



MAINTAINING GOOD MENTAL HEALTH
DURING COVID-19

HAVE A SCHEDULE



It is essential not to underestimate how quickly your days in isolation will pass you by. Having a schedule plays a critical role in keeping you focused, ensuring you have purpose and will help you manage the varying tasks you need to complete as a family unit each day. We find a weekly schedule is most beneficial and should cover a variety of learning topics, suitable breaks and relaxation, creativity and play times.

MAKE SPACE



Being in isolation will be a challenge for many families and to help manage conflict, stress and over crowding, it is vital for you to spend some time thinking about how you can best utilise the space you have. We recommend you have designated learning spaces, relaxation spaces and traditional family areas to help better structure your day and understand one another's environmental requirements.

KEEP ROUTINE



Although many of you will not be leaving the house during the period of isolation, it is important to keep routine and where possible create clear distinctions between learning time, home time, play time and rest time. Changing clothes for 'school' can be a simple and effective way of doing this; using a different room for learning or using music, lighting or even candles to change the mood within a room can also be beneficial.

UTILISE TECHNOLOGY



Although currently, social media and online news updates can be a source of stress and anxiety, it is imperative that you utilise technology to minimise the negative effects of isolation. You can use programmes like facetime, zoom and skype to organise group learning, play dates and even lunch dates with your children and their friends so that, even when in isolation, they don't feel alone.

REFLECT ON RELATIONSHIPS



Some of us will have members of our family, friends or loved ones that are particularly vulnerable to the effects of COVID-19 and will need to be more seriously isolated for a longer period of time. It is critical that you help your children consider these individuals and where possible, maintain communication with them via post, email or otherwise. Help them explore emotions around vulnerability and the role they would like to play in helping and supporting others during difficult times.

EMBRACE EMOTIONS



For both you and your children it is likely that self isolating will be challenging, stressful and sometimes, distressing. Rather than trying to hide, manage or mask emotions, it is essential that you find effective ways to embrace them, express them and overcome them with the individuals in your family and close network. Consider using worry jars, emotion trees and gentle and regular exercise to reduce and manage the variety of feelings you are likely to experience during this time.

HAVE HEALTHY HABITS



In these uncertain times, it can be incredibly easy to neglect our physical health and mental well being. With many basic supplies on ration and large numbers of foods unavailable to most, it can be difficult to maintain a healthy diet and exercise habits. However, you can utilise time at home with your children to explore other areas of interest including cooking, baking and meal planning. You can also look at ways to exercise as a family and embrace the opportunity to have a kitchen disco or a home yoga session.

LIVE IN THE MOMENT



It is undeniable that these are uncertain and unprecedented times. and isolation will be a challenge for many. However, try to live in the moment and appreciate spending time with your family, having the opportunity to practice and develop new schools and embracing traditional means of enjoyment from board games to records to cross words and card games. There isn't anything we can do to change COVID-19 so the well being of ourselves and our children, we must try and find positives to focus on in these difficult times.

ISOLATE TOGETHER



We will be here throughout COVID-19 to support you, your children and your mental well being. If we can help, please do join our conversation by following @thisis_frankie on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook or LinkedIn.