

COVID-19 Parent Resource Guide

A collection of resources to support children
and families across New Hampshire



NH Department of Health & Human Services
Division for Children, Youth & Families

April 2020

Introduction

During these uncertain times, people across the country are experiencing unprecedented pressure. In addition to the ever-present priority to keep oneself healthy and safe, families may be dealing with financial stress, grief & loss, and the pressure of new family routines. Each family faces its own set of challenges, and at the heart of it all are parents.

Parents have recently found themselves in roles that they have not had to fill in the past. The world of remote working and remote learning has pushed parents into the full-time roles of teacher, fitness director, short-order cook, activities director and homemaker, just to name a few. These new roles are being added to the existing role of parent, which is already challenging.

In an effort to provide enhanced support to parents and families during the COVID-19 emergency, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) has teamed up with its parent and community partners to provide resources to support parents and families across New Hampshire. The resources found in this guide provide important information on how to access the many services that DCYF is known for, as well as suggestions and links to resources that can help with some of the new challenges families are facing across New Hampshire.

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Breathe

Tips on managing stress during uncertain times *(information courtesy of American Addiction Centers)*

During this time of heightened stress, self-care and creating simple strategies to help empower ourselves and each other are important. Most people experience more stress when they perceive a situation as dangerous, difficult, or painful and they do not have the resources to cope. These powerful tools and resources can be used to assist children and adults, as everyone can benefit from learning stress management skills.

People who develop a “relaxation response” and other stress management skills feel less helpless and have more choices when responding to stress. This relaxation response includes decreased heart and breathing rates and a sense of well-being.

Below are a few resources for you and your children to explore that can help to turn on that relaxation response.

- **Managing Stress for a Healthy Family**
<https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/managing-stress>
- **Managing Your Mental Health**
<https://www.naminh.org/resources-2/covid-19/>
- **8 Self-Soothing Techniques Young Children**
<https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/managing-feelings/fear/8-self-soothing-techniques-for-your-young-child>
- **Stress Management and Teens**
https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Helping-Teenagers-With-Stress-066.aspx
- **Self-Care for Resilience Resources**
<https://www.mghclaycenter.org/self-care/>
- **Effective Stress Relievers for Your Life**
<https://www.verywellmind.com/tips-to-reduce-stress-3145195>

Stay Connected

Tools for staying connected while miles apart

Now more than ever, it is important to connect with others. Parenting isn't always easy and we can all benefit from having a support system, especially when we can't physically be together. We may feel more vulnerable and alone, but it is important to remember many of us are feeling this way. We are in this together!

Below you will find resources that can help you stay connected. In addition to online support groups, you will find links to some popular social media platforms that can help keep you in touch with family and friends.

Online Support

- **Parenting Hotline - Find support in your area**
<https://www.nationalparenthelpline.org/find-support>
- **Telephonic Support to stay connected**
<https://waypointnh.org/programs/the-family-support-warm-line>

Social Media Apps

- **Facebook Group for Parents During COVID-19 Pandemic**
https://www.facebook.com/groups/childmindcoronavirussupport/?source_id=124445037622183
- **Zoom**
<https://zoom.us/>
- **Houseparty**
<https://houseparty.com/>

What's Cooking?

Making mealtime fun and delicious

Many studies have shown that eating together is a very important aspect of family life. Families who eat together are more likely to eat healthier and encourage their kids to make good food choices, like more fruits and vegetables (Stanford Children's Health).

Why not take advantage of this period of physical distancing, invite your kids to join you in the kitchen, and help prepare the family meal? Cooking with your kids not only keeps them busy with a fun activity, it also teaches them cooking skills essential for their future and encourages them to try new and healthy food options.

Here are a few resources that will help you explore the benefits of cooking with your kids, where you will find some exciting and healthy new recipes that your whole family is sure to love!

