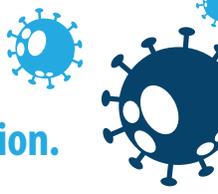


Mental Health during COVID-19



It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry during and after a stressful situation.

Everyone reacts differently, and your own feelings will change over time. Notice and accept how you feel. Self-care during a stressful situation will help your long-term healing. Taking care of your emotional health will help you think clearly and protect yourself and your loved ones.

For Parents and Guardians

Children react, in part, to what they see from the adults around them. When parents and caregivers deal with the COVID-19 calmly and confidently, they provide the best support for their children.

Not all children respond to stress in the same way. Some common changes to watch for in children:

- Excessive crying and irritation
- Returning to behaviors they have outgrown (e.g., toileting accidents or bedwetting)
- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and “acting out” behaviors
- Difficulty with attention and concentration
- Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained headaches or body pain
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

There are many things you can do to support your child:

- Take time to talk with your child about the COVID-19 outbreak. Answer questions and share facts about COVID-19 in a way that your child can understand.
- Reassure your child that they are safe. Let them know it is ok if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.
- Limit your child’s exposure to media coverage of the event. Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand.
- Help your child to have a sense of structure. Once it is safe to return to school or child care, help them return to their regular activity.
- Be a role model; take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well. Connect with your friends and family members and rely on your social support system.

Reaching out for help is not a sign of weakness; it is a sign of strength.

CHIMO Helpline - Help is just a phone call away: 1-800-667-5005

Hope for Wellness Helpline – The Hope for Wellness Helpline offers immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous people across Canada: 1-855-242-3310

Kids Help Phone - Text TALK to 686868 or call 1-800-668-6868 to chat with a volunteer Crisis Responder 24/7.