



WORKING WITH KIDS THROUGH A CRISIS

Education and Resources

Normal Adolescent Behaviors

- Increased moodiness- irritability
- Increased self-consciousness and concern with physical appearance
- Increased dawdling/procrastinating
- Increased parent–adolescent conflict
- Experimentation with drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes
- Increased sense of invulnerability (may lead to increased sensation seeking or risk taking)
- Stressful transitions to middle and high school
- Increased argumentativeness, idealism, and criticism; being opinionated

Behavioral Warning Signs in Kids

Common Behavioral Changes in Kids During Crisis:

- Rapid mood swings
 - (intense, painful, long-lasting moods; risky mood-dependent behavior, major depression, or panic attacks; self-injury or suicidal thinking)
- Trouble sleeping/sleeping too much--nightmares
- Severe agitation/increased irritability--aggression
- Confused thinking or irrational thoughts
- Responses do not match the issue at hand (big response to small problem)
- Hallucinations/delusions/flashbacks
- Making threats to others or themselves
- Isolating themselves from friends and family/loss of interest in prior preferred activities
- Change in eating habits
- SI thoughts/statements



Why do I feel my child only acts out at home?!

- 2 main reasons it feels our kids act out at home:
 1. We are inconsistent with our rewards/consequences
 - Inconsistent parenting styles leads to confusion and the possibility to get their way if they continue to behave a certain way
 2. We are their SAFE zone.
 - Kids often try to hold it together in other areas of uncertainty and at home they know you love them no matter what behaviors they exhibit. This allows them to feel safe and not work as hard on “keeping it together”.

How do I make the outbursts stop??

- Learn new skills TOGETHER
- Make a point to let them see you model these skills
- VALIDATE
- Practice, practice, practice when you are NOT in a crisis



VALIDATION

What is validation?

- Validation is a parenting tool that lets your child know that you understand and accept their thoughts and feelings.

Why validate?

- Validation improves relationships by communicating that you are listening and understand.
- It can deescalate conflict and intense emotions.
- Validation can show that:
 - We are being nonjudgmental.
 - We care about the relationship.
 - We can disagree without having a big conflict.

How to validate your child



Make eye contact



Just LISTEN

Actively listen to your child before responding. This helps them feel heard.



Make a validating statement

“I understand why you are upset.”
“It makes sense that you would feel that way.”

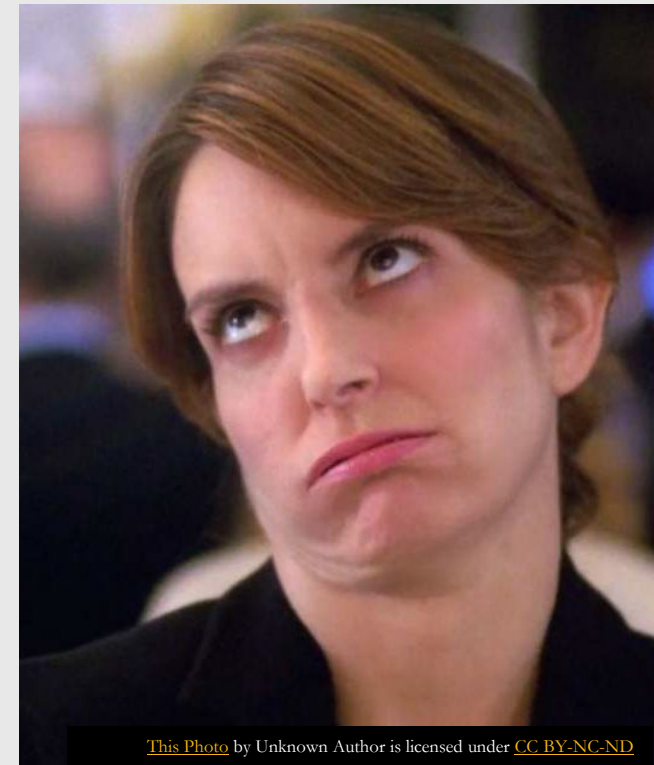


Validate the EMOTION behind the behaviors

Validating emotions does NOT mean we are approving the behaviors.

