

SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN DURING COVID-19

A RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES FROM THE MONTANA EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES BUREAU

We're here to help you support your child (and yourself!) during COVID-19. Use this guide to learn more about this transitional time. Included are resources around learning at home, practicing positive guidance, and connecting with people that can help you in our Montana community.



LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

As a parent of a young child, you may be asking, "How do I even help my child process the world around them?" Focus on what you know and what you can do now. Think about what brings you joy. Read or tell stories, allow your child to ask questions as a way for them to process information. And, it's okay if you don't have all the answers.

LEARNING AT HOME

You are your child's first and most important teacher. Engaging in back-and forth conversations and snuggles are great for creating a foundation for learning. The Montana Early Learning Standards (MELS) is a great tool for fun and easy activities to help your child learn while meeting them at their current developmental level. This will help with the transition of schooling from home, as well as going back to school.

TRANSITIONS AND POSITIVE GUIDANCE

Children thrive in calm and nurturing environments. Your child's behavior may challenge you and that's okay. Changes in routine can be stressful for your child. Children show they are upset through their behavior. During a time full of so much transition, like now, it's important to pause, breathe, then respond.

FOOD RESOURCES

Healthy foods support brain development in the early years of life. There are programs that can help you access healthy foods and provide ideas for child-friendly meals. Children gain amazing skills in the kitchen that include language development, counting, practicing shape recognition and most importantly, connecting with you!



PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP

There are caring people in your community that can help connect you to resources like child care, mental health, or rent assistance.



FINDING THE RIGHT WORDS WHEN TALKING TO CHILDREN

WORDS THAT COMFORT

Remind children that the grown-ups in their lives are taking steps to keep everyone safe. Validate their feelings and worries.

"A LOT OF THINGS ARE DIFFERENT RIGHT NOW. IT'S OK IF YOU'RE FEELING SCARED. I'M ALWAYS HERE TO KEEP YOU SAFE. HOW ARE YOU FEELING?"

"WE CAN HELP BY BEING GERM BUSTERS! LET'S MAKE SURE WE WASH OUR HANDS, COUGH INTO OUR ELBOW, AND HAVE HEALTHY HABITS."

GIVE THEM CONTROL

Remind your children what they can do to help and be involved.

KEEP A ROUTINE

Routines can help both you and your child feel more at ease.

"WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP ME CREATE A SCHEDULE FOR US? LET'S ALSO THINK OF FUN THINGS WE CAN DO TOGETHER WHILE WE'RE AT HOME?"

"IT'S BEEN SO NICE TO BE HOME WITH YOU, BUT MOMMY (OR DADDY) GETS TO GO BACK TO WORK AND YOU GET TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL!"

GUIDE THEM THROUGH TRANSITION

With so many changes happening, help your child understand that these transitions are okay.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!

[HOW TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT CORONAVIRUS](#)

[TIME TO COME IN, BEAR \(VIDEO\)](#)

[A CHILDREN'S STORY ABOUT SOCIAL DISTANCING](#)

[#COVIBOOK SUPPORTING AND REASSURING CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD](#)

[TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS](#)

[ANSWERING YOUR YOUNG CHILD'S QUESTIONS](#)

[JUST FOR KIDS: A COMIC EXPLORING THE NEW CORONAVIRUS](#)

[BOOK: MASKS AREN'T SCARY! A COVID-19 STORY ABOUT FACE MASKS FOR CHILDREN AGES 0-3](#)

[BOOK: WEAR FACE MASKS, STOP GERMS! A COVID-19 STORY ABOUT FACE MASKS FOR CHILDREN AGES 4-6](#)

[BOOK: STAYING HEALTHY AT SCHOOL](#)



POSITIVE GUIDANCE AND CARE-GIV-

[TIPS FOR COPING WITH A NEW BABY DURING COVID-19](#)

[PARENT TIPS FOR HELPING PRESCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN AFTER DISASTERS](#)

[PARENTING IN THE TIME OF THE CORONAVIRUS](#)

[POSITIVE PARENTING & COVID-19](#)

[SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS DURING THE PANDEMIC](#)

[HOW TO SUPPORT CHILDREN \(AND YOURSELF\) DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK](#)

[RESOURCES FOR CAREGIVERS | INFO-GRAPHICS](#)



LEARNING AT HOME

[MONTANA'S EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS](#)

[CREATING A ROUTINE FOR THE "FOR NOW" NORMAL](#)

[WIDE OPEN SCHOOL | SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED](#)
[MINDS ARE WIDE OPEN](#)

[STORY-TIME VIDEOS FOR KIDS](#)

[25 AMAZING VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS](#)

[READING TIPS FOR FAMILIES](#)

[MONTANA PUBLIC LIBRARY](#)



FOOD RESOURCES

[MONTANA NO KID HUNGRY TEXT-LINE](#)
TEXT THE WORD "FOOD" (OR "COMIDA") TO 877-877
TO FIND FREE MEALS FOR KIDS 0-18 NEAR YOU

[WIC \(WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN\) PROGRAM](#)

[MONTANA HARVEST OF THE MONTH](#)

[MONTANA FOOD BANK NETWORK](#)

[COOKING WITH KIDS](#)

[FARMERS MARKETS- DOUBLE YOUR SNAP DOLLARS!](#)

[SNAP \(SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM\)](#)

GET SOCIAL: WHAT TO FOLLOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA
[KID FRIENDLY MEALS](#) | [KIDS EAT IN COLOR](#) | [SUPER HEALTHY KIDS](#)

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP

DIAL 211 FOR ESSENTIAL SERVICES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

MONTANA CRISIS SERVICES

PARENTINGMONTANA.ORG
AGE APPROPRIATE RESOURCES & SUPPORT

MONTANA MILESTONES | SUPPORT FOR
CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

CHILDREN'S SPECIAL HEALTH SERVICES

MONTANA CHILD CARE
RESOURCE & REFERRAL NETWORK
SUPPORT FINDING & AFFORDING CHILD CARE

STARS TO QUALITY PROGRAM

BEST BEGINNINGS CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP



DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES BUREAU - MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

[DPHHS.MT.GOV/CHILDRENANDFAMILIES](https://dphhs.mt.gov/childrenandfamilies) | JUNE 2020