- **Five Great Reasons to Cook with Your Kids**
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Cooking-With-Your-Children.aspx>
- **Fifteen Healthy Recipes You Can Cook with Your Kids**
<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/recipes-to-cook-with-your-kids>
- **32 Crazy Good, Quick Dinners For Kids**
These will squash your kids' urges to feed their dinners to the dog!
<https://www.delish.com/cooking/g1372/quick-kids-dinner-recipes/>

Just for You

If the kids aren't around, and you would like some more grown-up options, check out the following resources that range from grilling to date nights:

- **Old Fashioned Comfort Food**
<https://www.allrecipes.com/article/our-top-comfort-food-recipes/>
- **Grilling Recipes from Around the Globe**
<https://www.feastingathome.com/15-grilling-recipes-summer/>
- **Date Night Recipes from Taste of Home**
<https://www.tasteofhome.com/collection/date-night-dinners/>

Stay the Course

Scheduling tips to maintain structure at home

We are all living in an unprecedented time, many of us juggling work, home schooling, family responsibilities and more. Routines provide structure and order, and give kids a sense of security, but it is important to be able to create a schedule that works for you and your family.

Here are some helpful hints that may assist you in scheduling an efficient day adapted from Calendar.com:

- Create a productive morning routine that includes time for you to plan your day.
- Define your goals...what do you want to accomplish today?
- Estimate how much time you will need for your tasks and block it off.
- Avoid task switching. Once you have created a task schedule, stick to it! Work smarter, not harder!
- Set your priorities and tackle them first!
- Don't forget to schedule in time for breaks. Make sure you have time for meals and getting outside for some fresh air & exercise....it is so important for the caregivers to take care of themselves too!
- Expect the unexpected. As we all know, anything that can happen most likely will; so understand that some of your tasks may have to be moved into tomorrow's schedule.

Here are some helpful links that may also assist you in keeping a family schedule:

- **How to Schedule Your Day**
<https://www.wikihow.com/Schedule-Your-Day>
- **A Realistic Schedule During COVID-19**
<https://busytoddler.com/2020/03/daily-schedule-covid-19/>
- **Time Management Tips**
<https://www.thebalancesmb.com/time-management-tips-2947336>

Teacher's Corner

Real Life Remote Learning

I am not an educator. How am I supposed to teach my kids?

The New Hampshire Department of Education (DOE) recognizes that most parents are not trained educators, nor are they traditionally stay at home parents. Most families have adapted their lifestyle to adhere to the Stay at Home order put into place for our state, including remote learning. Families can be made up of stay at home parents, single parents, part-time working parents, parents working remotely full-time, and full time “essential” working parents. The DOE has created a comprehensive resource page to assist families during remote learning, at <http://www.nhlearnsremotely.com/>.

New Hampshire Department of Education

Remote Instruction Help Desk: <https://nhdoepm.atlassian.net/servicedesk/customer/portal/16>

Topics covered on the DOE website include:

- Discounted internet access and technology resources
- Resources for working parents and childcare options
- Small student study groups/tutoring opportunities
- Attendance and Graduation information/requirements
- Special Education/Assessment and Evaluation
- Online resources and programs for age groups

Make sure to also visit your local School Administrative Unit (SAU) website for the most up to date remote learning information, and reach out to your child's classroom teacher or administration with any questions.

Often overlooked, but perhaps equally important to the success of your child's remote learning experience, is making sure your student engages in brain and movement breaks throughout the day.

School Age Appropriate Break Activities

- GoNoodle (YouTube)
- Cosmic Yoga/Zen (YouTube)
- Kidz Bop Dance Break (YouTube)
- Lunch Doodles with Mo Willems (YouTube)
- Outdoor time! (walks, play a sport, ride a bike, etc)

Movement Breaks for Teens

- Planet Fitness “United We Move” celebrity workouts (YouTube)
- Calm App Mindfulness meditation (Free with Ads)
- Yoga with Adriene (YouTube)
- PE with Joe the Body Coach (YouTube)
- Couch to 5K (App)

Remember: Remote Learning is not meant to exactly replicate or replace what your child would have learned from March to June in the classroom.

The Work is Done, Time for Fun

Recreational Activities for all ages

As we settle into the routine of physical distancing and quarantining, resources aimed at keeping children entertained at home are in high demand. As parents try to balance school, work, family and home life they will need new and creative activities for their families. Below are some web links that specialize in games and activities so that you can make the most of your family time, and create memories that will last long after the COVID-19 emergency has passed.

