

COVID-19 &
MENTAL HEALTH:
**PARALLEL
PANDEMICS**

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WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

A state of wellbeing in which:

- You realize your own potential
 - Cope with the normal stresses of life
 - Work productively
 - Contribute to your community
 - Incorporates our thoughts, feelings, actions
-
- Good mental health protects us from stressors
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- Reduces the risk of developing mental health difficulties

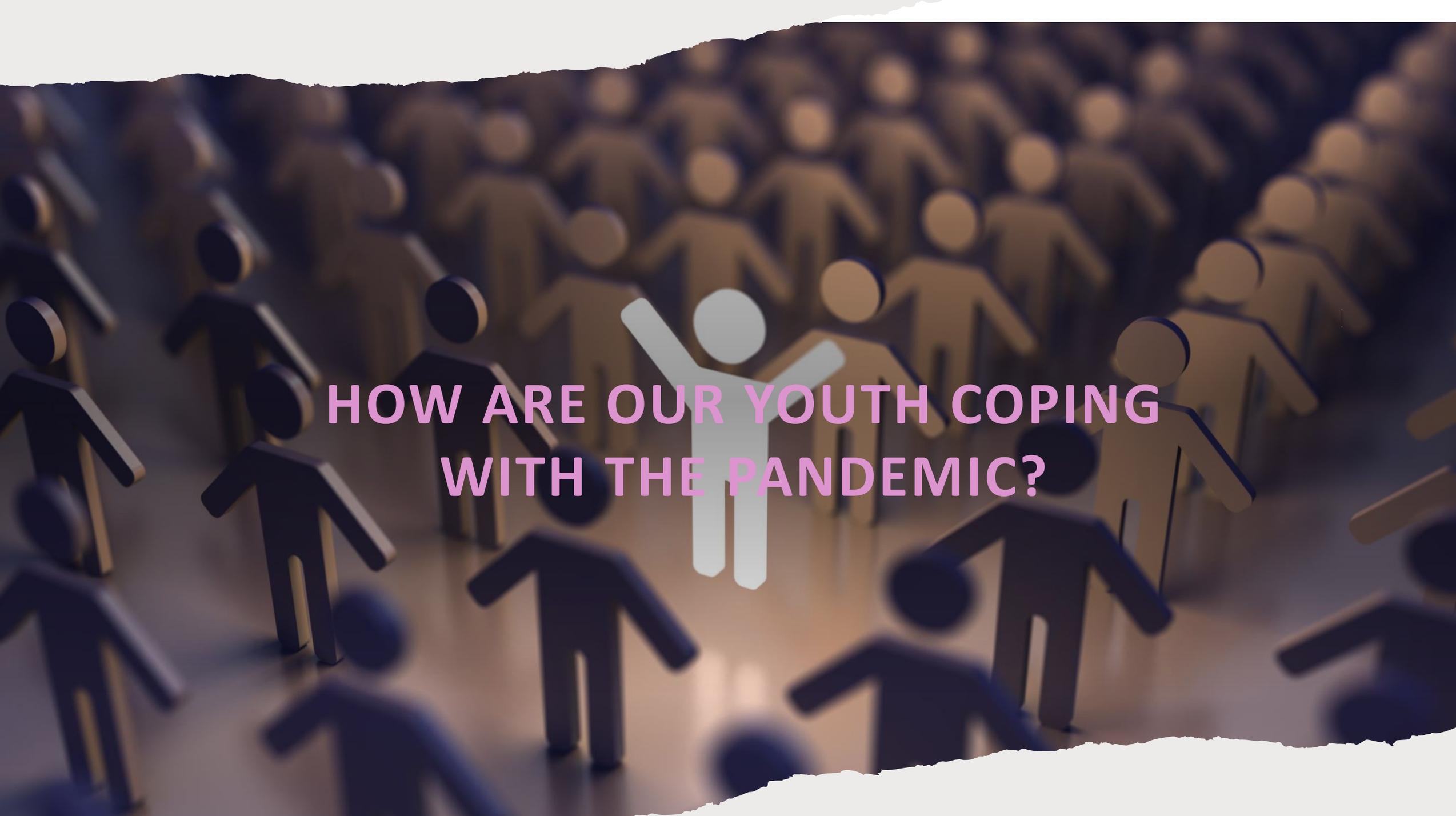
The World Health Organization, 2014





DID YOU KNOW?

