

COVID-19 Supplement
for the
2021
*Child Abuse and Neglect
Prevention Month*
Toolkit



April is National Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month

Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable, and nurturing environment. Please join us during April Prevention Month by promoting and strengthening child abuse prevention efforts in Wisconsin.

The Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board, Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin (PCAW), a program of Children's Wisconsin Community Services, and Wisconsin Department of Children and Families create an annual toolkit to provide information to communities, organizations, and individuals on how to promote child abuse and neglect prevention efforts in April and throughout the year. However, we understand that gatherings and events in April 2021 will be curtailed due to the pandemic. Most of our communities have adapted multiple times over the past year. Many of our families have been impacted economically, socially or in other ways from this pandemic. Even though we may not be able to plan gatherings, it is still possible to support families and prevent child abuse and neglect during this time.

We hope the resources, ideas and suggestions in the supplement and the toolkit can help with activities during April and throughout the year.

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Virtual activity ideas for 2021 Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention month

This April's campaigns and activities are going to look different, due to COVID and the need to social distance with others. However, we can still share the message of supporting kids and families to help all children in Wisconsin grow up in safe, stable and nurturing environments.

Below are ideas to help you plan your campaign and activities, while following guidelines that will keep you and others safe during this challenging time.



Show your support

- Participate in [Wear Blue Day - April 1](#) and post pictures on social media
- Plant a pinwheel garden – if can safely do while social distancing
- Promote having a pinwheel garden/display at family home, business, school, etc. – pinwheels can be purchased, homemade or coloring sheet
 - Garden/display can be in a yard, on a desk, in a window (location so people will not touch pinwheels)
 - Use window paint to create pinwheels for all to see – goggle “window paint recipe” to make your own
- Advocacy
 - share information about Children’s CAN Network <https://childrenswi.org/ways-to-help/advocacy/childrens-advocacy-network>
 - advocate in local healthcare systems to promote the Period of PURPLE Crying or other Abusive Head Trauma Prevention initiatives
- Create a virtual display to show how many children your program serves (i.e. number of children with library cards) to share on social media, place in your windows or yard
- Have a supply drive (diapers, toys, books, clothing) or fund raiser for a local organization that supports families and children





Virtual Activities and Events

- Promote ways to stay connected while safely practicing social distancing
 - Virtual game nights with extended family and/or friends
 - Connect with family and friends via FaceTime, Zoom, Skype, Google Doo
 - Create a story – one person writes 1-3 paragraphs, then sends to next person, who writes 1-3 paragraphs and so on. Then connect via Zoom, FaceTime, etc and read the completed story.
- Help families express their feelings. Use and/or share the feelings thermometer with family and friends
<https://children.wi.gov/Pages/FeelingsThermometer.aspx>
- Arrange and/or promote a virtual training
 - Host a Stewards of Children™ training to educate adults to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. It is the job of adults to protect our children. Find out more at a2awisconsin.org
 - Arrange to host a *Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work* training to educate professionals who work with children and families on effective strategies to strengthen families and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. To request more information or to schedule a training, please complete the [Training Request Form](#) found on the Prevention Board's website.
 - Host an *ACE Interface* training to educate individuals on the impact Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) have on an individual's health and longevity and the positive impact the prevention of ACE's can have on the community. Visit [SaintA](#) for more information.
 - Arrange a *Triple P* training for parents and caregivers. Triple P is an approach to parenting that helps families gain the skills and confidence to handle life's ups and downs. Contact PreventionBoard@wisconsin.gov to discuss options and to schedule a training.
- Create activity packets for families in neighborhood (puzzles, word search, items to make pinwheels, coloring sheets, books, etc.) and drop off, following best COVID-19 practices (masking and social distancing) or have a pick up site using safe, social distancing practices





Social Media

- Wear blue and/or pinwheel coloring sheet contest – done virtually and pictures put on organization/business social media
- Connect with other organizations (faith communities, schools) and businesses to promote positive messaging during April (on social media, outdoor signage, etc.) See the Social Media section in the Toolkit
- Use Instagram, Snap chat or Facebook to have families share messaging about “strong families”. They can take a photo, draw a picture or create a “poster” on the computer
 - Could ask them to create something weekly
 - Possible suggestions:
 - What does your family enjoy doing together?
 - What is your family’s favorite time of the day?
 - Show your family rocking it by wearing blue
 - Let’s see your creative pinwheels
 - How does your family like to exercise?
 - What is your family reading?
 - A favorite family memory



Ideas for Parenting as Children Grow

Parenting at any time of the year can be overwhelming, adding the stress of the COVID-19 pandemic has certainly add another layer of stress. It can be overwhelming to know where to start, but being able to seek out new information is a sign of a strong parent, no matter the times. See below for some ideas!



Ways to connect with other parents:

- Attend a virtual or in-person Parent Café
- Look for parent groups on Facebook to join
- Create a parent group text message group; each week share a rose and thorn activity with the group (share something great that happened during the week and something not so great)

Opportunities to learn:

- Choose one new article, blog post, or video about parenting to watch each week
- Connect with local Family Resource Centers to find helpful parenting tips and programming available in your area
- Sign up for parenting newsletters or text reminders
- Community Campaigns There may be specific community wide efforts available in your area that are designed to help parents with resources that support early learning and future school success. They often sponsor fun, free community activities for young children and their families. Campaigns available in various parts of the state include:
 - Talk Read Play • Born Learning • Success by Six • Cradle to Career

Helpful reminders:

- It is not your job to know everything all the time, have grace for yourself during the highs and lows of parenthood
- It is okay to ask for help

Ideas for Helping Kids Understand Feelings

COVID-19 has put unique stress on the ways children and families are able to experience emotions. With having to adapt to learning from home, missing friends, and having to avoid in person social activities, it is still important to help children continue to understand and process their emotions.

