

APRIL 2020

FOSTER PARENTS

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS INVOLVED WITH
CASA - VOICES FOR CHILDREN



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HAPPY SPRING!

This month's newsletter is full of fun activities and helpful resources that will come in handy as we all adjust to our new routines! We recognize that coping with the impact of COVID-19 has been difficult for everyone, and we thank you for your patience and dedication as we navigate these challenges together.

**It's also CHILD ABUSE
AWARENESS MONTH**



CASA AND COVID-19: A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Advocates and Foster Families,

After much discussion, the staff at CASA-Voices for Children has decided to implement certain precautions regarding the Coronavirus/COVID-19 outbreak and concerns regarding this virus. We wanted to be overly cautious as we work with and serve a specific demographic and do not want to put anyone at an unnecessary risk. Above all, we are committed to the health and wellness of our children, foster/bio families, advocates, volunteers, staff and community.

Please see below for the temporary policies we will be putting into place as of Monday, March 16, 2020 until at least Tuesday, April 28, 2020. We will be constantly assessing the situation as we receive more information and recommendations.

- CASA-VFC office will be officially closed during this period; staff will have the option to work either in the office or remotely. We will be available during our normal office hours (8:30 AM to 5:00 PM) by phone and email. Phones will be automatically forwarded to a staff member or you may contact staff directly through their cell phones. Please contact us if you need their number.
- We will be suspending all home visits during this time. We are required to have appropriate documentation for home visit exceptions. We strongly encourage you to still reach out to your CASA family by phone, Skype/FaceTime or however you feel most comfortable.
- CASA-VFC staff will cover all hearings for advocates. If you would like to attend, we can arrange via conference line with the court with advance notice. If you feel it is critical that you appear in person, please contact staff.
- The Courts have canceled all jury trials and will be constantly assessing the situation to determine if there is a need to reschedule dependency hearings.
- DHS will conduct all meetings via phone. If you have an upcoming meeting and have not been provided with the contact number, please contact the caseworker and/or CASA staff.
- CRB will have both options (in person and phone) available. We ask that you attend via phone.
- Our events for April have been postponed - more information to follow.

Your health and the health of the families we work with, as well as our staff and our community are the of the utmost importance.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your cooperation.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Kari Pinard

Executive Director, CASA - Voices for Children

REMINDERS

Bill of Rights: Please make sure that your kiddo(s), along with their siblings, are not only aware of their rights, but that they also understand them. If you would like a copy of the State of Oregon's Bill of Rights, let us know!



Donations to CASA: Have extra clothing or shoes lying around the house? Please call or email CASA to arrange for your donation! We are currently in need of boys and girls shoes, all kinds and sizes.



Car Seat Clinic: There is a monthly Car Seat Clinic that takes place at the Corvallis Fire Station where you can have your car seats installed or checked for safety by a certified child passenger safety technician for Free. A certified tech from CASA will be at this event.

Next check is **TENTATIVELY** scheduled for April 14, 2020 from 9-11am. Please check our website for continued updates!



Website Update: CASA has been working diligently to bring you a newly updated website! We have added new sections for community and educational resources to help our families cope with the challenges of COVID-19. Please read on for additional details, and visit us at

www.casa-vfc.org!



Child Abuse Awareness Month: CASA will be postponing all child abuse awareness activities and fundraisers to ensure we can keep our communities as healthy and safe as possible. Thank you for understanding, and wash your hands after reading this on your device!



April is CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH

As school closures and movement restrictions are disrupting children's routines and support systems, it is now more important than ever to be aware of the signs and risk factors for child abuse. "In many ways, [coronavirus] is now reaching children and families far beyond those it directly infects," said Cornelius Williams, UNICEF Chief of Child Protection. "Schools are closing. Parents are struggling to care for their children and make ends meet. The protection risks for children are mounting."

We can help protect children from abuse and neglect by doing the following:

- Support struggling families and connect them with helpful resources to reduce stress and decrease the likelihood of abuse. Prevent Child Abuse America offers some great strategies [HERE](#).
- If you suspect abuse, please make a report. Information on how to report abuse in Oregon can be found [HERE](#). In addition, you can always call or email CASA-VFC and we will help guide you through the process.
- Share your knowledge about child abuse prevention with your friends and family! If we educate others about what to look for and how to help, we create a larger community "safety net" for our children.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR MORE CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES THROUGHOUT THE MONTH



OREGON WEARS BLUE ON APRIL 8TH!

Please join us in wearing blue and posting a photo with child abuse awareness hashtags (see below for details) to social media on Wednesday, April 8th!



OREGON WEARS BLUE

WEDNESDAY,
APRIL 8TH, 2020

#OregonWearsBlue

Dress yourself for the success of our children in care by wearing the color blue on April 8th to help bring awareness to Child Abuse and Neglect.

Post your photos with these hashtags to see who else is joining in on the fun!

#OregonWearsBlue
#ChildAbusePrevention
#CASA-VFCBlueDay

**JOIN US IN SUPPORTING
CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS
MONTH BY WEARING BLUE**

CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH

Fundraisers!

