

May 28, 2020



Parent Panel Webinar

At Home with Kids During COVID

Our Mission

- To cultivate strong families across Minnesota by **connecting them with one another** for **support** and **information** so they become **empowered advocates** **improving health and quality of life** for their children and youth with special health care needs and disabilities.



Who We Are

- **Seven staff members and 180+ trained volunteer support parents throughout the state of Minnesota**

*Community of families raising children with a variety of extra needs
(medical, developmental, mental, behavioral)*



- Supportive network of parents who understand the triumphs, challenges and emotions involved in this unique parenting journey.
- A shared wealth of perspectives and experiences navigating systems
- Parent leaders and advocates bringing their expertise to the systems that serve them and mentoring future leaders.

What We Do



Staff available 9 AM – 4 PM,
Monday – Friday



1:1 Parent Matches



Parent Groups



Webinars



Resources



Family Leadership



Partnerships with organizations & professionals

At Home With Kids During Covid

Parent Panel Webinar

- **Medical Care | Preparedness**
– *Jamie O’Conner*
- **Learning at Home**
– *Courtney Kruse*
- **Mental and Behavioral Impacts**
– *Terri Boettcher*



Jamie O'Conner

Jamie@familyvoicesmn.org

- Parent to two kids (9 yo & 7 yo)
 - daughter has a rare genetic condition
- Outreach Coordinator for Family Voices of MN

Medical Care During COVID-19

Staying Well During COVID-19



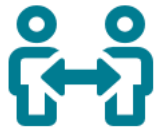
Know how it spreads



Wash your hands often



Cover coughs and sneezes



Avoid Close Contact



Clean and disinfect



Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth
face cover when around others



Monitor your health

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>



Emergency Planning

Tools

- [AAP Emergency Information Form for Children with Special Needs](#)

Information

- [Ten COVID-19 Preparations to do RIGHT NOW for Medically Complex Families](#)

Communication

- Work with your child's providers



General Preparedness

Where will you go?


- Virus related care vs. other care
- Adult vs. Child
- Is telehealth an option?

Who?

- Which adult will accompany the child?
- Who can stay with other children at home?

What to expect when you arrive?

- Research your family's medical providers' response to pandemic
- You may need to call ahead



Clinics & Hospitals

Some families are
afraid to seek care

Emergency, Primary
and Other Care are
important to the well-
being of our families

What hospitals and clinics are doing to keep patients and visitors safe

- Designating sterile and respiratory clinics
- Wellness screens when entering the clinic
- Providing cloth masks
- Regular intensive cleaning and disinfecting
- Staff wellness monitoring
- Staff Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Designating well visit hours and sick visit hours (with cleanings in between)
- Zoning ER waiting rooms into respiratory and non-respiratory
- Virtual visits (telehealth) including mental health
- Phone or virtual screening
- Sharing updated information on ways to avoid exposure (hand-washing, no face touching, social distancing, stay at home, wear masks when unable to socially distance)
- Parent Help Lines
- Enhanced visitor guidelines (limiting number, wellness screens, masks)
- Social distancing using floor decals and rearranged seating in waiting areas



Surgeries & Procedures

Some non-essential and elective surgeries and procedures have resumed

- Whether and when this is safe is determined by YOU and YOUR CHILD'S PROVIDER
- Research your clinic's precautions and ask questions
- Assess additional risk due to COVID-19 with your child's physician

Telehealth

- What is it?
 - The provision of healthcare remotely by means of telecommunications technology
 - Secure virtual appointments
 - Phone may be an option
- What Does it Cover
 - Medical
 - Mental Health / Behavioral
 - Therapies (OT, ST, PT)
 - Other



Telehealth Resources

- Telehealth tips from family organizations
- Pediatrician guidance on telehealth
- Videos to help prepare for and understand telehealth visits
- Preparing for therapy visits via telehealth
- Details about actions and policies
- Do I have to pay for telehealth? Summary of what is covered by public and private payors.

