

Colorado Partnership for Thriving Families

Key Shared Messaging COVID-19 with a focus on building resilience and social connections

- We all need to take two extra minutes with everyone we come in contact with to talk about how to take care of ourselves during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Communities build resilience by increasing connections between people & organizations to help families' weather storms.
- Everyone needs to support families right now by doing the following:
 - Call families to ask them how they are doing.
 - Connect families to resources they need like food, medicine, counseling and assistance programs such as SNAP Medicaid/CHP+, child care, etc.
 - Encourage parents to think about what has kept them strong in the past and what gives them hope.
 - Share ideas on ways to help children keep developing during this time at home.
 - Help parents and children identify and express their feelings at this time.
- There are many prevention programs and volunteers pulling together to help families during this challenging time. Families can turn to family resource centers and 211 to get connected to resources offered by community-based nonprofits and government agencies alike.
- It is critical that all families have equal access to help getting through this time. Everyone deserves a chance to thrive, and each of us can play a role in helping families that are struggling, especially now.
- Connecting families to resources they need and information to support children's development can be the difference between them struggling and stabilizing to thrive.
- As Colorado is on a statewide Stay at Home Order and as we continue to practice physical distancing, social support has never been more important to families because isolation and economic stress increase risks for child maltreatment and family violence.
- We know this can pose many challenges for all Coloradans. Colorado has created a Stay At Home CO Guide full of free resources, support, and activities to help you, your family, and your loved ones during this time at www.stayathomeco.colorado.gov
- This website is regularly updated and includes many hotlines to report concerns and access support, including the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline, Colorado Crisis Line and Domestic Violence hotline as well as wellness, education and entertainment activities for families. Submit suggestions of free resources that are helping Coloradans stay at home and keep families strong.

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- Healthy brain development is a building process that begins before we are born. When children experience toxic stress their brain is physically changed, requiring significant, costly support from communities to heal and grow up to become that healthy thriving adults who are our future neighbors, employees and leaders of tomorrow. We must **prevent child abuse right now or the costs of COVID-19 will significantly increase.**
- There are still ways to build protective factors that are known to mitigate those risks and strengthen families. That is how we work together to prevent child maltreatment.

That means **increasing five things known to strengthen families.**

1. Parental Resilience

Right now, stress is HIGH. You've likely felt a little short-temper, yelled or not been your best-self at moments. Everyone needs to practice self-care right now, especially parents. Take care of yourself, to take care of your kids.

Share a mindfulness or stress management tip, encourage others parents to give themselves permission to not be perfect.

2. Social Connections

Right now, while everyone is encouraged to physically distance ourselves from each other, that doesn't mean we need to socially isolate from one another. In fact, we need to connect more with one another to share support, tips, advice or just talk.

Share your REAL experiences, advice, a laugh or cry with one another. There are many ways to connect online, pick up the phone and talk to each other, or get outside to sing, dance or share a long-distance conversation.

3. Concrete Supports in Times of Need

Right now, we need to ensure that we all have what we need to be well - regardless of how we earn a living or how much we make. People already pushed to the brink by low wages and high housing costs will be most affected by this virus and an economic slowdown. This is the time to live up to our ideal of justice for all.

Share tips, resources and stories about programs that have helped you get through tough times.

Hearing stories and recommendations from other parents who have accessed support is incredibly impactful.

4. Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Right now, many parents are trying to make sure online learning is happening at home or just navigating the normal journey through parenthood from early childhood developmental milestones to survival strategies for raising teens, and everything in between.

Share tips, resources and activities on parenting and child development.

5. Social & Emotional Competence of Children

Right now, children of all ages are feeling a lot of emotions. A strong social and emotional foundation in early childhood powerfully impacts children's later positive attitudes and behaviors, academic performance, career path, and adult health outcomes. Many kids are grieving over the loss of their regular routine and missing their friends or even major milestones like graduation or prom for the Class of 2020.

Share tips, activities on building social & emotional competence of children and try to model what good social and emotional skills look like. Children mirror the behaviors of the adults around them.

When families, organizations and communities focus on building these five protective factors, we can effectively prevent child abuse and keep families strong during the COVID-19 pandemic