



# Mental Health Support Resources for Learning Continuity

K - Gr. 6



Image retrieved from: <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/who-we-are/vision/sci-fi-reality/>



## A Message from your GSACRD Voice Team

This resource was created and prepared for you by GSACRD Voice.

We are a team of Mental Health Capacity Builders that work to promote positive mental health in children, youth, and families within the Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools in the communities of Morinville and Legal. We believe that mental health and emotional wellbeing can be developed, nurtured, and supported through school-based and community mental health promotion, prevention, and education.

The following resource provides a collection of information and ideas to raise awareness, increase knowledge, and build personal and interpersonal skills to empower families in their pursuit of health and happiness. While we know there is a large amount of information in this document, we have organized it in a way so that you can *'take what you need, when you need it'*. Use the table of contents to link you to the page of information you may be needing whenever you see fit!

For more information on our team and the work we do within our schools and community, please visit our Instagram page [@gsacrd\\_voice](#) and Facebook page at [@gsacrdvoice](#). You can always contact our Program Manager, Lauren Chow ([lchow@gsacrd.ab.ca](mailto:lchow@gsacrd.ab.ca)), should you have any questions regarding this resource.

Sincerely,  
Your GSACRD Voice team  
Lauren, Brittany, Caitlin, & Deanna



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# Your Mental Health and COVID-19

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Most young kids will remember  
**how their family home felt  
during the coronavirus panic**  
more than anything specific about the virus.

Our kids are watching us and learning about  
how to respond to stress and uncertainty. >

**Let's wire our kids for resilience, not panic.**

@drbeckyathome

*Dr. Becky*

In uncertain times, such as when the coronavirus (COVID-19) disease emerged and shook the world, it becomes more than essential to take care of our mental health. This section provides mental health tips specific to COVID-19. Topics include how to manage anxiety and worry surrounding COVID-19, how to use literature and movies to talk about these worries and fears, creating routine and rituals in your home, and self-care during this time.

## COVID-19: How to Manage Anxiety and Worry

### MANAGING CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19) ANXIETY

**For You**

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage
- Connect through calls/text/internet
- Add extra time for daily stress relief
- Practice self-care
- Focus on your mental health

**For Kids**

- Reassure them that they're safe
- Let them talk about their worries
- Share your own coping skills
- Limit their news exposure
- Create a routine & structure

**For Quarantine/Isolation**

- Keep in contact with your loved ones via social media, texts, and phone calls
- Create a daily self-care routine
- Keep yourself busy: games, books, movies
- Focus on new relaxation techniques

BlessingManifesting

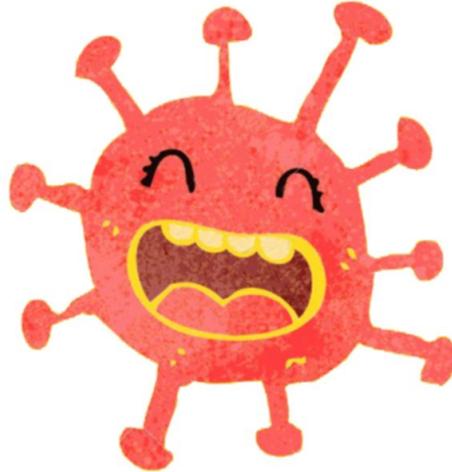
In this section, you will find mental health information specific on how to manage anxiety and worry surrounding COVID-19. Some of the topics include managing your child's fears and stress, how to support your child's feelings of anxiety, the importance of rituals and routine, and the importance of practicing self-care in your family home.



## COVID-19 Children's Book

Recommended age: 7 and under

*Resource found on March 18, 2020*



This book can be an opportunity for you to have discussions with your children surrounding their worries, thoughts and feelings around COVID-19. This book was developed by the author, Manuela Molina, to provide opportunities to support and reassure children around the world of their safety. Manuela states, "Dear families and educators all over the world, I have created this short book to support and reassure our children, under the age of 7, regarding the COVID-19. This book is an invitation for families to discuss the full range of emotions arising from the current situation. It is important to point out that this resource does not seek to be a source of scientific information, but rather a tool based on fantasy. My recommendation is to print this material so children can draw on it. Remember that emotions are processed through repetitive play and stories read multiple times."

For a PDF version of this book, please click on the following link:

- ★ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ywMoE8xWrqgcAqW5AJMUhBJ5wdj9eR6z/view?usp=sharing>



## Educational Resources



Below are some educational resources and videos on how to help your child manage any worries, fears, or anxiety surrounding conversations about COVID-19 and public health emergencies.

### ★ [Helping Children Manage Anxiety Surrounding COVID-19](#)

"In this video, Tammy Schamuhn, R. Psychologist & Co-Founder of The Institute of Child Psychology, gives parents and caregivers a few tips on how to speak to children about COVID-19, and some ideas of how to manage the emotional response in reaction to global distress." (Institute of Child Psychology, 2020)

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocddWZuLYbw&feature=youtu.be&mc\\_cid=05e9199e36&mc\\_eid=db136ca8cd](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocddWZuLYbw&feature=youtu.be&mc_cid=05e9199e36&mc_eid=db136ca8cd)

### ★ [Dr. Laura Markham Helps Kids Manage Coronavirus Fears](#)

"Renee Jain, MAPP, founder of GoZen! interviews clinical psychologist, Dr. Laura Markham on how to help kids (and parents) navigate questions around the coronavirus" (GoZen!, 2020)

- [https://youtu.be/lV\\_5qliG4NM](https://youtu.be/lV_5qliG4NM)

### ★ [Talking to your children about public health emergencies](#)

"Coronavirus is flooding the media and has become a major topic of conversation for many. Kids are not immune from picking up on this worry and anxiety." (MyWorkplaceHealth, 2020).

