

# CULTIVATING CARE AT HOME

A GUIDE FROM INLIGHT INSTITUTE

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

HOW TO TALK TO KIDS ABOUT COVID-19 3

KIDS GUIDE TO CARING FROM HOME 3

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER DISCOVERY 4





## UNCERTAIN TIMES

Our mission is to empower kids to care for themselves, their communities, and the environment. Over the last year, we have celebrated the accomplishments of many kids who have found their voice and joined our platform that is constructed upon a base of love, compassion, and kindness. They resolved to make a difference through their entrepreneurship and by showcasing their creative talents to build awareness for social issues and animal rights. Our Care Hard club members danced, applauded, and marched for goodness and unity. With the arrival of COVID-19, our ability to gather has been stalled. Yet, we see that human ingenuity to continue to learn, connect, feel, and emote through newfound experiences. Yet, we face new struggles and compounding roles that challenge our state of mental wellbeing. Mental wellness too often is not made a priority when our survival instincts outbalance our need to thrive. We want you to know that we feel this quake with you. You are not alone. It is our goal with this toolkit that we can offer both parents and children an inspired guide with ideas and tools to prioritize mental wellness so that we can all express care and receive the care that we deserve. This is not more to-do's but instead opportunities to fight this disease and other illnesses with healthy habits and empathetic muscles. Our hearts are with your families and loved ones. Let us be well together.

- Courtney Stone, Co-founder Inlight Institute

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Parent's Toolkit • P. 3-6

These pages are intended for an adult audience.

---

Child's Toolkit • P. 7-20

These pages are intended for a youth audience and can be printed for them to read and interact with the content.



# INLIGHT INSTITUTE

Talking to your children about COVID-19, ways to safely express care for others and stay connected, plus home-based activities.



## HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT COVID-19

When we talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary. News of the coronavirus is everywhere, and we have a few helpful tips for having age-appropriate conversations with your children.

- Don't volunteer too much information. Instead, try to answer your child's questions with age-appropriate facts while reassuring them, they are safe. Here is an example from PBS on how to explain the virus, *"You know what it's like to have a cold or the flu — how sometimes you get a cough or have a fever? This is kind of like that. Most people who catch this sickness stay home, rest, and get all better. And we have wonderful doctors and nurses who can help people when they need it. This sickness isn't a big deal for you or me, but we need to be germ-busters so we can protect other people — like grandma and grandpa!"*
- "Why do we need to stay home and what will we do all day?"  
*"Germs like to travel from person to person. Have you ever noticed how kids in your class sometimes get sick at the same time? If lots of people stay home for a while, it will be hard for the Coronavirus germs to travel to new people — and that's good news for doctors and nurses who are helping people who get sick. We can use this time to create special memories as a family. We can play games, build forts, talk with friends over video, make art, read books, and watch movies."*
- Emphasize simple things your family can do to be "germ busters" by washing hands, covering coughs, and getting rest. Kids and adults alike are *"more distressed when we feel helpless and passive, and more comfortable when we are taking action."* - Dr. Richard Weissbourd, a Harvard Child Psychologist.

Let your kids know that you will keep them updated and are always here to answer questions.



## **EVERYONE COPE WITH STRESS DIFFERENTLY. THE CDC HIGHLIGHTS THESE KEY WAYS TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND COPE WITH ANXIETIES.**

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate
  - Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals.
  - Exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep.
  - Avoid alcohol and drugs
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.



**Information above is shared from the [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov). Please bookmark and visit their page for more information and updates on COVID-19.**

Read, watch, and listen to media that helps you feel better, in control of what you can control, and inspired. We provide a few ideas on the next page.