Invalidation

- Invalidation:
 - communicates (intentionally or not, through words or actions) that another person's feelings, thoughts, and actions in a particular situation make no sense, are "manipulative," or "stupid," or an "overreaction," or not worthy of your time, interest, or respect.
 - Examples of invalidation:
 - Verbal Invalidation examples:
 - "Don't be sad, there is no reason to be sad."
 - "It's not that bad."
 - "Just let it go."
 - "It could be worse."
 - Non- verbal invalidation:
 - Eye rolling, ignoring, playing on your phone, leaving the room, etc.



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Rathus, Jill H. (2014). *DBT skills manual for adolescents*. New York :The Guilford Press

54321 Grounding Exercise

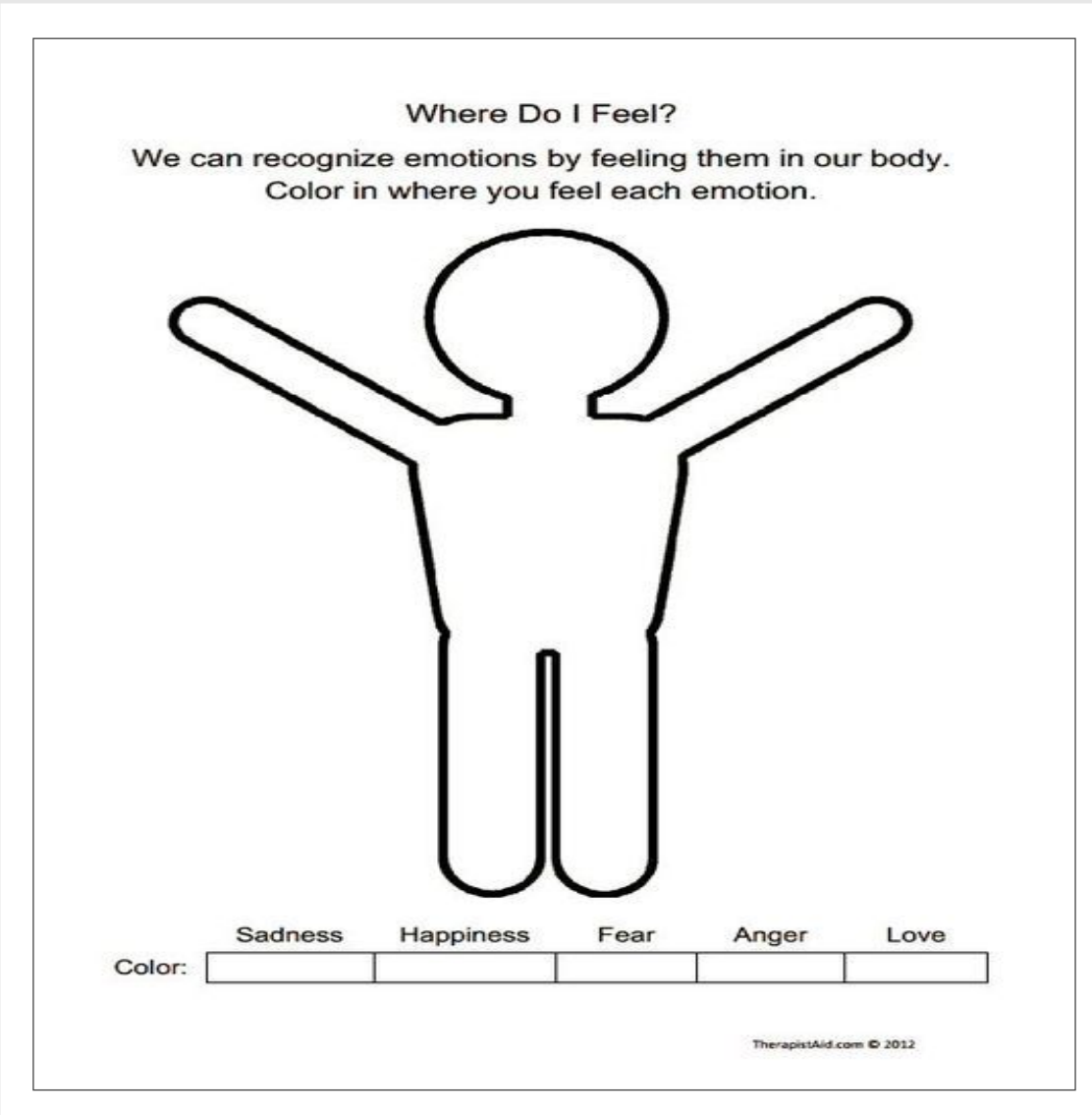


Skills for Parents and Children

- Grounding Exercises:
 - These are usually used in the moment, but PRACTICE when you are not in crisis.
 - Robot to Ragdoll
 - Tense your body like a robot and relax like a ragdoll
 - Lemon Squeezes
 - Squeeze your hands really tight like you're juicing a lemon and slowly let go of the tension
 - Chair pulls
 - Squeeze the sides of your chair really tight and slowly let go of the tension
