



MENTAL HEALTH AND COVID-19 FOR CAREGIVERS

IT'S NORMAL TO FEEL WORRIED:

The uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 and the sense of added responsibility can be stressful. Emotional reactions may include:

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Stress from having to regularly monitor yourself and constantly monitor your child for symptoms
- Sadness because friends or loved ones have fears of getting the virus as well
- Frustration with constantly having to adapt to the many responsibilities you have
- Disappointed about not being able to engage with students how you normally would

COPING STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH THE STRESS AND UNCERTAINTY

LIMIT MEDIA CONSUMPTION ABOUT COVID-19

- Set aside a few hours a day to disconnect from the news as it can do more harm than good, it is easier to find the negative stories that add to stress levels
- Only access COVID-19 information from reputable sources such as Wellington-Dufferin- Guelph Public Health



USE MINDFULNESS TO HELP MANAGE DIFFICULT EMOTIONS:

- Allow yourself to acknowledge and feel the different emotions
- Try not to avoid, minimize, or numb the emotional discomfort/pain

DISTRACT YOURSELF WITH SELF-CARE

- This is a short-term solution to improve mood and help deal with your emotions
- Examples: call a friend; go for a walk; listen to music, watch a funny show, focus on your breath, exercise, etc.



PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION

- Accept and acknowledge that it is okay to make mistakes
- Try not to get stuck in a negative loop of thinking "what if...?"
- Don't let shame or stigma prevent you from seeking help

USE PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

- Break down stressors into smaller tasks that are doable
- Set manageable expectations with family caregiving
- Reach out to family or friends for help with tasks they can support while physically distancing



GET BACK TO THE BASICS

- Follow a routine, eat nutritious meals, be active, get quality sleep, and stay hydrated
- Stay focused on what you have control over and seek help when needed

LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES AVAILABLE

If you notice that your symptoms of stress and anxiety are causing you significant distress or are interfering with your ability to function normally, please reach out for support.

CITY OF GUELPH AND WELLINGTON COUNTY

Here 24/7 Addiction, Mental Health and Crisis Services:
1-888-437-3247

Family Counselling and Support Services:
1-888-821-3760

DUFFERIN COUNTY

Here 24.7 Crisis Support:
1-888-811-2222

Dufferin Child and Family Services:
519-941-1530

ADDITIONAL HELPFUL RESOURCES:

<https://www.wdgpUBLICHEALTH.ca/your-health/covid-19-information-public/community-supports-and-contacts>

<https://www.wdgpUBLICHEALTH.ca/your-health/covid-19-information-public/mental-health-substance-use-and-stigma>