



September 2020 Newsletter

2020 – The Year of Staying Safe and Healthy

Well, I guess we can all say that 2020 has certainly been a year for the books. We are all tired of listening to the news because all they talk about is Covid-19 and the insanity of people who are violently rioting in protest of police violence.

We shop online with curbside pick-up or delivery in an effort to stay safe and healthy. More of us are cooking at home more often, and when we do decide to let a restaurant cook for us, it is also pick-up or delivery in an effort to stay safe and healthy. Those of us with elderly parents or other loved ones who are in an assisted care setting or nursing home setting can't see them face to face, but we deal with it in an effort to keep them safe and healthy. A very large percentage of our kids are attending school through distance learning in an effort to stay safe and healthy. Many adults are working from home, myself included, in an effort to stay safe and healthy.

Most of us have become very good at communicating through our electronic devices. We call each other using Facetime or similar apps. We attend meetings through platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Google Hang-outs. We go to our medical appointments through the same platforms when it is appropriate.

Now, all that being said, we are making the adjustment to what is currently our "normal" way of living our lives. Many have made these adjustments very easily. Some of us are adjusting in protest, myself included. (I hate wearing a mask and I don't mind telling you that!) Many events have been canceled, with new ones taking their places in a different way.

Here, at the ND Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, we are making those adjustments. We are attending virtual meetings with the families we help. We are trying to make contacts with the families we help to make sure they are adjusting to these changes. We can attend any school meetings this way, and other family service meetings. It is not ideal, but it does work. And, we are planning for our annual conference which will be held virtually on Zoom.

Our conference has been a little harder to plan, but we are doing our best to make it work. We will be spreading out these sessions over time, because it is not fun to sit in these meetings for too many hours in on sitting. Sessions will be held for one to two hours, depending on the content, beginning on September 19th. Josh Calarino from Youth Move National will be our Keynote speaker, addressing our transition aged youth in two different sessions. Some of you may remember Josh, this will be his 4th year with us. We have lots of informational sessions planned for parents, that would also be good for youth. See page 4 for more information.

What this comes down to is that we want you to know that we are still here for you. If you have meetings coming up, please contact us so we can support you. If you just have questions, don't hesitate to call, we are here to help. And we will do our best to keep you safe and healthy.



Things To Do With Your Kids at Home

Young Children: Be available and in close distance as much as possible. Parents should practice their own self-care so they are rested and patient with little ones who need them throughout the day.

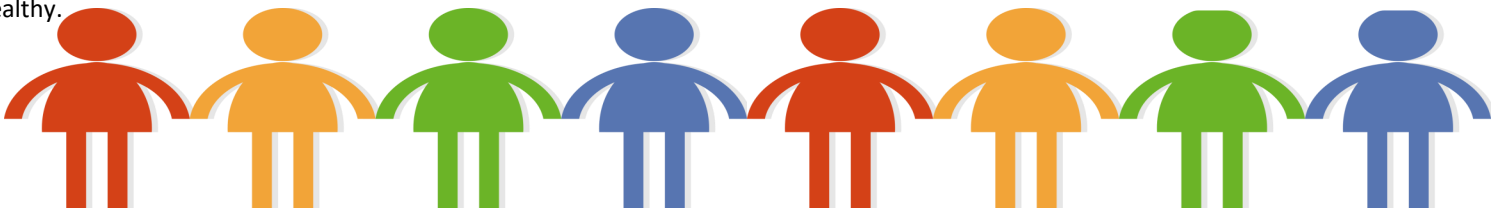
School-age Children: Parents should choose their battles over school-work. Don't pick a fight when it will compromise the quality of the parent-child relationship and try to transition a potential conflict into something more positive. Do not set low expectations or avoid creating needed structure—just remember that consistent criticism can create a bad environment for everyone. Playing games, listening and providing hope are other constructive ways to build a stronger connection.

Teenagers: When possible try to watch movies and listen to music together with your teen. Learn their world, but also respect their need for privacy and time alone as they are used to spending more time with their friends.

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*When you think about
Social Distancing
remember, it's really just
Physical Distancing..
We need to continue our
Social Contacts.*



If you are a parent

In times of stress, it is common for children to seek more of your attention.

What you can do:

- Maintain familiar routines as much as possible, or create new ones, especially if you must stay at home.
- Discuss the new coronavirus with your children in an honest way, using age-appropriate language.
- Support your children with at-home learning and make sure time is set aside for play.
- Help children find positive ways to express feelings such as fear and sadness. Sometimes engaging in a creative activity, such as playing or drawing, can help you with this process.
- Help children stay in contact with friends and family members through telephone and online channels.
- Make sure that your children have time away from screens every day and spend time doing off-line activities together. Do something creative: draw a picture, write a poem, build something. Bake a cake. Sing or dance, or play in your garden, if you have one.
- Try and ensure that your children do not spend significantly more time than usual on video games.

