

## Caring for Caregivers:

### Supporting Children's Social Emotional Health During Covid19

- Providing Consistency and Safety
  - Keeping a Consistent Schedule: Structure and consistent routines help children feel safe and confident about what will happen next.
    - Whenever possible, keep children on the **same consistent routine**.
    - Refer to your visual schedule to remind children of what they have done and what is happening next.
    - When changes occur, discuss these with children and provide a **visual and verbal cue** if possible.
  - Maintaining Consistent Expectations -
    - State directions **positively** and remind children that they exist to keep children **safe**.
    - Refer to **visual classroom rules** or expectations when setting limits and providing directions.
    - Ask floats and substitute teachers to familiarize themselves with classroom expectations when they enter a classroom.
    - Provide **positive attention and praise** for children when they are behaving appropriately, **describing** what they did well.
  - Preparing Children for Staffing Changes:
    - Whenever possible, the classroom's primary teachers should **prepare** children for their transition, tell them **who** will be covering in the classroom and **when** they will return. For example, "In 2 minutes I'm going to go eat my lunch. Ms. Elena will be coming in to help the class. I'll be back when you are eating lunch."
    - New teachers in the room can **greet** the children warmly upon entering the classroom.

Contact your consultant or behavior coach for visuals and resources to support with transitions, visual schedules and classroom routines, providing directions, setting limits or preparing children for staffing changes!

- Prioritizing Self Care:
  - Take care of your own mental and emotional health during this time. This means prioritizing sleep and rest, making time for connection with loved ones, getting outside and taking breaks from news coverage.
  - Resources:
    - Relaxation Techniques:  
<https://socialwork.buffalo.edu/content/dam/socialwork/home/self-care-kit/exercises/effective-methods-for-relaxation.pdf>

- Self-Care Tips:  
<https://tinybuddha.com/blog/45-simple-self-care-practices-for-a-healthy-mind-body-and-soul/>
  - Self-Care Questions to Ask Yourself:  
<https://foreverconscious.com/15-self-care-questions-ask-feeling-lo>  
[w](#)
- Explaining Covid19 and Social Distancing to Young Children
  - Covid19 Social Story: Our consultants created a social story discussing Covid19 in a developmentally appropriate manner. This social story concentrates on simple, concrete information about Covid19 and what children can do to stay healthy.  
[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1j99hotPMnpEnyl-rQ4NgenIHQJZzJJR96axox2\\_BzxA/edit?ts=5e70dd7d#slide=id.p](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1j99hotPMnpEnyl-rQ4NgenIHQJZzJJR96axox2_BzxA/edit?ts=5e70dd7d#slide=id.p)
  - “Covibook”: This social story from MindHeart is available in 15 languages!
  - Talking with children about coronavirus:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>
  - Explaining Social Distancing: Our consultants created a social story discussing social distancing:  
<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1DWkArR133qdeH7lyAKzKmnzLIgwVWWAGtkbOY5Up1-I/edit?usp=sharing>
- A Guide to Helping Families Cope with Covid19
  - <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/parent-caregiver-guide-to-helping-families-cope-with-the-coronavirus-disease-2019>
  - <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/creating-effective-child-and-family-focused-disaster-behavioral-health-messages-on-social-media>
- Age-Appropriate Activities To Do at Home: (for example: art projects that don’t require many materials, science “experiments”, as well as activities such as drawing and reading a book). Lots of sensory activities
  - See handouts provided by Malden EI OT
  - [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kbzrvK\\_hdFoyrKzdpqeuJJ-8aK1sRFQ0omtGdVxXDP8/edit?ts=5e6fc6ea](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kbzrvK_hdFoyrKzdpqeuJJ-8aK1sRFQ0omtGdVxXDP8/edit?ts=5e6fc6ea)
- Stay Connected, Safely:
  - 14 Ways to Help During Covid19:  
<https://giveandtakeinc.com/blog/culture/waysto-help-others-during-covid-19/>

## Community Specific Resources

- Lowell Education Justice Alliance
  - “Lowell Education Justice Alliance (LEJA)” on Facebook; emergency services, mental health providers, and nonprofit organizers are organizing to create a larger resource hub for families to utilize during this time. All of their resources and partner organizations can be accessed through this Facebook group.
  - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/611347229076243/>
- Lynn MA Mutual Aid Disaster Relief
  - Facebook group similar to LEJA that is compiling resources, providers, neighbors helping neighbors etc.
  - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/242220393479479/>
- Mutual Aid Medford and Somerville
  - Facebook group creating resource network similar to above
  - <https://www.facebook.com/MutualAidMAMAS/>
- Mutual Aid Massachusetts
  - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2469822833253818/>
- Here’s a website where you can put in an address and find the closest food pantries [https://www.foodpantries.org/address\\_geo.php](https://www.foodpantries.org/address_geo.php).
- Mass 211; Information about critical health and human services available in the community
  - <https://mass211.org/>
- Comcast; 60 days free WiFi access to keep families connected
  - <https://corporate.comcast.com/covid-19>
- Salem
  - All Salem children ages 0-18 can get free breakfast and lunch to pick up M-F 9:00-11:00am at Bates, Bentley, Carlton, Collins, Horace Mann, Saltonstall, and Witchcraft Heights schools.
- Beverly
  - All Beverly children 18 and under can get free breakfast and lunch to pick up at Beverly High School 10:30 AM to 12PM
- Danvers
  - Prepared lunches delivery to all Danvers residents
  - Email [lunch@danvers.org](mailto:lunch@danvers.org) by 9AM daily with name, address, number of family members, and lunch choice
  - Grab and go lunches to pick up M-F 11AM to 1PM at Danvers High school