CASA - VFC had planned an array of exciting fundraisers this April, but unfortunately, our in-person events have had to be postponed due to COVID-19. Look for these fun events to happen at a future date, and please stay tuned as we take Child Abuse Awareness Month online!

We will be featuring online fundraising opportunities, and also sharing ways to increase awareness of child abuse.

**THESE IN-PERSON EVENTS ARE POSTPONED,
BUT PLEASE STAY TUNED FOR MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE
IN CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH!**



*Paint the Town
Blue*



The Super Ball



*Many Hands
Day of Sharing*



On Tap for CASA

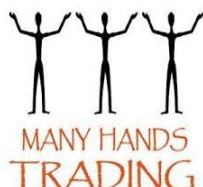


SHARE THE LOVE WITH OUR SUPPORTERS!

These generous businesses had all offered to support CASA's Child Abuse Awareness Month fundraisers. Many of them are currently suffering due to COVID-19 closures. If you are able to, please consider placing delivery or takeout orders, or purchasing a gift card from them!

Click on the logos below for updates on hours and order fulfillment options.

Help us support the businesses who support CASA!



CASA - VOICES FOR CHILDREN PRESENTS

A YARD ART COMPETITION

WHAT TO DO:

1. Take a "before" photo of the area of the yard you will be creating your art in. Do your art and incorporate **KINDNESS** into your project.

2. Take a photo of the completed "after" photo of the yard art.

3. Submit both the before and after picture, and include your name, age, telephone number, and a quick description of how your art reflects or invites kindness by email. Email submissions to service.coordinator@casa-vfc.org

2 Winners will receive a \$20 gift certificate to The Toy Factory in Corvallis!

RULES & REGISTRATION

- No entry fee! A registration form and your photos are all that is required to be entered into the contest.
- Maximum one entry per person.
- Must have parental permission before starting and in order to compete.
- Must submit your own original yard art Your art can be in any visual format (paint, sculpture, recycled items, stacked rocks) the theme is kindness, it can be about kindness to others, kindness to animals, kindness to the world, kindness... what does that mean to you?
- Remember the art must be rated G and the viewing of this art is "for kids, by kids and with kids in mind."
- **2 Winners will be announced on Friday, April 10th.**
- If you have any questions please call 541-753-5838 or email questions to the email address above.





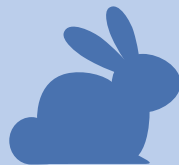
SPRING FUN FOR YOU AND YOUR KIDDO(S)

Fun activities are a great way to engage with your kiddo(s) during your visits. Having a planned activity can make a child feel more comfortable, which helps promote conversation and enables you to learn more about one another. Below are some of our favorite ideas for fun inexpensive ways to engage with your kiddo(s).

TAKE A
STROLL THROUGH
NATURE



DECORATE
EASTER
COOKIES



CRANK UP THE
TUNES AND HAVE A
DANCE PARTY!



PUT ON YOUR
RAIN BOOTS AND
PUDDLE JUMP



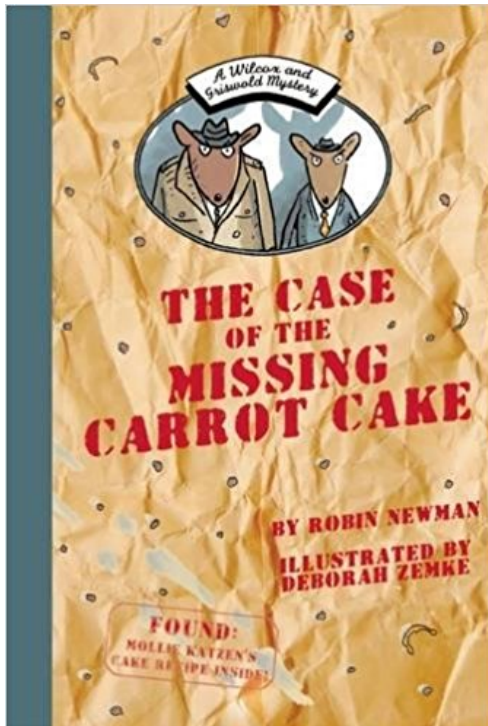
PICK UP A
BOARD GAME AND
PLAY, PLAY, PLAY!



LOOK FOR
CREATURES
COMING OUT
FOR SPRING



BOOK OF THE MONTH



The Case of the Missing Carrot Cake

By: Robin Newman

When crime happens, especially when food goes missing on Ed's farm, mouse crime fighters and food detectives Wilcox and Griswold are the animals to call. When Miss Rabbit's carrot cake goes missing, they do what it takes to track down the thieves.

Watch Wanda Sykes read this classic tale with your kiddo(s) online!

STORIES WITH THE STARS!

Want to hear more stories? This is a perfect time to explore the award-winning children's literacy website, [Storyline Online](https://www.storylineonline.net). This site streams FREE videos featuring celebrated actors reading children's books alongside creatively produced illustrations. Readers include Viola Davis, Chris Pine, Lily Tomlin, Kevin Costner, Annette Bening, James Earl Jones, Betty White and dozens more!



