

# Coping at Home For Families

*Supporting your wellbeing through meaningful  
activity and leisure during COVID-19*

Recreation Therapy  
Child and Adolescent Addiction and Mental Health Psychiatry Program  
Calgary Zone  
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## Coping at Home for Families

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## Introduction

Welcome to the e-resource guide *Coping at Home for Families*! This guide was compiled by Recreation Therapists within the Child and Adolescent Addiction, Mental Health and Psychiatry Program (CAAMHPP) in the Calgary Zone, who recognized that one of the many challenges facing families due to COVID-19 is finding new ways to have fun and reduce boredom while they stay home.

[Recreation Therapists](#) know that recreation and leisure are essential parts of wellbeing and quality of life of Albertans. Play and leisure allow all of us, regardless of our age, to explore our strengths and skills and experience better wellbeing during times of stress and uncertainty.

Families will find an abundance of ideas to support meaningful engagement in activities to support their wellness while staying close to home. This guide provides general information about health and wellness with the intention of inspiring families to take care of their social, emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual selves.

In the words of a great tennis player:

“Start where you are.

Use what you have.

Do what you can.”

- Arthur Ashe

## What is Health & Wellness?

In Old English, the word health means whole and the word wellness means wealth—together these words tell us that we are our best when we are whole (Alberta Health, 2014). We, as people, are at our best when all dimensions of our wellness are healthy (Alberta Health, 2014). It is what allows us all to work, play, create, and love. By doing all of the things your family already does, through creativity, connecting virtually, learning new skills, getting outside, and laughing together, you are maintaining your families' health and wellness.

This guide is sectioned into 5 dimensions of wellness:

**Social Wellness:** positive relationships with family, friends, and community members

**Physical Wellness:** taking care of your body by making informed decisions

**Emotional Wellness:** positive feelings about yourself, sharing your feelings and being optimistic

**Intellectual Wellness:** engaging in stimulating activities, expanding knowledge and abilities

**Spiritual Wellness:** living a meaningful and purposeful life

By trying or engaging in meaningful activities in each of these areas, you are practicing balancing your areas of wellness. Now it's time to check out each some new activities to try!



## Social Wellness

Social wellness is the quality of the relationships you have with the people around you such as your family, friends, co-workers, classmates or neighbours (Healthwise, 2018b). The support you and your family get from your social connections can add to meaning and purpose in life (Healthwise, 2018b). While we can't visit our supports in person right now, there are lots of ways to connect with our supports that don't reside at home with us.

Check out these social activity ideas:

1. [Connect with friends and family with a video chat app.](#)
2. [Try out your singing voice with a karaoke night.](#)
3. [Host a movie night in your living room.](#)
4. [Try a new board game or card game together.](#)

## 1. Connect with friends and family with a video chat app.

Sometimes a phone call just isn't enough. See your loved ones faces virtually through one of the apps below.

Resource	Cost
<a href="#">Bunch</a> : Play your favourite games with friends over group video chat. Use on tablets and phones. <b>Recommended age: 13+ with supervision.</b>	Free
<a href="#">Caribu</a> : A family video calling app that integrates children's books and activities and virtual play. <b>Recommended age: 0-7 with supervision.</b>	Free during COVID
<a href="#">Facebook Messenger</a> : Allows for multiple people to join a call. Use on tablets, phones and computers. <b>Recommended age: 13+ with supervision.</b> There is also a kid-friendly version <a href="#">here</a> .	Free
<a href="#">Houseparty</a> : Group video chat with features to play games together. Use on tablets, phones and computers. <b>Recommended age: 13+ with supervision.</b>	Free with in-app purchase options (i.e. games).
<a href="#">JUSTALK</a> : Provides an app for parents/guardians and an app for youth using WIFI. <b>Recommended age: 13+ with supervision.</b>	Free
<a href="#">Marco Polo</a> : Combines texting, social media and video chats. <b>Recommended age: 13+ with supervision.</b>	Free
<a href="#">Zoom</a> : Has features including face to face chats, screen sharing. Use on tablets, phones and computers. <b>Recommended age: 18+.</b>	Free Basic Account, Paid Options.

## 2. Try out your singing voice with a karaoke night.

Have each family member make a list of their favourite songs and then get ready to sing your hearts out! Find your favourite songs on [YouTube](#), or try out the [Smule](#) or the [Voice](#) apps.

