

Parenting During COVID-19

Strategies for Coping

Jayne Kim, LMFT, PPSC
November 6, 2020

Introduction

Overview

Coronavirus is known as COVID-19 and this outbreak is creating an unprecedented crisis for families and is changing family life. Many children are out of school or child care, without access to group activities, team sports, or playgrounds. Parents and caregivers are attempting to work remotely or unable to work, while caring for children, with no clarity on how long the situation will last. It is a daunting task to just keep children busy and safe at home. Even these challenges are difficult for those living in low-income and crowded households.

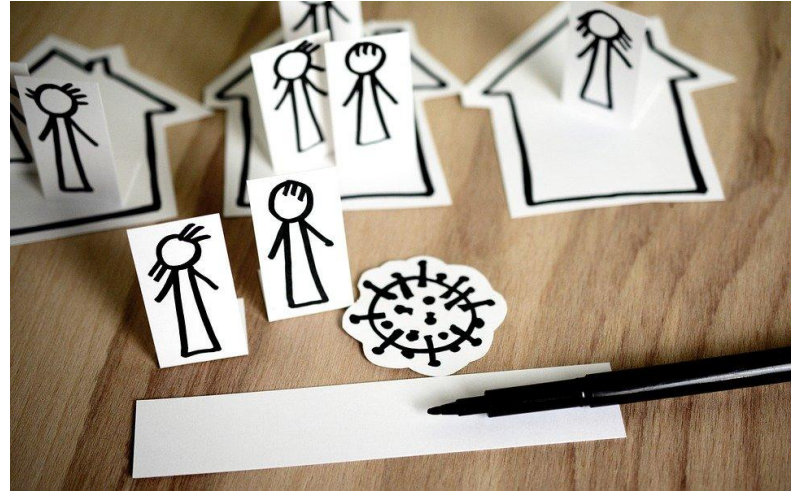
Objectives



- The Unprecedented Crisis- COVID-19 and how it impacts Families
 - The Stress on Families and Caregivers
 - Deaf Children's Development/Mental Health Issues
 - Interventions for Children, Families, and Professionals
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Common Reactions to COVID-19

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping and concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs
- Worsening of mental health conditions



COVID-19 Causing Stress on Families & Caregivers



- Unemployment
- Childcare availability
- Family Violence
- Economic Hardship
- Unstable Housing
- Food insecurity
- Social Isolation/Cabin Fever
- Limited access to Medical care
- Substance Abuse
- Untreated mental health problems
- Fears related to Immigration Status
- Burdens of Racism

The Challenges & Benefits of COVID-19 on Children & Youths

- Saddled parental responsibilities to take care of children full-time such as homeschooling their children
- Shifting work, education, and socialization to online.
- Struggling with schedules
- Constant togetherness
- Increased anxiety in children and adults
- Different personalities in the household
- Spending more time with their families
- Engage in Learning Opportunities
- Use downtime to maintain social connections
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Watch for Behavior Changes In A Child



- Clinginess/anxiety
- Unexplained headaches or body aches
- Excessive crying/temper tantrums
- Bathroom accidents/Potty-Training Regression
- Comfort-seeking behaviors like thumb sucking
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability or acting out behaviors
- Poor concentration or distraction
- The disruption of routine can be especially difficult for young children, who take great comfort in consistency

Deaf Children's Common Development & Communication Issues



- More than 90 percent of deaf children are born to hearing parents & 88% of these parents don't know sign language
- Early language deprivation and inadequate means of communication between parent and child
- Isolation in family where there is poor communication
- Reduced opportunities for incidental learning and fluent two-way interactions can result in the Deaf child not fully understanding what is going on around them
- Lacks of understanding empathy
- Self-regulation
- Problem solving
- Having difficulty forming relationships with peers, teachers & family members

Coping Skills for Parents/Caregivers

- Have a conversation and share your fears/concerns (do not unload all on your child)
- Reassure appropriate reaction to a stressful situation before discussing coping skills with child
- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories
- Read a book and play games – even virtually with friends
- Pick up a new hobby or rediscover one you haven't had time to enjoy
- Start watching a new show with friends who live apart from you



Coping Strategies For Parenting Young Children



- Cook and bake together with your child.
- Stay virtually connected to family and friends – especially those who are isolated and alone.
- Family members take turns choosing with whom they would like to connect. Make a schedule.
- Identify a family project that might help others. Writing letters/send positive messages.

More Coping Strategies For Parenting Young Children



- Allow "down time."
- Create a low stimulus calm down space with your child.
- A calming space helps your child stay balanced, calm and avoid over-stimulation.
- A calm down corner is a safe space for angry, upset, frazzled, and/or overstimulated children to go to calm down.
- Make a calm down jar with your child.

More Coping Skills for Parents/Caregivers



- Stick to a schedule that works. Keeping a regular schedule provides a sense of control, predictability, calm and well being.
- Children feel comforted with routines.
- Signal transitions and give your child enough time to finish an activity before transitioning.
- Set a timer with a visual/auditory signal.

More Coping Skills for Parents/Caregivers



- Go for a walk, run or play a game outside as a family.
- Read a book or visit the library online where there are thousands of e-books, audiobooks, and musical recordings.
- Video workouts or watch movie/TV shows together as a family or through virtually with friends.

Helping Children Cope with Changes-COVID-19

Explain safety tips and social-distancing using age appropriate language. “Germs can spread when we are close to others or when we touch surfaces. That is why we stay apart and we wash our hands often.”

For now hugs, kisses and handshakes are just with our family.

Practice and model daily good hygiene with your child.

Wash your hands multiple times a day for 20 seconds. Sing/Sign, “ Twinkle, Thinkle Little Star” while washing and do it two times.

Compliment your children when they use a Kleenex or sneeze/cough into the bend of their elbow.

Interventions For Anyone Who Works With Families

- Encourage family members to stay connected to kids through social media and text
- Ask children about how their pets are doing because animal abuse can be an indicator of child abuse
- Play a game that involves physical movement such as “Follow Me” or “Show Your House”



More Interventions For Anyone Who Works With Families

- Use video calls to check in on family members and friends
- Not only ask parents/caregivers but also ask children about their well-being, how they're feeling, what they're doing to cope with current situation
- **For teachers-** add a special feature (sliding scale: from red (awful) to orange to yellow to blue (perfect) on powerpoint during online classes
- **Mental Health Therapists-** Virtual play therapy for children to open up
- "Be a resource" for families



Resources Available



- <https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/> (Child Mind Institute)
- <https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/> (Prevent Child Abuse America)
- <https://www.common sense media.org/resources-for-families-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic> (Common Sense Media)
- <https://www.childhelp.org/hotline/> (Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline)
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/index.html> (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention- CDC)
- <https://handsandvoices.org/resources/OUR/index.htm> (Hands and Voices)
- www.mindfulamazing.com How to Create the Perfect Calm Down Corner
- <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/10/15/923716847/being-a-mom-is-tough-being-a-mom-in-a-pandemic-is-even-tougher>
- <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/helping-children-cope-with-changes-resulting-from-covid-19> (National Association of School Psychologists)
- www.covid19.colorado.gov Colorado Public Health and Environment
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Any Questions?

You can contact me at
jaynek.mft@gmail.com

THANK YOU FOR JOINING & BE SAFE!

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