SNACK OF THE MONTH

Chocolate Egg Nests

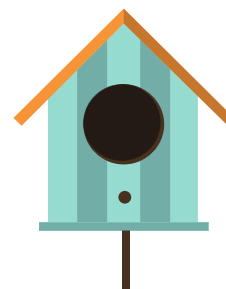
Ingredients Needed:

- 2 cups chow mein noodles
- 1 cup milk chocolate chips
- 1 cup butterscotch chips
- 12-ounce bag mini candy eggs
- Yellow frosting



Directions:

- Put chow mein noodles in large bowl.
- Melt chocolate and butterscotch chips for 1 minute, or until melted. Stir until smooth.
- Save one tablespoon of melted mixture and pour remaining onto noodles. Stir until coated.
- Spray muffin pan with non-stick cooking spray, add large spoonful of mixture to muffin cup. Press lightly in the center to form the nest.
- With remaining chocolate, dip backs of candy eggs and stick them to nests' center.
- Dip toothpick in remaining chocolate for eyes, and yellow frosting for beak.



ACTIVITY OF THE MONTH #1

Superhero Cuffs

Supplies Needed:

- Toilet or paper towel rolls
- Paint – (acrylic or other kid-safe paint)
- Paintbrush
- Glitter (optional)
- Glue
- Sparkly card, foam or felt
- Scissors

Directions:



Step 1: Paint your toilet roll cuffs

Paint your rolls until they are completely covered. Let them dry.

Step 2: Add some super sparkle

If you want to add a bit of extra sparkle, paint the toilet roll with school glue and then sprinkle glitter all over it. Once again, put them aside to dry.



Step 3: Cut out your superhero cuffs

First make one long cut up the center of your toilet roll. (If using paper towel roll, cut into fourths) Next cut the tube in half lengthways. Then use your scissors to round off the corners.

Step 4: Cut out some superpower shapes

From a piece of sparkly or brightly coloured card, foam or felt, cut some superpower shapes, such as stars or lightning bolts.



Step 5: Glue on your shapes

Now glue the shapes onto your sparkly superhero cuffs with school glue.

BAM! They are all ready for your little superhero to wear!

ACTIVITY OF THE MONTH #2

PAPER-BAG CROWNS



Supplies Needed:

- Paper bag
- Watercolors
- Brushes
- School Glue
- Pom-poms
- Glitter
- Sequins
- Tape



Directions:

Step 1: Cut out your crown

First, cut your paper bag down the side and cut off the bottom. Lay it flat and zig-zag cut all across the top to create the points of the crown.

Step 2: A perfect fit

Place the paper strip around the child's head to size the crown, then add an extra inch of length. Trim to size.

Step 3: Princesses and Princes paint!

Next, lay out your watercolors. Paint the crown and let it dry before moving on to the gluing step. If desired, you can use a hairdryer to dry them quickly.

Step 4: Sparkles, sequins and poms!

When they are dry, put out the glue and the rest of the supplies and let your kiddo(s) add decorations to their heart's content!

Step 5: Wait overnight, then it's time for the coronation ceremony!

These crowns should dry overnight, flat. You can place them around their heads with a piece of masking tape the next day when they are dry. Now it's time to crown your princess or prince!