Looking after our mental health

As countries introduce measures to restrict movement as part of efforts to reduce the number of people infected with COVID-19, more and more of us are making huge changes to our daily routines.

The new realities of working from home, temporary unemployment, home-schooling of children, and lack of physical contact with other family members, friends and colleagues take time to get used to. Adapting to lifestyle changes such as these, and managing the fear of contracting the virus and worry about people close to us who are particularly vulnerable, are challenging for all of us. They can be particularly difficult for people with mental health conditions.

Fortunately, there are lots of things that we can do to look after our own mental health and to help others who may need some extra support and care.

Here are tips and advice that we hope you will find useful.

- **Keep informed.** Listen to advice and recommendations from your national and local authorities. Follow trusted news channels, such as local and national TV and radio, and keep up-to-date with the latest news from @WHO on social media.
- **Have a routine.** Keep up with daily routines as far as possible, or make new ones.
 - Get up and go to bed at similar times every day.
 - Keep up with personal hygiene.
 - Eat healthy meals at regular times.
 - Exercise regularly.
 - Allocate time for working and time for resting.
 - Make time for doing things you enjoy.
- **Minimize newsfeeds.** Try to reduce how much you watch, read or listen to news that makes you feel anxious or distressed. Seek the latest information at specific times of the day, once or twice a day if needed.
- **Social contact is important.** If your movements are restricted, keep in regular contact with people close to you by telephone and online channels.
- **Alcohol and drug use.** Limit the amount of alcohol you drink or don't drink alcohol at all. Don't start drinking alcohol if you have not drunk alcohol before. Avoid using alcohol and drugs as a way of dealing with fear, anxiety, boredom and social isolation.
- There is no evidence of any protective effect of drinking alcohol for viral or other infections. In fact, the opposite is true as the harmful use of alcohol is associated with increased risk of infections and worse treatment outcomes.
- And be aware that alcohol and drug use may prevent you from taking



sufficient precautions to protect yourself again infection, such as compliance with hand hygiene.

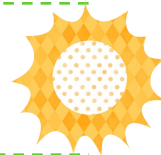
- **Screen time.** Be aware of how much time you spend in front of a screen every day. Make sure that you take regular breaks from on-screen activities.
- **Video games.** While video games can be a way to relax, it can be tempting to spend much more time on them than usual when at home for long periods. Be sure to keep the right balance with off-line activities in your daily routine.
- **Social media.** Use your social media accounts to promote positive and hopeful stories. Correct misinformation wherever you see it.
- **Help others.** If you are able to, offer support to people in your community who may need it, such as helping them with food shopping.
- **Support health workers.** Take opportunities online or through your community to thank your country's health-care workers and all those working to respond to COVID-19.

Don't discriminate

Fear is a normal reaction in situations of uncertainty. But sometimes fear is expressed in ways which are hurtful to other people. Remember:

- Be kind. Don't discriminate against people because of your fears of the spread of COVID-19.
- Don't discriminate against people who you think may have coronavirus.
- Don't discriminate against health workers. Health workers deserve our respect and gratitude.
- COVID-19 has affected people from many countries. Don't attribute it to any specific group.

Taking Care of yourself. It should come Easy. But sometimes it's so easy to forget!



If you have a mental health condition

- If you are being treated for a mental health condition, make sure that you continue to take medication as prescribed, and that you have a way of re-stocking your medication. If you are see a mental health specialist, find out how to continue with that support during the outbreak.
- Keep in touch with people who care for you and know who you can contact for support if your mental health declines.
- If you are being treated for an alcohol or drug use disorder, be aware that the COVID-19 outbreak may lead to increased feelings of fear, anxiety and isolation that can increase the risk of relapse, substance use, disengagement from treatment or non-compliance with treatment regimens. Make sure that you continue to take medication as prescribed, particularly if you receive treatment with opioid medicines such as methadone or buprenorphine, and that you have a way of obtaining a regular supply of your medication. If you are receiving support through a psychologist or support group, find out how to continue that support during the outbreak.
- If you are being treated for gaming or gambling disorder, continue with your treatment if possible. Check with your therapist or health-care provider about the best way of continuing with therapy during confinement at home.

This article was copied from: https://www.who.int/campaigns/connecting-the-world-to-combat-coronavirus/healthyathome/healthyathome---mental-health?gclid=EAlaIqobChMli_vBvt3P6wIvH8DACH3w3QP-EAAYAAEgI_XPD_BwE



Please join us for our

***2020 ND Federation of Families for Children's Mental
Health Virtual Youth Conference***

Nothing About Us Without Us.

Our Keynote Speaker will Be Josh Calarino from Youth Move National.
He will presenting on September 19th and 20th.



We will have several presentations throughout the rest of September.

Here is what is on the schedule now.