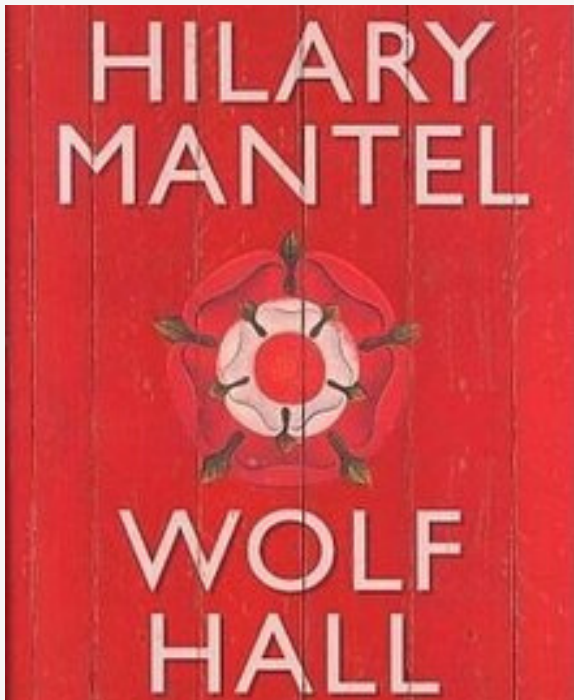


### **Need help? Know someone who does?**

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others

- Call 911
- Visit the [Disaster Distress Helpline](#)  , call 1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746
- Visit the [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#)  or call 1-800-799-7233 and TTY 1-800-787-3224





## CINEMA TO REFLECT

Robert Egbert said "The Tree of Life is a film of vast ambition and deep humility, attempting no less than to encompass all of existence and view it through the prism of a few infinitesimal lives."

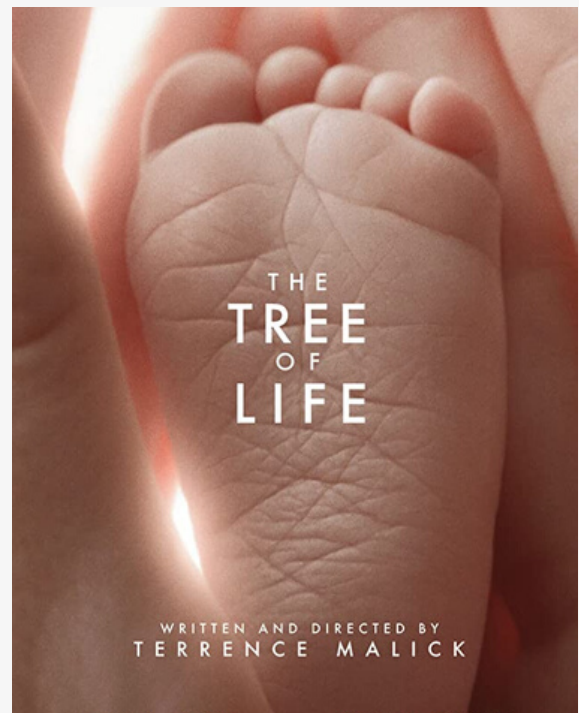
Recommended by Chad Perman a, psychotherapist,



## BOOKS TO EXPLORE

If leaning into dystopian media makes you feel less anxious, the immersive collection by Hilary Mantel can provide perspective and an escape. If this strategy compounds anxiety, try any fiction that makes you feel better. "My Age of Anxiety" by Scott Stossel is a non-fiction option that focuses on mental health.

Recommended by Rosalie Knecht, a therapist and author



## PODCAST TO GROW

Podcasts offer great insight from experts in various fields. This episode by the APA "Speaking of Psychology: Managing Your Mental Health During COVID-19 with Lynn Bufka, PhD" dives into the anxieties we feel in this new reality at home.

with Kim Mills and Lynn Bufka, PhD



# Kids Emotions During Isolation

Overwhelmed, bored, anxious, sad, fearful..... just to name a few of the emotions that have been identified during these last several weeks by both parents and children. Not all emotions reported have been negative though. Many have reported feeling hopeful, calm, and more connected with loved ones. As we try to navigate these times of uncertainty, it is more important than ever to identify and acknowledge these emotions on a daily basis, as they can rapidly fluctuate.

