

Ways to help families stay happy and hopeful during self-isolation

Whatever your living situation we've collected tips from the extended Red Cross family to help your family during self-isolation.

You may have two toddlers under five in the suburbs. Or live with a lively teenager in a small inner-city apartment. Maybe you live alone, with your extended family in one home or in a share house full of students. Whatever the circumstance there are ways to make self-isolation easier.



Tips for families with children

- For parents who need to work from home, take turns working and parenting.
- Set up video chat 'play dates' with school friends
- Don't forget about your own needs. Keep up meditation, yoga and exercise.
- Take time to prepare meals together, get creative, let the children take control!
- Perfect time to Marie Kondo your child's bedroom, together.

- Got a crafty skill like crochet or knitting – share the skill with your family.
- Make a short movie – stop motion using household items, a drama or comedy.
- Not creative? Colouring in is very calming, frame your favourite piece!

Self-improvement ideas

- Dig out the guitar and commit to learning some tunes.
- No instrument? Apps for instruments are fun with plenty of online options.
- Take a course or try [first aid training](#) or [Pet First Aid](#) online.
- Always thought you had a novel in you? A biography? Now's the time to sit yourself down and get started.
- Napoleonic wars? Codes? Viticulture? Geography? Impressionism? 1980's TV shows? Indulge your interest and study it like you're going on a quiz show.
- Brain training apps – puzzles and lateral thinking. Crack cryptic crosswords.
- [ABC iView](#)
- [ABC podcasts](#)
- [TED Talks](#): learn something new with over 3,300 videos
- Start an online bookclub with friends or neighbours.
- Visit a world-class museum or your local library online.
- Clothes need repairs? There's a YouTube video for that.

Ideas for maintaining your wellbeing

- Make regular phone calls or video calls to people you know.
- Being in close confines can be stressful, watch out for signs of stress among family members.
- Work out a strategy to defuse any difficult situations or anger.
- Watch movies or footy games together, virtually.
- Get some sun every day – keep up the vitamin D.
- Stay in touch with work colleagues. If you can, working from home could help you stay busy and connected.
- Self-indulge and put on that hair mask you've had in the back of the drawer or give yourself a pedicure.
- Now's the time to do those household projects you've been putting off.

Ideas for having fun

- Replace outdoor time, with kitchen dance parties or yoga in the sitting room.
- If you have access to a garden, go out and pull out the weeds, mow and rake the lawn, trim the hedges, transfer plants, get dirty.
- Start planning a holiday. Do your research and create your perfect itinerary, where would you stay? What would you see in a day? Where will you eat lunch?
- Challenge yourself in the kitchen - try a ingredient meal or bake a soufflé.
- Sort out all those old photos and videos.

Ways to help others

- Reach out to others you know who might also be self-isolating.
- Share on social the ways that help you stay connected, they can inspire others too.
- Post highlights of your day to help spread the positive word.
- Write a letter to someone. It's amazing the effect it can have.
- Haven't worn it for years? Try your hand at repurposing and up styling or package up items for donation to your local Red Cross shop
- Search online for items you can make and donate to others.

Looking after your mental wellbeing during the COVID-19 epidemic

Practical, helpful tips to help you and others look after your mental wellbeing.

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KNOW

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CHECK IN

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ORGANISE

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ACT

KNOW

Get in the know about how stress can affect you and others during the outbreak

Accept that things will be different for a while. It is normal to have a range of feelings: you may feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or even angry. There are things you can do to feel better.

- Talking to people you trust can help. Set up regular check-ins with friends and family, especially if you are self-isolating.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle, including a good diet, sleep and exercise.
- Try to keep perspective. Remind yourself the world will keep turning and the sun coming up.
- If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health worker or counsellor.

[We have more tips on looking after yourself and other during a major crisis »](#)

CHECK IN

Get together while staying socially distanced

Social distancing does not mean social disconnection. If you need to physically isolate yourself, it's more important than ever to maintain connections with your loved ones, friends and community.

There are lots of ways to stay connected.

- Make regular phone calls or video calls to people you know.
- Arrange video 'play dates' for your children, or yourself.
- Set up virtual social events with friends to watch your favourite TV show or sport.
- Play virtual games, like chess or scrabble.
- Join a local community group on Facebook.
- Reach out to others you know who might also be self-isolating.

- Share on social the ways that help you stay connected, they can inspire others too.
- Write a letter to someone. It's amazing the effect it can have.
- Take a course or [first aid training](#) online.
- Stay in touch with work colleagues. If you can do it, working from home could help you stay busy and connected.

ORGANISE

Get a plan to help maintain wellbeing for yourself and others

Yourself

- Stay healthy, eat well and exercise when you can.
- Reduce your exposure to news. Choose one source and check twice a day.
- Think about posting positive stories about how people are dealing with this.
- Form a plan on how you and your family (including pets) would manage in the event that you needed to stay home for 2-3 weeks. Over-purchasing can take essential supplies away from people who are already disadvantaged or have limited mobility.
- Only share information from reputable sources, like WHO or the Department of Health.

Your family

- Being in close confines can be stressful, watch out for signs of stress among family members.
- Work out a strategy to defuse any difficult situations or anger.
- Do things together that you all enjoy.

Young people and children

- Talk to children and young people calmly and honestly about the virus.
- Be reassuring and let them know they are safe.
- Limit their exposure to the news.
- Take their concerns seriously.

ACT

Get checking on family, friends and people in your community who might need extra care

COVID-19 has impacted us all in some way. There are things we can do to make this situation easier for one another.

- If someone is self-isolating, remember that they may feel lonely and stressed, and appreciate a phone or video call.
- Invite others in your social network to call or message people who are self-isolating.
- Think about who in your neighbourhood, workplace or social circle may be especially vulnerable. If possible, give them a phone call or leave a note by their door.
- Slip a note under the door of people in your community who may need help. Ask if they would like essentials dropped off at their door, bins taken out, garden watered or pets walked.
- Plan your shop and buy only groceries and household items you need.
- Take time to thank supermarket staff, doctor's receptionists and other at the frontline at this time.
- Check in on friends and family whose employment is likely to be affected.
- If you can afford it, continue to support our local shops and cafes, by buying your lunch or adding a cake with your coffee.
- Respectfully counter racism or stigma on social media where you can, and feel safe to do so.