[Resource E-Blast from Family Voices National: COVID-19 Telehealth Tips](#)



Practice Through Play

- Wearing a mask at home to play or putting one on a doll
- Using visuals or creating mental images for physical distancing
- Videos of other people
 - using personal protective equipment (ppe)
 - practicing social distancing
 - refusing handshakes and other social gestures
- Pretend Play
- Promote understanding through developmentally appropriate materials
 - Limit and monitor access to news

Resources To Help Kids Understand “The Virus”

- [Trinka and Sam Fighting the Big Virus: Trinka, Sam and Littletown Work Together](#)— From the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, this book helps young children and families talk about their experiences and feelings related to COVID-19 and the need to shelter in place. In the story, the coronavirus has spread to Littletown causing changes in everyone’s lives. The story opens doors to conversations about COVID-19, ways that families and communities are working together to keep safe from the virus, family and community strengths, common challenges and reactions in children and adults, ways that families support children and each other, and our intense gratitude for frontline workers. A caregiver guide is available in the back of the book that provides ways parents can use the story with their children. A companion story, [Fighting the Big Virus: Trinka’s and Sam’s Questions](#), for how to answer children’s questions about the virus is also available.
- [Talking to Children About COVID-19](#)— National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) offer a parent resource on talking to children about COVID-19 (Coronavirus).
- [Tips for Caregivers, Parents, and Teachers During Infectious Disease Outbreaks](#)— Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration PDF.
- [Helping Kids Cope with the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)— News article by Mayo Clinic.
- [Just For Kids: A Comic Exploring The New Coronavirus](#)— It’s based on a radio story that NPR education reporter Cory Turner did. He asked some experts what kids might want to know about the new coronavirus discovered in China.
- [Supporting Kids During the Coronavirus](#)— Here are tips from the Child Mind Institute’s clinicians to help calm fears, manage stress and keep the peace.
- [The Yucky Bug](#)— Written by Julia Cook and illustrated by some great kids at Emerson Elementary School.
- [Wash Your Lyrics](#)— Generate hand washing infographics based on your favorite song.

Additional Telehealth Resources

- [**Connecting with Children and Adolescents via Telehealth During COVID-19**](#): Advice for child and adolescent psychologists by the American Psychological Association (APA).
- [**State Medicaid & CHIP Telehealth Toolkit**](#)– Released by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) with a focus on pediatric considerations, including the impact of HIPAA, FERPA, IDEA, and age-of-consent laws. The Toolkit includes a checklist of policy questions intended to serve as a tool for states to assess telehealth in their state. More about the toolkit: [**CMS Releases Telehealth Toolkit with Special Emphasis on Pediatrics**](#) (Georgetown Center for Children and Families blog, 4/23/2020).

Courtney Kruse

courtneykruse@gmail.com

Classically Homeschooling Mom of 4 Boys
6 Year Old With Down Syndrome, Public School





Learning At Home



Impossible?

Unique opportunities!

- Look for the positives
- Home with your family
- Master skills and hobbies
- Curiosity
- Creativity
- Time for improving relationships



Debunking the Myths

Myth: I could NEVER homeschool my children.

Truth: Any parent with strong love for their child can participate in their child's education.

Myth: I am not qualified.

Truth: Your love for your child qualifies you as their teacher. When we love someone, we sacrifice for them.

Homeschooling vs. Distance Learning



Distance Learning

Parent not in control of
schedule or material

Homeschooling

Parent decides schedule and material

Confidently Communicate

Make distance learning work for your child.



What are my choices?

- Public School- Full time. Part time.
- Homeschool + opt-in to an individual class \$
- Online school/ home based charter programs
- Homeschooling on your own \$
- Private Schools \$\$\$\$
- Homeschool Co-ops \$
- Homeschool Communities \$\$



How?

What does my child need to know?