Activities:

- Encourage imaginative play
- Create flash cards with random words, have children tell a made-up story using the word
- Read books together. While reading, ask children to describe emotions characters may be feeling during the story.
- Practice breathing exercises and mindfulness activities

Apps:

- Mindful Powers
- Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame Street
- Zones of Regulation*
- Smiling Mind
- Avokiddo Emotions*
- Headspace for Kids
- Daniel Tiger's Grr-ific Feelings*
- Calm
- Stop, Breathe and Think Kids
- GoNoodle

* apps that have a cost to download



Games:

Playing games helps children with self-control and problem solving. Almost any games - board games, card games or playground games - teach children how to follow rules, take turns, wait patiently and deal with losing. Plus, they are fun!

- [Turtle Time and Other Games](#)
- [Common Games that Teach Children Self-Control and Patience](#)
- [Feelings Identification Activities](#)
- [Calming and relaxation games and exercises](#)

Helpful reminders:

- Big emotions are hard for anyone to manage. Sometimes they can get the best of us. When this happens to your child, try to help them understand what they are feeling and allow them space to calm down.

Ideas for Building Inner Strength

The stress of COVID-19 has put many families to the test. It is important to take parents take time and evaluate their needs, before trying to tackle everyone else's. When parents can manage their own stress, they have more patience to take on whatever else comes their way.

Tips

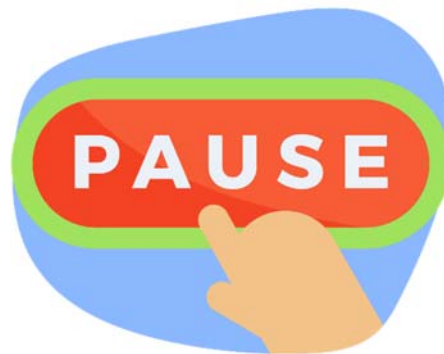
- Find simple things to do that you enjoy and that will make you feel renewed.
- Feeling overwhelmed and unable to think of something that will fit into your busy life is not unusual.
- Start with something small and simple like grocery shopping alone or a short walk with a friend. You are not alone. Do not give up.
- Remember that people need and enjoy different things. Some like relaxing activities and others, new challenges. Find what works for you.

Resources:

- [Take Care of Yourself](#) and [Goals for Better Health](#) These reflection exercises can help with focus on health and well-being.
- [Dealing with Stress](#) This worksheet can be used to develop a concrete plan for managing your stress.
- Sometimes it is helpful to talk with someone outside of your family or friend circles. Look at this [link](#) for therapists and professional service providers.

Helpful reminders:

- It is not your job to know everything all the time, have grace for yourself during the highs and lows of parenthood
- It is okay to ask for help



Ideas for Connecting with Others

Even with COVID-19 challenging the ways we traditionally connect with others, it is still important to find time to engage with others socially, it just requires a little creativity. Here are some ideas for how to connect with others during the pandemic.

Use free web conferencing or video sharing tools such as Zoom, Skype, Facetime, Google Duo App to:

- Talk to family and friends pick at least one friend or family member to catch up with each week
- Play games together- Jeopardy, Charades
- Make the same recipe together
- Share mealtime
- Virtual Happy Hour, coffee/teatime
- Have a watch party while viewing the same movie together
- Read a story to family or friends via Zoom
- Learn an online dance together

Trade homeschooling responsibilities and online babysitting via video sharing to collaborate with other families and give one another breaks:

- Read stories to each other's children
- Trade homework checks with one another
- Teach subjects virtually (one family does science, another history)
- Organize and supervise a virtual scavenger hunt
- Schedule dance or movement breaks via zoom with other families or outside with neighbors

Post concerts or performances on Facebook Live or Twitter:

- Create a virtual choir
- Make a funny video
- Record your pets

Use Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook or text to send pictures:

- Exchange a picture of something important each day
- Exchange a daily picture of something beautiful
- Exchange a daily picture of something funny or silly

Helpful reminder:

Others may seek your support during these times, consider talking about the Five Strengths when you are supporting others. It is important to highlight our own and other's strengths, especially when times feel challenging.

Ideas for How to Find Help

During COVID-19 many families are finding themselves in a place of needing help and support. Asking for help can sometimes feel overwhelming, but it is important to remember absolutely everyone needs help at some point. See ideas below for where to look!

Places to go for information and support:

- [Family Resource Centers](#)
- Community Centers
- Libraries
- Physicians or nurses
- Childcare providers / [Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies](#)
- Behavioral health providers or counselors
- Schools
- [211 Information and Referral](#)
- Other helplines or warmlines
- United Way
- [Well Badger Resource Center](#)
- Home visitors
- Search your by your county to see if any housing, food, or utility relief is being offered due to COVID-19 in your area
- [Community Action Agencies](#)
- [Resilient Wisconsin](#)

Using your connections:

- Make a list of people you have in your network that you can call when times get tough.
- Search for parent groups online or in your community to join

Helpful reminder:

Every parent gets overwhelmed and angry or frustrated with their children at different times. If that happens, use one of the following tips BEFORE reacting to your children:

- Take a "time-out"
- Count to 10
- Take slow, deep breaths
- Get outside or take a walk

You will be better prepared to react in a nurturing, helpful way to your children.



To learn more visit www.fiveforfamilies.org