- Video:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrdz1LxKaa8&feature=youtu.be>
- Website:  
<https://www.myworkplacehealth.com/talking-with-children-about-public-health-emergencies-like-coronavirus/>

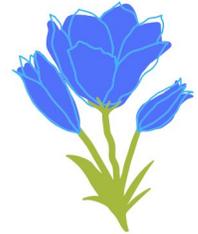
### ★ [Caregiver Handout Regarding COVID-19 from Alberta Health Services](#)

This resource provides caregiver tips on how to have a conversation with your child surrounding COVID-19 and how to support your family to wellness.

- [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RDnueWQ2VaWLBle0n3GR\\_jGwHt\\_KNMFF/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RDnueWQ2VaWLBle0n3GR_jGwHt_KNMFF/view?usp=sharing)

## Routine and Rituals

Having a routine provides a structure that children can rely on. This creates a sense of safety, reassurance, and self-control. Having structured routines empowers children with knowing what comes next in their daily activities. It helps them to feel confident and assured of how their world works. Following these routined patterns and rituals helps a child physically and mentally prepare for transitions and changes in their day.



Here is an example of a scheduled routine that you can use in your home: Remember to adjust based on grade and course hours.

Course Hours/Grade:

K - Gr. 6: 5 hours/week (1 hour/day)

Time	Activity
Before 9:00 am	<p>Wake up, get dressed, and eat a healthy, nutritious breakfast.</p> <p>→ <i>while an everyday pyjama party sounds, fun - we should all be getting dressed for the day to set ourselves up for productivity and success!</i></p> <p>List 3 things you are grateful for each morning. You can write them down, tell them to someone in your family, and challenge your loved ones to do the same. During this time, focus on these feelings of gratitude that you have. This time should be focused on the time spent with family, connection with loved ones in your home, and time for self-care.</p>
9:00 am to 9:30 am	Education and activities provided by teachers.
9:30 am to 10:00 am	Break time (go outside for 15 minutes, enjoy the sun and fresh air or do a meditation/yoga video on YouTube)
10:00 am to 11:00 am	Education and activities provided by teachers.
11:00 am to 11:45 am	Call or facetime a loved one; connect over text or the internet. Play games or online games with family/friends.



11:45 am to 12:45 pm	Lunch Break - eat a healthy lunch that will make you feel energized and balanced!
12:45 to 1:45 pm	Read aloud, read a novel, or read to a family member or pet!
1:45 pm to 2:45 pm	Do some physical activity! (On YouTube: Cosmic Kids Yoga, Cosmic Kids Meditation, GoNoodle, or go outside, play in the snow, or go for a walk with family members)
2:45 pm to 4:00 pm	Help around the home! Learn how to do some life skills activities such as laundry, cleaning, or organizing. Helping out your families around the home will increase feelings of support and connection.
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm	<p>Help prepare dinner! Put the ingredients together, learn how to mix the ingredients, cut vegetables, cook, and set the table. Ensure to eat dinner altogether as a family.</p> <p>Mealtime together will provide opportunities to discuss how your days went and to do an activity called "Highs and Lows". You can do this activity where each person tells everyone their one "high" point of their day (their favourite part of their day) and one "low" point of their day (their least favourite part of their day). It is important to recognize that there will be lows and highs of the day and to talk about these as a family. Let everyone express their worries and fears they are feeling. Always remember to reassure everyone in your family that they are safe.</p> <p>These open family conversations can create a sense of safety, support, love and connection during times where people may feel uncertain.</p>
After 6:00 pm	Turn off electronics, limit TV/News footage for the evening → instead, try playing a board game altogether as a family, watch a family movie, go for a family walk, play outside in the snow, do a family workout or dance video together!



## Self-Care During COVID-19 Anxiety

By: Dr. Rebecca Kennedy, 2020

“Here are some things to keep in mind as we all try to manage life and parenting in times of high-stress:

1. **Calm yourself.** We have to manage our own anxiety first. Some ideas:

**Deep breathing:** If you don’t know how to do a good diaphragmatic breath, this is the time to learn. Deep breaths that go into your diaphragm and go out slowly through your mouth help activate our parasympathetic nervous system, which helps us calm down.

**Walking:** Find ways to walk around in fresh air. We need to get off our computers and phones and connect with our bodies and nature. Commit to a 10-minute phone-free walk each day.

**Positive self-talk:** How we talk to ourselves has a massive impact on our anxiety. I find it useful to think of anxiety as something uncertain coupled with our underestimation of our coping abilities. We can’t find certainty right now but we can focus on our coping skills. Reminding ourselves things like “I can cope with this” and “I can get through hard things” and “I am strong, I can handle this” can be very helpful.

**Compassion:** Direct some compassion toward yourself. *“It’s hard to be an adult right now. It’s hard to be a parent right now. This is a stressful time, and I’m doing the best I can.”*



2. **Limit excessive reading and talking about coronavirus**, especially around your kids. Being on our cell phones and computers only increases our anxiety. Right now, we are faced with a deluge of information, but most of the information is the same: more uncertainty and waiting. Flooding ourselves with reminders of the uncertainty only increases our panic.