 - Explore your 5 senses
 - Find something around you that you see, hear, smell, taste and feel
 - I Spy
 - Choose a color or another descriptor that the child likes and play I Spy until we are calm

Skills for Parents and Children Cont.

- Identifying emotions and planning skills in advance:
 - Feelings thermometer
 - Create a thermometer and write different emotions they feel. Create a corresponding “skills sheet”. When client is “in the yellow” or “in the orange” they have a predetermined skill to utilize to remain calm.
 - Where do I feel this in my body?
 - Have child color or circle where and what they feel in their body when they are starting to become upset.
 - Use this regularly to help them notice “warning signs”.
 - What emotions am I feeling today?
 - Draw a big circle. Choose a few colors to represent various emotions. Draw/color/scribble in the circle each emotion they are feeling. Explore this with them as they are coloring to help them be in tune with their emotions.



Anger in Children

Anger can produce negative behaviors.

- This makes it difficult not to respond with anger.
- USE A SKILL to calm yourself first.

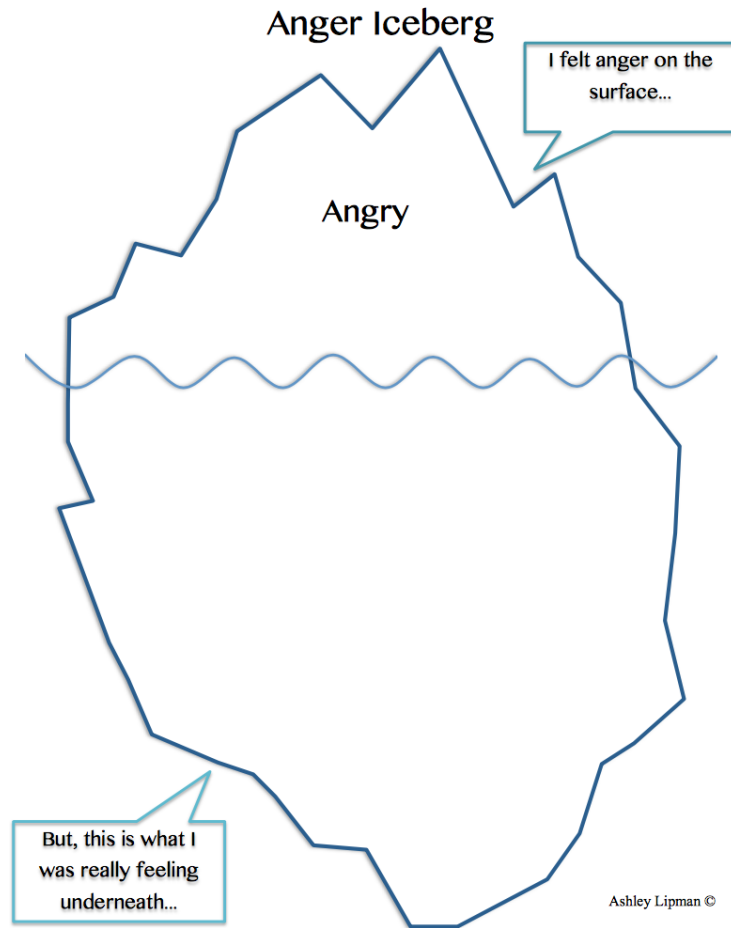
Anger is what we call a secondary emotion.