Arts & Crafts

- <https://www.happinessishomemade.net/quick-easy-kids-crafts-anyone-can-make/>

50 Fun Indoor Craft Activities

- <https://www.itsalwaysautumn.com/best-indoor-kid-crafts-activities.html>

Rainy Day Activities

- <https://www.care.com/c/stories/3775/101-indoor-games-and-activities-for-kids/>
- <https://rochester.kidsoutandabout.com/content/250-creative-ways-keep-your-family-sane-during-covid-19-crisis>

Other Fun Resources

- <https://momypoppins.com/family/coronavirus-pandemic-update-indoor-activities-resources-kids>
- <https://www.abcmouse.com/abt/homepage?8a08850bc2=T1652160382.1586260528.1717>

Staying Fit and Healthy

Fitness resources for kids and busy parents

As we all know, physical wellness is crucial to our overall health and well-being. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends that adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week. This can be achieved through 30 to 60 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise five days per week, or 20 to 60 minutes of vigorous-intensity exercise three days per week. Children and adolescents should aim for a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity daily.

With schools being unable to provide physical education and school & recreational sports on hold, it will be up to parents to ensure that their children are getting the exercise they need. To assist parents in planning recreation and fitness activities, we have provided links to some websites that provide suggestions in this area. To ensure that busy parents and caretakers are also meeting their exercise needs, some links have been provided to the Fit Mother and Fit Father Projects.

- **Easy Outdoor Games and Activities for Kids**
<https://www.verywellfamily.com/great-outdoor-games-for-kids-620396>
- **Exercise and Fitness Tips for Teens**
<https://safeteens.org/health-wellness/nutrition-exercise/exercise-fitness/>
- **Fitness Resources for Fathers**
<https://www.fitfatherproject.com>
- **Fitness Resources for Mothers**
<https://www.fitmotherproject.com>

When the Going Gets Tough

Family Services and Support

FAST Forward

Families and Systems Together (FAST)

The FAST Forward program is New Hampshire's wraparound service model that helps New Hampshire families with children or youth who have a diagnosis of Serious Emotional Disturbance. FAST Forward is an evidence-based, family and youth driven process that helps families identify their strengths and their needs, and develop a plan that connects them to supports and services in their communities.

The FAST Forward program...

- Works with a team using a wraparound process to coordinate care.
- Provides unconditional support and individualized flexible programming with a “do what it takes” attitude.
- Offers an enhanced array of services, including short-term respite care, and soon to include mobile crisis teams.
- Uses a “system of care” approach that is family driven, youth guided, community based, and culturally and linguistically competent.
- Makes sure our youth with the most difficult emotional and substance use issues are connected with the appropriate supports within their communities

Family and Youth Driven

Family is at the core of FAST Forward's work. Family members have a voice in describing their needs and strengths, and a choice in identifying services and their supports. Families take a leadership role in their families' care as well in policy, planning, and evaluation of the overall system. Youth voice is critical and valued, as youth are full participants in planning their care.

Community Based & Culturally Competent

Services are home- and community-based: keeping youth in their homes and schools is a priority. FAST Forward honors the culture and beliefs of each family served through this program.

For more information, and to access support, please visit <http://nh4youth.org/collaborative/grants-and-projects/fast-forward>.

Family Health & Well-Being Resources

Statewide resources including those specific to COVID-19

Crisis Support

- **Waypoint Warm Line:** Free guidance and support for parents/caregivers. Call: 1-800-640-6486
- **Family Resource Centers:** FRCs act as a “front-door” to services—they provide many supports directly and help families navigate to whatever else they might need. Find your local FRC at www.nhchildrenstrust.org/connect.
- **Catholic Charities of NH:** (603) 669-3030 Available 24/7 Telehealth for Kids and Teens suffering from Mental Health issues
- **NAMI-NH:** For information on a variety of crisis and mental health supports visit www.naminh.org/resources2/covid-19 or call (800) 950-6264 M-F, 10am- 6pm. For 24/7 crisis support text "NAMI" TO 741741
- **Suicide Prevention Hotline:** # 1-800-273-8255 and online at <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>
- **Juvenile Diversion:** <https://nhcourtdiversion.org>
- **Know & Tell:** for information on reporting child abuse and neglect visit <https://knowandtell.org>

