

## Keeping Children and Young People Safe during the Coronavirus Lockdown

At the Y, we believe in the power of inspired young people. Children and young people tell us that they can only be inspired if they feel safe and are safe. Many children and young people will now be at home more regularly and this can place increased stress and anxiety on ourselves and our loved ones. During this difficult time, it is essential we continue to put the safety and welfare of all children and young people first, whilst acknowledging that this is a particularly difficult time for us as adults as well. Here are some tips and resources from the Y to help families get through these times.

### Establish routines

In times like these, maintaining a routine for children and young people is more important than ever. Whilst this can be extremely challenging due to the current lockdown climate, we know that a routine gives children and young people stability, structure and this inherently helps them to feel safe and be safe.

Simple things can help provide structure and enjoyment:

- A regular breakfast time
- Family exercise time and
- Family game times

### Online time, risks and opportunities

As children and young people will be spending more time at home, it is likely that they will also spend more time online. The online world is a great resource to help children and young people to continue to learn and socialise during this current lockdown. However, we know that during times like these, there is an increased risk for children and young people to be targeted online by those who may wish to harm them.

### Risks

The risks to children and young people can include:

- being cyber-bullied
- being asked to send inappropriate images
- being groomed.

### Tips

- Limit and supervise where possible children and young people's online time
- Have conversations with children and young people about the above risks
- Letting children and young people know they can speak to an adult or the Kids Helpline (phone 1800 551 800) if ever feeling unsafe, is a great tool in a child or young person's safety toolbox!
- Try and limit the amount of exposure children and young people have to the constant negative news about Coronavirus – as this repeated messaging can be traumatic.

### **Tips and help for parents!**

Children and young people rely on us as adults to help keep them safe. We know that this is a difficult time for adult. We may have financial worries and the stress of a full household with little time or space to ourselves.

### **Keep active**

Keeping active can really help us to manage our stress as well as children and young peoples'.

The Y has teamed up with Les Mills to provide free online workouts for Y members and staff and your families. There are workouts aimed at adults as well as family workouts which are a fun way to connect together during this time. You can request to sign up for these services [here](#).

Keep an eye on our social channels @YMCA Australia for other online exercise opportunities for you and your loved ones from local and global Ys. Where possible, we are shifting programs and supports online to keep our communities healthy, happy and connected.

### **Help for family violence**

We also know that during times of crisis, there is an increased risk of conflict in the home. Whilst we all bicker with our family, it is essential that everyone in the house is aware that they have the right to be safe, which includes us as adults. During crisis events, research suggests that family violence increases. Family violence is never okay, and there are lots of support organisations out there to help. Their advice is to call one of their hotlines and stay connected to the wider world, including friends, families and workplaces (even if workers are not in the workplace).

- **If you, a child, young person or anyone you know is in immediate danger call 000 for help.**

### **For Y staff and volunteers**

The Y also has an Employee Assistance program for employees and volunteers, who are able to support across a wide range of issues. Alternatively, you can contact any of the support lines below to help you during this difficult time.

Stay safe!

### **Crisis Support Services for everyone**

<b>Lifeline</b>	13 11 14	National number for people in crisis at risk of dying by suicide
<b>1800 RESPECT</b>	1800 737 732	24 hour sexual assault and domestic violence counselling service
<b>Men's Referral Service</b>	1300 766 491	Specifically supports men who use, or are at risk of using, violence against family members

### **Non- Crisis Support Services**

<b>E Safety Commissioner</b>	www.esafety.gov.au	
<b>Kidline</b>	1800 551 800	Specific counselling support for children and young people aged 5 – 25
<b>Australian Childhood Foundation</b>	1800 176 453	Counselling specifically for children and young people experiencing abuse
<b>Mind Heart</b>	<a href="https://www.mindheart.co/descargables">https://www.mindheart.co/descargables</a>	Has developed a resource available in multiple languages to explain the Coronavirus situation to children in a child-friendly way
<b>Aboriginal Family Domestic Violence Hotline</b>	1800 019 123	
<b>QLife</b>	1800 184 527	Provides support specifically for members of the LGBTQIA+ community
<b>Mensline</b>	1300 789 978	Service that specifically supports men and boys who are experiencing difficult home life situations
<b>Relationships Australia</b>	1300 364 277	Support groups and counselling for abusive and abused partners in relationships
<b>National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline</b>	1800 880 052	A number that can be called to report abuse and neglect of people with a disability
<b>Suicide Call Back Service</b>	1300 659 467	Free counselling service, whether a person is suicidal themselves or concerned about someone else who is suicidal
<b>Translating &amp; Interpreting Service (TIS)</b>	131 450	TIS is available 24 hours a day if you or someone you know needs something translated via phone