## **NAME THE EMOTION TO TAME THE EMOTION**

So often we have feelings but don't even know what we are feeling, which can lead to greater unrest and confusion. There is great power in understanding what emotion you are experiencing so you can sit with it and then decide what you want to do with it. It's possible to feel instant relief by simply identifying it. Check in with family members daily, meal times are great opportunities for this. For younger children it may be helpful to have an emotions chart handy with a small sticky with their name that can be placed on the illustrated emotion. Parents can play along too, and role model what it's like to talk about their emotions without judgment, recognizing the current circumstances are hard on everyone. Resist the urge to tell yourself or others, "you shouldn't feel that way".

## **HELPFUL TOOLS**

Acceptance is where the power lies, and we can find some sense of control by accepting our current circumstances. Making lists can give us some sense of control, whether it's grocery lists or a couple of things that need to be accomplished by end of day.

## **MOOD BOOSTER LIST**

You can also have each family member make a list of things that boost their moods, i.e., petting the dog, playing guitar, watching a sunset, walks around the neighborhood, silly dancing, comedy shows, nature, etc. Take turns sharing your list, not only are you creating greater connection by learning something new about your parent or child but you also have a reference list ready to engage in when emotions get overwhelming.

## **CREATE A CALMING KIT**

Use a shoebox, or whatever works, to store a few items that bring you joy and/or calm. Examples include a favorite picture, a poem or scripture, a letter or card from a loved one, a stuffed animal, recording of a favorite song, etc. This can be a fun activity that sparks creativity and a place of comfort when needed.

**There are many resources, tips and tools flooding our inboxes right now, try not to get overwhelmed with perfecting the art of happiness and coping. Choose 1-2, be flexible, and have fun!**

**- Val Rock, PsyD, Inlight Advisory Board Member**



**NEVER BELIEVE THAT A FEW CARING  
PEOPLE CAN'T CHANGE THE WORLD. FOR,  
INDEED, THAT'S ALL WHO EVER HAVE.**

*- Margaret Mead*



Over the next series of pages, we will discover more about these topics:

**UNDERSTANDING  
WHAT IS  
HAPPENING**

**IDEAS TO  
CONNECT, HELP,  
AND ADVOCATE**

**DEVELOP A  
GROWTH  
MINDSET**

## **THIS VIDEO EXPLAINS ALOT**

We are sharing a video by Playmobile that explains COVID-19. Check it out and let us know what other questions you have.

The next page has some more information to kickstart ideas on how to care from home..







## WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS?

To see coronavirus you need a microscope. It is a round particle with spikes that look like crowns. It can enter into your body through your nose, mouth, or eye. Strains of coronavirus infect lots of people every year but what makes this coronavirus different is that it first infected an animal and then mutated to become a human coronavirus that scientists and doctors have not seen before. It can cause a fever, cough, and even loss of smell. Kids' immune systems fight the coronavirus powerfully - so well that you may be sick and not even know it! You can still spread the virus even if you don't feel sick. That is why school is closed. We can protect people whose immune systems are not as strong by washing our hands and practicing **social distancing**.

S<sub>1</sub> O<sub>1</sub> C<sub>3</sub> I<sub>1</sub> A<sub>1</sub> L<sub>1</sub>

D<sub>2</sub> I<sub>1</sub> S<sub>1</sub> T<sub>1</sub> A<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> C<sub>3</sub> I<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> G<sub>2</sub>

## WHY IS IT SO SERIOUS?

Coronavirus has turned into a **pandemic** because the virus is very **contagious**. That means it has spread all over the world. People in other countries are doing the same thing that we are - staying home to stop the spread. Scientists will find a medicine that will help people but that takes time. While we wait, we need to keep too many people from getting sick so that the doctors and nurses can have enough masks and energy to help those who need supplies and care right now.

## WHEN WILL IT END?

There is no set timeline. Each State Governor will decide when and how we move back to social activities. This is not the first coronavirus or pandemic we have ever had. We can read about past diseases like the Black Plague and the Spanish Flu to understand how our ancestors faced uncertain times. There will be an end to this in the future.