Educate yourself: Check out my favorite resources

Methods

Curriculum: Temporary and Long Term

Library, Online, YouTube

Tips and Tricks

Planning
Time

Morning
Meeting

Expectations

Schedules

Lists

Youngest
First

PE is NOT
and elective

Resources

- Homeschool Teacher Practicum: 1st steps: Deschooling <https://www.thehomeschoolmom.com/school-homeschool-what-is-deschooling/>
- Homeschooling laws in Minnesota: <https://hsllda.org/legal/minnesota>
- The Classical model of education. <https://members.classicalconversations.com/classical/what-is-classical-education>
- Gordon Neufeld psychologist whose expertise is in attachment through all of childhood. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIMkWJY5T_w
- Notebooking as a SIMPLE no-curriculum temporary method of learning at home. <https://www.theunlikelyhomeschool.com/2014/06/notebooking-101-what-and-why-of.html>
- Limited free Audiobooks from Audible: <https://stories.audible.com/discovery>
- Why read aloud? <https://www.thecurriculumchoice.com/read-aloud-homeschool/>
- Importance of Read Alouds. Check out the podcast! <https://readaloudrevival.com/most-important/>
- Teaching From Rest: <https://www.amazon.com/Teaching-Rest-Homeschoolers-Guide-Unshakable/dp/1600512879>
- Resources for Families At Home: <http://familyvoicesofminnesota.org/resources-for-families-at-home/>
- Printable worksheets: <https://www.mathfactcafe.com/>
- Full free online math program: Many homeschoolers use this as their main curriculum. I have used it myself during the summer or when I was between curriculum or when my little one with DS was more medically intense and I needed a break. <https://www.khanacademy.org/>
- Free online charter program that provides parents with a mentor who works with you to make an educational plan that fits your child. <https://ventureupward.org/>



COVID 19 and Mental Health

Terri Boettcher

terri@familyvoicesmn.org





Outbreaks can be stressful

- COVID-19 is stressful
- Fear and anxiety are overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children.

Common Signs of Stress and Anxiety in Adults

Feelings of numbness, disbelief, anxiety or fear.

Changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels.

Difficulty concentrating.

Difficulty sleeping or nightmares and upsetting thoughts and images.

- Falling asleep or staying asleep

Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes.

Worsening of chronic health problems.

Anger or short-temper.

Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.

Stress and Anxiety in Kids

- Excessive Crying or “Neediness”
- Regression
 - Toilet accidents, bedwetting, thumb sucking, baby talk
- Excessive worry
- Changes in eating/sleeping
- Unexplained pain or headache
- Increase in frequency or intensity of tantrums or rages
- Use of alcohol or drugs

THE EMOTIONAL CUP

Imagine that every child has a cup that needs to be filled -- with affection, love, security, and attention. Some seem to have a full cup most of the time, or know good ways to get a refill. But most children get a little nervous when their cup gets near empty.

Some ways that children deal with having an empty cup:

- steal from other people's cups
- misbehave to get your attention and show that they need a refill
- seem to have bottomless cups, or need constant 'topping off'
- can't sit still for refills or actively refuse them
- bounce off the walls when they approach 'empty'
- think they have to fight or compete for every refill

What fills a child's cup:

- play
- friendship
- one-on-one time
- love and affection
- connection
- succeeding
- doing what they love to do or what they choose to do



What empties the cup:

- stress and strain
- rejection by peers
- loneliness and isolation
- yelling and punishment
- failing
- fatigue
- doing what they're forced to do or they hate to do

Supporting Kids

Remain

- Remain calm

Be

- Be available

Avoid

- Avoid language where blames leads to stigma

Pay

- Pay attention to what they watch/listen too (radio, tv, social media)

Be

- Be honest and accurate

Teach

- Teach them to be proactive



Caregiver Burnout

- If the stress of caregiving is left unchecked, it can take a toll on your health, relationships, and state of mind—eventually leading to burnout, a state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion. And when you get to that point, both you and the person you're caring for suffer.
- While caring for a loved one can be very rewarding, it also involves many stressors. And since caregiving is often a long-term challenge, the emotional impact can snowball over time. You may face years or even decades of caregiving responsibilities.

Ways to cope with stress



Stay informed.

Check sources

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

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.

Make a phone calls video chat,
send cards



Mindfulness activities

Mental Health Resources

- **Disaster Distress Helpline** SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline provides 24/7, 365-days-a-year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** **1-800-273-8255** or **Chat**
- Family Voices
 - www.familyvoicesmn.org
 - <http://familyvoicesofminnesota.org/resources-for-families-at-home/>
- CDC
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>
- Nami
 - www.nami.org
- Mn Dept of Health COVID-19 Response
 - <https://mn.gov/covid19/>
- Positive Psychology
 - <https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-exercises-techniques-activities/>
 - <https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-for-children-kids-activities/>

Questions/Comments

- **Jamie O'Conner**

- Jamie@familvoicesmn.org

- **Courtney Kruse**

- courtneykruse@gmail.com

- **Terri Boettcher**

- terri@familyvoicesmn.org

