



Stress Management in the Time of COVID-19



Introduction

In this unprecedented time, The Primary School has put together this thrive guide to support our community during this time. This situation may have brought with it new challenges and unforeseen stressors. During this pandemic, if you are feeling stressed, fearful, anxious, lonely, or overwhelmed, you are not alone. These feelings can take a toll on your productivity, social behavior, enjoyment, and general pursuits due to how this time has disrupted our everyday routines. The current pandemic has changed how our families are able to get adequate sleep, physical activity, nutrition, and routines such as brushing our teeth! To help with this, we have provided resources and tools for the topics of:

**Stress
Management**



Sleep



**Physical
Activity**



Nutrition



Oral Health



Stress Management

Noticing Signs of Stress for Parents

You may be feeling:

- Worried
- Angry
- Irritable
- Depressed
- Unable to focus

Physical signs of stress:

- Headaches
- Trouble sleeping
- Upset stomach
- Weight gain or loss
- Tense muscles
- Frequent or more serious colds



Noticing Signs of Stress for Children

- Children may have changes in behavior and mood which could look like:
 - being more sad, irritable, or angry
 - difficulty concentrating
 - new behaviors arising
- They may become more withdrawn or isolated
- They may have differences in sleep and eating patterns



Tips for Stress Management

Deep Breathing

- For a few minutes sit in a chair and take deep breaths focusing on how your chest expands.
- Your family can also try blowing out candles or bubbles!
- 4-7-8 Breathing: Deep breathe to the count of 4, hold for 7, and then breathe out to the count of 8.

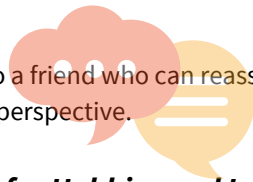
Listen to Music

- Take a break and listen to calming music or nature sounds!



Talk it Out

- Talking to a friend who can reassure you can help you remain calm and keep things in perspective.



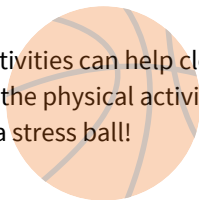
Make Time for Hobbies and Interests

- Do activities that you love to take your mind off of stressful situations.



Physical Activity

- Doing physical activities can help clear your mind and helps your body fight stress! Check out the physical activity section of this guide for more resources!
- You can also use a stress ball!



Activity: Self-Reflection

Self-reflection is an exercise that can promote your well-being. Reflecting on your thoughts, experiences, and feelings can be a way to sift through your many emotions. You may write out your responses or just think through them! Here are some prompts to help you begin!

Prompts:

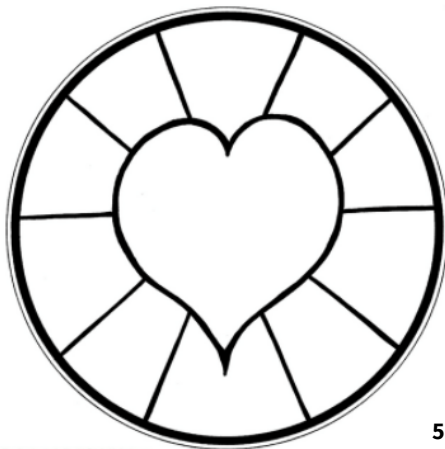
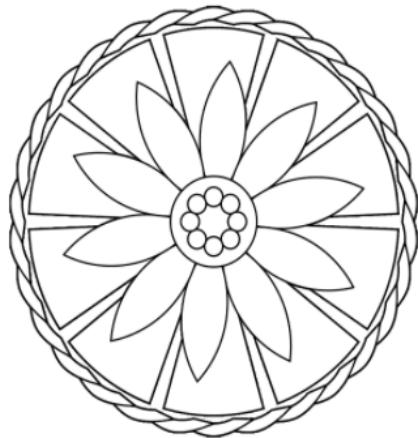
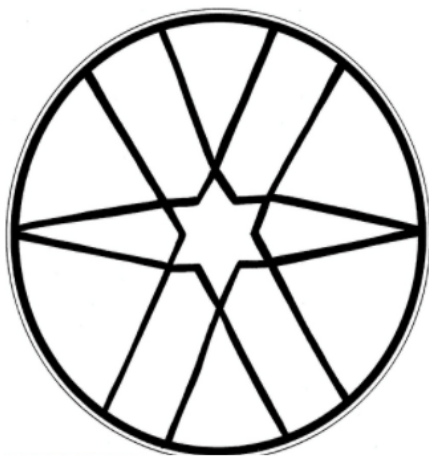
- How are you feeling today?
- How is your family feeling during this time?
- What are things that bring me joy (e.g. activities, hobbies, experiences)? Why do these things increase my joyfulness?
- Which people/relationships increase my joy? What is it about these people and what is it about me that leads to interaction-based (between myself and these people) joy?
- What may I do to maintain my connections to people and things adding to my joyfulness during the pandemic?
- What may I do to add to the joyfulness of my family?
- How may I add joy to the lives of the people from whom I am physically distanced at present?
- What are you learning about yourself during this time?
- Describe your family traditions and happy moments.

