

Child & Family

Supporting Families through the COVID Pandemic

Top stories in this newsletter



Routines



Happy Family Mealtimes



Play Ideas



Wellbeing

So much has changed over the last 7 weeks. COVID has impacted every aspect of our daily routines. The Child and Family team at Access Health and Community are very aware of the strain that these changes are placing on our families. We are here for you! Please reach out to your clinician, play group facilitator, or key worker to find out how we can support you and your family during the COVID pandemic.

Routines

COVID-19 has brought about so many changes to our daily lives. Life is far from normal. Establishing some simple routines in a day can help to provide some predictability during uncertain times. Routines provide a sense of security and belonging. Simple routines can have positive benefits for the whole family. This article from the Raising Children Network has some great ideas about where to start.

www.raisingchildren.net.au/guides/first-1000-days/safety-and-security/family-routines



Maintaining normal daily routines can make it easier for children to deal with stressful events, like the birth of a new child, a divorce, the illness or death of a family member, or ... an international pandemic!!

Happy Family Mealtimes

Creating happy mealtimes with children can sometimes feel like a challenge!

It's okay! Children have a lot to learn about how to eat and you can help them along the way.

Try these tips for creating more enjoyable family mealtimes.



Routine

- ✓ Children need the routine of regular meals and snacks
- ✓ Offer 3 regular meals and snacks such as: three meals and two to three snacks every day
- ✓ It's okay to nicely say 'no more snacks', or 'snack time is over'

Eat together

- ✓ Make mealtimes more enjoyable by eating family meals together
- ✓ Family meals help children learn to eat what you eat, be patient this can take time
- ✓ Be friendly and talk about anything but food!

Avoid pressure

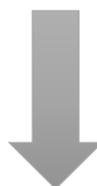
- X Pressure is when adults try to make a child eat more or less food
- X Pressure can seem like a way to help but it makes children feel sad (and adults too!)
- ✓ It is important to let children eat the amount they want from the food you provide

Want to know more?

One of our friendly dietitians can help you build happy healthy mealtimes with your family. To arrange an appointment:

- Contact your playgroup facilitator or NDIS key worker to find out more
- For non-NDIS funded clients, please contact our intake team at CFTIntake@accesshc.org.au or [9978 8698](tel:99788698)

More on the next page!!



Play Ideas

Head to the laundry for some fun, kid-friendly play activities. All you need is a laundry basket and some clothes pegs.

What can you do with a laundry basket?

- Gather up some balled-up socks and throw them into the laundry basket. How many can you get in?
- Your child help you hang up the washing, hand you pegs or choose the next item for hanging
- Tip the basket on its side to create a goal – use a fly swat to hit a balloon into the goal



Laundry Basket Pretend Play:

- Put a laundry basket on your child's back as a pretend shell to be a turtle or snail. How do these animals move?
- Add some blankets and a soft toy/doll to make a bed
- Make a car: add a circle of cardboard for the steering wheel
- Make a boat: Use pegs to attach a sheet or towel to the edge of laundry basket and then put a chair near basket and attach a sheet or towel to make a sail



With a handful of pegs:

- Sort them into colours or sizes
- Put them in and tip them out of plastic containers
- Peg the pegs onto the edge of a cardboard box or plastic container
- Put pegs into a plastic container with a lid to make a shaker
- Draw pictures of animals (bird, spider, octopus, caterpillar) and use the pegs as legs

Wellbeing

Looking after yourself is often the first thing that gets sacrificed when life is busy and stressful. We can often think that taking time for ourselves is indulgent. Looking after your own wellbeing will help you get through this challenging time and give you strength to care for others.

Being a parent is constant and tiring. The current restrictions that ban a visit to the playground, or a catch up with friends can make parenting even trickier. We need to be kind to ourselves and find ways to take a break.

Finding a time each day to do something just for you is important. It might be as simple as having a cuppa, listening to music or using a lovely smelling soap in the shower.

Here are some resources that may help you hit the "pause button" in your day to look after your own wellbeing:

www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/mindfully/

www.blog.smilingmind.com.au/how-mindfulness-can-help-during-coronavirus
www.smilingmind.com.au/smiling-mind-app

www.headspace.com/covid-19

www.coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au/

Community Support

Priority Assistance Service is being offered by a range of Supermarkets. This service ensures vulnerable customers in the community have access to delivery services during the COVID pandemic. Eligible customers include seniors, people with a disability, families with a child receiving NDIS funding and those with compromised immunity.

Participating supermarkets include: (follow the links for more detail)

- [Woolworths](#)
- [Coles](#)
- [IGA and Foodland IGA](#)



The NDIA has worked with supermarket retailers to make sure NDIS participants wanting support to grocery shop have priority access to home delivery services. This means, as an NDIS participant, from Monday 6 April, you can purchase grocery items online to be delivered to your home.

Click the link for more information.

www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus/priority-home-delivery-services

AccessHC Child and Family: we partner with children and families to support learning, growth and participation.

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