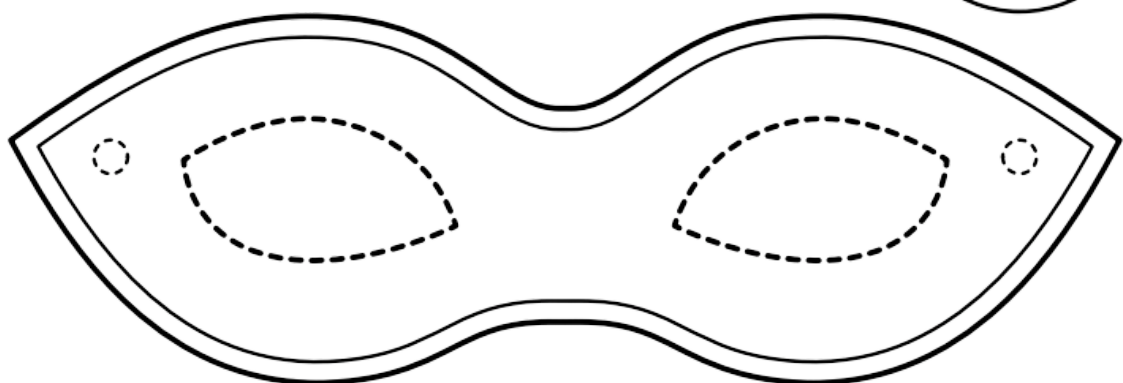
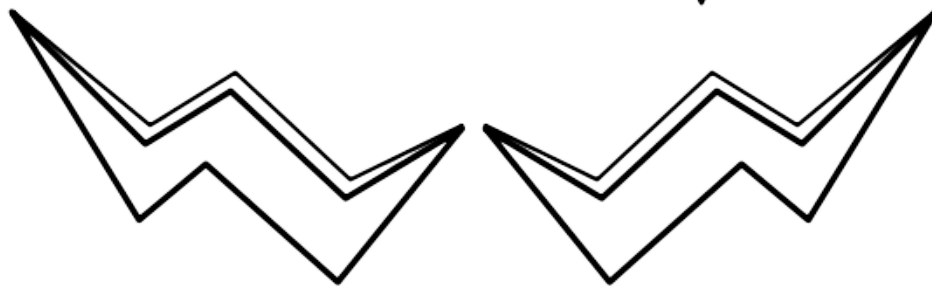
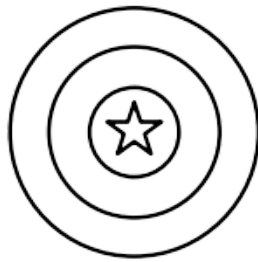
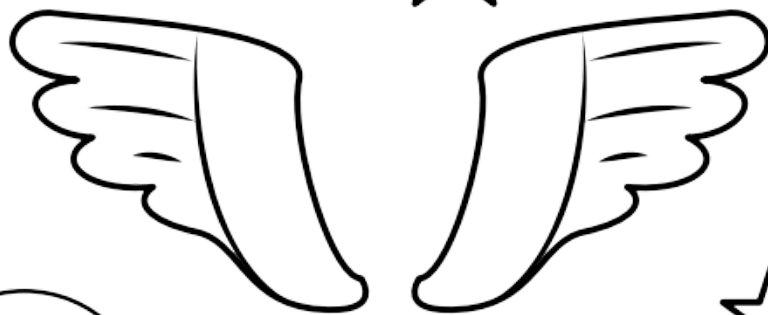
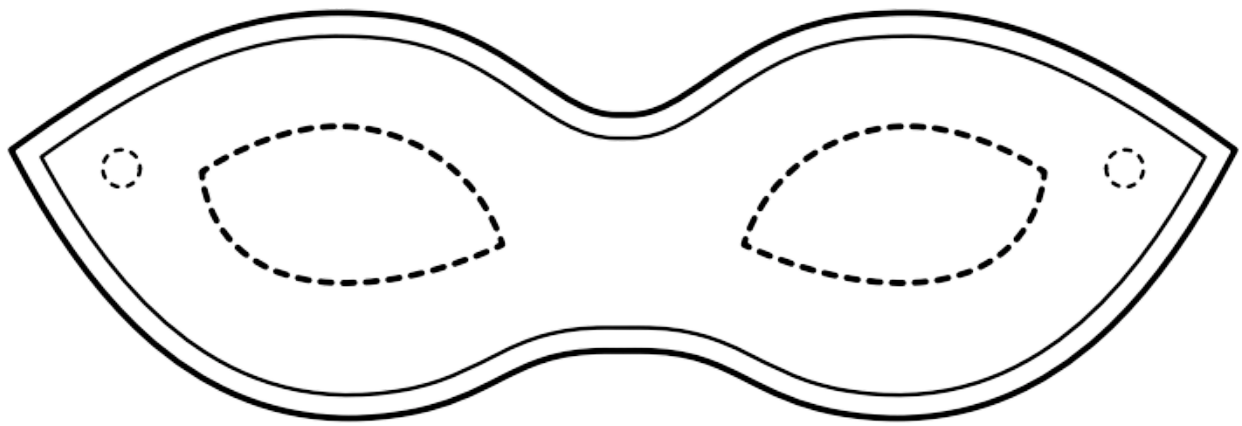


COLORING CORNER



Print it out for an afternoon of coloring fun!

COLORING CORNER



Print it out for an afternoon of coloring fun!

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOSTER PARENTS

In-person workshops may be postponed at the moment, but there are still lots of informative training opportunities available online! Check out the following resources for helpful insights into children's mental health, coping strategies, foster care information, and more:

National Child Traumatic Stress Network



The National Child Traumatic Stress Network offers a wide array of webinars and e-learning courses on best practices for helping children who have experienced trauma. Register [HERE](#) to create an account for free access to training materials.

Below are links to some trainings that may be especially helpful right now. You can also explore NCTSN's full educational library [HERE](#).

TRAUMATIC SEPARATION IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS



School closures and cancelled playdates are hard for all children, but they present additional challenges for those who have already endured separation trauma. Learn healthy coping mechanisms for the far-reaching impacts of traumatic separation in this webinar.

PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR EMERGENCIES



In this webinar, NCTSN presenters describe how best to prepare our children for emergencies from the standpoint of community preparedness and resilience. Provides individual, family, and community strategies for withstanding the stressors of emergency situations.

More training opportunities on next page!

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOSTER PARENTS

Texas CASA

(ONLINE TRAININGS HOSTED BY TEXAS CASA AND AVAILABLE TO ALL FAMILIES)



Texas CASA has an excellent library of trainings and webinars. While some of the content is geared towards advocates, the information offered is very useful for foster families as well!

Registration for their "CASA College" learning portal is required, but free and open to families in all states.

