The responsibility of parents and caregivers are many, and these responsibilities can be even more overwhelming with the current state of our world and communities during this COVID-19 pandemic. We understand there are so many worries: employment, housing, food, and health, to name a few. We also understand these concerns cause stress. You are giving a lot. So now we ask, how do you fill your “well”? As you give yourself to your job, children, family, and other responsibilities, it is important that you refill your own “emotional well.” We have created this toolkit to give you resources to support your family, children, and YOU!
Communicating with Children about COVID-19

While this unprecedented time is confusing and uncertain for everyone, it is important to remember that young children in particular may have many questions that can be challenging for us as adults to answer. Being responsive to our children’s questions and educating them on what is going on can help keep their anxiety and challenging behaviors at bay.

- Talking to Kids about the Coronavirus (Child Mind Institute)
- Coronavirus: How to Talk to Kids (Nemours KidsHealth) **
- Answering Your Young Child's Questions about Coronavirus (ZERO TO THREE)
- Respuestas a las preguntas de su hijo pequeño sobre el coronavirus
- Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting From COVID-19 (NASP) - English, Spanish, Amharic, Chinese, Korean, French, Vietnamese

Activities to Help Children Understand COVID-19

In addition to talking about COVID-19 and responding to children’s questions, the following activities and books can be helpful in making this learning fun and age-appropriate.

- Health Emergency Activities (Sesame Street)
- COVID-19 Coloring Pamphlet (Child Life)
- COVID-19 Activity Books (Hopkins Medicine)
- "Dave the Dog is Worried about Coronavirus" Story Book (Nurse Dotty Books)
- "Something Strange Happened in my City" Story Book Video (Cal State University) **
- "The Germ Called Coronavirus: A Short Guide for Children" (Fernando Gonzalez III, LCSW)
  "El Germen Llamado Coronavirus: un guía para niños"
- "Why Can't I Go to School?: Editable School Closure Social Story (Abbi Kruse & The Playing Field, Artwork by Reach Dane, Madison, WI) - multiple languages
It’s extremely normal for children’s behaviors to “regress” during this time as children, like the rest of us, are confused, anxious, and trying to communicate their needs. By supporting children’s social-emotional well-being during COVID-19, we are helping to foster their healthy development and critically important life skills while also making our jobs as parents and caretakers a little easier.

* Erikson Institute’s Fussy Baby Network is available to support families struggling with their infant’s crying, sleeping, or feeding. Call 888.431.BABY. Email fussybaby@erikson.edu. @Fussybabynetwork on Facebook.

- Resources for Supporting Children’s Emotional Well-being during COVID-19 (Child Trends)
- Infographic: Helping Children Cope with Stress during 2019-nCOV outbreak (WHO)
- Using Positive Behavior Supports During Quarantine (USF/NCPMI)
- Coronavirus: Kids and Anxiety During the COVID-19 Pandemic (UC Davis Health) **
- Tips for Helping Your Child During the Pandemic (NCPMI) - English
  Consejos para ayudar a su hijo durante la pandemia
Self-Care for Parents and Caregivers

One of the most important ways we can support our children’s social-emotional well-being is by taking care of OURSELVES. We can’t be the emotional supports that children need us to be if we aren’t managing our stress. While some of these strategies can be done with your children or as a family, it is also okay, and even encouraged, to take the alone time that we all need to recharge.

*Illinois residents experiencing stress and mental health issues related to COVID-19 can text "TALK" or "HABLAR" to: 5-5-2-0-2-0. Within 24 hours, you will receive a call from a counselor employed by a local community mental health center to provide support.

*Illinois Domestic Violence Helpline: 1-877-TO END DV (1-877-863-6338 voice or 1-877-863-6339 TTY)

- Mental Health and Coping during COVID-19 (CDC)
- Caring for Yourself and Young Children During the Coronavirus Crisis (Healthy Steps)
- Daily 15-minute Guided Mindfulness (ZERO TO THREE) **
- Weekly Videos on Staying Positive & Resilient (Center for Resilient Children) **
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy COVID-19 Resources (Beck Institute)
- Parenting during Coronavirus: You are Enough (PBS)
- A Support Guide for Parents Raising Babies & Toddlers through Coronavirus Crisis (Quartz)
- Young Children at home during COVID 19: the importance of Self-Care (ZERO TO THREE) Los niños pequeños en casa durante el brote del COVID-19: La importancia del cuidado personal
- Self-Care in the Time of Coronavirus (Child Mind Institute) El autocuidado en los tiempos del coronavirus (Child Mind Institute)
- How You and Your Kids Can De-Stress During Coronavirus (PBS) Cómo pueden usted y sus hijos desestresarse durante el Coronavirus
- Relaxation Exercises (Center for ECMHC) - English & Spanish **
- Mindfulness for Kids and Their Adults (Mind Yeti) - English & Spanish **
Engaging Learning Activities While at Home

Let’s face it, children and adults alike can get bored easily during this time. Below are some resources to just have some FUN and throw in a little education while you’re at it. Remember young children learn through play. That’s just how their brains work! So, don’t be too hard on yourself to try and make everything a “lesson:” simply play, talk, and have fun experiences with your little ones and watch their brains grow! Here are some activities to let loose and enjoy fun times with your loved ones.

- At-Home Activity Guide (ZERO TO THREE)
- Daily Learning Experiences for Toddlers, Preschoolers, & Families (Cox Campus)
- Read-Along Mondays with Michelle Obama (PBS Kids)
- Children’s Museum of Manhattan at Home Activities (CMOM)
- Daily Schedule to Keep Children at Home Engaged (Teachstone)
- Parenting Playbook (Chicago Children’s Museum)
- Play at Home (Playworks)
- Executive Function Skills Activities Guide (Center for the Developing Child)
- 24 At-Home Learning Activities to Share with Parents of Young Children (Brookes Publishing)
- Preschool Spanish Activities (Spanish Playground)
We didn’t want to overwhelm you, as we know that there are so many resources out there. But we did want to include some additional resource “hubs” in case you just can’t get enough! These websites contain a wide range of information for families, beyond social-emotional well-being, related to COVID-19.

- [How to Support Children (and Yourself) During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#) (Center for the Developing Child)
- [COVID Caregiver Resources](#) (Promise Studio)
- [COVID-19 Supports](#) (ParentChild+)
- [Emergencies and National Disasters: Helping Children and Families Cope](#) (USF/NPMI) - resources available in English and Spanish