Tip: Start small! Do not pressure yourself into doing this activity for an hour, try 10-15 minutes a day!

Adapted from <https://www.conncoll.edu/media/website-media/campuslife/Journaling-to-Cope-with-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf>

Activity: Mandala Art

Coloring can help you relax your mind and calm restless thoughts!



Sleep



During this time, getting adequate sleep may be especially difficult but it is still necessary! Sleep is an essential part of everyone's routine and an indispensable part of a healthy lifestyle! Studies have shown that kids who regularly get an adequate amount of sleep have *improved attention, behavior, learning, memory, and overall mental and physical health.*

- **Preschoolers (ages 3-5 years)** generally need between 10-13 hours of sleep per night
- **School-age children (ages 6-12 years)** need between 9-12 hours of sleep per night

Benefits of Sleep

- promotes growth
- helps the heart
- affects weight
- helps beat germs
- reduces injury risk
- increases kids' attention span
- boosts learning



Sleep: Tips for Children

1. Creating a routine for your child:

- Stick to the same bedtime and wake time every day, even on weekends
- Have a series of events that lead up to bedtime such as brushing teeth, putting on pajamas, coloring, and reading a story
- Use VISUALS! Build a personalized visual schedule, using pictures of child



2. If your child has siblings with different sleep schedules try:

- Shift stimulating activities to earlier in the night and replace stimulus to things such as nightlights or music later into the night
- Thinking about ways to pass a wave of calmness over the entire space (reading, coloring, or talking to your child), even for siblings or family members who stay up later

3. If there are shared living spaces try:

- Doing relaxing activities together and using music/white noise apps (fans and humidifiers can also work)
- Taking a break for 30 minutes at child's bedtime to relax together as a family, then resume activities like homework, chores, TV after the child falls asleep

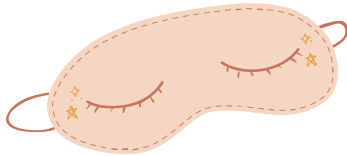


4. Child temperament

- Children may not be able to communicate that they are tired, and it may come out in other ways
- Parent can model relaxed mood which are ways to bring temperament down like deep breaths together with child
- Think about a child's "triggers" to avoid escalating moments (Ex: too much choice may get a child riled up, if that's the case then having only two books to choose from at bedtime instead of whole shelf may help)

Activity: Sleep Diary

Keep track of your family's sleeping habits to better understand sleep patterns!



Instructions:

Every morning when you wake up complete the sleep diary for the previous night! For example, on Monday morning fill in the information for Sunday night!

- **Preschoolers (ages 3-5 years)** need between 10-13 hours of sleep per night
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| DAY OF THE WEEK | BEDTIME | FINAL WAKE UP TIME | TIME SPENT ASLEEP |
|-----------------|----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Ex: Monday | 10:00 PM | 8:00 AM | 9 hours 30 minutes |
| Monday | | | |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Thursday | | | |
| Friday | | | |
| Saturday | | | |
| Sunday | | | |

Physical Movement: Tips and Tricks

Physical movement is not limited to only sports, just get everyone moving!