- Anger protects us from being vulnerable.
- This means that we are SHOWING anger as a protective mechanism when we are FEELING a different emotion behind that.

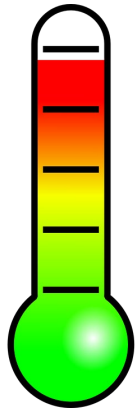
Stay calm and explore the emotion behind the anger.

- Remember: the behaviors we are seeing are maladaptive skills.
- Help them implement new skills.

The Anger Iceberg

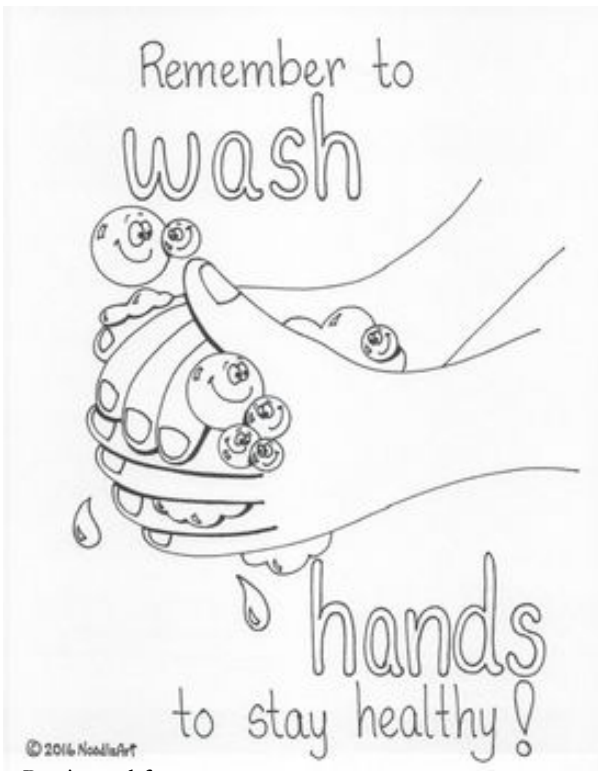


- This is a great tool for exploring and explaining anger to kids!
- How it works:
 - Anger is the top/tip of the iceberg and what everyone can see.
 - What is UNDER the iceberg is much bigger, similar to our emotions under our anger.
 - This is a good tool to explore anger and what other emotions are impacting the child.



