What can you do to take care of your mental health during this time?

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy meals. Find fun and simple ways to exercise, and get plenty of sleep.
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy such as reading, watching your favorite movie/TV, or listening to music.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

Sharing the accurate facts about COVID-19 and understanding the actual risk to yourself and people you care about can make an outbreak less stressful.

As a parent, what are signs of stress in children?

- Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained headaches or body pain
- Excessive crying or irritation in younger children
- Returning to behaviors they have outgrown (for example, toileting accidents or bedwetting)
- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and “acting out” behaviors

If your child/children are showing signs of COVID-19 related stress, how can you help them cope?

- Take time to talk with your child or teen about the COVID-19 outbreak. Answer questions and share facts about COVID-19 in a way that your child or teen can understand.
- Reassure your child or teen that they are safe. Let them know it is ok if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.
- Limit your family’s exposure to news coverage of the event, including social media. Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand.
- Try to keep up with regular routines. If schools are closed, create a schedule for learning activities and relaxing or fun activities.
- Be a role model. Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well. Connect with your friends and family members.

Local Resources:

Visit [https://www.foodbankwny.org/pantrymeal-locator/](https://www.foodbankwny.org/pantrymeal-locator/) - input zip code for closest food pantry. May need to bring form of ID. Call food pantry before visit, as COVID-19 progresses certain locations could possibly temporarily close.

- **Niagara Falls School District Locations** – Visit the closest NF District School from 11am-1pm Mon thru Fri to pick up a breakfast & lunch bag
- **Lockport School District Locations** – Visit Roy B. Kelley Elem., George Southard Elem., or North Park Jr High from 10am-1:30pm Mon-Fri to pick up breakfast & lunch
- **Niagara Wheatfield School District Locations** – Visit your closest NW district school from 11am-1pm Mon thru Fri to pick up breakfast & lunch
- **North Tonawanda School District Locations** – Visit Mullen Elem., Riverview Elem., Fletcher Elem., Middle/High School from 10am-1pm Mon thru Fri to pick up breakfast & lunch