

DDS

Department of
Developmental
Services



Mental Health Tips for Care Providers During Coronavirus

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic added stress to the already stressful world of caregiving.

Although the safety of all Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities is our highest priority, we acknowledge that the Care Providers* are equally as important and should be given support during this challenging times.

This presentation will provide some useful tips on how you can take care of your mental health and overall well-being.

*The term “Care Provider” also referred to as Direct Care Staff or Direct Support Professional may be used interchangeably through out this presentation.

Stay-at-Home

- Stay-at-Home Orders are currently in place. This can be very stressful not just for the Individuals with Developmental or Intellectual Disabilities but also for the Care Providers.
- To make it work, it is important to maintain everybody's daily routine and healthy lifestyle.



Routines

- Go to bed and wake up around the same time every day as you normally would.
- Eat meals as scheduled.
- Provide activities to the clients as they normally would in their day program or daily routine. Identify if there are any preferred activities.
- Create a visual schedule to keep everybody aware on what is happening next.



Stress

Stress brings a lot of problems to your body, **physically** and **mentally**. Every individual responds or reacts to stress differently and how you handle it can make a big impact to your body, good or bad, especially during this pandemic.



What Not To Do



- Consume alcohol and drugs
- Smoking cigarettes
- Binge watch (TV/Computer/Mobile Device)
- Eat unhealthy foods
- Lose sleep time
- Put off exercise

What You Need To Do



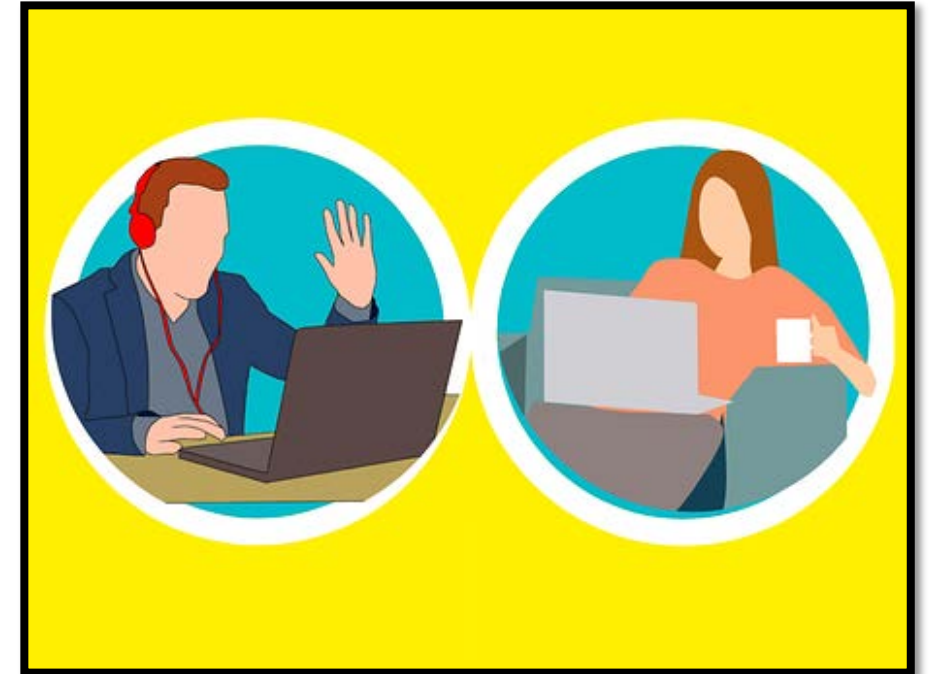
- Get enough rest and sleep
- Exercise regularly
- Eat vegetables and healthy meals
- Get some sun and fresh air whenever possible (i.e. backyard)
- Go out for a walk or go biking (remember to keep your distance)
- Take mini breaks throughout the day

Stay In Control

- Do not worry about the things that are outside of your control.
- Focus on what you can control, such as:
 - Practicing social distancing when going out
 - Wearing a face mask
 - Washing your hands frequently
 - Cleaning surfaces in your home
 - Planning ahead if someone gets sick
 - Limiting news consumption
 - Choosing reputable sources for the COVID-19 updates

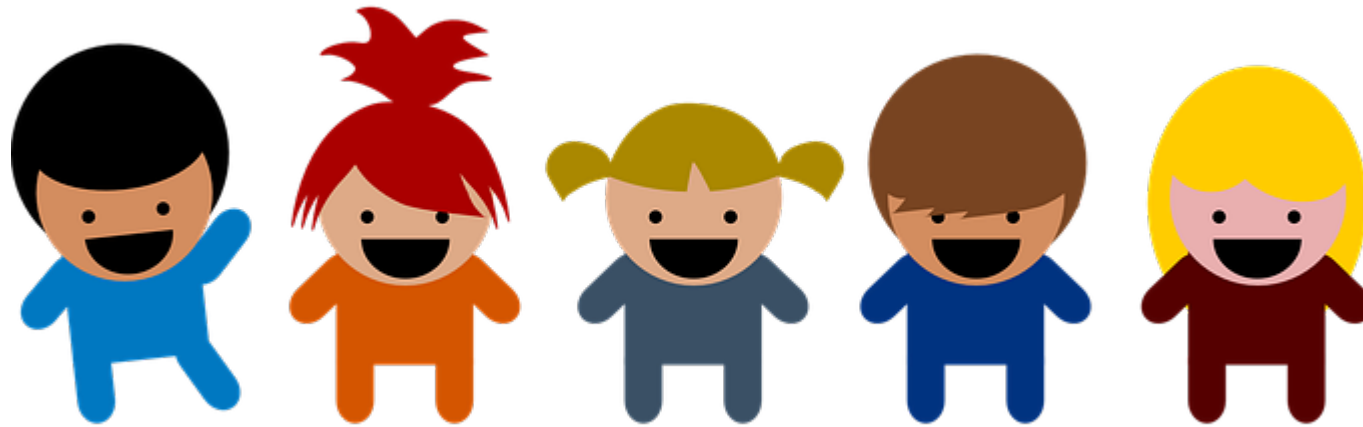
Stay Connected

- Use the technology to stay visually connected with your friends and family (Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, etc.)
- Make phone calls regularly to talk to friends and family
- Have fun with the people you live with (card games, charades, board games, etc.)
- Join a support group or keep in touch with your colleagues (share or get tips)



Laughter is the Best Medicine

- Watch funny videos or clips
- Read funny stories or jokes
- Play fun games with the people you live or work with (scavenger hunt, Jenga, Card games, etc.)



Remember

**You are not alone in this battle
and the work you do is very
IMPORTANT!**

Stay Safe and Stay Healthy!