TIPP Skills- Crisis Survival Skill for Adolescents

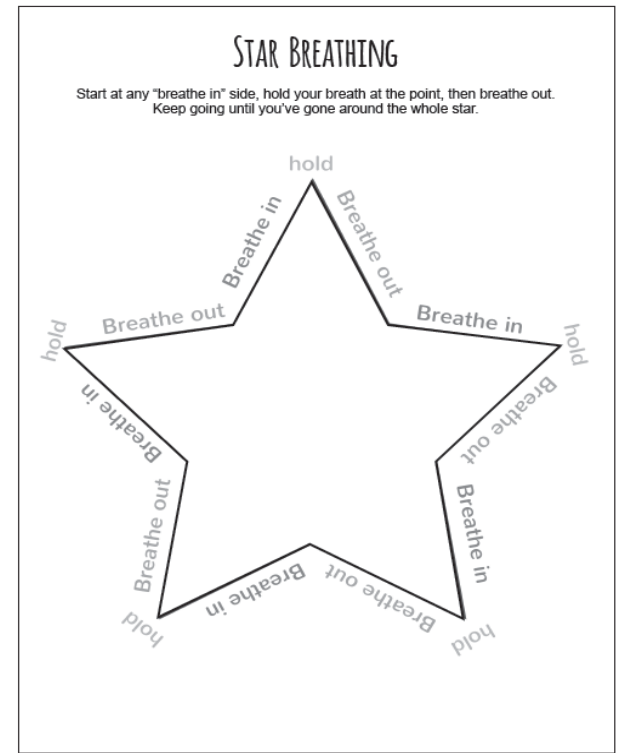
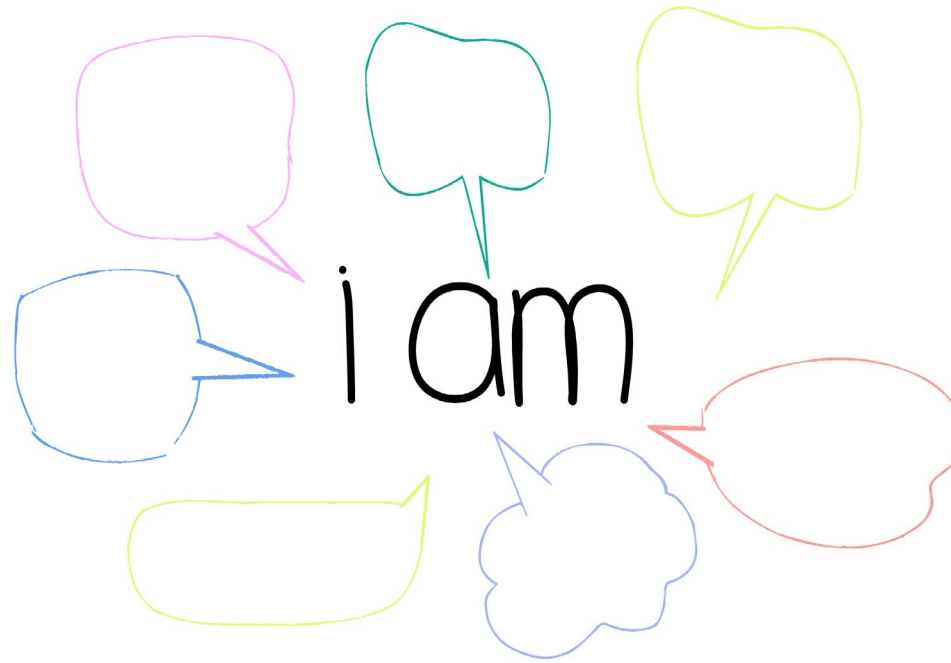
- TIPP your body chemistry with:
 - **Temperature**
 - Alter your body temperature by splashing cold water on your face or place a cold gel mask on your eyes or forehead. Hold for at least 30 seconds.
 - **Intense exercise**
 - Run in place, do a high-intensity weight circuit, jump, put on music and dance, or do jumping jacks (10–15 minutes).
 - **Paced breathing**
 - Slow down your breath so that you're breathing in for about 4 seconds and out for 5–8 seconds. Do this for 1–2 minutes to bring down your arousal. Star breathing or belly breathing for younger kids!
 - **Progressive muscle relaxation**
 - Tense and relax each muscle group, head to toe, one muscle group at a time.



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MISCELLANEOUS TOOLS FOR KIDS