Our kids are paying attention to what we are talking about. They notice that everyone around them is talking about coronavirus. Be mindful of conversations



while your kids are in earshot and consider delaying a conversation or reading an article until your kids aren't around.

**3. Validate your child's perception of reality.** Things feel different now than they did a few weeks ago. Let your child know that his perceptions of this change are accurate. If your neighbourhood includes people wearing masks, label that by telling your child *"You might have noticed people wearing masks. They are protecting people from germs."* Talk to your child about the coronavirus-focus of conversations and any other changes she may have picked up on. *"You're right to have noticed people talking about 'coronavirus' a lot. It's on everyone's mind. Are there other changes you've noticed?"* Allow your child to talk about what she/he noticed, how she/he feels, and what's been worrying her/him. Remember that you don't need to convince your child that she/he should feel any differently than she/he does - instead just listen, ask questions, and let her/him know that you'll always be there to talk with her/him.



**4. Re-assert roles.** Boundaries make kids feel safe. Let your kid know that worrying about safety is the job of a parent. Thoughtful and anxious kids are especially likely to worry during this period, and while you should listen to their concerns, it's important to also let them know that safety is outside the bounds of their family responsibilities. You can tell your child: *"My job as your parent is to keep everyone safe. I take that job very seriously. For now your jobs are to wash your hands and to keep playing and having fun. Let's both do our jobs well."*

**5. Prepare your child for misinformation.** Your child will likely hear many things about coronavirus. Tell your child, *"You may hear things about coronavirus that aren't true. If you have any worries, please come to me and we'll talk about them."*

**6. Label changes and re-create structure.** Tell your child about the changes that are happening. Be specific *"I'll be working from home now, and you have some days off school. The days will feel different."*

Add structure by making a schedule for your child of any new activities or playdates she might have or let her know any after-school activities that were cancelled. Kids thrive in routine and predictability, and if your child's school has closed, insert these elements by creating a new schedule for your kids. You don't need to task yourself with recreating school periods and classes, but rather just by thinking about clearly communicating in writing or in a chart what your child can



expect each day. (For more information on developing a routine, see [“Routine and Rituals”](#) on pages 8 and 9.)

7. **Be honest.** Don't lie or make false promises. You can be upfront about how hard it is to tolerate uncertainty, for everyone. Honesty combined with your thoughtful loving presence is comforting for your child. Things like, *“I'm not sure about that one, honey. I promise you I am up to date on all the information, and I'll continue to be on top of things. Sometimes we just have to wait to find out more. Waiting feels hard, I know. For all of us.”* Then give your child a hug.

8. **Add in extra fun.** Silliness and laughter communicate safety, and this is a time for dance parties, light-hearted games, and funny movies. Remember this when the kids are sleeping too. As important as it is for you and your partner to discuss plans and support each other around your anxieties, you also need to take a break from the seriousness. Watch a comedy special together one night instead of doomsday planning. I promise it's one of the best things you can do for yourself in this time of unease.”

- Dr. Rebecca Kennedy, 2020

For the complete article, please see the following link:

- <https://drbeckyathome.com/home/managing-coronavirus-anxiety-ours-and-our-kids>



# Your General Mental Health

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“Mental health is more than the absence of a mental health condition or illness: it is a positive sense of well-being, or the capacity to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face. Mental health impacts each and every one of us. We all have mental health, just as we all have physical health.”

- Canadian Mental Health Association, 2020

Take some time to read through the following section, which provides many different ways in which anyone can develop their positive mental health. Some strategies we have provided to help with improving mental health include ways to calm your child, engaging in self-care, physical activities to do at home, healthy habits, ways to engage in artistic expression, and literature for teaching and discussing emotions.



## Family Resources Surrounding Anxiety and Resiliency

In this section, there are some resources on strategies you can use when dealing with your child's anxiety, and ways you can foster a sense of resiliency and hope in your family home.



### ★ 5 Connection Rituals to Battle Anxiety: Institute of Child Psychology

This article includes connection strategies for helping your child with anxiety and worry.

- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nfVAG6jzcCcqYhixN7qIDHY5RqVcs9y9/view?usp=sharing>

### ★ Cultivating Resiliency in Children: Institute of Child Psychology

This article includes ways to help build resiliency within your child, including empathy, valuing your child's abilities, nurturing emotional health and more.

- [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Gibj\\_bC3hogcgWYEFmTyr4d1tWGi4DrO/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Gibj_bC3hogcgWYEFmTyr4d1tWGi4DrO/view?usp=sharing)

### ★ GoZen! YouTube Channel

GoZen! provides informational videos to teach your kids some research-based coping, resilience, and happiness skills. GoZen! Includes information surrounding childhood anxiety, fear, anger, mindfulness meditation, stress relief songs, stories and podcasts.

- <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfsqZNj1On2lYnEcGGAQnUA>

### ★ Words to Calm a Child: Phrases Every Child Needs To Hear: Institute of Child Psychology

See the following page for a brief excerpt on ways to help foster a sense of calm for your child, or click the link for the full printable version.

- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Jrl7uU5qtClk2d7OIAuLxUTutFjcyjcy/view?usp=sharing>

*The Institute of Child Psychology developed strategies to support your child to feel a sense of calm and resilience when faced with difficult to manage emotions, such as fear and anxiety. For*

*more resources, online classes, workshops and information on how to support your child and family with mental health, check out The Institute of Child Psychology at <https://instituteofchildpsychology.com>.*



## Words to Calm a Child: Institute of Child Psychology



### *Words to Calm a Child:* PHRASES EVERY CHILD NEEDS TO HEAR

When children are experiencing big emotions, they often need us to step in and help them to calm the torrential storm. When a child feels safe with you, they are able to lower their defenses and truly give voice to the feelings inside. Children learn that they will be held and unconditionally loved as they experience all the different facets of life. If a child does not feel safe and learns that only certain emotions are acceptable, the more difficult emotions are stuffed down. These children struggle with feeling psychologically safe and end up disconnecting from the most vulnerable parts of themselves. Research now shows us that emotional constriction can lead to a host of psychological and physical issues that persist throughout the lifespan.

#### WHEN A CHILD IS *Anxious*

Anxiety is one of the most common struggles of parents in today's society. Sometimes the anxiety is object/situation specific, or it's more general. Regardless, when children are anxious, it means they are fearful and needing connection; they need to know they're safe before they're ready to venture into the world. We need to calm the part of the brain that is screaming "**Danger! Danger!**". We suggest you move in close, and try some of these phrases, but **always pair any of these phrases with something to calm the body**: a child cannot think calm thoughts if their bodies aren't calm (i.e., yoga, deep breathing, being held, exercise, gross motor play).



It is important to remember that guiding your child through emotional experiences does not mean parenting without limits. We can honour feelings **AND** have clear, consistent boundaries with our children. Children who do not have boundaries often feel unanchored, and unsafe with a pervasive underlying theme of not being cared for.

The language we use with our children becomes their inner voice. As the adults in a child's world, we play a pivotal role in determining how a child perceives themselves and others. It can be tricky in those tumultuous moments to remember what to say - particularly if we are having a hard time calming our own heart rate and breathing!

*"You are really scared"*

*"You are so worried about \_\_\_\_\_"*

*"You feel really overwhelmed, but this feeling will go down"*

*"I will stay with you until this feeling gets smaller"*

*"You are safe with me"*

*"I'm not going anywhere. Let's do some big breaths until this feeling goes down"*

*"It's hard to feel this way. But everyone feels scared sometimes"*

*"I can see you are scared to do that. Would you like to try it together for the first time?"*

*"That's such a big feeling"*

*"I'm right here. I won't go away"*

*"Even though you're scared, we'll figure this out. I believe in you"*

*"Everyone gets scared. You are still strong"*

*"This worried feeling will not last forever"*

*"We will get through this together"*

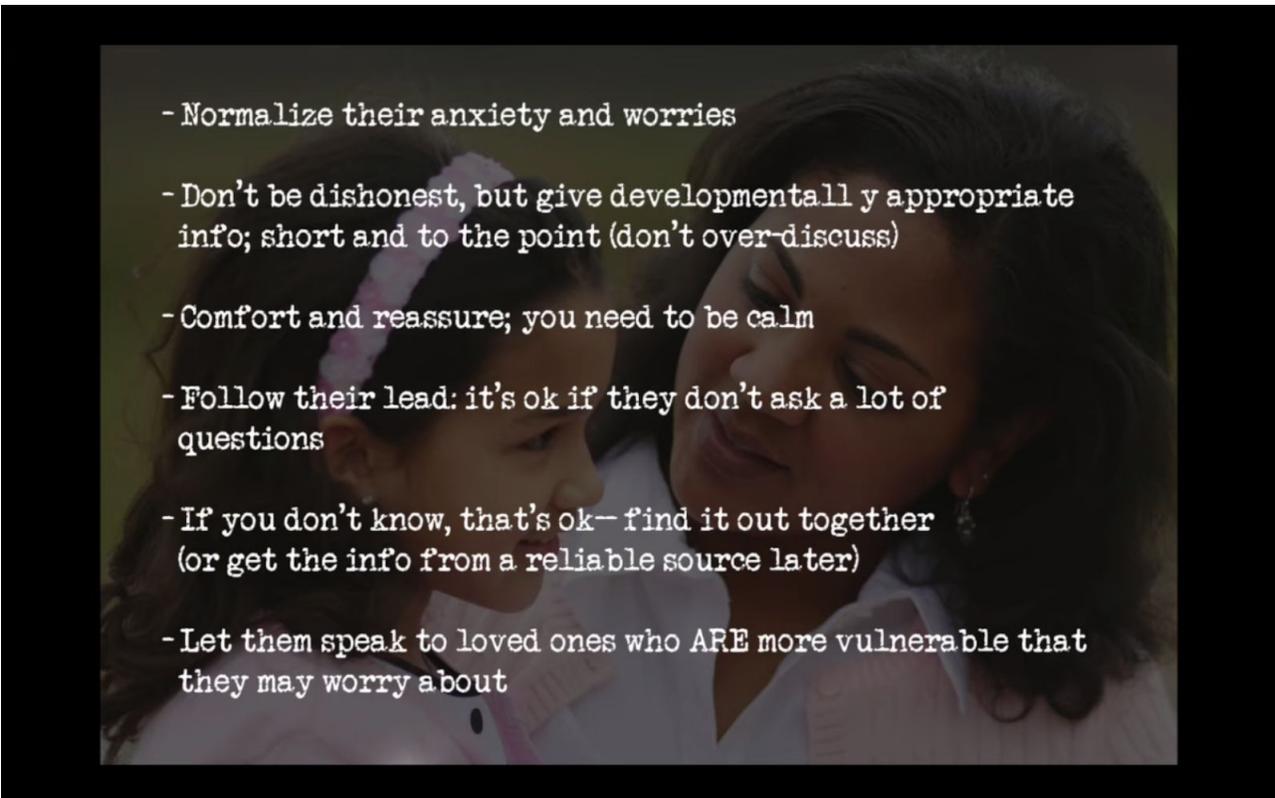


## Talking Feelings of Anxiety with your Child: Using the Movie Frozen 2

By: [Institute of Child Psychology](#)



