

Mental Health Resources During School Closure

From Michael Silva Rose, DrPH, LCSW
Director of Community Benefit
Department of Community Health, Hoag Hospital

Important reminders:

1. Accept your emotions. Anger, fear, anxiety, etc. are all normal. Be gentle on yourself and offer patience to others. We're in this together!
2. Limit exposure to media and remember that official communications from [the CDC](#) are the best source of up-to-date information (more info on that below!)
3. Move! (more info on that below!)
4. Connect with others (more info on that below!). It helps improve your physical health and psychological well-being.
5. Some [guidance from Children's Hospital Orange County](#) (CHOC)

Families can [call 211](#) from any phone in OC for help with anything from legal aid to mental health emergencies to housing and transportation.

The [NAMI warm line](#) is open to residents of OC or LA. Calling or texting can connect someone with support and resources in their respective counties.

[The Trevor Project](#) - If you are a young person in crisis, or in need of a safe and judgment-free place to talk, call the TrevorLifeline now at 1-866-488-7386.

[The Crisis Text Line](#) - Text from anywhere in the USA to text with a trained Crisis Counselor

[Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) - Call 1-800-273-8255 or text ANSWER to 839863 to receive free and confidential support, 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

[California Youth Crisis Line](#) - Call 1-800-843-5200 to connect with the statewide emergency response system for youth (ages 12-24) and families in crisis.

[Robyne's Nest](#): If you are a student who is living independently without parental support, Robyne's nest can provide you with resources.

[CareSolace](#) - a free resource to help you find a therapist that is right for you and is covered by your insurance. Right now, they are available 24/7 to assist you and your family (in English, Spanish, Mandarin, or Cantonese), specifically in helping setup online/virtual services. Call 1-888-515-0595 or email at weserve@caresolace.org.

Please Note: If you already have a counselor or therapist (even if you haven't seen them in a while), you can call their office and ask about "telehealth" services or virtual counseling/therapy. Many offices now offer these services that do not require you to come into the office.

Be Mindful of Media Exposure

It is important to keep up to date on the frequently changing information regarding COVID-19 and the measures being put in place to keep everyone safe and healthy. As you are likely aware, it's hard to turn on the TV or open the internet without being exposed to 24 hours of breaking news banners, podcasts, memes, and stories from around the world. The more we watch or listen to this media, the more it can affect our

mental health and stress. You may feel better if you limit your exposure to this kind of media, and use reputable sources (i.e. WHO, CDC, OC Health Agency).

Here are some links to the above mentioned health related resources:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx>

http://www.ochealthinfo.com/phs/about/epidasmt/epi/dip/prevention/novel_coronavirus

Positive Coping Skills

- Reach out for support; text/call friends or a supportive person
- Acknowledge your emotions and find active ways to divert your attention
- Meditation--this can help create a healthy immune response and reduce anxiety
- Deep Breathing; Inhale 4 seconds, hold for 4, exhale for 4. There are a lot of variations, so find what works best for you
- Use an app to relax or connect to emotional support
- Take time to rest and stay healthy
- Focus on things you can control; wash hands, hydrate, and nourish
- Create a routine and structure for your day at home
- Play with a pet or take your dog for a walk
- Exercise (run, walk, find a youtube workout)-- only if you are feeling well.

[Yoga With Adriene](#) is offering all classes for free.

[Les Mills](#) has a free 3 week trial to do online yoga, pilates, barre, weight lifting, cardio, etc.

Apps for Self-Care:

Many of these apps have waived their in-app purchase fees, but they all have free options that can help with managing the stress of the news and media.

[Stop, Breathe & Think](#) A short “check in” with this app provides 1-5 minute mindfulness activities that can help keep you calm and create a little space between your thoughts, emotions and reactions.

[UCLA Mindful App](#) This app has basic meditations and wellness meditations and includes how-to videos and a built-in timer. There are also cool podcasts you can listen to--there’s one called the Mindfulness of Washing Hands up right now!

[SAM app](#) This app can help you manage anxiety (SAM stands for self anxiety management) by helping you be aware of your triggers and understand your thoughts and behavior better. There’s even a cool tracking feature!

[Calm](#) This app contains audio content that strengthens mental fitness and tackles some of the biggest mental health challenges of today: stress, anxiety, insomnia, and depression.

[Mindshift](#) This app uses cognitive behavior therapy based tools to offer quick relief from anxiety, worry, and panic. It offers coping cards, a thought journal, and a check-in system to create healthy habits and set goals.

[7 Cups](#) This app connects you to caring listeners for free emotional support, 24/7. Listeners are specifically available for teens (ages 13-17). Chat rooms and community forums are also available, so you can talk to others who understand how you feel.