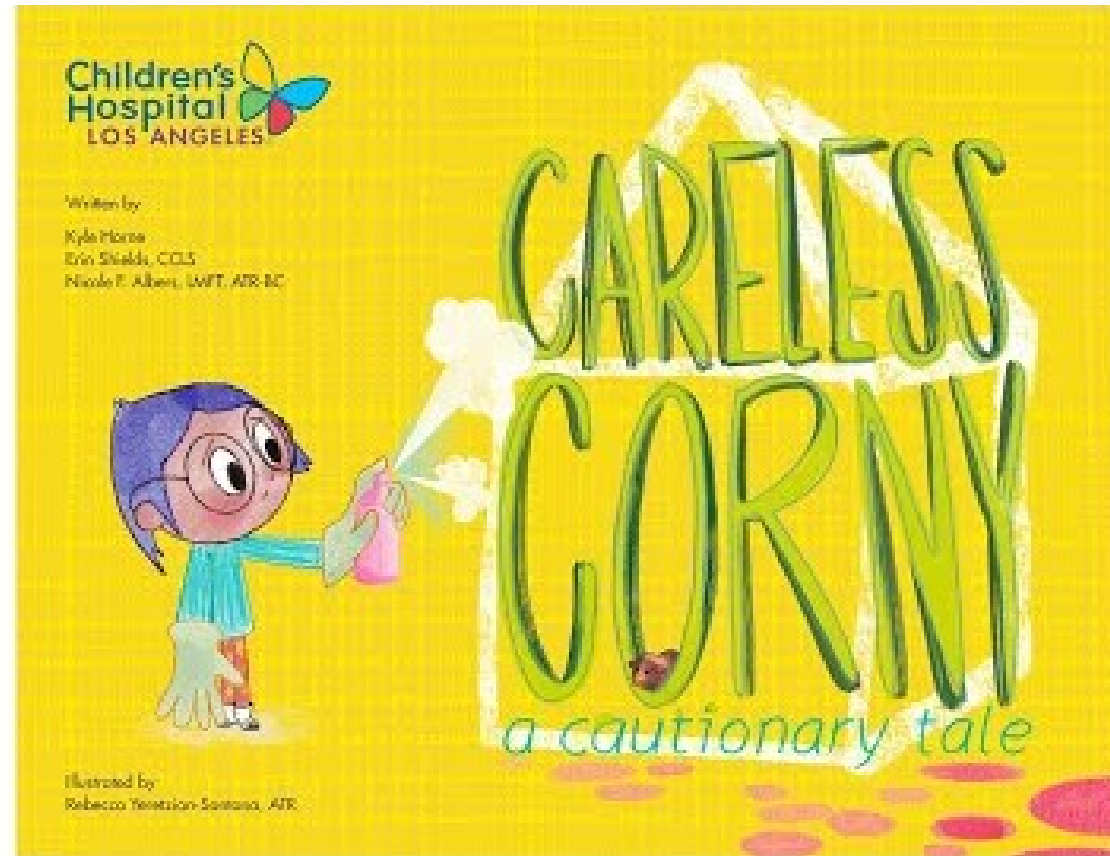
- Coronavirus coloring: can be a tool to help explain the importance of handwashing
- I am worksheet: helps to identify emotions/self-talk
- Star breathing: helps to soothe and calm



IDEAS TO TAKE A BREAK

Careless Cory: A Cautionary Tale

- This is a video of Natalie Portman reading a story explaining the Coronavirus for kids.
- Here is the PDF version of the book:
<https://www.chla.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/CHLA-Careless-Corny-Digital-Download-English-01.pdf>



TIME TO COME IN, BEAR



Click on the video to see a clip about social distancing

Helping Kids Understand COVID

- How can I explain it in their terms??
 - <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns-hopkins-childrens-center/patients-and-families/documents/covid-19-resources-for-families/what-is-coronavirus-siblings-english.pdf>
 - https://660919d3-b85b-43c3-a3ad-3de6a9d37099.filesusr.com/ugd/64c685_0a595408de2e4bfcbf1539dcf6ba4b89.pdf