This is a tool the Institute of Child Psychology has developed on how to talk to your child about feelings of anxiety and worry using the movie Frozen 2. This tool can be a way to create open and safe conversations surrounding these feelings, in a way that your child can easily connect with.

- 
- Normalize their anxiety and worries
  - Don't be dishonest, but give developmentally appropriate info; short and to the point (don't over-discuss)
  - Comfort and reassure; you need to be calm
  - Follow their lead: it's ok if they don't ask a lot of questions
  - If you don't know, that's ok— find it out together (or get the info from a reliable source later)
  - Let them speak to loved ones who ARE more vulnerable than they may worry about



## ANNA & Anxiety: Frozen 2

### Song: "Next Right Thing"

"But you must go and do the next right thing . . . Take a step, step  
again . . . it is all that I can do the next right thing  
I won't look too far ahead. . . it's too much for me to take  
But break it down to this next breath, this next step  
This next choice is one that I can make  
So I'll walk through this night . . . stumbling blindly toward the light  
And do the next right thing"



## OLAF & Anxiety: Frozen 2

- Show the scene when Olaf says: "This is called controlling what you can, when things feel out of control" and talk about what your kids CAN CONTROL (i.e., washing hands, sleep, helping others, play, their body)
- Song: "When I am older"  
Facilitate conversation about how things don't always make sense at the time, but one day they can make more sense

## Self-Care

Self-Care is the practice of taking care of yourself to a place of wellness and balance. In this section, we provide different ways you can engage in positive self-care.



### 1) Mindfulness

Mindfulness happens when we are fully engaged in the present moment. It involves being aware and accepting of your thoughts, emotions and environment. If you are feeling anxious or afraid, be aware of your worrying thoughts and the sensations in your body, such as your heart beating faster. Don't judge these thoughts or sensations, just notice them and then let them go. These mindfulness techniques will help calm the body and focus the mind:

## Grounding

Use this grounding technique to engage all your 5 senses when wanting to feel calm and balanced.

Grounding technique:

<http://www.carena.org.uk/grounding-technique-for-anxiety/>

5 4 3 2 1

**SLOW DOWN & CALM DOWN**  
FIRST- TAKE 3 SLOW BELLY BREATHS!

5 List 5 things you can SEE 

4 List 4 things you can FEEL 

3 List 3 things you can HEAR 

2 List 2 things you can SMELL 

1 List something you like to TASTE 

FINISHED? - TAKE ANOTHER 3 SLOW BELLY BREATHS

## Expressing Gratitude

There are so many wonderful things to feel grateful for. Expressing gratitude can help us feel more positive, develop closer relationships with others, and build resilience in our day to day lives. Try journaling about one of the prompts below or starting a conversation on what you are grateful for with those around you. Share something you're grateful for each day at the dinner table with your family.

- Something that made you smile today
- A favourite activity that you enjoy
- Something that you are thankful for
- Someone that makes you feel loved

Grateful

## Breathing Exercises

8 Fun Breathing Exercises for Kids:

<https://childhood101.com/fun-breathing-exercises-for-kids/>

### BALLOON BREATHING



Sitting in a comfortable position, place your hands around your mouth as if you were about to blow up a balloon. Take a deep breath in through the nose and, as you slowly exhale through your mouth, start to spread your hands out as if you are blowing up a great big balloon. Hold your hand position as you inhale again and then spread your hands further as you exhale. Once your balloon is as big as it can be, gently sway from side to side as you release your balloon up into the sky.

### SHOULDER ROLL BREATHING



Choose a comfortable sitting position. As you take a slow deep breath in through your nose raise your shoulders up towards your ears. Breathe slowly out through your mouth, lowering your shoulders as you exhale. Repeat slowly, rolling your shoulders up and down in time with your breath.

### TAKE 5 BREATHING



Sit comfortably, resting one hand in front of you with fingers outstretched like a star and the pointer finger of your other hand ready to trace your hand. Starting at the base of your thumb on the outside of your hand, breathe in slowly through your nose as you slide your pointer finger up to the top of your thumb. Breathe out slowly and slide your pointer finger down the inside of your thumb. Breathe in as you slide your finger up the next finger and out as you slide down. Continue breathing in and out as you trace your whole hand.

### BUMBLEBEE BREATHING



Sitting comfortably, gently place the tips of your pointer fingers in your ears and close your eyes. Breathe in through your nose and then hum quietly as you slowly breathe out.

## BACK TO BACK BREATHING



Find a partner and sit on the floor back to back. Sit tall and close your eyes if you want to. Decide who will start - that person begins by inhaling deeply and then exhaling slowly, and then continues to breathe slowly and deeply. Their partner should feel the expansion in their partner's back each time they breathe in and then try to sync their own breathing so that both partners are breathing in time together.