**ACTION IDEA: WRITE A LETTER OR DRAW A PICTURE TO SEND TO YOUR GOVERNOR, FAVORITE AUTHOR, TEACHER, OR FRONTLINE WORKER. ADVOCACY AND GRATITUDE IS CARING.**

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

When life is disrupted we can feel big emotions. That is why people around us might use the word "stressed" or "worried." Parents, teachers, government leaders, and kids are united in navigating new ways of learning, sharing, and working. All of us are citizens and in that role, we can practice resilience, empathy, and connection to best care for ourselves, our families, our community, and our planet.

**ACTION IDEA: DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS. LEARNING IS CARING.**

**ACTION IDEA: ADD AN EXTRA CHORE TO YOUR LIST. FAMILIES ARE JUGGLING MORE TO-DOS THAN USUAL. HELPING IS CARING.**

**ACTION IDEA: BE CREATIVE AND SHARE YOUR CREATIVITY WITH OTHERS TO SPREAD JOY. SHARING IS CARING.**



# Brainstorming Wall

## GROUP DISCUSSION TO FORM IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS

A brainstorming session or thinking session creates a visual to express ideas, thoughts, feelings, assumptions, and more. Big brands, authors, and musicians often start with a wall of sticky notes to kickstart creativity and find solutions.



## PICK A FOCUS

**STEP ONE** in this project is to pick a focus.

COMPASSION: (kəm'pəSHən) is the pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others.

- OR -

GRATITUDE: (gradə,t(y)ōd) is the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

## PICK A RECIPIENT

**STEP TWO** in this project is to pick a recipient.

You can make a wall for

- A family member
- Teacher
- Nonprofit or a cause
- The Planet
- Your Pet

You can do this project solo, with your family, or on a virtual call with friends.



## Tips for Successful Brainstorming

- No judgments - no one should be negative about an idea
- Imagine freely - no ideas are too wild, silly, or impossible.
- The more ideas, the better!
- Many thinkers are better than one..



## EXAMPLE: HUNGER RELIEF

EXAMPLE of BRAINSTORMING PROMPTS for HUNGER:  
 what is food insecurity?  
 what is a food bank?  
 what does a food bank do?  
 how do they receive funding and who receives food?  
 how can we safely help the food bank while in isolation?



## RESEARCH A CAUSE

COVID-19 has put an extra spotlight on a number of social issues that are experiencing more demand and strain. To think deeper your wall might include

- historical facts
- notorious people who helped that cause
- overview of current strain
- other causes that overlap
- local organizations working for that cause



## REFLECTION

How do you feel about the ways you can safely help others by advocating for a cause?

What are you grateful for?

-How do you feel when you see all these thoughts together?



# CARE HARD

Check out what other kids from Team Care Hard are doing from home!