## 3. Host a movie night in your living room.

Get out your comfy blankets, pop some popcorn and grab your favourite treat and have a movie night together. There are currently many streaming services offering 1 month free such as [YouTube Premium](#), [Netflix](#), and [Crave](#).



## 4. Try a new board game or card game together.

Blow the dust off those games in your closet or try out some of these resources. Want to play with family over video chat? Try Yahtzee or other dice games.

Resource	Cost
<a href="#">Card Games</a> : Have a deck of cards? Check out this resource for ideas of new games to play. <b>Recommended age: varies</b>	Free
<a href="#">CATAN Universe</a> : Play the game of Catan virtually with family on smartphones and tablets, on a browser (Chrome or Firefox) or on STEAM. For more information, visit their <a href="#">FAQs</a> . <b>Recommended age: 10+.</b>	Free with in-app purchase options (i.e. expansions)
<a href="#">Heads Up!</a> : A charades like guessing game app. <b>Recommended age: varies depending on the selected deck.</b>	Free with in-app purchases.
<a href="#">Jackbox Games</a> offers many different games and party packs that can be played with 1-8 players. For instructions on how to play remotely, click <a href="#">here</a> . <b>Recommended age: 13+.</b>	Cost varies
<a href="#">Pen &amp; Paper Games</a> : Have a pen and paper? Check out this resource for some ideas of new games to play. <b>Recommended age: varies</b>	Free
<a href="#">Playingcards.io</a> : A virtual card table that lets you play any table top game in your browser. The website has Go Fish, Checkers, Crazy Eights and Match-Up or the option to play with a 52 deck of cards. For more information on how to get started visit the <a href="#">Help/Information</a> page. <b>Recommended age: varies.</b>	Free
<a href="#">Pogo Classic</a> is an older but free version of online games such as Solitaire, Mahjong, and Bingo. Available on desktop browsers. <b>Recommended age: 13+.</b> <a href="#">Pogo Early Access</a> offers a new updated version of online games. <b>Recommended age: 13+.</b>	Free and paid features.
<a href="#">Tabletopia</a> : an online arena for playing board games just like real life. Supports desktop browsers and STEAM. <b>Recommended age: varies.</b>	Free and paid options
<a href="#">Ticket to Ride</a> : A cross-country train adventure. Supported on multiple browsers and applications. <b>Recommended age: 8+.</b>	Price varies depending on platform



## Physical Wellness

[Physical activity](#) and exercise can help you feel better, have more energy, improve your sleep, keep your mind sharp and even improve your ability to handle stress (Healthwise, 2018a). If you or your family haven't been active recently, start slow and increase your activity each day. Any movement and activity you do is better than nothing. For recommended physical activity guidelines, check out the [Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology](#).

Check out these physical activity ideas:

1. [Get your stretch on!](#)
2. [Create an indoor or outdoor obstacle course.](#)
3. [Get move in, move in!](#)
4. [Use the outdoor spaces nearby to stay active..](#)

## 1. Get your stretch on!

Take a break from the couch and try out some yoga stretching exercises. Yoga is great for our muscles, spine and even our mood.

Resource Description	Cost
<a href="#">Cosmic Kids Yoga</a> : Yoga, mindfulness and relaxation for kids (age 3+).	Free
<a href="#">Yoga by Adrienne</a> : Free yoga videos for all levels, bodies, genders and souls!	Free
<a href="#">Yoga Ed</a> : Free yoga videos for children and teens. Includes chair yoga options.	Free

## 2. Create an indoor or outdoor obstacle course.

If you're stuck inside, check out this [link](#) for ideas!

## 3. Get move in, move in!

Put on your best '90s workout gear and get move in, move in to the beat! Check out these resources below for no-equipment workouts, dance cardio and more.

Resource Description	Cost
<a href="#">Glenn Higgins Fitness Kids Workouts</a> : YouTube playlist of superhero themed workouts for kids.	Free
<a href="#">GoNoodle</a> engages kids in movement and mindfulness!	Free
<a href="#">GROOV3Dance Mini-Workouts</a> : YouTube playlist of mini dance workout videos for all ages.	Free
<a href="#">Nike Training Club App</a> : a library of videos to choose from. Recommended for 13+.	Free (limited time)
<a href="#">STRONG by Zumba</a> : high-intensity workout led by music.	Free
<a href="#">The Fitness Marshall</a> choose your favourite songs, create a playlist and dance for your workout!	Free and paid options
<a href="#">YMCA360</a> is a growing online library for you and your family	Free

#### 4. Use the outdoor spaces nearby to stay active.

Tired of walking around your neighborhood? Get creative with [Hopscotch](#) or find a bike path nearby. **NOTE:** Please check the provincial, federal and municipal restrictions and orders prior to leaving your home and **always** maintain proper physical distancing.