- Play tag, swim, toss a ball, jump rope, hula-hoop, or dance
- Walk the dog, go for a jog, go on a bike ride, or head to the park
- Get the whole family involved in household chores like cleaning and vacuuming

Here are some activities you can try doing indoors:

- Do familiar exercises, like push-ups, sit ups, and leg lifts
- Use rubber tubing or resistance bands for exercises
- Use free weights ("dumbbells") or a other objects like books for muscle exercises
- Follow YouTube workout videos

Tips for Children

- Do activities like walking as a family.
- Split up screen time by incorporating physical movement into commercial breaks or between TV episodes.
- Provide kids with opportunities to be active. Give them active toys and games, like bikes, scooters, jump ropes, balls, bubbles, chalk, or balloons!
- Try dancing/freeze dancing, balloon volleyball, yoga, hopscotch, or treasure hunts!



Activity: Active Routine

The best way to incorporate physical movement into your family's routine is to schedule it! Keep track of your activities by writing out the date, time, and type of activity you will be doing! At the end of the day, give yourself a checkmark to keep track of your progress!

| DAY OF THE WEEK | TYPE OF ACTIVITY | TIME | COMPLETED |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Monday | Walk for 20 Minutes with kids | 7:00 PM | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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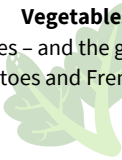
Nutrition: A Healthy Eating Plate

There are two ways to achieve a balanced plate

- 1. Modifying the ingredients of a recipe*
- 2. Adding a side dish to balance the meal out.*

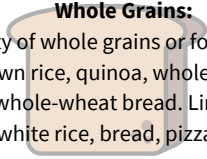
Vegetables:

The more veggies – and the greater the variety – the better. Potatoes and French fries don't count as vegetables!



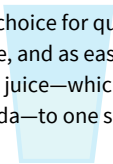
Whole Grains:

Eat a variety of whole grains or foods like whole wheat, brown rice, quinoa, whole-grain pasta, and 100% whole-wheat bread. Limit refined grains like white rice, bread, pizza crust, and pasta.



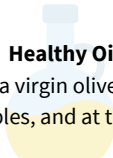
Water:

Water is the best choice for quenching our thirst. It's also sugar-free, and as easy to find as the nearest tap. Limit juice—which can have as much sugar as soda—to one small glass per day!



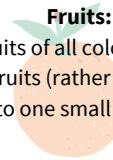
Healthy Oils:

Use healthy oils from plants like extra virgin olive, canola, corn, sunflower, and peanut oil in cooking, on salads and vegetables, and at the table. Limit butter to occasional use!



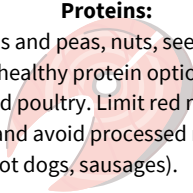
Fruits:

Eat plenty of fruits of all colors. Choose whole fruits or sliced fruits (rather than fruit juices; limit fruit juice to one small glass per day).



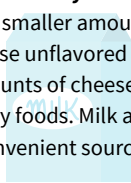
Proteins:

Choose beans and peas, nuts, seeds, and other plant-based healthy protein options, as well as fish, eggs, and poultry. Limit red meat (beef, pork, lamb) and avoid processed meats (bacon, deli meats, hot dogs, sausages).



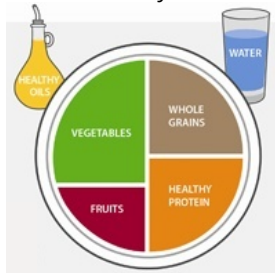
Dairy:

Dairy is needed in smaller amounts compared to other foods. Choose unflavored milk, plain yogurt, small amounts of cheese, and other unsweetened dairy foods. Milk and other dairy products are a convenient source of calcium and vitamin D!



Activity: Meal Plan

Eating a variety of foods is the key to a healthy and balanced diet! Here is an example of a healthy plate! For this activity, write down what types of food your family will eat for every meal!



Healthy Oils: _____

Vegetables: _____

Fruits: _____

Whole Grains: _____

Healthy Protein: _____

Check out the TPS Cookbook on our family website for great recipes on family favorites!

If you are concerned about not having enough or the appropriate foods to make a balanced meal for your family please connect with your coach or check out resources at the end of this guide !