Below are links to some trainings that may be especially helpful right now.
You can also explore their full educational library [HERE](#).

TBRI 101: A SELF-GUIDED COURSE IN TRUST-BASED RELATIONSHIPS



TBRI® 101: A Self-Guided Course in Trust-Based Relationships is a series of self-paced, whiteboard-style video lessons. This course offers an informal, yet thorough approach to Trust-Based Relational Intervention, or TBRI®, an evidence-based intervention for children who have experienced abuse, neglect, and/or trauma.

ADDRESSING ISSUES OF GRIEF & LOSS FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE



"Addressing Issues of Grief & Loss for Children in Foster Care" is presented by Adam Robe, CEO of Foster Care Alumni of America. How can you help a foster child cope with the inevitable grief and loss they experience just by coming into care? This presentation offers specific and practical strategies to help your child navigate grief and loss.

LINKS FOR LEARNING AND PLAY!

Help your kiddo(s) adjust to their new routine with our collection of resources for online learning and play activities that can be done remotely or at home!

Please visit

casa-vfc.org/learning-and-fun

to check out all the possibilities - page will be updated regularly with more fun finds!



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The following websites provide links for help with meals, physical and mental healthcare needs, utility help, and more!

Please visit

casa-vfc.org/community-resources

to explore the different programs and services available during this time.

This page will be updated regularly as we continue to find new links and services.



FOSTER CARE RESOURCES

Focus on Foster Families App - This App is designed to support foster children, youth, and their caregivers. Through video interviews and online tools, FOCUS on Foster Families helps users improve their skills related to communication, emotional regulation, problem solving and goal setting.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

Oregon Family Support Network - OFSN is a statewide non-profit organization that supports families who are raising a child with significant mental health challenges. They provide education, support and advocacy for individual families and support systems.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

Foster Parent Lending Library - Free for Oregon Foster, Relative, and Pre-Adoptive Parents! There are over 1,000 books including Children's and Spanish titles. Each provider can check out three items at a time, and the check out time is three weeks. Books will be mailed to you with a return address and postage paid canvas pouch.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

Oregon Post Adoption Resource Center - The OPARC provides services for Oregon DHS adoptive and assisted guardianship families. Services included information, assistance, referral, in-depth consultation, advocacy and support, parent education and training.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

FosterParenting.com - Focuses on writing content that will help foster parents and children. They answer a variety of different questions about what it's like to be a foster parent.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

TheiFoster - Using iFoster's programs and services decreases family needs, improves child and caregiver well-being, improves life-satisfaction, improves grades, and can help youth successfully transition to independence. iFoster provides 100s of Resources through Partnerships with 100s of Companies, Government Agencies and Non-Profits Nationwide. Free and Deeply Discounted Products and Services are available to meet your biggest needs.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

"IF YOU CAN HELP A CHILD, YOU DON'T HAVE TO SPEND YEARS REPAIRING AN ADULT."
- JOYCE MEYER

HOW TO TALK ABOUT SCARY AND TRAGIC NEWS WITH YOUR KIDS

The American Psychological Association's guide to talking to your kids about difficult news is quite helpful. They encourage parents to share their feelings with their children. It is not about burdening them with one's anxiety or sadness or other emotions; it is about naming feelings and discussing them. This approach has been shown to be highly effective in helping youth develop greater emotional intelligence.



[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

The APA says “It is OK to acknowledge your feelings with your children. They see you are human. They also get a chance to see that even though you are upset, you can pull yourself together and continue on.”

Psychologists generally say that small children, less than 5 years old, do not need to be told about these types of events. However, young kids now have easy access to information on devices, so we need to be mindful that they might be seeing much more than we know.

For older kids, the APA recommends: “Tell the truth. Lay out the facts at a level they can understand. You do not need to give graphic details.”

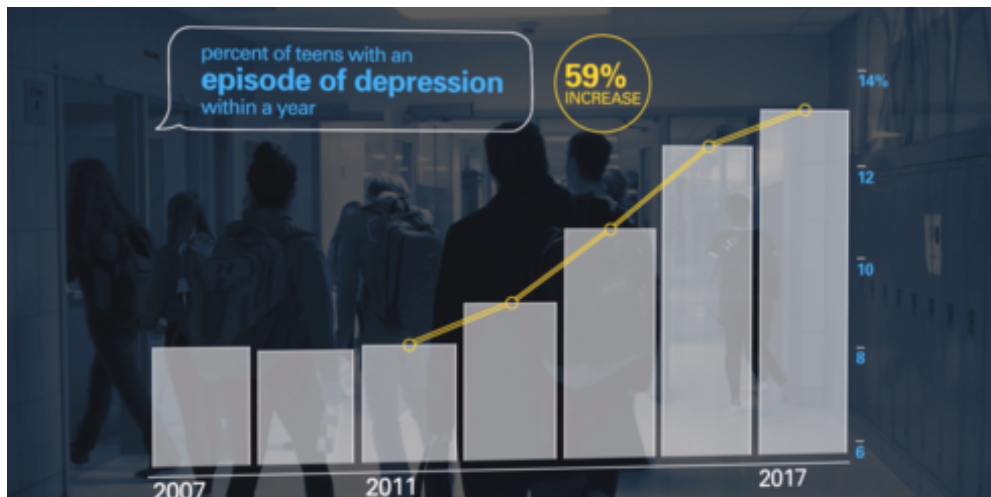
It is important that we all make sure kids know how rare these tragedies are. In homes where news is on a lot, or where news alerts are readily visible on screens, youth get an inaccurate perspective of the frequency with which tragedies occur. Yes, bad things happen, but the key is letting our children know that for every negative thing, there are thousands of positive things happening. And, be sure at the end of the conversations that you reassure them that they are safe and that you are there for them to talk further.