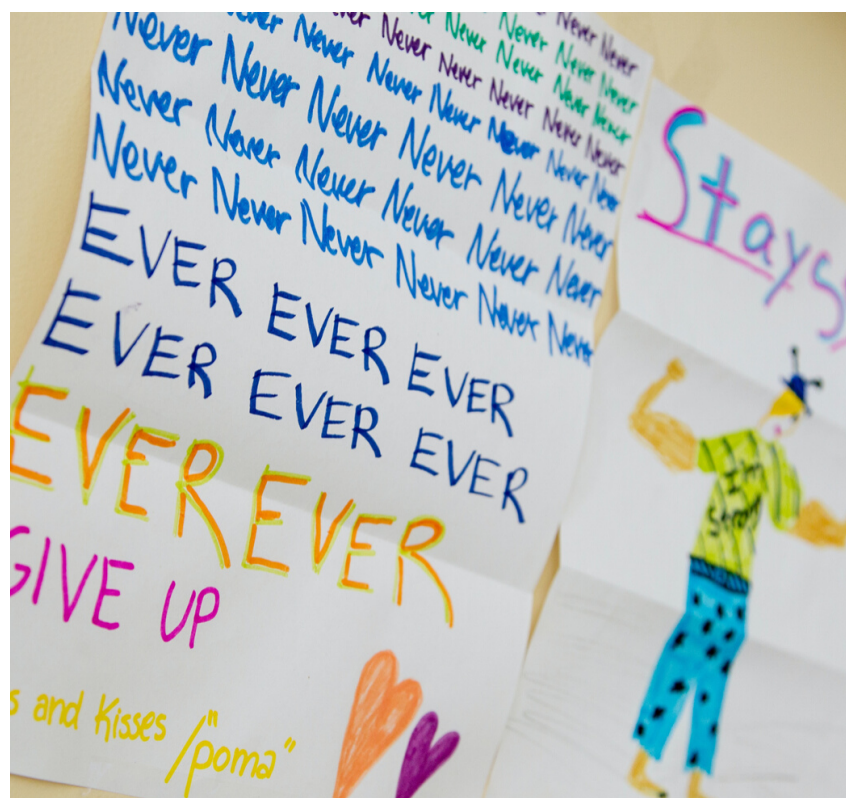
## KINDNESS GARDEN

Connect with nature by taking a walk and collecting leaves, tree bark, and rocks. Paint on them with uplifting words or images. Use those, a small planter, and some dirt to make a mini garden. Place it in your front yard so that people walking by can see messages from your family to theirs.

## SNAIL MAIL

Write cards or draw pictures and send them to seniors in assisted living homes, first responders, relatives, classmates, teachers, and friends.

This can also be a neighborhood project. Have your child write positive notes to neighbors to inspire a pen pal. This can create a daily or weekly routine for children to get excited to check their mail and remain connected with their peers.







## **CHALK THE WALK**

Create entertainment and joy for your neighbors by adding chalk art to your sidewalk. Write kind messages, create interactive games like hopscotch, or draw a circle and write, "do something silly here."

## **THANK YOU'S + SUPPORT LOCAL**

Purchase gift cards to local restaurants to keep them afloat, then use them in a few months. Or, give them as gifts right now, along with a thank you card, to essential workers (grocery cashiers, first-responders, mail carriers, nurses, caregivers, teachers, etc.).

## **STAY CONNECTED**

Find ways to connect virtually while practicing social distancing. Check out our YOUTUBE channel for a sweet video of The Kitchen Cub baking over video chat with her grandma. Play card games, like Go Fish or checkers with friends using the playingcards.io platform. Plan dance parties with your classmates, friends, and family.



# MINDFULNESS, SELF CARE + MOVEMENT



As we continue to adapt to drastic lifestyle changes, we should make time for mindfulness. "Anything that helps everyone take a moment to slow down, stay present, and come together." - David Anderson, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute.

Here are some activities you can do individually or as a family to help everyone feel less anxious:

- Practice Yoga - Cosmic Kids + If I Was a Bird Yoga are offering free virtual classes.
- Take a Walk: Focus on the way the air feels, the sound of the birds, and the smell of the trees.
- Squeeze Muscles: Starting at your toes, pick one muscle and squeeze it tight. Count to five. Release and notice how your body changes. Repeat exercise moving up your body.
- Belly Breathing: Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Slowly breathe in from your stomach (expand like a balloon) and slowly breathe out (deflate).
- Meditation: Sit in a relaxed, comfortable position. Pick something to focus on, like your breath. When your mind wanders, bring your attention back to your breath.
- Blow Bubbles: Notice their shapes, textures, and colors.
- Color: Color something. Focus on the colors and designs.
- Listen to Music: Focus on the whole song, or listen specifically to the voice or an instrument.

# GRATITUDE

30 DAYS, 30 RESPONSES, 30 CELEBRATIONS

In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships. - Harvard Health Publishing



## CREATIVE WAYS TO BE GRATEFUL

- Journal your answers.
- Decorate a jar and then fill it each day with your responses written on scrap papers.
- Make a thankful tree - get an empty jar, fill with twigs (like a bouquet), cut leaves from colored paper to write down responses, punch a hole in one end of each leaf, tie each leaf to a branch using a piece of string

1, 2, 3, 4.....

