

Looking After Yourself During Lockdown

COVID LOCKDOWN - THE IMPACT ON PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Lockdown means more time at home with your family. And for many, it means that you're balancing supervision of children's learning, family time, and work commitments.

The potential for COVID-19 to impact mental health and wellbeing was recognised early in the pandemic. Not only are families experiencing stress about contracting the virus itself, but the impact on mental health is also prominent.

The sudden loss of employment, social interaction, and the added stressors of moving to remote work or schooling, and more recently, impacts of sudden, localised 'lockdowns' to prevent further outbreaks have impacted the mental health of many Australians. Stress, confusion, and anger are commonplace, as a result of the pandemic and, while many people may not experience any long-term concerns, COVID-19 has the potential to contribute to or exacerbate long-term mental illness including anxiety, depression, PTSD, and substance misuse.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

It's completely natural to be worried about coronavirus and the changes that are happening all around us. Too much concern can impact on your ability to think clearly and cope with daily challenges.

There is never a wrong time to seek help.

If you experience anxiety, mood changes, feel overwhelmed, or find it difficult to sleep, to the point where you are affected in a negative way, it might be time to reach out.

COPING WITH LOCKDOWN

- *Manage your expectations:* you may not be as productive if you are working from home without your usual equipment and routine, or with family interrupting you.
- *Step outside for a change of scene:* even a walk around the block can relieve some of the frustration, when social visits or a workout at the gym are not an option.
- *Allow extra time for everything:* with fewer people providing customer service and more shopping online for groceries, medicines and deliveries of food there are likely to be delays and cancellations.
- *Talk to your child's teacher or school representative* if you are experiencing difficulty navigating home schooling.
- *Practice self care regularly:* Take some time to yourself. Read a book, take a walk, have a nap, meditate or practice gratitude, sit in the sun, call a friend, reduce alcohol use.