The internet and social media make it essential that we get in front of these conversations quickly.

[LINK](#) to the American Psychological Association's recommendations on how to have a conversation with children about difficult news, for further inquiries.

TECH TALK: DETANGLING TEEN DEPRESSION IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Current data finds that about 19% of girls 12 to 17 will meet criteria for a depression episode in a given year and about 6% of boys. Since 2011, for youth ages 12 to 17, there has been about a 59% increase in teens reporting enough symptoms that they meet criteria for a depression episode (which includes mild, moderate, or severe).



[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

There are so many headlines about teen depression and yet so few opportunities for teens to better understand what the health care profession means when we talk about depression.

Currently, only three states in the country require their schools to teach about mental health. New York and Virginia were the first two states to pass laws, and that was just in 2018. Teachers and students are trying to change this by doing things like starting mental health clubs.

To screen for depression, many health professionals use a screening tool called the PHQ-9. Talking about the questionnaire with your kids can help them better understand the symptoms of depression, whether they are experiencing them now or in the future or if a friend exhibits these symptoms.

We know access to social media and the internet has dramatically increased over the same time. How does this relate to more teens reporting depression symptoms? That is what we all want to understand on a population level and, of course, we want to know it on the individual level as well. To try to understand the later question, mainly researchers take surveys that ask people about time on social media, as well as depression symptoms. From there they look to see if more time on screens is associated with (i.e., correlates with) more of a chance of reporting depression symptoms.

For now, we all know that for any teens things can happen online that can lead to some level of depression symptoms, such as a person experiencing intense cyber cruelty. And, we also know that when youth spend large amounts of time on screens, it can be a red flag that they may be experiencing depression.

Please click [HERE](#) to view the PHQ-9, which is used by most mental health professionals to aid in depression diagnosis.

EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT CASA-VFC IN 2020



A fun, new way to help raise money for CASA-VFC! Download the FlipGive App and shop your favorite brands and online stores. Each company will then donate a certain percentage of your purchase to CASA-VFC. This is a convenient, fast and easy way to support our organization. Don't forget to share with your friends and family!

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)



Did you know that you can raise money for CASA-VFC by simply shopping on Amazon?

If you have an Amazon account you can shop from the Amazon Smile website and they will donate .5% of your purchase to CASA-VFC. It's exactly like shopping on Amazon: Same items, check-out and pricing. Another great way to support CASA this Spring season!

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)





RESOURCES

Don't forget! We have tons of great resources for you and your kiddos. Please call or email if you are in need of any of the following items, and our staff will happily help locate them and gather them for pick-up!

Jackets	Shoes	Books
Clothing	Birthday Gifts	Quilts
Duffel Bags/Backpacks	Christmas/Holiday Gifts	Sports Equipment

If we don't have the item you are looking for, please let us know and we will try our best to find it for you!

TUTORING

We are excited to announce that CASA will be providing **Trauma Informed Educational Tutoring** later in 2020! Please keep a lookout for more information in the near future.

BIRTHDAYS

Help your kiddo(s) get ready for that special day! **We have gifts and cards available** at the office. Please contact our Service Coordinator, Alyssa, for more info.

**REPORT
CHILD
ABUSE** !

To report child abuse, please call these child abuse hotlines:

Local: 541-757-5019

Toll Free: 866-303-4643



Happy Easter, FOSTER FAMILIES!



WE HOPE YOUR DAY
IS FULL OF FUN!



Thank you

for the vital role you play in
providing for our most
vulnerable population.

- CASA-VFC STAFF

CASA STAFF

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AUTZEN
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Juan Young
TRUST



Circle Church of Christ



SPIRIT MOUNTAIN
COMMUNITY FUND

Fred Meyer

amazon smile



Kiwanis
CLUB OF CORVALLIS SUNRISERS



The
Bill Healy
FOUNDATION
A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

TRUST
MANAGEMENT
SERVICES
LLC



FAMILY GUIDE TO COPING WITH COVID-19



Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope With the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

At this time, information about COVID-19 is rapidly evolving as new details are confirmed and new questions emerge. In the event of an outbreak in your community, as a parent/caregiver, your first concern is about how to protect and take care of your children and family. Knowing important information about the outbreak and learning how to be prepared can reduce your stress and help calm likely anxieties. This resource will help you think about how an infectious disease outbreak might affect your family—both physically and emotionally—and what you can do to help your family cope.

