

Mental Health and COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic may make us feel confused, sad and anxious. Self-isolation may make us feel separate from some of the activities we used to do to help manage our feelings. It's important to learn about resources and supports to help you take care of yourself and your family.

Virtual Mental Health Supports

Virtual Mental Health Supports for COVID-19 are available for youth, adults, seniors and health care workers in British Columbia. These services provide online mental health and substance use support. They include services such as virtual counselling, senior volunteer services and crisis support. If you are struggling with your mental health or experiencing a crisis, reach out now. Learn more about virtual mental health supports at [Virtual mental health supports](#).

Domestic and intimate partner violence can increase during a crisis. Regardless of the situation, violence and abuse are never acceptable. Visit [BC Centre for Disease Control: People who may be or are experiencing violence](#) for information on the services that are available to help you and your family.

Learn more about the mental health resources that are available for families, workers, older adults, Indigenous people and more.

Parents and Children

Providing children with a little guidance and extra nurturing can help reduce their stress levels during the pandemic. Children may wonder why they can't see their friends or why they have to wash their hands more frequently. Be supportive when listening to their concerns and questions. For more information on how to support your child, see:

- [BC Centre for Disease Control: Mental well-being](#)
- [Canadian Mental Health: Talking to children about COVID-19 and its impact](#)
- [Doctors of BC/Child & Youth Mental Health & Substance Use: Managing Anxiety and Stress in Families with Children and Youth During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#)
- [FamilySmart](#)
- [Government of BC: Mental Health Support for Children & Youth During COVID-19](#)
- [Government of BC: Online Safety](#)
- [Kelty Mental Health: Talking to children about COVID-19](#)
- [Open School BC: Keep Learning: Suggestions for parents and caregivers to support their child's learning](#)
- [Stigma Free Society: Stigma-Free COVID-19 Youth Wellness Toolkit \(includes resources for parents, children and teens\)](#)
- [World Health Organization: Helping children cope with stress during the 2019-nCoV outbreak](#)

Teens

Physical distancing means that many teens are missing out on the regular activities they take part in. This can lead to increased anxiety, feelings of isolation and unhappiness. This makes it more important than ever for teens to stay connected to their social groups. With a little creativity and research, it is possible to learn new ways of doing so. Emphasizing self-care and health is also a good way to lessen stress and help teens adjust to the new normal. For more information, see:

- [Anxiety Canada: Anxiety in Youth](#)

- [Canadian Mental Health Association: Here to Help: COVID-19 and Anxiety](#)
- [Foundry: Foundry Virtual – Get Support Online](#)
- [Kids Help Phone: We're here for you during covid-19 \(novel coronavirus\)](#)
- [Kids Help Phone: How to cope with social distancing during COVID-19](#)
- [Unicef: How teenagers can protect their mental health during COVID-19](#)

Additional resources for students of the LGBTQ2S+ community who may be feeling vulnerable and disconnected from their peers and school:

- [Government of BC: erase \(expect respect and a safe education\)](#)
- [Youth in BC : Provincial crises lines and online support for youth](#)
- [Trans Lifeline](#)

Adults

Change can be difficult, especially during times like these. You may be experiencing more stress and uncertainty. Understanding the facts about COVID-19 can help reduce this uncertainty and provide you with tools to cope. Practicing compassion and good self-care can help manage anxiety and lessen stress. For more information see:

- [Anxiety Canada: What to do if you're anxious or worried about coronavirus \(COVID-19\)Hi](#)
- [Canadian Mental Health Association: COVID-19 Stay Well in Uncertain Times](#)
- [Canadian Mental Health Association: Mental Health and the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Virtual mental health supports](#)
- [Canadian Mental Health Association: Here to Help: COVID-19 and Anxiety](#)
- [Starling Minds: Managing Stress & Anxiety from COVID-19](#)

Older Adults

For older adults, self-isolation can be particularly challenging. You may have feelings of loneliness, isolation and depression. Social distancing doesn't have to mean social isolation. Learning ways to connect with family and friends virtually can help. If you find that you are struggling with your mental health, reach out to your health care provider. For more information on supporting your mental health during COVID-19, see:

- [Canadian Mental Health Association: Here to Help: COVID-19 and Anxiety](#)
- [Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health: COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [Government of BC: Managing COVID-19 Stress, Anxiety and Depression \(PDF 210 KB\)](#)
- [BC Mental Health & Substance Use Services: Tips for supporting your mental health through the COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- [Starling Minds: Managing stress & anxiety from COVID-19](#)

Caregivers

If you are a health care worker or if you are caring for someone who is ill, you may feel extra stress and anxiety. You may worry about the health and safety of people in your care, as well as your family and yourself. For information and support, visit:

- [Care for Caregivers: COVID-19: Anxiety for Caregivers](#)

Indigenous People

Mental health and cultural supports are available during the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more:

- [First Nations Health Authority: COVID-19 \(Novel Coronavirus\)](#)
- [First Nations Health Authority: Mental Health and Cultural Supports During COVID-19](#) (PDF, 82KB)
- [First Nations Health Authority: First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day](#)

Workers

If you are continuing to work during the COVID-19 pandemic, you may want a better understanding about how to protect your health and safety. Find resources to support you if you are experiencing stress, anxiety or uncertainty during this time. To learn more, see:

- [British Columbia Psychological Association: COVID-19 Mental Health Support](#)
- [Canadian Mental Health Association: Mental Health and COVID-19. Resources for health care workers during COVID-19](#)
- [WorkSafeBC: Addressing the mental health effects of COVID-19 in the workplace: A guide for workers](#)

More resources

It is important to know that no matter how you are feeling, you are not alone. Whether you are looking for information and support for yourself or for a loved one, help is available. Learn more about available resources:

- [BC Centre for Disease Control: Mental well-being during COVID-19](#)
- [Government of BC: Mood and Anxiety](#)
- [Mental Health and Substance Use](#)

Find more information about COVID-19 and how to protect yourself, your family and your community, see [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#).

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The information provided in the Mental Health and COVID-19 Health Feature has been adapted from the [Government of BC: Virtual Mental Health Supports for COVID-19 page](#) accessed January 20, 2021.