September 19—Keynote Josh Calarino

September 20—Keynote Josh Calarino

September 21—Healthy Schools Presentation

September 22—State Agency Panel

September 23—Changes in Mental Health Policies in ND Presentation

September 24—IEP Training

September 25—Vocational Rehabilitation Presentation

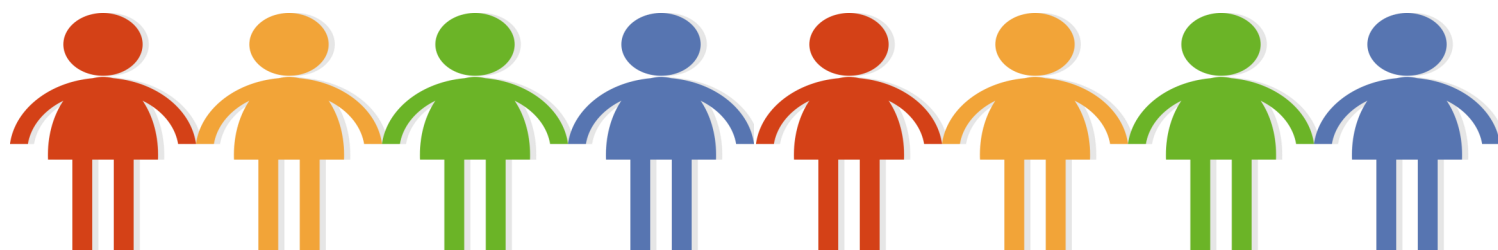
September 26—Youth from YESS Panel

September 27—Transition for Parents

September 28—Children's Mental Health Presentation

September 29—Supported Decision Making

To Register, Contact
Robin Hoyer at
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701-222-3310
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Helpful Resources

The National Federation of Families has a great website at <https://www.ffcmh.org>.

There is a resource page for parents with links to other resources for help with dealing with Corona Virus. The Myth Buster page that is referenced to the right is one of the resources you can find here. Check it out at <https://www.ffcmh.org/covid-19-resources-for-parents>

You can also check out what is going on with national legislation regarding Children's Mental Health.

There is an upcoming Virtual National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health Mini-Conference coming up in November that you can join.

Please take some time to check out the site. <https://www.ffcmh.com>

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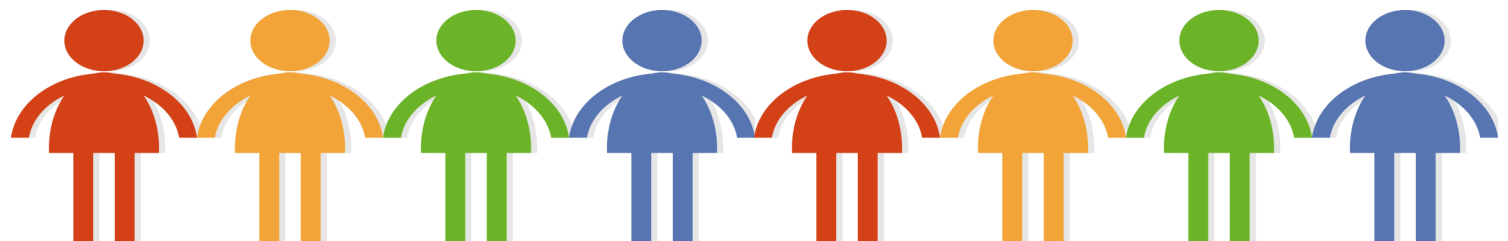
Corona Virus Myth Busters

FACT: People should NOT wear masks while exercising.

People should NOT wear masks when exercising, as masks may reduce the ability to breathe comfortably.

Sweat can make the mask become wet more quickly which makes it difficult to breathe and promotes the growth of microorganisms. The important preventive measure during exercise is to maintain physical distance of at least one meter from others.

For this and other Myth-Busting Facts, check out this WHO link: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>



What's Going On?

Do you have an event that you would like to share? Please let us know and we would be happy to share it on our calendar.

9/8/2020	Fargo Schoolboard Meeting	Virtual
9/8/2020	ND Medicaid Advisory Committee	Virtual
9/10/2020	IDEA Advisory Committee Meeting	Virtual
9/11/2020	Alliance for Children's Justice Task Force Meeting	Virtual
9/11/2020	POWER-UP Conference	Virtual
9/16/2020	Secondary Transition community of Practice	Virtual
9/19-28/20	2020 NDFFCMH Youth Transition Conference	Virtual
2/22/2020	Fargo School Board Meeting	Virtual
9/29/2020	Self Directed IEP Training	Virtual
9/30/2020	Medicaid EPSDT Program Overview	Virtual
10/13/2020	Fargo School Board Meeting	Virtual
10/15/2020	State Rehab Council Advisory Committee	Virtual
10/27/2020	Fargo School Board Meeting	Virtual
10/28/2020	Recovery Reinvented	Virtual
11/10-11/20	National Federation of Families Mini-Conference	Virtual

If you would like more information on these events you can call us at 701-222-3310.

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PLACE
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