Oral Hygiene

Goals:

- Brush teeth twice a day every day
- Brush teeth for 2 minutes every time
- Incorporate flossing into daily routine
- Reduce the amount of sugary drinks consumed
- Schedule appointments for yearly check ups and cleanings

Ideas to Make Brushing More Fun

- Brush teeth together as a family - make it a teeth-brushing party!
- Let your child brush their teeth for a while on their own, then take a turn to make sure every tooth gets brushed: “MyTurn!”
- Brush teeth while child is distracted: while playing in the bathtub, or while a parent or sibling is reading a book out loud.
- Let your child pick their toothbrush at the store so that they are excited to use it, or even let them pick between two toothbrushes at home each night.
- Make the toothbrush into a “Superhero” fighting off sugar bugs!
- Celebrate after each brushing with a “You did it!”, high-fives, or a funny tooth-brushing dance.



Activity: Oral Health Sheet

Use this resource to help ensure your child brushes their teeth twice a day every day! Don't forget to floss!

| | | Morning | Night |
|-----------|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Monday |→ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tuesday |→ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wednesday |→ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Thursday |→ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Friday |→ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Saturday |→ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sunday |→ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Notes

We encourage you to use this space to write down your own ideas for stress management, take notes during Parent Circles, and for journaling!

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Resources

If you are looking for additional support, connecting with your medical and/or dental home is always an effective strategy. See below for the clinic numbers within our community.

Medical Home Contact Info:



Ravenswood Family Health Center - (650) 330-7400

Ravenswood Family Dentistry - (650) 289-7700

Kaiser Permanente (Redwood City) - (650) 299-2015

Kaiser Permanente (San Mateo) - (650) 358-7000

Fair Oaks - (650) 363-4602

Gardner Packard Clinic - (650) 362-2500

Palo Alto Medical Foundation (Sutter) - (650) 321-4121

Food Resources

East Palo Alto Community Farmers' Market

Every Wednesday (May-Nov.)

Bloomhouse – 11:00am – 2:00pm | 2555 Pulgas Ave, East Palo Alto

Facebook Community Mobile Market

Every Sunday

Belle Haven Library – 9:00am-12:00pm | 413 Ivy Drive, Menlo Park

YMCA East Palo Alto – 1:00-2:00pm | 550 Bell St, East Palo Alto

All orders are encouraged to be placed online previous to arrival at www.communitymobilemarketorders.com or via call service 650.781-6622 (EBT orders will be processed using our call center.)



Boys and Girls Club of the Peninsula Dinner

Monday - Friday | Drive thru warm meals for families

Redwood City Club – 6:00pm - 7:00pm | 1109 Hilton St, Redwood City

East Palo Alto Club – 6:00pm - 7:00pm | 2031 Pulgas Ave, East Palo Alto

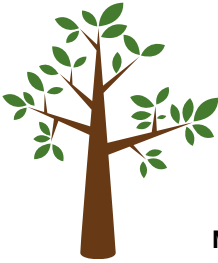
Resources

Physical Movement Resources:

Virtual YMCA

Join the YMCA or reactivate your Y membership for live group exercise classes and arts and social programs to keep you connected!

Visit www.ymcasv.org for more information



Parks and Open Spaces

Bell Street Park | 2159 University Ave, East Palo Alto

Cooley Landing Park | 2100 Bay Rd, East Palo Alto

Jack Farrell Park | 2509 Fordham St, East Palo Alto

Joel Davis Park | 1960 Tate St, East Palo Alto

Martin Luther King Park | 435 Daisy Lane, East Palo Alto

Pocket Park at East Bayshore | East Bayshore Rd and Bay Rd, East Palo Alto

Pocket Park at Newbridge | Bay Rd, East Palo Alto



Behavioral Health Access Lines:

Star Vista - Call 888-220-7575

Free, confidential, 24-hour crisis line and parent support line to callers in San Mateo County.

San Mateo County Health System - Call 800-686-0101

If you are on Medi-Cal in San Mateo County, you can call the BHRS accessline above to find a therapist, counselor, behavioral program (for autism), intensive behavioral program (social-emotional needs), and adult/child treatment needs.

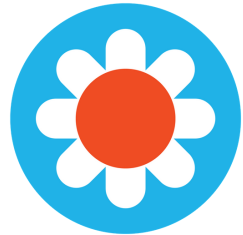
Call the access line and they will complete an intake over the phone.



Excellence



Soul



Growth



Community



Courage