- In Ontario, 20% of children <19 years of age have significant mental health problems.
- 40% have more than one disorder.
- Anxiety disorders most common (10%) followed by depression.
- 1 in 5 teenagers will have experienced major depression by the time they leave high school.
- 70% of mental health problems have their onset in childhood and adolescence.



**HOW ARE OUR YOUTH COPING
WITH THE PANDEMIC?**



- Large majority of children and youth experienced harm to their mental health.
- 70.2 % of 6-18 y.o's reported deterioration.
- 66.1% of 2-5 y.o's reported deterioration.
 - 37.6% depression
 - 38.7% anxiety
 - 40.5% irritability
 - 40.8% inattention
- Worse functioning in the first lockdown with school closures then in subsequent lockdowns.



- Suicide attempt admissions **tripled** over a 4-month period.
- Longer hospital stays due to more serious suicide attempts.
- Admissions due to substance abuse **doubled**, deadly opioids increased.
- Admissions due to psychotic symptoms **doubled**, majority due to substances.
- Referrals to eating disorders program **↑ by 90%** in 4-month period.

- 39% from community sample of 600 14-27 y.o.'s reported significant problems with mood and anxiety.
- 68% from sample drawn from those who previously sought mental health support reported significant problems with mood and anxiety.

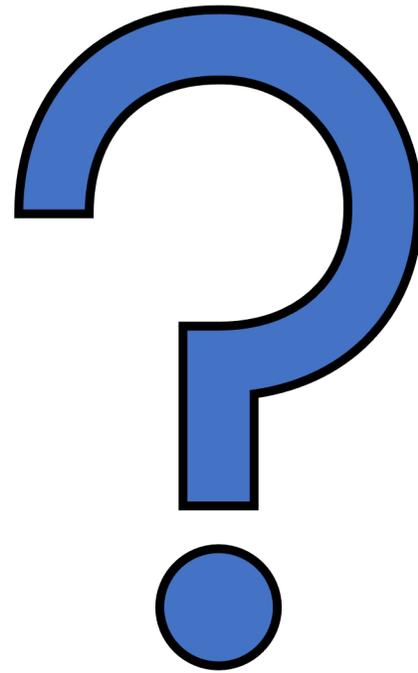
camh
mental health is health

125% INCREASE IN REFERRALS PER MONTH



reframe
PSYCHOLOGY CLINIC

WHY? WHAT IS GOING ON?





A TYPICAL YOUTH

Complex years full of transitions and changes

- Physical
- Physiological
- Cognitive
- Social

Competing demands

- Academics
- Social
- Family
- Defining one's identity

Brain not fully developed till mid-20's

- Judgement and impulse control develop last
- Underdeveloped emotion regulation skills

TYPICAL YOUTH IN A PANDEMIC: CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

