COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) IN CHILDREN & TEENS

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During times of major crisis, especially this life-threatening public health crisis, it’s difficult to know

what to think and what to do. The COVID-19 pandemic has been terrifying not only because of

physical threat and worldwide disruption, but also because of news misinformation as well as

contradictory and confusing public orders. Let’s take a look at what we know right now and the

positive steps we can take.

STAY SAFE, STAY HEALTHY: HELPFUL STEPS FOR PARENTS TO TAKE AT THIS TIME IN THEIR OWN

HOMES.

Protecting your own health will protect the health of your children, so continue to wear effective

masks and socially distance outside of the home when around others, wash your hands with warm

water and soap for at least 20 seconds on a regular basis, and clean doorknobs and other high-contact

surfaces (especially if used by non-family members).

Do your best to maintain good nutrition in your family meal planning and also to schedule family meal

times to ensure opportunities for communication, sharing, and maintaining family cohesion and

mutual support.

Even though the social distancing and other recommendations have helped to reduce infection rates

during this influenza season, remember to get your annual influenza vaccination and to maintain your

children’s usual recommended vaccinations for communicable diseases as well as continue routine

check-up doctor visits for all family members.

Seriously consider getting the COVID-19 vaccination when it is made available to you and other family

members.

Physical activity is important for all and especially for your children when learning from home, so

include scheduled play and movement into your children’s regular assignments, especially ball sports

for the older pre-schoolers and the grade school children.

While monitoring the overall academic performance of your children and teens, also keep an eye on

daily on-line class attendance, competing distractions and misuse of the computer, and completion of

assignments.

Seek mental health consultation and/or treatment for individual and /or family problems leading to

significant distress and dysfunction.

EMPOWER YOURSELVES: TALKING POINTS FOR PARENTS ADVOCATING FOR THEIR KIDS AND THEIR

EDUCATION.

There are almost 50 million American households in the US with kids under 18 years of age.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has published research stating that schools can reopen safely if

they develop and adhere to specific SARS-CoV-2 prevention policies such as utilizing “face coverings,

distancing and hand-washing”.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has also stated that “schools are crucial to children’s

Educational, social, physical and emotional development” and they “also are a source of special

services and nutrition and can help reduce disparities for students who are Black, Hispanic/Latino,

American Indian/Alaska natives and those who live in poverty”.

If your child is struggling in school, remember that special educational services are available through a

504 Plan or an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in your school district. Under the IDEA (the nation’s

special education law), you have the right to ask the school to evaluate your child. You should speak

with your school administration and also demand an evaluation in writing.

On-line helpful resources:

https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families\_and\_Youth/Resource\_Libraries/covid-

19/resources\_helping\_kids\_parents\_cope.aspx

https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/

https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Parenting-in-a-

Pandemic.aspx

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The Center for Child &amp; Youth Psychiatry (CCYP) utilizes telepsychiatry/telehealth and face-to-face

practices in San Diego County to provide outpatient psychiatric evaluation and medication support

and services by trained Child &amp; Adolescent Psychiatrists.

Services are available to children and youth who have been successfully discharged from their

outpatient mental health provider, yet have psychotropic medication needs that are too complex for

their primary care physician and/or a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) to manage.

Licensed Assessment Coordinators will provide case management and short-term crisis stabilization

services, as needed. Nursing staff will be available to provide education, medication support and

gather necessary medical information.