## TUMMY BREATHING



Lie on the floor and place a small stuffed animal on your stomach. Breathe in deeply through your nose and feel the stuffed animal rise, and then feel it lower as you slowly exhale through your mouth. Rock the stuffed animal to sleep using the rise and fall of your stomach.

## ELEPHANT BREATHING



Stand with your feet wide apart and your arms dangling in front of your body like an elephant's trunk. As you breathe in deeply through your nose, raise your arms up high above your head. Then slowly swing your arms down again as you breathe out through your mouth.

## BUBBLE BREATHING



Sit comfortably with your eyes closed. Begin by imagining you are holding a bubble wand. Breathe in deeply and then, as you breathe out slowly and gently, imagine you are blowing bubbles into the room. Imagine the bubbles are filled with peace or love or happiness and that you are filling the whole room with a peaceful, happy feeling. As you keep breathing slowly and blowing your imaginary bubbles, feel your body become calm and relaxed.

## Guided Relaxation

Use this guided relaxation to calm your body and mind. It can be read by a family member or a friend, or you can record yourself reading the script and play it back whenever you want.



*guided relaxation*

with Mellisa Dormoy  
of Shambala Kids

*“Thankful Turtle”*

*This issue’s guided imagery meditation is all about gratitude. Read the imagery in a relaxed voice but place joyful emphasis when needed.*

Let’s take a moment and simply feel happy and thankful before we drift off to sleep. Noticing what we appreciate makes our hearts feel so very full. It also gives us deep peace and joy!

So, get comfortable, and when you’re ready, close your eyes. Let your body sink into your bed. Allow yourself to just relax naturally. Take in a few deep breaths and exhale slowly, as you begin to relax your body fully.

Imagine an extremely cute and cuddly little cartoon turtle. He’s not a real of course – but I am sure you can see him very clearly in your mind. He can stand on his back legs and he has little turtle flippers, big eyes, a funny nook nose and a silly smile. You see a twinkle in his eye! This is the Thankful Turtle. Isn’t he adorable?

The Thankful Turtle is here to remind us of all the things we have to be thankful for, even when our days are sometimes rough.

First of all, the little happy turtle reminds you that you woke up this morning! Yes! Thank goodness you woke up to a beautiful day of life – a life that holds adventure and many surprises. You think to yourself how very thankful you are that you simply woke up and had the opportunity to experience the day. You also learned things

today... maybe your day was wonderful. Maybe it was difficult. But either way, you know more today than you did yesterday. The Thankful Turtle reminds you that you can be grateful for all life’s lessons - great and small. For that, he does a little happy dance and you feel happiness dance into your own heart.

Thankful Turtle looks at you with a gleam in his eyes now and smiles as he looks up at your strong body. You’re reminded that your body has moved and breathed for you today. Your body is truly a miracle! You imagine your hands and feet and how active they’ve been today in doing all you’ve done.

It’s so wonderful to experience all the things you’ve experienced today and the places you’ve been. Even if you’ve stayed home today, you have still travelled many places in your imagination, right? You’re thankful for this! Thankful Turtle does another little happy dance and that makes you giggle. He reminds you of all there is to be grateful for in life... big things and small things.

Thankful Turtle reminds you about your family and friends who care deeply for you. These people love you just because you are you! You feel so good in your heart knowing that you are loved and cared for. Life is so much better when we take time to be grateful for all we have and all we experience. When you’re ready, you can open your eyes and give your body a big stretch. Or let yourself drift off to restful sleep.

For more meditations and guided relaxation audios, visit *Shambala Kids* online.

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## Practice Positive Self-Esteem

Practicing self-love and positive self-esteem creates a sense of resiliency, hope, and bravery.



*Try this activity regularly in your home!*

Write down 3 things you are proud of yourself for.

Write down 3 things that you love about yourself.

Write down something that makes you laugh.

Draw somewhere you feel happy, somewhere you feel safe, someone you feel safe with, and someone who makes you happy.

(Use these answers to connect online or on the phone with loved ones, family members and friends)

## Mindfulness Videos

These are some other resources you can try at home to practice mindfulness!

- ★ Cosmic Kids - Sleeping Dragon, Guided Meditation  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUjpWdbMrAg>
- ★ GoNoodle - Rainbow Breath  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O29e4rRMrV4>
- ★ GoNoodle - On & Off Flow  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZP-TMr984s>
- ★ Top 50 Mindfulness Resources by Big Life Journal  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-AQV1o25UV1KtLD0DFnQ1hCkzOHhAJUr/view?usp=sharing>



## 2) Physical Activities to do at Home

Below are some videos and resources of physical activities you can engage in at home with the whole family! Engaging in exercise, movement and games is not only important for your physical health, but is also important for your mental wellness.



