



The Social and Emotional Impact of the COVID Pandemic. Resources and Strategies for Families

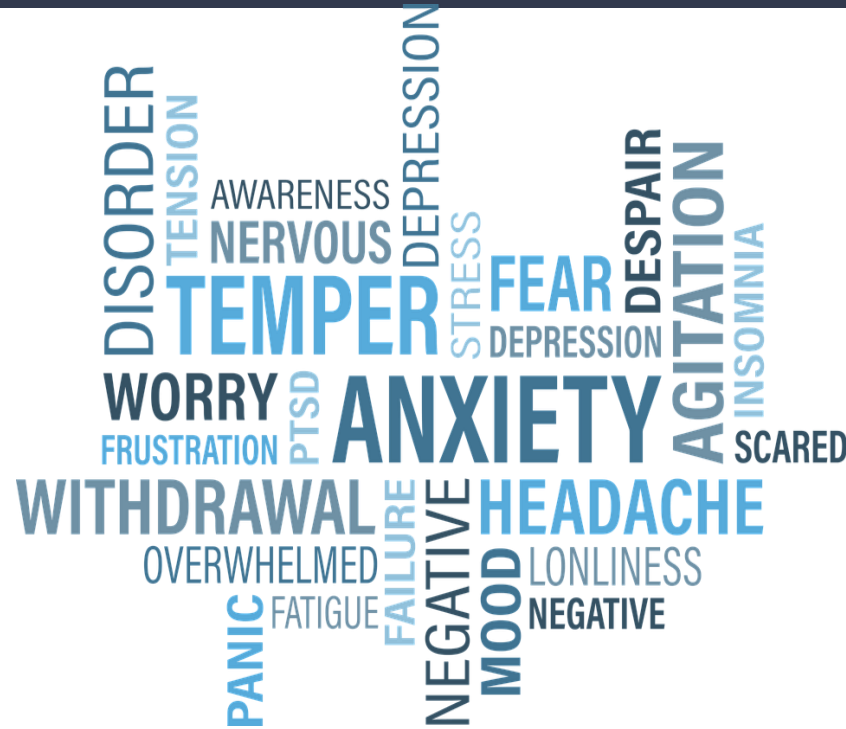
What is Stress?



- Stress is when the brain and body responds to a demand. These demands can be things such as Work, School, Family Changes, Friendships, and Traumatic Events such as what we're experiencing now with COVID19.

What is Anxiety?

- ❑ Anxiety is a NORMAL reaction to stress. It helps us pay attention and be cautious. Anxiety disorders differ from *normal feelings of nervousness and involve excessive fear or anxiety*
- ❑ Since Anxiety is a reaction, your child can learn ways to cope with the unwanted anxious thoughts.



How You Can Help

- Create a safe place to go with calming activities
- Teach relaxation techniques
- Have realistic expectations: reward effort, not outcome
- Consistent, daily routines (post them)
- Play soothing music during downtime, homework, etc
- Incorporate exercise, stretching
- Sleep hygiene and eating habits
- Encourage connection with others (limits to screen time)
- Help find a hobby/outlet
- Challenge kids to think about what they can and cannot control

Monitoring Television and Media

- Parents/guardians should monitor television, internet, and social media viewing—both for themselves and their children. Daily watching of COVID-19 updates may increase fear and anxiety. Developmentally inappropriate information, or information designed for adults, can also cause anxiety or confusion, particularly in young children.
- Make sure your children know the facts. Explain to your child that many stories about COVID-19 on the internet may include rumors and inaccurate information. Older children, in particular, may be accessing a great deal of information online and from friends that contains inaccuracies.
- Provide alternatives to screen time. Take walks, play board games, and/or try something new.

What to say when your child is feeling anxious...



WHAT NOT TO SAY...

“Stop worrying.”

“Get over it.”

“This isn’t a big deal.”

“I don’t understand what you’re so worried about”

“It’s Fine”

“Don’t worry about that”

WHAT TO SAY...

“I am here for you.”

“I Love you”

“I’m listening”

“How can I help you?”

“Let’s breathe together”

“What is your worry telling you?”

“On a scale of 1-10...”

Coping strategies for Anxiety

- ★ **Deep Breathing:** left hand on stomach, right hand on your heart. Take 4 deep breaths in through your nose, breathe for 4 seconds or more out
- ★ **5,4,3,2,1...**
 - 5 things you can see
 - 4 things you can touch
 - 3 things you can hear
 - 2 things you smell
 - 1 thing you can taste
- ★ **Journaling or Drawing**
- ★ **Practice Gratitude:** Write 3-5 things your grateful for each day
- ★ **Help your child identify what they can CONTROL**
- ★ **Practicing positive self talk:** “I can’t do it” to “ I’m going to try my best”
- ★ **Exercising**



Calming Resources

Calming Apps

Breathe2Relax

Smiling Mind

Headspace

Mindshift

Calm Counter

Calm

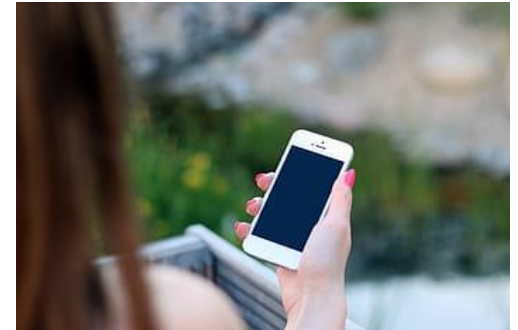
Mandala Coloring

Websites

Mindtools.com

Createinnerpeace.com

Calm.com



Supports for Parents & Caregivers

- <https://luxerecess.com/amomsretreat/category/podcast/> Lynn Lyons
- [Supporting Challenging Behaviors During COVID-19: A Coffee Chat with Ross Greene](#)
- [Our Response to COVID-19 ★](#) Think:Kids, Mass General Hospital, Weekly Series on Managing Difficult Behavior During These Challenging Times
- [REMOTE WORKSHOP - Strengthening Our Resilience in an Uncertain Time: Practical Strategies and Inspiration for You and Your Family](#) May 15, 10-12. Mass Partnerships for Youth
- Minding Your Mind <https://mindingyourmind.org/virtual-resources>
- [Parent Information Network \(PIN\)](#) Parent Information Network (PIN) is a parent information and support program designed by parents and professionals to help families of children and young adults ages 5-25 with serious emotional, behavioral, and/or mental health challenges.
- **NAMI-** [Find Support](#) , [Welcome NAMI Massachusetts](#)
- **National Parent Helpline:** <https://www.nationalparenthelpline.org/find-support>
- **NASP-** <https://www.nasponline.org/>:The National Association of School Psychologists' website offers a number of resources to address childrens' ,mental health.

Q&A

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