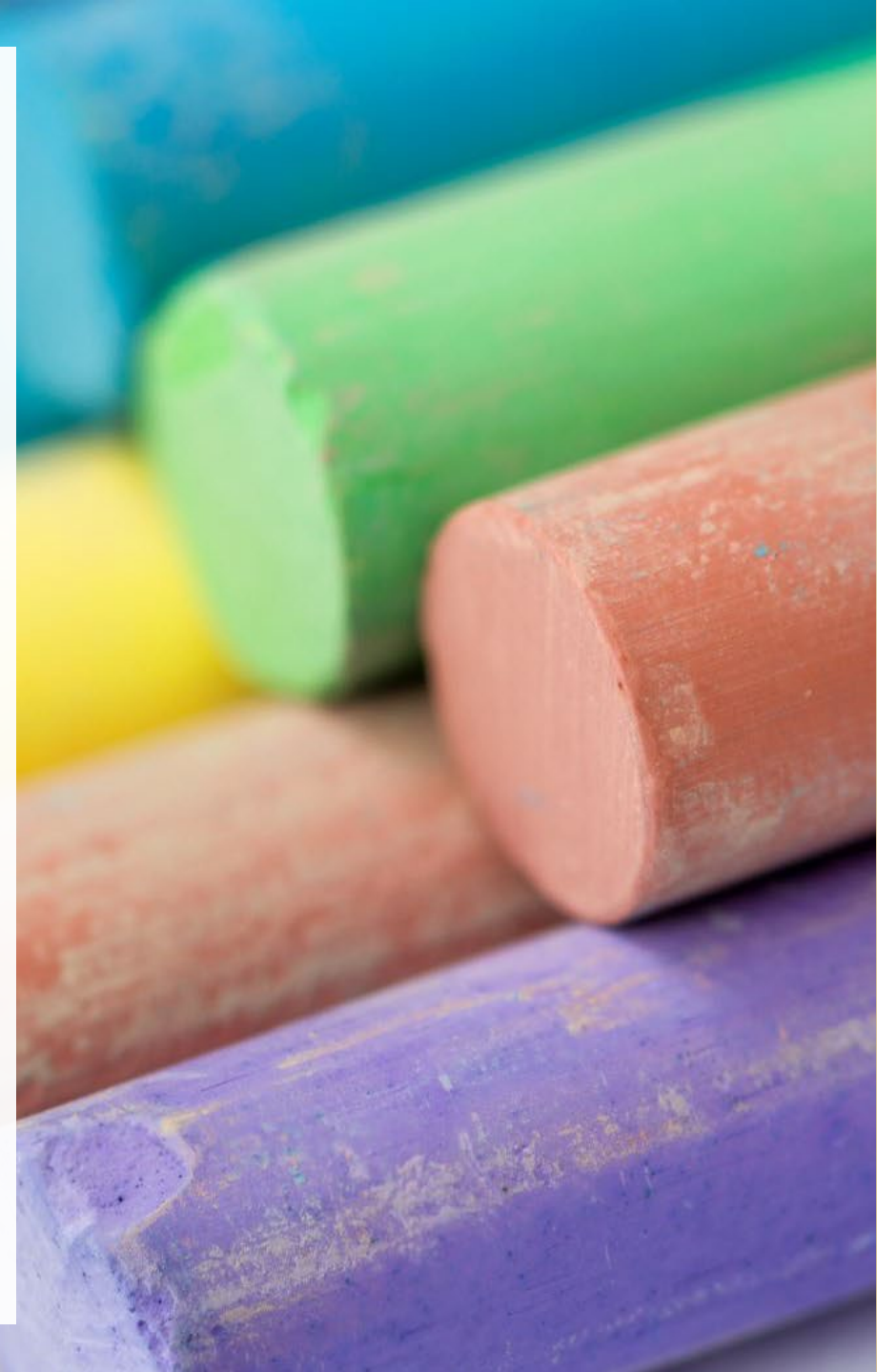
Helping Kids Understand COVID Cont.

- Why can't I see my family and friends??
 - <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns-hopkins-childrens-center/patients-and-families/documents/covid-19-resources-for-families/why-cant-i-visit-siblings-english.pdf>
- Tips and Tricks for talking to them about COVID
 - <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns-hopkins-childrens-center/patients-and-families/documents/covid-19-resources-for-families/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-covid19.pdf>
- Helping ease the nerves of testing
 - <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns-hopkins-childrens-center/patients-and-families/documents/covid-19-resources-for-families/pediatric-testing-materials.pdf>



Activities about COVID for Children

- COVID activity worksheet:
 - <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns-hopkins-childrens-center/patients-and-families/documents/covid-19-resources-for-families/activity-book-english.pdf>
- COVID Coloring page
 - https://www.childlife.org/docs/default-source/covid-19/coronavirus-coloring-pamphlet-us-version.pdf?sfvrsn=e9228a4d_2
- Coping with COVID Workbook
 - https://www.childlife.org/docs/default-source/covid-19/coping-with-covid-19-work-book-finalized.pdf?sfvrsn=315c8a4d_0
- COVID Time Capsule
 - <https://www.nbc4i.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/18/2020/04/COVID19-TIME-CAPSULE-3.pdf>