### Exercise

- ★ Family Fun Cardio Workout:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5if4cjO5nxo>
- ★ Home Exercises for Kids:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aHVR2FnTpdK>
- ★ BOKS at Home - Active Videos:  
<https://www.bokskids.ca/boks-at-home/>
- ★ Indoor Games & Activities by Big Life Journal:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GoXFjZLY-5SM7XO-uMjX4T3zmebpi9qP/view?usp=sharing>

### Yoga

- ★ Cosmic Kids Yoga:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5uIZ2KOZZeQDQo\\_Gsi\\_qbQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5uIZ2KOZZeQDQo_Gsi_qbQ)
- ★ Yoga with Adriene - Rainbow Yoga:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dF7O6-Qablo>

### Dance

- ★ GoNoodle - Trolls: Can't Stop The Feeling:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhfkYzUwYFk>
- ★ KidzBop UK - Dance Monkey Song - Dance Along:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHscaKsr0IU>
- ★ KidzBop UK - One Touch Song - Dance Along:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqR-sB0rqm8>

### 3) Healthy Habits

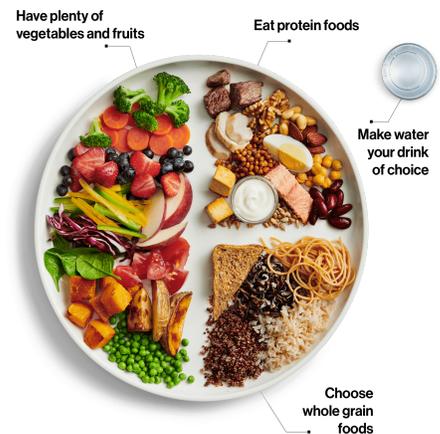
“Healthy habits harbour happiness.”  
- Zero Dean

Developing healthy habits is key to living a long and healthy life. Good habits can improve your physical and mental well-being (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2020). In this section, you’ll find important information on healthy eating, physical activity, spending time in nature, and sleep.

#### Nutrition

Eating a nutritious diet is an important part of maintaining both our physical and mental health. It helps give us energy, elevates our mood, helps us to feel good, and helps us think clearly.

The Canadian Food Guide provides tips on how to eat a healthy and balanced diet. By filling half of our diet with fruits and vegetables, a quarter with proteins and a quarter with whole grain foods, we can help support our overall well being. We can also support healthy eating habits by choosing healthy foods that we enjoy and by taking the time to cook and eat with others. Be sure to drink plenty of water as well to help support body and brain function!



For more information on healthy eating and following the food guide, please visit:  
<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>

Try these snack ideas at home:

- whole grain toast with nut butter and banana
- green leafy salad with orange sections and almonds
- lower fat yogurt topped with frozen berries and walnuts
- lower fat cheese and whole grain crackers with cherry tomatoes
- sliced cucumber and red pepper with hummus or lower fat yogurt dip
- whole grain crackers topped with lower fat cottage cheese and peach slices
- whole grain English muffin topped with apple slices and melted lower fat cheese
- whole grain cereal with fruit slices and milk or unsweetened fortified plant-based beverage

Resource found at:

<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/healthy-snacks/#section-3>



## Spend time outside!

Playing outside in nature is important for children's development, self-care, health, feelings of gratitude, and their emotions.



Here are six crucial ways playing outside helps children:

1. Sunshine
2. Exercise
3. Executive Functioning
4. Taking risks
5. Socialization
6. Appreciating Nature

Article found at:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/6-reasons-children-need-to-play-outside-2018052213880>

## Sleep



Children ages 5 to 13 years should get between 9 to 11 hours of sleep/night.

Children ages 14 to 17 years should get between 8 to 10 hours of sleep/night.

Catching more Zzz's can help with childrens' physical health, emotional well-being and quality of life.

Tips for healthy sleep habits:

- ★ Keep to a schedule.
- ★ Keep to healthy habits with regular physical activity and balanced meals daily.
- ★ Create a relaxing routine including a bath/shower before bed, creating a sense of calm, include 30 minutes of quiet time before bedtime routine (reading, writing in a journal, listening to music), avoid technology and turn off electronics at least one hour before bedtime.

Learn more about sleep health at Canada.ca:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-children-getting-enough-sleep-infographic.html>



#### 4) Get Crafty!

Art is an important part of expression, healing, and education. Being at home can provide opportunities for families to have some creativity and fun! Crafts, art, coloring pages, painting, sculpting, and using recyclable materials in your home can be creative ways to express different emotions and feelings in your home.



#### Online resources for art and craft ideas

- ★ <https://projectkid.com>
- ★ <https://www.happinessishomemade.net/quick-easy-kids-crafts-anyone-can-make/>
- ★ <https://leftbraincraftbrain.com/40-best-art-projects-for-kids/>

*inspire*

## 5) Tips for Sensory Self-Care

### Touch

- Using a weighted blanket or a favourite blanket to wrap yourself up in - it can be very soothing and comforting to have pressure wrapped around you.
- Adjust the temperature - turn up or down the heat
- Get a cold/warm cloth for your forehead
- Use a microwavable heating pad

### Taste

- Warm and comforting drinks
- Healthy and nutritious snacks and meals
- Drink lots of water!

### Smell

- Lavender scented essential oils, candles, etc. - Lavender is believed to help promote calmness and wellness, also reducing stress and anxiety.
- Find a scent that speaks to you! It can be something that reminds you of your childhood, the smell of a person, or memory.

### Sight

- Watch a nature video with calming music
- Dim the lights in your home

### Sound

- Listen to music together as a family
- Listen to calming instruments or nature sounds like rain or thunderstorms
- Turn on an audiobook
- Listen to guided meditation on Youtube

## SELF-CARE FOR SENSORY OVERLOAD



Find the article *Self-Care for Sensory Overload, Blessing Manifesting, 2020* at <https://www.blessingmanifesting.com/self-care-for-sensory-overload>

# Literature for Teaching & Discussing Emotions

Below are some books that help teach and discuss different emotions that your child may be feeling or struggling with. Reading is a powerful way to connect with your child, to create a sense of calm and to practice mindfulness.



