

Victoria Child Abuse Prevention & Counselling Centre

Bi-Weekly Newsletter

Introduction

Welcome to our newsletter, in this issue you will find insight, advice and resources from our counsellors on how to manage predictability during these uncertain times.

COVID-19 Resources

bigfeelingsstorybook

- A free PDF download of a children's story book on fight, flight, freeze and big emotions

communityresources

- A list of community resources and their availability during the pandemic

communitybusinesses

- A list of community businesses and what they are offering during the pandemic

<https://vcapcc.com/resources>

- Under COVID-19 Resources you will find a word document to download that contains resources regarding the pandemic

Keeping Children Safe Online

<https://www.cybertip.ca/app/en/signup>

- tips for parents to help keep kids safe while online and out of school

https://protectkidsonline.ca/app/en/emerging_issue_s-13_to_15

- Emerging online risks to youth based on age

If you need immediate assistance, call 9-1-1 or go to your nearest hospital

Crisis and Support Websites

<https://youthinbc.com/>

- Online chat with crisis responders for youth, available between noon and 1am

<https://crisiscentrechat.ca/>

- Online chat with crisis responders for adults, available between noon and 1am

<https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/support-myself>

- Self help for mental health and substance abuse

Vancouver Island Crisis Line: 1-888-494-3888

- Available 24/7 for crisis support

Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868

- 24-hour confidential and anonymous support for youth between 5-20 years of age

Hope for Wellness: 1-855-242-3310

- 24/7 crisis and counselling support for First Nations and Inuit

Youth Space: 778-783-0177 (text)

- Open 6pm - midnight providing crisis and emotional support chat

Youth Against Violence: 1-800-680-4264

- Available 24/7 and in your language if you are concerned about your safety or the safety of others

Predictability

Just a few weeks ago, our lives were humming along with predictable daily routines that included scheduled work, school, and afterschool activities-perhaps we had events planned for this month that we were looking forward to and then...we were thrown an unpredictable COVID-19 curve ball. The consequences of COVID-19 are unpredictable and as daily, national, and world events evolve (or are cancelled) we can feel increasingly distressed and our emotions may become elevated. This newsletter topic focuses on the importance of creating predictability in this time of flux and change. So what do we do with the feelings of unpredictability and change as we navigate new social rules and routines? For children, youth and adults, consistency and predictability are powerful sources of stability that help create a feeling of safety and regulate our emotional responses. How do we create predictability in our new daily routines for children, families, and ourselves? Here are a few questions, thoughts, and resources put together by our VCAPCC Therapists on creating predictability, routines and rituals:

1. Routines

Routines create structure in our day, and structure increases feelings of stability. What are your routines in the day? These can include routines of sleeping and waking, meal times, work, chores, play and fun. Remember that every family is different in their routines and rhythms of the day. Self-isolation at home for some may be a good time for new goals and achievements, but for many people it is also a time of increased stress. Therefore, it's important to create routines but also be reminded that unrealistic expectations and rigid schedules can also increase stress.

Here are some resource and valuable information links from VCAPCC therapists on routines:

<https://makesociallearningstick.com/keep-calm-and-structure-on-how-to-manage-emotions-and-build-structure-at-home-during-covid-19/>

<https://www.pixelcounselor.com/recipe-for-a-great-day?fbclid=IwAR01jyQFT8tdFOHudy1mc62-lkiwmltwcEB4SBESRZRXuLtDr3XnG6NaQG8>

<https://www.edhelper.com/dailyschedule-idea-for-when-kids-are-home.pdf>

[Protect Young Minds Stay at Home Planner PDF](#)

<https://protectchildren.ca/en/resources-research/supporting-you-through-covid-19/>

Predictability

<https://autism.sesamestreet.org/coping-with-covid/>

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/u/1/d/1fUCBRosJOFkgwe1_EBEQjRfRbpZMk5gdJcMVUsK9OUY/htmlview?usp=sharing&sle=true#

This is the website of Dr. Dan Siegel – there are parenting videos and resources to help parents understand developmental processes in children – and hence why predictability and the way in which we respond to our children (and youth) will impact how they think, feel and behave:

<https://www.drdansiegel.com/home/>

This is a handout we use in our parent groups and our fabulous intake counsellor Brenden Taylor first shared with me – on parenting a child who has experienced trauma. It includes several suggestions for helping your child, including how to respond and the need for predictability and routine:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/child-trauma.pdf>

The Centre for Disease Control also has a lot of resources for creating structure and routine (i.e., predictability), including several parenting videos and practices:

<https://www.cdc.gov/parents/essentials/structure/index.html>

A family and parenting resource from Australia on why routines are good for the whole family, there are several different resources and links:

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/grown-ups/family-life/routines-rituals-relationships/family-routines>

A simple straightforward explanation (with some resources and suggestions) on why children need routine, especially during unpredictable and difficult transitional times:

<https://www.ahaparenting.com/parenting-tools/family-life/structure-routines>

Predictability

2. Rituals

Rituals are repetitive personal (positive) habits that create connection and renewal. They are similar to routines in some ways, but are the special, personal ways we go about our routines. Rituals are simple events in the day such as eating together as a family, taking your furry friend on your favourite daily walking route, the way you spread just the right amount of peanut butter and jam on your PBJ sandwich, or making coffee in the morning in the favourite mug your best friend gave you. Bedtime rituals are especially important for children and can make going to bed a little more fun. What are your rituals in the day? Why are they important to you?

Here are some resources and suggestions for bedtime rituals for children and ourselves:

<https://www.fatherly.com/parenting/bedtime-rituals-that-work/>

<https://www.parenting.com/toddler/14-happy-bedtime-rituals/>

<https://thesleepdoctor.com/2018/09/23/how-to-create-an-effective-bedtime-ritual-for-better-sleep/>

3. I'm looking forward to....

Looking forward to, and planning events in the future also creates a sense of predictability and stability. Many of the events we had planned or were looking forward to in the next few months have been cancelled or postponed, however, we can still plan our own events at home, however big or small. Although we may not know when we can return to work and school, we can look forward to a Zoom party with friends online or a special theme dinner with our family. What event can you create this week or this month by yourself, with your family that you can look forward to?

Contest!

So, we are having a contest! The question for this week's newsletter is, what are some of your quirky daily rituals while in self-isolation? What do you like about them? Why are they important? The first reply to our secretary at the VCAPCC (admin@vcapcc.com) on Monday, May 11th 2020 will receive a \$20 Amazon gift card. Also, let us know if we can put your answer in the next newsletter (no names will be published). Good luck and put it in your calendar!