What You Should Know

- Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. COVID-19 is caused by a novel coronavirus; this means it is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.
- COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that is mainly spread person-to-person. Currently, there is no available vaccine or curative treatment, so the best preventative strategy is to avoid exposure.
- So far, children appear to be much less affected by COVID-19, which was also seen after other coronavirus outbreaks.
- Children with pre-existing illnesses may have different risk, so you should discuss this with your child's medical team.
- To reduce the spread of the virus, a variety of approaches will be used, including keeping those who are sick away from others and promoting healthy hygiene strategies. Additional recommendations for ways to contain the virus's spread could include canceling of events that attract large numbers of people; closing schools, public transit or businesses; and required quarantine, which is the separation and restriction of movement of people who might have been exposed to the virus.

READINESS

Preparing your Family for a Potential Infectious Disease Outbreak

Being prepared is one of the best ways to lessen the impact of an infectious disease outbreak like COVID-19 on your family. Here are some steps that you can take to be better prepared:

Information & Communication

- Identify how you will keep up with the rapidly changing information on COVID-19.
In rapidly changing health events and outbreaks such as COVID-19, there can be large amounts of incorrect or partially correct information that can add to your stress and confusion as a parent/caregiver. Identify a few trusted sources of health information.

The NCTSN relied on the CDC resources to create this document.

Get the most up-to-date and accurate information at:

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

CDC: information on children and COVID 2019:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/children-faq.html>

<https://healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chest-lungs/Pages/2019-Novel-Coronavirus.aspx>

Plan how you want to discuss COVID-19 with your family. Be sure to include:

What the current disease outbreak is

How it is contracted

What are the possible dangers

Protective steps being taken in the community/nation/global community

Protective steps everyone in the family can take

- Hold your family discussion in a comfortable place and encourage family members to ask questions. Consider having a separate discussion with young children in order to use language they can understand and to address specific fears or misconceptions they may have.
- Create a list of community resources that will be helpful during an outbreak. Make sure you know their emergency telephone numbers, websites, and official social media accounts. These may include: your family's schools, doctors, public health authorities, social services, community mental health center, and crisis hotlines.
- Develop a plan for maintaining contact with friends and family members via telephone and internet in the event that isolation or quarantine is recommended.
- Check in with your children's school about potential homeschool and distance learning opportunities that may be offered during a school closure. Also, if your child receives additional services at school, ask how these will be handled during a closure (e.g., meals, therapeutic services).

Reducing Your Family's Risk: Hygiene, Medical Care & Supplies

Have all family members practice preventive behaviors including:

- Regularly washing hands for 20 seconds with soap and water (length of the A-B-C song) or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Staying home when sick.
- Covering the mouth and nose with a tissue or with the bend/crook of the arm when coughing or sneezing.

Keep basic health supplies on hand (e.g., soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, tissues, and a thermometer).

Make sure you have a supply of medications taken regularly.

If your child takes medication for a chronic condition, talk with your child's medical provider about plans to get a supply at home that will last through any period of home isolation for your family.

Have your family work together to gather items that might be needed during an outbreak. These include drinking water, nonperishable food, and cash. Be sure to include activities, books, and games for children in case a lengthy time at home is recommended. Remember to include batteries in your item list if those are needed for certain activities and games.

**HAVE ALL YOUR
FAMILY MEMBERS
PRACTICE GOOD
HYGIENE AND
PREVENTIVE
BEHAVIORS.**

RESPONSE

Coping with the Stress of an Infectious Disease Outbreak like COVID-19

Even if your family is prepared, an outbreak can be very stressful. To help your family cope with this stress, following these recommendations can help:

Information & Communication

- Keep updated about what is happening with the outbreak and additional recommendations by getting information from credible media outlets, local public health authorities, and updates from public health websites (e.g., CDC).
- Seek support and continued connections from friends and family by talking to them on the telephone, texting, or communicating through email or social media. Schools may have additional ways to stay in contact with educators and classmates.
- Although you need to stay informed, minimize exposure to media outlets or social media that might promote fear or panic. Be particularly aware of (and limit) how much media coverage or social media time your children are exposed to about the outbreak.
- E-mail and texting may be the best ways to stay in contact with others during an outbreak, as the Internet may have the most sensational media coverage and may be spreading rumors. Check in regularly with your children about what they have viewed on the Internet and clarify any misinformation.
- Focus on supporting children by encouraging questions and helping them understand the current situation.
 - Talk about their feelings and validate these
 - Help them express their feelings through drawing or other activities
 - Clarify misinformation or misunderstandings about how the virus is spread and that not every respiratory disease is COVID-19
 - Provide comfort and a bit of extra patience
 - Check back in with your children on a regular basis or when the situation changes

NOTE: During an outbreak, stigma and rejection can occur against individuals who live in affected communities, against health-care workers, and individuals with other illnesses.

