



Providing Emotional Support While Social Distancing.

“Friends are a significant source of support at any age, and children, like many adults, feel pretty frustrated by the circumstances now,” It’s great that there are a number of ways we can still stay connected today, but it’s still not the same as seeing someone in person. And many of us are feeling a sense of sadness and loss for what we had before.

The nature of learning is so social and interactive in young ones, children learn by directly touching and exploring their world and it’s really hard to do that on a screen.

Children are missing a lot of things like play, friends, school and most importantly interaction with their own peer group, this can be emotionally difficult for children to manage during such times like Pandemic.

It is important that parents recognise this and handle the situation effectively, here are few strategies to help parents be more responsive to child’s emotions.

Listen to your children:



If they are worried about something in the news or miss their friends, it’s probably more important to pause, listen, and talk with them because they look to you for that. And if you can support them, it goes a long way,”

“*The foundation of learning is social emotional health,*” Children cannot learn if they are feeling worried or sad, be prepared to listen and to give them the time.

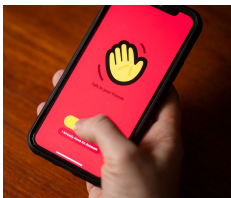
Keep an established routine:

Routines and schedules can be an important part of self-care for children. While school and regular activities may be affected temporarily, you can establish a *new schedule for your child to create a sense of normalcy.*



Make time for your kids to socialize through phone calls or

video conferencing: Find ways to fit your child’s friends into their days, because peer relationships are a critical support system for children and they play an important role emotionally.



“If your child normally sees their friends at a sports activity after school twice a week, maybe they could do a shared Zoom activity with a friend,” kids can create a drawing where they show each other the results, discuss a book they both read, or even simply share jokes (or memes).

A sense of staying connected while social distancing in possible ways can help children stay emotionally balanced.

When you can, let kids choose what to do for fun:

Give them a sense of that freedom and play that they may usually get with their friends. You may not completely fill that space of friends but offer to make a silly video with them, or if they want to paint your hand, let them.





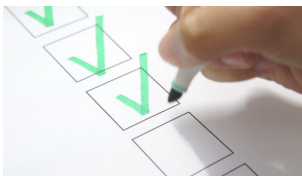
This is an opportunity to connect with your kids, even teens. Adolescence is a time when kids are purposely pulling away from their parents, so the normal autonomy they are seeking has been impacted very directly by this quarantine. So, we have to understand that as parents and recognize that this may be very frustrating for them. Exercise is an important part of staying healthy, both physically and mentally. It's recommended that children and teens get at least one hour of physical activity each day. Even when you are spending time around the house, set aside time to get active. Whether that's playing in the terrace, taking a daily walk together or even a family yoga session.

For teens, try to foster their independence in positive ways:

Older children and teens may require a different approach, especially if they experience significant boredom or want to disregard social distancing recommendations because they cannot tolerate perceived restrictions on their freedom or a loss of autonomy. The best approach may be one that appeals to the natural empathy and altruism of your child. *"Appeal to how your child can help contribute to society's attempt to overcome this pandemic rather than what they are losing,"*. Messages of altruism are often more effective than those of coercion.



Make a list of projects or goals:



Whether fun or necessary, and see what you have time to tackle. Maybe it's a list of books your child wants to read, or a project to reorganize your child's bedroom. For older children and teens, consider taking this time to teach them valuable life skills around the house, such as learning to change the oil in the car, fix the sink or manage a budget. If you are recommending that your teen read a book, start a family book club and read it along with them.

Have patience with yourself and each other:

Parents should know that as you seek to develop a "new normal," it's okay to acknowledge that the situation is not normal. During a time of many unknowns, it's understandable to feel some stress or anxiety, and this is okay.

"Positive thinking is important during this time, and positive thinking stems from positive conversations," appreciate your family members, even if it is bringing a small change.



Know that your child's schedule does not have to be perfect nor should you feel pressured to be 100% productive every day. The most important thing is that you are there for your child and encourage open communication as you adjust to this change together.

