

# PARENTING & MENTAL HEALTH

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FINDING CLARITY IN A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY

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Pennsylvania





## SOME RECENT THOUGHTS...



What if we get sick?

I need toilet paper.

We need more Lysol.

It will go away in two weeks.

I need chicken nuggets!

Can I pay the bills?

I think I bought too many masks.

I can make wipes!

Red.

It's just a cold.

We need routine.

I can't work from home!

Can we play in the yard?

I don't have sanitizer!

Can I visit family?

I miss my friends.

Oh no, it's here.

Yellow.

People are dying! What if...

Can I make my own mask?

My kids will fall behind.

Do I need to wash my groceries?

Did you just cough?

Allergies? COVID 19? My mind?

Look! More masks!

How will I home school three kids?

Green.....What does this mean?!?!?!?



# FEELINGS

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## PARENTS

- Anxious
- Fearful
- Irritability
- Frustration
- Anger
- Grief
- Shame

## CHILDREN

- Anxious
- Fearful
- Uncertain
- Confused
- Grief



# BEHAVIORS

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## PARENTS

- Isolating
- Lack of self care
- Shutting down
- Yelling
- Substance Use

## CHILDREN

- Acting Out
- Not sleeping
- Eating pattern changes
- Neediness / Clingy
- Crying



# CONSEQUENCES ON THE FAMILY / PARENTING

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- Conflict / Arguments
- Lack of follow through on discipline
- No structure
- Resentment
- Isolation
- Emotional Shutdown



# SELF CARE

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- Your go to “toolkit” may not be any good right now.
- Recognize your symptoms / triggers
- Find your “person.”
- Know who to avoid right now.
- Journal/Record
- Go outside
- Music
- Breathing



# CHILD CARE

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- Routine
- Allow them to express themselves in whatever way they can (i.e. talking, art, dancing)
- Video chat / phone calls to loved ones
- Sunshine and exercise
- Less social media / television
- Opportunities to be “kids again.”





# FAMILY CARE

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- Go for a drive / walk
- Arts & crafts
- Game night / movie night
- Scrapbook
- Write together
- Take breaks
- Cook together
- Learn a new skill
- Less screen time – more quality time



# COMMUNITY CARE

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A sense of community and altruism nourishes the community garden as well as your own roots.

- Check on your neighbors
- Volunteer if able.
- Donate time / money / items.
- Community / socially distant activities.
- Involve the entire family.



# FROM OTHER PARENTS TO YOU...

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- There is no new normal. Stop using that term.
  - We have to define what normal is now for our own family.
- Follow your own instincts.
- Let go of schedules/expectations. Don't get hung up on the details.
- Ask for help. There is no shame in it.
- You cannot wear all the hats. Give yourself a break.
- Turn off media (including social media!)
- **Your feelings are valid.**

# THERE IS HELP....



**2.1.1**  
Pennsylvania

WE ARE ALWAYS JUST A CALL, TEXT OR CLICK AWAY!  
24/7/365

**DIAL 211  
GET CONNECTED. GET HELP.**



**DIAL 211  
TEXT YOUR ZIP CODE TO 898211  
VISIT NEPA211.ORG**

**FREE & CONFIDENTIAL**

## Star Breathing

Start at any "Breathe in" side, hold your breath at the point, then breathe out.  
Keep going until you've gone around the whole star.



# THANK YOU

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