Scheduling & Activities

- Even if your family is isolated or quarantined, realize this will be temporary.
- Keep your family's schedule consistent when it comes to bedtimes, meals, and exercise.
- Make time to do things at home that have made you and your family feel better in other stressful situations, such as reading, watching movies, listening to music, playing games, exercising, or engaging in religious activities (prayer, participating in services on the Internet).
- Have children participate in distance learning opportunities that may be offered by their schools or other institutions/organizations.
- Recognize that feelings such as loneliness, boredom, fear of contracting disease, anxiety, stress, and panic are normal reactions to a stressful situation such as a disease outbreak.
- Help your family engage in fun and meaningful activities consistent with your family and cultural values.

Hygiene & Medical Care

- Find ways to encourage proper hygiene and health promoting behavior with your children (create drawings to remember family routines; sing a song for length needed to wash hands like the A-B-C or Happy Birthday song, twice). Include them in household jobs or activities so they feel a sense of accomplishment. Provide praise and encouragement for engaging in household jobs and good hygiene.
- Reassure your children that you will take them to the pediatrician and get medical care if needed. Explain, however, that not every cough or sneeze means that they or others have COVID-19.

Self Care & Coping

- Modify your daily activities to meet the current reality of the situation and focus on what you can accomplish.
- Shift expectations and priorities to focus more on what gives you meaning, purpose, or fulfillment.

Give yourself small breaks from the stress of the situation.

- Attempt to control self-defeating statements and replace them with more helpful thoughts. Here's a helpful checklist for identifying unhealthy thoughts and coping with them:
<https://arfamiliesfirst.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Cognitive-Distortions.pdf>.
- Remember, you are a role model for your children. How you handle this stressful situation can affect how your children manage their worries.
- If your family has experienced a serious illness or the death of a loved one, find ways to support each other, including:

Reach out to your friends and family, talking to them about the death of your loved one. Use telephone, email, or social media to communicate if necessary.

Find ways to honor the death of your loved one. Some activities may be done as a family, while additional activities may be done individually.

Seek religious/spiritual help or professional counseling for support. This may be available online or by telephone during an outbreak.

HELPING CHILDREN COPE

Your children may respond differently to an outbreak depending on their age. Below are some reactions according to age group and the best ways you can respond:

AGE GROUP	REACTIONS	HOW TO HELP
PRESCHOOL	Fear of being alone, bad dreams Speech difficulties Loss of bladder/bowel control, constipation, bed-wetting Change in appetite Increased temper tantrums, whining, or clinging behaviors	Patience and tolerance Provide reassurance (verbal and physical) Encourage expression through play, reenactment, story-telling Allow short-term changes in sleep arrangements Plan calming, comforting activities before bedtime Maintain regular family routines Avoid media exposure

SCHOOL-AGE (ages 6-12)	<p>Irritability, whining, aggressive behavior</p> <p>Clinging, nightmares</p> <p>Sleep/appetite disturbance</p> <p>Physical symptoms (headaches, stomachaches)</p> <p>Withdrawal from peers, loss of interest</p> <p>Competition for parents' attention</p> <p>Forgetfulness about chores and new information learned at school</p>	<p>Patience, tolerance, and reassurance</p> <p>Play sessions and staying in touch with friends through telephone and Internet</p> <p>Regular exercise and stretching</p> <p>Engage in educational activities (workbooks, educational games)</p> <p>Participate in structured household chores</p> <p>Set gentle but firm limits</p> <p>Discuss the current outbreak and encourage questions. Include what is being done in the family and community</p> <p>Encourage expression through play and conversation</p> <p>Help family create ideas for enhancing health promotion behaviors and maintaining family routines</p> <p>Limit media exposure, talking about what they have seen/heard including at school</p> <p>Address any stigma or discrimination occurring and clarify misinformation</p>
ADOLESCENT (ages 13-18)	<p>Physical symptoms (headaches, rashes, etc.)</p> <p>Sleep/appetite disturbance</p> <p>Agitation or decrease in energy, apathy</p> <p>Ignoring health promotion behaviors</p> <p>Isolating from peers and loved ones</p> <p>Concerns about stigma and injustices</p> <p>Avoiding/cutting school</p>	<p>Patience, tolerance, and reassurance</p> <p>Encourage continuation of routines</p> <p>Encourage discussion of outbreak experience with peers, family (but do not force)</p> <p>Stay in touch with friends through telephone, Internet, video games</p> <p>Participate in family routines, including chores, supporting younger siblings, and planning strategies to enhance health promotion behaviors</p> <p>Limit media exposure, talking about what they have seen/heard including at school</p> <p>Discuss and address stigma, prejudice and potential injustices occurring during outbreak</p>

SEEKING ADDITIONAL HELP

If you or a loved one is having a difficult time coping with the outbreak and want to seek outside help, there are ways to get that help. For example:

- Get support regarding your anxiety or stress by speaking to a trained counselor at SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 or by texting TalkWithUS 66746.
- Contact your physician or your insurance company (if they have a consultation line) to ask health-related questions or to seek mental health support.
- Learn more ways to help your family. Additional resources can be accessed at:
www.NCTSN.org
www.healthychildren.org
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/children-faq.html

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