

## Dakota County Well-Being Resources

**We are experiencing a global but time-limited experience from which many great things will be learned. We are in this together which will be very uniting!**

### Facts and Tips for Helping Children, Adults, Friends, and Family

- ❖ Both adults and young people are very resilient. Our brains are made to adapt; and they do.
- ❖ Tell young people that adults will take care of things and express optimism about the future. Together, we can solve tough problems.
- ❖ Clearly communicate which things that will not change in their world. Ensure families are connected to the local resources to meet their basic needs.
- ❖ When distressed, the brain constantly scans for threats; eliminate uncertainty which contributes to anxiety and fear.
- ❖ As caring adults, our role is to demonstrate to young people that they are safe and cared about. The intention you commit to in supporting young people during this time may be one of the most significant legacies you leave. The memories you help instill in the minds of the young people may stay with them throughout their lives.
- ❖ Model problem solving, flexibility, compassion, kindness, and the capacity for personal growth. Create thank you art and drop it off to local COVID-heroes.
- ❖ During times of distress we have a strong need to be heard. Assure young people you hear their concerns, reflect back what you heard, and communicate what actions you will take to try to address the issues that are raised.
- ❖ Our brains want to take action; encourage young people to carry out random acts of kindness. Research is clear that when we show kindness, our brains feel better too.
- ❖ The brain likes structure; partner with young people to prepare monthly, weekly, and daily schedules. Coordinate virtual play dates, game nights, visit museums and enjoy the arts.
- ❖ Reinforce that it's okay to ask for help; and, it's okay to not be okay. These new acquired resiliency skills may offer comfort young people can draw upon throughout their lives.

### School Connection Ideas

- ❖ Ensure that all messages reinforce belongingness to this school community.
- ❖ Prepare activities which cultivate engagement and provide safe opportunities to express and identify emotions and/ thoughts.
- ❖ Provide a variety of opportunities for students to contribute to cultivating a resilient school community and optimism about the future.
- ❖ Promote journal activities:
  - *Every day describe one thing I've learned during this time (pandemic) about myself, your family, my community, the world.*
  - *Describe how I can make meaning from these experiences.*
  - *Describe 3 things each day that I am grateful for.*
  - *Describe how we are succeeding collectively during this time.*
- ❖ "(School name or mascot) Strong!" – Families create signs and hang them in their windows; families go on hunts to see how many signs they can find in their neighborhood.

- ❖ Build rewards and play into everyday; especially savor time outdoors, go forest bathing. Savor simple, positive experiences.

### **Parent Tips to Build Stress Resilience – MidWest Center for Personal & Family Development**

- ❖ Validate feelings, express your appreciation on how they are handling their challenges
- ❖ Empower your children to build their own problem-solving skills
- ❖ Talk about your own emotions and model your problem-solving skills
- ❖ Utilize virtual resources, go to [www.co.dakota.mn.us](http://www.co.dakota.mn.us): click on the COVID banner at the top
- ❖ Prioritize regular sleep routines, collect and charge everyone's devices every night
- ❖ Challenge your perfectionism - chill out and praise yourself for trying
- ❖ Don't be afraid to reach out to your child's teacher and/or counselor, they are available to you
- ❖ Remember, the most successful people in life are those that ask for help
- ❖ Finally, be comforted knowing that children surrounded by love and support have remarkable strength and hardiness

### **Parent Resources**

- ❖ [Child Mind Institute](#)
- ❖ [COVID-19 Community Resources for Children and Families](#)
- ❖ [COVID-19 Healthy Living, Mindfulness, and Stress Relief](#)
- ❖ [Digital Guidelines: Promoting Healthy Technology Use for Children](#)
- ❖ [Guide to Well-Being During Coronavirus](#)
- ❖ [Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting from COVID-19](#)
- ❖ [Keep Calm and Provide Structure for Children](#)
- ❖ Well-being Apps: Calm; Headspace; Mindshift; Pacifica; Stop Breath & Think
- ❖ [Youth or Adult Mental Health First Aid Classes](#)

### **Student Resources**

- ❖ [1000 Petals](#)
- ❖ [Change to Chill: Stay Calm During Uncertainty](#)
- ❖ [House Party app](#)
- ❖ [Kids for Peace](#)
- ❖ [Kindness is All Around Us](#)
- ❖ [Random Acts of Kindness](#)
- ❖ [UNICEF Kid Power](#)
- ❖ [Want to Know How to Help a Friend?](#)