01

*Today I am grateful for...*

02

*What I love about my family...*

03

*I am thankful for my health because...*

04

**I am thankful for food because...**





# I SPY WITH MY LITTLE EYE....



Mindfulness can be introduced to younger children by directing their attention to things in their environment with a simple game of I Spy.

Help them create their own binoculars and then search for the I-spy items in the house and on a neighborhood walk. Have them record what they spy by checking off on the spy sheet.

## **DIY Binocular Materials:**

- Round binoculars
- toilet paper rolls
- paper towel rolls
- paper cups
- plastic cups
- roll up paper/cardboard

Design with whatever you have at home: Paint, glitter, beads, string, ribbon, markers, etc. To put the rolls together, you can use glue, tape, paperclips, or stapler.

While playing the game, instruct your child to pay attention to the sensations. This could include the feeling of the ground beneath them, of the wind or breeze, the warmth of the sun, even the way their body feels while in motion. Then spend one minute together quietly listening to the sounds around you. Such mindfulness practices slow the thoughts racing through our minds simply by practicing to take time, note, and observe each thought.

The goal is for children to apply this mindfulness technique whenever they need to calm themselves and refocus their energy and attention. - Joy Francisco, Ph.D.

## **ENJOY CREATING AND PLAYING TOGETHER!**



# EYE SPY - OUTDOOR SEARCH

I spy three different types of TREES \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I spy four DIFFERENT FLOWERS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I spy something I LOVE \_\_\_\_\_

I spy two ANIMALS \_\_\_\_\_

I spy something FUZZY \_\_\_\_\_

I spy two BLUE things \_\_\_\_\_

I spy three different INSECTS \_\_\_\_\_

I spy two things that are GREEN \_\_\_\_\_

I spy two things that LIGHT UP \_\_\_\_\_

I spy five WEEDS to help pull (check off)

\_\_\_\_\_

I spy six MAILBOXES (check off)

\_\_\_\_\_

I spy four people to wave and say "HELLO" (check off)

\_\_\_\_\_

# EYE SPY - INSIDE SEARCH

I spy three RED things \_\_\_\_\_

I spy four CIRCLES \_\_\_\_\_

I spy something I LOVE \_\_\_\_\_

I spy two things to JUMP OVER \_\_\_\_\_

I spy something FUZZY \_\_\_\_\_

I spy two things that are SHINY \_\_\_\_\_

I spy two TRIANGLES \_\_\_\_\_

I spy something I can THROW AWAY \_\_\_\_\_

I spy two things that are GREEN \_\_\_\_\_

I spy two things that LIGHT UP \_\_\_\_\_

I spy something I can PUT AWAY (then put it away)

\_\_\_\_\_

I spy someone I CAN GIVE A HUG! \_\_\_\_\_





## FREE WEB RESOURCES FOR KIDS

funbrain.org  
mrn365.com  
brainpop.com  
gonoodle.com  
greatminds.com  
almanac.com/kids  
chopchopfamily.org  
thekidzpage.com  
freekidsbooks.org  
learninggamesforkids.com  
keyboarding - Lwtears.com  
YouTube - LUNCH DOODLES  
YouTube - Cosmic Kids Yoga  
YouTube - Eat The Frog PE Workout  
Virtual Zoom Games -PlayingCards.io  
zoo.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams

## PODCASTS FOR KIDS

- Brains on! Staying home: How social distancing helps fight coronavirus
- The Story Seeds
- Wow in the World
- The Past and the Curious: A History Podcast for Kids
- Tumble Science Podcast for Kids
- TED Kids & Family
- Story Pirates
- Barefoot Books
- Storynory



In this time of uncertainty, we send your family well wishes for good health, positive thoughts, and lots of love.

- The Inlight Team



CONNECT WITH US!

# Inlight Institute

INLIGHTINSTITUTE.ORG

[instagram.com/inlightinstitute](https://www.instagram.com/inlightinstitute)  
[fb.com/inlightinstitute.org](https://www.facebook.com/inlightinstitute.org)

We are a registered 501(c)3 EIN #83-1858571