## Emotional Wellness

Emotional wellness is our positive feelings about ourselves, our ability to express our feelings and our sense of optimism (Alberta Health, 2014). When we are stressed, it is important to have ways to express our thoughts and feelings. Practicing engaging in your favourite activities can help you relax, find relief and cope in a healthy way (Healthwise, 2018c). More information on managing stress can be found [here](#).

Some activity ideas to support emotional wellness:

1. [Colouring/Drawing](#)
2. [Positive News](#)
3. [Journaling, poetry or writing](#)
4. [Time in nature](#)
5. [Uplifting music/videos.](#)
6. [Random acts of kindness.](#)

## 1. Spend some time colouring or drawing.

Colouring and drawing are great outlets for our thoughts and feelings. If you don't have any colouring books, provided below are some printable and digital options

Resource Description	Cost
<a href="#">Art for Kids Hub</a> : new art lessons M-F every week for kids.	Free
<a href="#">Crayola Colouring Pages</a> : colouring pages for younger children.	Free
<a href="#">Faber Castell Pages</a> colouring pages for adults and teens.	Free
<a href="#">Pigment Colouring App</a> : discover a world of colour, relaxation and creativity through this adult colouring app for iPad, iPhone and Android.	1 Free Year (limited time)
<a href="#">Supercoloring.com</a> offers printable colouring for kids and adults.	Free
<a href="#">Therapeutic Colouring Book</a> is a printable resource of mandala like colouring pages for adults and teens.	Free

## 2. Search for positive or uplifting news in the media.

It's important to keep up-to-date on current events happening in our province and country. But, sometimes we need a break from the sad things happening in the news. There are lots of positive news websites, social media pages and video channels to help us balance out the negative.

Resource Description	Cost
<a href="#">Good News Network</a> website offers positive news stories from around the globe.	Free
<a href="#">HuffPost Good News Section</a> Huff post dedicates a section of their website to positive news	Free
<a href="#">Positive News</a> is a magazine of journalism about good things happening around the world.	Free
<a href="#">SomeGoodNews YouTube Channel</a> hosted by actor John Krasinski, was created to help viewers see positive news in the centre of COVID-19.	Free
<a href="#">Yes Magazine</a> reports on positive ways communities are responding to social problems.	Free

### 3. Try journaling, poetry or creative writing

Journaling and writing can be a great activity to help us express our thoughts and emotions. If you are creative, try an [art journal](#) or a [photo journal](#). It's as easy as grabbing a pencil, some paper and finding a [topic](#). For younger children, try out this [positivity journal](#) or the [COVID-19 Time Capsule](#).

### 4. Spend some time in nature.

Try a [nature scavenger hunt](#), geocache [Start your seeds](#), or try [an indoor herb garden](#)! There are lots of [options](#) to interact with nature, even indoors!

### 5. Take a break by listening to or watching uplifting music/videos.

We can be hard on ourselves to keep busy and productive but it is okay to take a break and chill out! Put on your favourite playlist and listen to some music or put on an episode of your favourite comedic video or show to lighten the mood.

Resource Description	Cost
<a href="#">America's Funniest Home Videos</a> is the longest running funny video television program. Their channel has tons of entertaining videos.	Free
<a href="#">James Corden Carpool Karaoke</a> : tune in to watch your favourite artists sing with James Corden.	Free
<a href="#">SoulPancake</a> spreads joy through their videos like Kid President.	Free
<a href="#">The Tonight Show: Home Edition</a> : watch Jimmy Fallon's at home show while he works from home.	Free

### 6. Complete a random act of kindness.

Being kind to others helps us all feel better. Try making some cards and mailing them to your friends and family. Bake a sweet treat for someone and leave it at their doorstep. Write a letter to someone from [More Love Letters](#). Brighten someone's day with [kindness rocks](#).



## Intellectual Wellness

Engaging in activities that help our brain learn new skills, practice problem solving, and requires attention and focus, helps us to boost our intellectual wellness. By engaging in interesting activities that allow you to grow your knowledge, you may feel more accomplished and productive.

