



Groveport Madison Schools District Service Center

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TIPS FOR COPING WITH COVID19

This is an unprecedented situation that requires all of us to be creative, flexible, and responsive. It can all easily feel overwhelming, and we want to make sure that you are all doing well in this time of uncertainty and have the resources that you need while at home.

Please continually visit the District's website and Extended Break Information page for more information, at gocruisers.org/ExtendedBreakInformation.aspx. You'll find information about virtual learning, student expectations, and where to get free meals for children 18 and under.

You are going to be away from school for a while, so it will be essential to maintain a routine while you are home. The goal of canceling school is to create distance between people, but that does not mean you have to close yourself off from connection. We want to help you be whole and healthy. Here are some tips that might be helpful during the next few weeks:

- **Stay Connected.** Maintaining social distance is crucial and even mandated right now, so no parties, playdates or sleepovers. The better we do at keeping distance, the earlier we can return to a regular routine. What you can do during this time is to spend time with your family, take a walk/jog outside, and FaceTime or use other video platforms to connect with friends virtually.
- **Be Mindful of Media Intake** Temporarily limit exposure to sources that increase your anxiety, depression, loneliness, fear, and anger. Stick to content that helps you feel hopeful, happy, calm, connected, inspired, and uplifted. Download apps that can help you feel in control and in a good place. Here are some FREE favorites: Virtual Hopebox, Headspace, MindShift, and Self-help for Anxiety Management.
- **Set a Schedule** Get dressed and shower every day. This is important! It is tempting to live life in pajamas, but wearing them every day and never changing your clothes can be depressing, which we want to minimize. Make it your goal always to change from the clothes you slept in and create a regular morning routine. Youtube has some great videos to get you up and moving during the day- and remember, you can always take a walk outside! Take a break and get fresh air - moving around is super beneficial for us all during this time.

The mission of Groveport Madison Schools is to build a community of learners, leaders and responsible citizens.

Every Student, Every Lesson, Every Day

- **Create a Regular Work Space** This will help you feel like you are still in a routine of going to school every day. You might need to reorganize your room or another space in your home currently used for something else to create space, that's ok! Experts say that it is best to avoid using your bed for this purpose because it is a space that should be reserved only for sleep and rest, but of course, if this is the only space you have, use it!
- Coping skills for this stressful time that you can do from home: **drawing, coloring, journaling, a gratitude list, dancing, deep breathing, exercise, online yoga, meditation, listening to music, mazes/puzzles, reading a book, disconnecting from social media and watching movies that make you feel good.** This will be our new reality for a while, and it will take some time to adjust. Change can be difficult, but you all have the Cruiser Spirit and will persevere and flourish!
- Reach out to your teachers and counselors, even if it's to say hello! Hopefully, we will all be back at school soon. Take a deep breath. Take another. We got this!
- Helpful links to talk to your kids about COVID-19
<https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/helping-kids-cope-with-the-covid-19-pandemic/>
<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>
<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/10-tips-for-talking-about-covid-19-with-your-kids>
<https://www.brainpop.com/health/diseasesinjuriesandconditions/coronavirus/>
- [How to Support Your Child's Health and Well-Being During Ohio's School Closures](#)
 (originally published by the Ohio Department of Education, March 23, 2020)

We know you and your child may be experiencing stress, confusion, fear, or anxiety during this time. Below are some steps you can take to support your child.

- **Talk to Your Child about the Current Situation** - Have age-appropriate conversations with your child and be sure all adults in the household are using the same language to describe what is happening. Be sure you understand the correct facts from medical and government resources. Share only developmentally appropriate facts with your child (see the links below for ideas about how to do this). Be calming to avoid cultivating anxiety or distress in your child.
- **Limit Exposure** - Be mindful of adult conversations or media coverage about what is happening. Limit your child's exposure to these as they could cause an increase in anxiety or distress in your child.
- **Encourage Expressive Activities** - Encourage imaginative and expressive activities that can help your child share how he or she is feeling (for example, play for younger children and music activities, art activities, and journaling for older children). This will allow your child to process his or her emotions in safe and productive ways.
- **Create a Structured Environment** - Provide structure and routine for your child. Have a daily schedule with general activities posted in the home. Visual schedules are beneficial for young children. Children do well and feel safer when they know what to expect next.

- **Set Expectations** - Set expectations for your child to complete a set amount of academic work daily. This helps with structure but also will help avoid the pressures of feeling behind when he or she returns to school.
- **Create Special Time** - Set aside at least 10 minutes a day to focus on your child. More time is better. Actively listen to what he or she says and stay positive. If your child is younger, play with him or her during this time. Child-focused play has many benefits to child-adult relationships.
- **Spend Quality Time Together** - Have dinner together. Put away all technology. Take turns sharing something that you felt happy about today. Your child can help with the preparation and clean up.
- **Stay Active** - Encourage your child to play, walk, or hike outdoors and get outside with your child as well. If the weather does not allow for outdoor time, try yoga, having a dance party, or watching online videos that encourage movement indoors.
- **Focus on the Positive** - Point out the “helpers” in the world and the good things they are doing. Stay simple and limit detail about anything frightening, but emphasize the good work being done.
- **Model Responses to Difficult Situations** - The adult should care for him or herself and model this for the child. Children will watch how adults in their homes deal with stress and replicate this themselves.
- **Potential Behavioral Health Needs** - Your child may experience increased stress during this time. Increased anxiety, inattention, and a decrease in focus are some examples of typical stress responses. If you observe these responses, it is crucial to monitor them closely to be sure they do not interfere with your child's daily functioning.

Below are some important notes about behavioral health

- **Your Child Currently Receives Behavioral Health Services** - If your child is in therapy, contact his or her provider about options for teletherapy or ideas of things to do at home to support his or her treatment goals.
- **Your Child Takes Medication for Behavioral Health** - If your child is prescribed any medication for behavioral health, consult with his or her physician, and follow medical recommendations.
- **Your Child Shows Safety Concerns** - If your child is demonstrating risky behaviors (self-harming behavior, threats to self or others, drug or alcohol use), create a plan to provide consistent supervision. If your child has a mental health provider, follow-up with the provider immediately. If there is an immediate safety concern, contact your local police, hospital, 911, or crisis response team.