↑ social
isolation

Boredom

Lack of day-to-
day structure

↑ exposure to
family conflicts

↑ family stress
= jobs, income

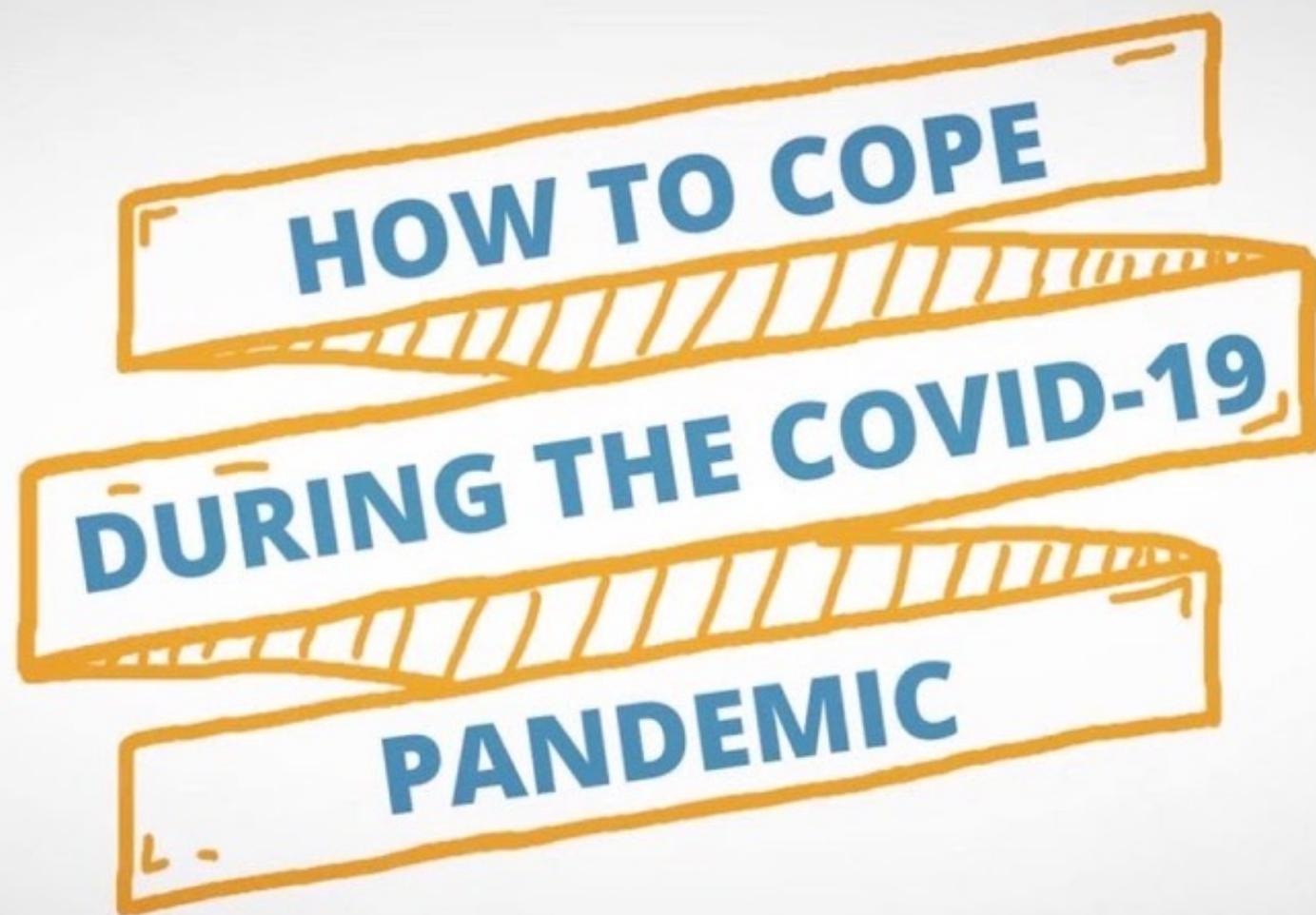
Social
inequality,
security, safety

Uncertainty of
future

Anxiety =
virtual schooling

Anxiety = illness
and death

Ltd access to
doctors,
teachers,
coaches, peers



HOW TO COPE
DURING THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC

LIMIT EXPOSURE TO THE NEWS

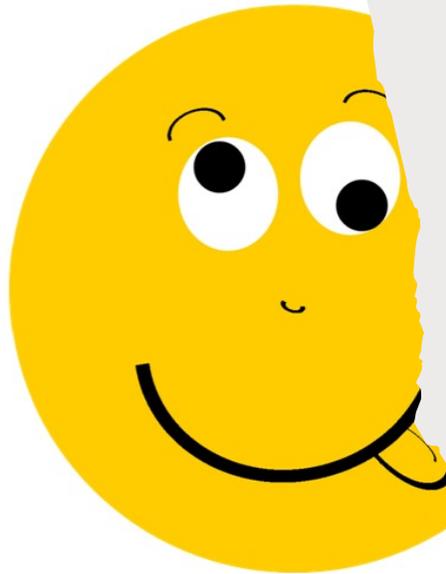
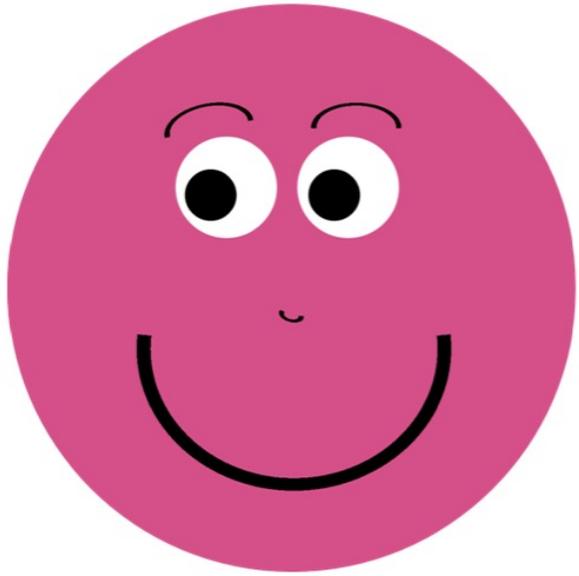
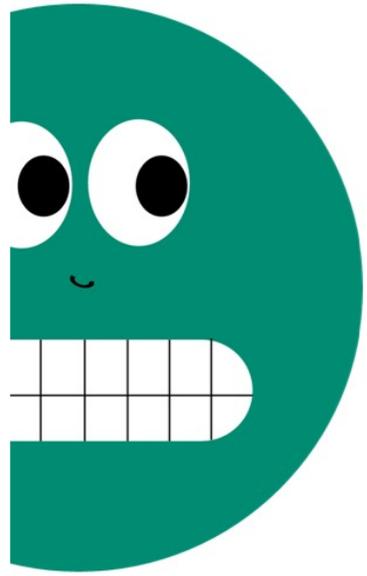
- Set one or two short periods of time for updates on the COVID-19 situation weekly.
- Limit any other discussion or updates outside of these times.
- Shelter young children from this information all together, as it can be very overwhelming.