Here are some intellectual activities:

1. [Learn about writing music or playing an instrument.](#)
2. [Study a new language.](#)
3. [Visit a museum, zoo and more virtually.](#)
4. [Try your hand at a new arts skill.](#)
5. [Read or listen to a new book or podcast.](#)



## 1. Learn about writing music or playing an instrument.

Try out singing, a new instrument, or putting your own tunes together.

Resource Description	Cost
<a href="#">51 Tabla Lessons</a> : learn the Tabla percussion instrument on YouTube.	Free
<a href="#">Djembe Hand Percussion</a> : learn to play the degembe drum through videos and tutorials. Available through Google Play. <b>Recommended age: 10+</b>	Free
<a href="#">Easy Music by Edoki Academy</a> : is an animated music app for children to learn to recognize notes, pitch, rhythm and melody. Available for iOS and Android. <b>Recommended age: 4+</b>	Small Cost
<a href="#">Eva Alexandrian Violin Lessons</a> : learn violin on YouTube with Eva Alexandrian.	Free
<a href="#">Justin Guitar</a> : over 1000 free lessons from beginner to advanced. <b>Recommended age: varies.</b>	Free
<a href="#">SingTrue App</a> : Train your ears, mind and voice with this application available in Apple products. <b>Recommended age: 13+</b>	Free (in-app purchases)
<a href="#">Soundtrap</a> try out your skills at high-quality music making. Available on web browser or mobile application. <b>Recommended age: 13+</b>	Free 1 Month Trial
<a href="#">Super Simple Songs for Kids</a> : learn and explore through song and movement! <b>Recommended age: 2+</b>	Free
<a href="#">Yousician</a> : learn the guitar, piano, ukulele, bass or how to sing with this application. Available on Google Play and Apple. <b>Recommended age: 13+</b>	7 Day Free Trial, Paid

## 2. Study a new language.

Develop your language skills and memory with the resources below. There are options for all ages, including toddlers:

Resource Description	Cost
<a href="#">Babbel</a> : learn 14 different languages with over 5000 language courses.	Free with in-app purchases
<a href="#">Duolingo Kids</a> : learn French or Spanish for kids! <b>Recommended age: 4+</b>	Free
<a href="#">Duolingo</a> : personalized learning of your selected language. <b>Recommended age: 13+</b>	Free
<a href="#">Indigenous Language Apps</a> : Animikii, an Indigenous-owned digital agency, provides many application suggestions for learning an Indigenous language.	Varies
<a href="#">Indigenous Language Resources</a> : Surrey Library provides a list of resources for learning an Indigenous language.	Varies

### 3. Visit a museum, zoo and more virtually.

There are so many zoos, museums and parks across the world offering virtual tours and learning opportunities. Check out these options:

Resource Description
<a href="#">Calgary Zoo</a> is offering your daily dose at home episodes and activities during COVID-19 closures.
<a href="#">Glenbow From Home</a> : experience the Glenbow museum from home with their weekly schedule of events for all ages.
<a href="#">HuffPost</a> lists many Canadian museums and organizations hosting virtual opportunities.
<a href="#">San Diego Zoo</a> offers activities, tours and animal cams!
<a href="#">Telus Spark</a> is offering science from home for families, including Facebook live sessions to ask your questions about the topic of the day!
<a href="#">The Smithsonian Museum of Natural History</a> is offering virtual tours and more on their website.
<a href="#">Virtual Disney Rides</a> : check out 360 rides on YouTube.

## 4. Try your hand at a new arts skill.

Always wanted to learn how to paint or draw? Have lots of paper around the house? Try out some of these options or search up tutorials on [YouTube](#) or [Skillshare](#).

Resource Description		
5. or to a book  podcast.	<a href="#">Cartooning Club: Learn to Draw</a> : Tutorials for everyone to learn to draw cartoons.	Read listen new or
	<a href="#">Draw with Jazza</a> : YouTube channel with weekly tutorials and lessons on drawing and more. <b>Recommended age: varies.</b>	
	<a href="#">Learn to Watercolour Paint</a> : A beginner's tutorial in watercolour painting.	
	<a href="#">Origami Tutorials</a> : Find instructions for +120 origami activities.	
	<a href="#">Proko - Learn to Draw</a> : YouTube channel with tutorials in drawing.	

