

for Families

TIPS TO SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY



Taking care of your mental health

- Get information from reliable sources, such as our website or other official sites like www.Canada.ca/coronavirus.
- Stay informed, but follow coverage about COVID-19 in moderation. Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories or social media conversations. It can be upsetting to hear about the crisis and see images repeatedly.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep.
- Make time to step back and consider how to take advantage of unexpected flexibility in your daily routine.
- Stay connected. Talk to friends or family about your feelings and concerns.
- Maintain healthy relationships and respect other people's feelings and decisions.
- Show support and empathy to those dealing with difficult situations.
- Identify what is within your control and try to direct your energy towards what most worries you within your own control.

Supporting children

It's common to wonder what to do or say when trying to comfort a child in a changeable situation where you, yourself, have questions. Most importantly, you can be there for them as they process their feelings, and you can respond truthfully when they ask questions.

How to get the conversation started

- Acknowledge the situation: *"This might feel hard to talk about, but I will try to answer your questions and I'm open to talking about how you're feeling."*
- Express your concern: *"I'm sorry this happened."*
- Be genuine in your communication: *"I'm not sure what to say, but I want you to know that I'm here and I care."*
- Offer your support: *"Is there something I can do to help?"*

Things to keep in mind

- Be there, even if you don't know what to say – just having someone near can be comforting. Tell them that you're there to listen, answer questions and hear their worries.
- Children also need to be reassured that they will be cared for and supported no matter what happens.
- Listen when they want to talk. Accept whatever feelings they express.