

## Social and Emotional Support for Gifted Learners During COVID-19

Thanks to Wendy Behrens, Gifted and Talented Education Specialist at Minnesota Department of Education for allowing us to share this and make updates for Kentucky.

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Throughout the world, people are experiencing anxiety about the Covid-19 outbreak. Children are not immune to worry and many young students are concerned about missing school and friends and confused by changing schedules and responsibilities. Older students may also be concerned about testing, college applications, completion of courses, credits, missing final school events and more.

Research indicates that many gifted children experience heightened sensitivity to environmental stimuli because of their rapid information-processing (Mendaglio, 2007). Many of these students are dismayed by the news and the apparent lack of a solution to the pandemic. Some are catastrophizing, imagining the worst possible outcome of the current or an imagined circumstance. Others may be feeling isolated or depressed. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) reminds us that during these uncertain times, children look to adults for guidance on how to react. As our anxiety rises so does the anxiety of our children. NASP recommends, "Parents reassure children that health and school officials are working hard to ensure that people throughout the country stay healthy. However, children also need factual, age appropriate information about the potential seriousness of disease risk and concrete instruction about how to avoid infections and spread of disease. Teaching children positive preventive measures, talking with them about their fears, and giving them a sense of some control over their risk of infection can help reduce anxiety."

### Resources for Consideration

- [Cultivating Calm Amidst a Storm](#). Blog from Nicole A. Tetreault, Ph.D., on how to calm our mind, body, and nervous system in the presence of a global health crisis. (March 18, 2020)
- [Helping Your Child Manage Stress Through Mindfulness](#) by Michele Kane, Ed.D. *Parenting for High Potential*, Dec 2017. This article, written directly to teens and tweens, helps gifted adolescents understand mindfulness and the formal/informal pathways to mindfulness. Includes apps, books, and online resources for kids.
- [Just for Kids: A Comic Exploring The New Coronavirus](#)  
A resource for children about coronavirus, what it is and how to protect oneself.
- [Management of Anxiety Begins at Home](#) by Sal Mendaglio, Ph.D., *Parenting for High Potential*, Summer 2016. General article that focuses on the sources of anxiety in gifted children and what parents can do to help reduce anxiety at home.
- [Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope With the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) \(PDF, 144KB\)](#) This resource provides information for parents and caregivers about outbreaks, how they can prepare to reduce stress and anxiety, how it may affect your family both physically and emotionally and ways to cope.
- [Resources for Supporting Children's Emotional Well-being During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). Guidance, recommendations, and resources provided by child trauma experts at *Child Trends* and the Child Trauma Training Center at the University of Massachusetts.
- [Talking with Caregivers, Parents. And Teachers during Infectious Disease Outbreaks \(PDF, 12.8MB\)](#)  
Resource provides helpful information how to talk with children of different age groups.
- [Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\): A Parent Resource](#)  
A resource for parents on how best to talk to children about the coronavirus.

- [Talking to Teens and Tweens About Coronavirus](#) This article details advice from experts on how parents can help teens be prepared and have the right information about the coronavirus.
- [Teacher, Interrupted: Leaning into Social-Emotional Learning Amid the COVID-19 Crisis](#) by Christina Cipriano and Marc Brackett, *Ed Surge*. Psychologists from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence offer social and emotional learning (SEL) evidence-based practices to help educators, parents, and students get through these difficult times. (March 18, 2020)

## Mental Health Resources in Kentucky

- *Coping With the Stress of COVID-19: Tips for Families with Gifted Children* with Edward R. Amend, Psy.D. ([The Amend Group](#)) video produced for Kentucky Association for Gifted Education (KAGE), [The Center for Gifted Studies, WKU](#), and the [World Council for Gifted and Talented Children](#).  
<https://youtu.be/ORYGc5STaKM>
- Kentucky Community Mental Health Center Crisis Services: Location and Hours:  
<https://dbhdid.ky.gov/dbh/documents/crisis-services.pdf>
- Suicide hotline: <http://suicidehotlines.com/kentucky.html>
- To connect with resources: <https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/giving/on-our-sleeves/find-help/state-resources/kentucky>
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) general info; press release on COVID-19:  
<https://www.nami.org/Press-Media/Press-Releases/2020/COVID-19-and-Mental-Illness-NAMI-Releases-Important-Information>
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Kentucky: <https://www.nami.org/Local-NAMI?state=KY>
- To keep abreast of the latest information on Kentucky's response to Covid-19  
<https://governor.ky.gov/covid19>
- Good article: <https://ci.uky.edu/kentuckyhealthnews/2020/03/17/coping-with-covid-19-its-important-to-maintain-mental-and-behavioral-health-especially-among-children-experts-say/>
- General Resource (not KY specific): <https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/covid-19>
- World Health Organization info on mental health: [https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af\\_2](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2)

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