Financial & Community Support

- **NH Unemployment Benefits:** Call (603) 271-7700, or visit <https://www.nhes.nh.gov>
- **NH Cash & Other Assistance:** TANF, Food Stamps (SNAP), <https://nheasy.nh.gov/#/>
- **Internal Revenue Service:** Track your stimulus check or give the IRS your banking account info to receive your stimulus check at <https://www.irs.gov>
- **NH Community Action Program:** <https://www.nh.gov/osi/energy/programs/fuel-assistance/agencies.htm>
- **Assistance with paying bills:** https://www.needhelppayingbills.com/html/new_hampshire_community_action.html
- **Internet Essentials:** Providing families with internet for free (2 months) visit www.internetessentials.com

If you are experiencing trouble paying your bills be sure to call your landlord, electric company, cable, etc. and explain your situation. They may be able to work with you during these challenging times.

Food Security

- **Food Stamps (SNAP):** Visit <https://nheasy.nh.gov/#/> or call 1-844-275-3447.
- **NH Food Access Map:** Crowd-sourced listing of food resources during COVID-19 bit.ly/nhfoodaccessmap
- **NH Food Bank:** www.nhfoodbank.org/need
- **WIC:** Nutrition support for pregnant women, new mothers, children 0-5. Services remain accessible by telephone only. For more info, visit <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/wic/> or call 1-800-942-4321.

Local churches and other organizations across the state are holding food drives and giving food to needy families. Check out your local town hall homepage or local Facebook page for more info on what is happening in your area.

Family Health & Well-Being Resources (continued)

Domestic Violence Resources

- **NH Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS):** <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf/domesticviolence.htm> or call New Hampshire Domestic Violence helpline: 1-866-644-3574
- **NH Coalition Against Domestic Violence:** www.nhcadsv.org
- **Crisis Text Line:** Text 741741 or visit crisistextline.org for free, 24/7 support from a trained Crisis Counselor.

Substance Use Services

- **NH Addiction Hotline:** Call **211**
- **The Doorway NH:** <https://www.thedoorway.nh.gov>
- **Partnership for Successful Living:** <http://www.nhpartnership.org>

Recovery-Related Online Resources

- **SOS Recovery Community Organization:** Virtual Recovery Meetings <https://straaffordrecovery.org/virtual-meetings/>
- **In The Rooms:** offering online AA meetings <https://www.intherooms.com/home/category/community-and-meetings/>
- **New England Region of NA:** offering online NA meetings <https://nerna.org>
- **All Recovery Meetings:** <https://unityrecovery.org/digital-recovery-meetings>
- **SMART Recovery Meetings:** <https://www.smartrecovery.org/community/calendar.php>
- **Seacoast Youth Services:** Adolescent Substance Abuse Program <https://www.seacoastyouthservices.org>

Housing/Childcare

- **ChildCare Aware:** For COVID-19 childcare support for essential workers and others nh.childcareaware.org
- **Housing Assistance:** If you are experiencing a housing crisis, call NH 2-1-1, or contact your local city or town welfare office (searchable at www.nhmunicipal.org/municipal-directory). Call ahead for current operations.
- **Eviction and Foreclosure Support:** Most evictions and foreclosures are temporarily frozen during the current NH State of Emergency: See NH Emergency Order #4 (<https://www.governor.nh.gov/news-media/emergency-orders/documents/emergency-order-4.pdf>), issued on March 17, and clarification provided in Emergency Order #24 (<https://www.governor.nh.gov/news-media/emergency-orders/documents/emergency-order-24.pdf>) on April 3.

COVID-19 Information

- **NH DHHS COVID-19 Website:** <https://www.nh.gov/covid19> or call 2-1-1 for COVID-19 related guidance and resources.
- **NH 211:** Visit <http://211.org/services/covid19>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** Visit <https://www.cdc.gov>