MAKING
NEWS

TEEN RESISTANCE

- Expect resistance from your teen on the safety rules regarding COVID.
- This is normal teen behavior in context of development (risk taking).
- Reinforce safety rules.
- Discuss what is and is not allowed.
- Focus on positive behavior more than “bad” behavior.





ALLOW FEELINGS

- Ebbs and flows and “mini lifts” once in our days have changed for everyone.
- We may all be less productive, social, or active, which may increase negative emotions.
- Encourage youth to talk about how they feel which promotes mental health.
- Validate their feelings.

FEELINGS ARE LIKE VISITORS:

- Watch them come and go
- They won't hurt you
- They don't need to be avoided



MAINTAIN ROUTINE

- Wake up and go to bed at roughly the same times everyday.
- Make these times similar to wake and sleep times on school and weekend days.
- DO NOT switch sleep schedule to include sleeping and napping during the day.
- DO NOT oversleep – will feel groggy, unmotivated.
- Wake up in enough time to eat all meals and snacks in a normal school day.
- DO NOT stay in PJ's all day – wash and dress.



STRUCTURE

- Have a plan to provide structure and engagement in the day.
- Ensure the following areas are incorporated:
 - Productive, engaging, interesting
 - Social
 - Active
 - Relaxing/soothing

SOCIALIZE

#1 PROTECTIVE FACTOR

- Call
- Text
- Skype
- Facetime
- Snap
- DM
- Messenger
- Physically Distant, Masked, Outdoor Visits



RELEASE EMOTIONS

MOVE YOUR BODY

- Walk
- Jog/Run
- Ride a bike
- Dance
- Yoga
- Lift weights
- Sports

MEDITATE

- CALM,
- Headspace



COPING ROLE MODEL

- Let us practice and model what we teach.
- Take care of your own mental health.
- Try to maintain a hopeful, positive outlook.
- Let go of expectations – these are not usual or normal times (the game has changed).

WHAT IS A ROLE MODEL?

- A role models is a person whose **behavior** , **example** or **success** is or can be emulated by others ,especially by **younger people**.
- A role model is someone who **inspires** others to imitate his or her **good behavior**.



The illustration shows a group of five stylized human figures. One figure in the center is colored pink, while the other four are grey. The pink figure has its arms outstretched towards the grey figures. The entire scene is enclosed in a light blue rounded square border. Below the figures, the text 'Role Model' is written in a light blue font.

GET HELP

- Know when you need help and access it.
- There is no shame in asking or accessing help.
- Talk to your doctor, ask a friend, search online.
- Self-help resources.
 - ADAA
 - Child Mind Institute
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - Center for Health Minds



**Whenever you
need to talk,
we're open.**

 Text 686868

 KidsHelpPhone.ca

 Call 1-800-668-6868

 Message at Facebook.com/
CrisisTextLinepoweredbyKidsHelpPhone



Kids Help Phone 

- How to talk to children about the coronavirus: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/how-to-talk-to-children-about-the-coronavirus-2020030719111>
- 5 ways to watch news coverage for Corona-virus to help manage anxiety: <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/pandemics>
- CAMH – supports and strategies to manage mental health during a pandemic: <https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-health-and-covid-19>
- <https://www.ahaparenting.com/BlogRetrieve.aspx?PostID=641509&A=SearchResult&SearchID=11445523&ObjectID=641509&ObjectType=55>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/19/well/family/coronavirus-covid-teenagers-teens-parents-kids-family-advice.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share>
- https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/greater_good_guide_to_well_being_during_coronavirus
- Bright Lights Psychology (online academic intervention services)



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QUESTIONS?