Ideas for Teens

- Explaining COVID to teens
 - https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns-hopkins-childrens-center/patients-and-families/_documents/covid-19-resources-for-families/covid19-teen-info-sheet.pdf
- Ideas to Combat Isolation
 - https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns-hopkins-childrens-center/patients-and-families/_documents/covid-19-resources-for-families/resources-combat-loneliness-boredom.pdf
- Rent Wifi or a laptop at your local St. Louis County Library!
- Warning signs to look for: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/Pages/Mental-Health-and-Teens-Watch-for-Danger-Signs.aspx>



Parent Support

- Local Supports: <https://united4children.org/covid-19/>
 - UMSL guide to daycare, food, diapers, etc.: <https://www.umsl.edu/studentsocialservices/COVID/parent-resource-center.html>
- Guide to Self-care: <https://childmind.org/article/self-care-in-the-time-of-coronavirus/>
 - **IMPORTANT:** if you are not taking care of YOU, you will not be able to adequately take care of your child!
- Remote learning:
 - Strategies: <https://childmind.org/remote-learning-resources-for-families/>
 - Resource list: <https://childmind.org/guide/family-resources-for-remote-learning/>
- NAMI Webinar for Parents: <https://www.namistl.org/event-registration/?ee=5880>

Mental Health Resources in the Area

- FREE therapy and/or psychiatry resources through Children's County Service Fund
 - <https://www.stlouisco.com/portals/8/docs/document%20library/Children%20Service%20Fund/COVID-19%20News/4-21-20%20Telehealth%20Flyer.pdf>
- Affordable Therapy at UMSL
 - Counseling for individuals, couples or families of all ages. In-person or telehealth available.
 - Call: 314-516-4613 or email: csac@umsl.edu
- Mental Health Services in the Region for ALL ages:
 - <https://www.startherestl.org/mental-health.html>

SHOW-ME
H  **PE**
MISSOURI

SHOW ME HOPE HELP LINE 314-747-7492

Have you been affected by
COVID-19?

We're Here to Listen

We are a federally funded crisis counseling program

Some of the things we offer include free:

Coping and resiliency skills education

Disaster preparedness and response education

Referrals to community resources

Additional Support Resources:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-8255

DHSS COVID-19 Hotline 877-435-8411 (24 Hours)

Disaster Distress Helpline 800-985-5990
Text "TalkWithUs" to 66746

BJC Behavioral Health

bjcbehavioralhealth.org

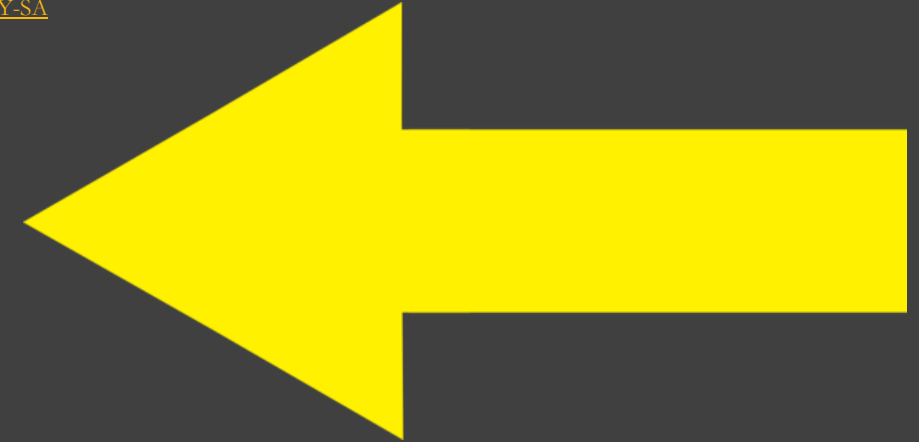
**HELP STOP
COVID-19**

DO THE FIVE

- 1 WASH YOUR HANDS**
- 2 COUGH IN YOUR ELBOW**
- 3 DON'T TOUCH YOUR FACE**
- 4 STAY 6 FEET APART**
- 5 FEEL SICK - STAY HOME**

**EMERGENCY
CRISIS
HOTLINE
314-469-6644
800-811-4760**

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Give us a call if
you have been
impacted by
COVID!