Many public libraries around the Calgary area have tons of virtual options for reading and learning! Check out a few of the options below:

Resource Description
<a href="#">Airdrie Public Library</a> offers online resources for children, streaming, e-books and online learning.
<a href="#">Audible</a> is offering free children and youth audiobooks during COVID-19!
<a href="#">Calgary Public Library</a> has eBooks and audiobooks, streaming services, music and more!
<a href="#">Chestermere Public Library</a> has tons of online resources to try.
<a href="#">Cochrane Public Library</a> provides e-resources such as auto repair source and audio eBooks and lots more.
<a href="#">Okotoks Library</a> is offering curbside hold and pick up!



## Spiritual Wellness

Spirituality is about connecting with what's meaningful to you in a way that lightens or enriches your spirit (Healthwise, 2019b). Spiritual wellness can bring comfort and healing when handling times of stress (Healthwise, 2019b). For some people, taking time in nature, to meditate, to pray or to sit in quiet may be spiritual. For others, practicing kindness, gratitude or faith in a higher being. What brings each person spiritual wellness is unique and individual.

Here are some spiritual activities to try:

1. [Connect with yourself through mindful activities and apps.](#)
2. [Try taking a walk in a labyrinth.](#)
3. [Connect with your place of worship virtually.](#)
4. [Complete any activity that feels meaningful and purposeful to you.](#)

## 1. Connect with yourself through mindful activities and apps.

Mindfulness means to focus on the present moment by purposefully paying attention to your surroundings, emotions, thoughts and how your body feels (Healthwise, 2019a).

Mindfulness can help you quiet your mind, relax your body and cope with stress (Healthwise, 2019a).

Resource Description	Cost
<a href="#">Headspace</a> has many videos on YouTube to try and also an app for mobile devices!	Free
<a href="#">Mindfulness Apps for Kids &amp; Teens</a> are great to learn about connecting our mind and body, being calm and practicing mindfulness.	Free
<a href="#">Relax Kids</a> helps children have fun while teaching them new skills to help manage stress on YouTube.	Free
<a href="#">Zentangles</a> are a great meditative drawing activity for all ages and abilities.	Free

## 2. Try taking a walk in a labyrinth.

Labyrinths can be found in many different environments such as hospitals, schools and outdoors. They are often considered a spiritual tool used for meditation, dance, and ceremonies and just for fun! Check out these options to try a labyrinth virtually or in-person.

Resource Description	Cost
<a href="#">Finger Labyrinth Printable E-Book</a> : Print off these labyrinths to try out at home. All you need is your finger!	Free
<a href="#">Labyrinth Journey App</a> : app for virtual finger labyrinths.	Free
<a href="#">Labyrinth locator</a> : website locates labyrinths all over the world! For those listed in Alberta, click.	Varies
Make your own finger labyrinth with <a href="#">playdough</a> .	Free

### 3. Connect with your place of worship virtually.

Many places of worship are offering virtual services and meetings. Connect with your place of worship to see if they have opportunities for you to connect with your community.

### 4. Complete any activity that feels meaningful and purposeful to you.

Spirituality is different for every person and every family. What kinds of activities help you feel connected to humanity or feel purposeful? For some, dancing, visiting with an Elder, praying or attending a religious service may be their answer. For others, spending time outside or journaling. The options are endless!

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## Appendix A: Important Health Information

For most up to date information and recommendations regarding the coronavirus and COVID-19, please visit the following organizations:

1. [COVID-19 Info For Albertans – Alberta Health](#)
2. [COVID-19 Info – Alberta Health Services](#)
3. [COVID-19 Info – Government of Canada, Public Health](#)

For supports in managing your mental health during COVID-19, please visit the following:

1. [Help In Tough Times – Alberta Health Services](#)
  - a. [Mental Health: Coping & Connection for Children and Families](#)
  - b. [COVID-19 and Your Mental Health](#)
  - c. [Pandemic Practical and Emotional Preparedness](#)
  - d. [Text4Hope – Free CBT Based Messages](#)
2. [Resource Hub – Mental Health Commission of Canada](#)
3. [Managing Stress & Anxiety – Center for Disease Control](#)
4. [Canadian Mental Health Association – Calgary](#)

Some helpful phone numbers for mental health support:

1. [Kids Help Phone](#): 1-800-668-6868
2. [Distress Centre](#): (403) 266-4357
3. [Connecteen](#) Call (24/7): 403.264.8336 / Text (daily): 587-333-2724

**If you cannot find someone you trust who can be there to support you, dial a crisis line right away. For emergencies, please call 911.**



## Contributors

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