## List of Literature

Tomorrow I'll Be Brave by Jessica Hische

Rumple Buttercup by Matthew Gray Gubler

You Are Brave by Todd Snow

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst

Can You Say Peace? By Karen Katz

A Color of His Own by Leo Lionni

Feelings to Share A-Z by Todd Snow

Fill a Bucket: A Guide to Daily Happiness for Young Children by Carol McCloud and Katherine Martin

Fish is Fish by Leo Lionni

Glad Monster, Sad Monster by Anne Miranda

Grumpy Bird by Jeremy Tankard

Harriet Dancing by Ruth Louise Symes and Caroline Jayne Church

I Am Enough By Grace Byers and illustrated Keturah A. Bobo

Dear Girl By Amy Krouse Rosenthal and Paris Rosenthal

What Do You Love About You? By Karen Lechelt

Giraffes Can't Dance By Giles Andreae and illustrated by Guy Parker-Rees

Zero By Kathryn Otoshi

I'm Gonna Like Me: Letting Off a Little Self-Esteem By Jamie Lee Curtis and illustrated by Laura Cornell

Amazing Grace By Mary Hoffman and illustrated by Caroline Binch

Knuffle Bunny by Mo Willems



## Online Supports for Literature

If you do not have access to books at home, try searching these free online book resources!



★ [Storyline Online](#) or find [Storyline Online on YouTube](#)

This resource features celebrities such as Oprah Winfrey, reading different educational children's books on video.

Example:

Storyline Online: Carla's Sandwich by Debbie Herman (Read by: Allison Janney)  
<https://www.storylineonline.net/books/carlas-sandwich/>

★ YouTube

Try searching the book name in the Youtube search engine to find videos of the books being read online!

Example:

The Mitten by Jan Brett  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DurzHg\\_GjEQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DurzHg_GjEQ)

★ Audible

Audible is offering a subscription for families to listen to audiobooks for one month free during this time.

[https://www.audible.ca/?source\\_code=CANGB244031920024N&ref\\_=pe\\_3601050\\_487375700](https://www.audible.ca/?source_code=CANGB244031920024N&ref_=pe_3601050_487375700)

★ SaveWithStories



Check out SaveWithStories on [Instagram](#) and [#SaveWithStories](#) on [Facebook](#)!

These social media pages were created by actresses Jennifer Garner and Amy Adams, to provide fun and educational ways to support children and families impacted by COVID-19. It features celebrities reading children's books online and singing nursery rhymes.

Click on the link below to learn more about SaveWithStories:

<https://www.savethechildren.org/>

## Mental Health Resources

If you are feeling distressed, reach out to your loved ones or call the [Distress Line](#) at: 780-482-4357 (HELP). For a list of other supports, please see the following table.

### Mental Health Support Information

<b>Emergency Mental Health Concerns – Stollery Children’s Hospital or local ER</b>	<b>911</b>
<b>Stollery Children’s Hospital Crisis Line/Services</b>	780-427-4491
<b>Text4Hope (COVID-19 Support Resource)</b>	Text: ‘COVID19HOPE’ to 393939
<b>Mental Health Distress Line (24/7)</b> (Canadian Mental Health Association)	780-482-4357
<b>Kids Help Phone</b>	Phone: 1-800-668-6868 Text: “CONNECT” to 686868 Chat Online: <a href="https://kidshelpphone.ca/">https://kidshelpphone.ca/</a>

<b><u>Counselling Supports</u></b>	
Mental Health Helpline	1-877-303-2642
Addiction Services Helpline	1-866-332-2322
<b><u>Intake Services</u></b> (Connects you to an AHS Mental Health Clinic in St. Albert & Morinville)	
<b>Access 24/7 (18+)</b>	780-424-2424
<b>Addiction &amp; Mental Health Youth <u>Child &amp; Adolescent</u> (Northgate)</b>	780-342-2701
<b>Walk-In Counselling Services (AHS)</b> FREE 50-minute, solution-focused, single therapy session on a first-come, first-serve basis. Available to children and youth ages 6-17 Monday to Friday 12:30 – 4:00 PM. (Last client seen at 3:00pm)	<b>St. Albert Clinic:</b> St. Albert Provincial Building, 30 Sir Winston Churchill Avenue, St Albert Phone: 780 342-1410 <b>Northgate Clinic:</b> 9499 137 Avenue Phone: 780 342-2700 <b>Rutherford Health Centre:</b> #202, 11153 Ellerslie Road Phone: 780 342-6850



<b>AHS Addiction Services Mobile Unit</b> GSACRD Counsellor: Sara Heitzman	780-422-7383
<b>Primary Care Network</b>	780-997-0046
<b>FCSS Family and Community Support Services</b>	St. Albert – 780-459-1756 Morinville – 780-939-7833 Redwater 780-992-6267 Gibbons 780-923-3331 Bon Accord – 780-921-3550
<b>CASA Child, Adolescent, and Family Mental Health</b>	<a href="http://www.casaservices.org">www.casaservices.org</a>
<b>Private Psychologists in your area</b>	<a href="http://www.psychologistsassociation.ab.ca">www.psychologistsassociation.ab.ca</a> <a href="http://www.psychologytoday.com/ca">www.psychologytoday.com/ca</a>
<b>Hope for Wellness Helpline (First Nations/Inuit)</b>	1-855-242-3310
<b>Legal Aid Alberta</b>	780-427-7575