



SOCIAL DISTANCING SAFETY TIPS

COVID-19 came on quickly and it is a scary time for all. In this time of uncertainty it is important to take extra safety measures regarding the physical, but also the mental and emotional health of ourselves, our children, and our community. With the extra time at home comes unique challenges.

Did you know?

- The average American family uses 26 rolls of toilet paper per month. The CDC recommends having 1 month of necessities on hand. Buy what you need, leave some for others!
- Facemasks are NOT effective in preventing the general public from catching COVID-19
- Coronaviruses are generally spread from person-to-person through respiratory droplets.
- The US has roughly 1 million hospital beds nationwide. Every year our hospitals treat on average 36 million patients over the course of the year. If even a portion of that 36 million get very sick at the same time, our hospitals will not have resources to care for everyone.
- Social distancing will NOT stop COVID-19 but it will slow down the rate of spread allowing our health care system enough time and resources to care for those who are sick.

KEEPING YOUR STUDENT SAFE

With students postponing the return to school, they will likely turn to the internet/social media more than usual. Here are some tips and steps you can take to mitigate the uptick in social media usage and monitor behavior:

- Encourage educational activities during “school hours”
 - > Math games, journaling, puzzles, online activities on [netsmartzkids.org](https://www.netsmartzkids.org)
- Screen time should be in open spaces of your home
 - > Gaming consoles should be set up in living or game rooms
 - > Prohibit students from taking their devices into their bedroom with door closed
- Monitor who they are conversing with
 - > Do not accept friend request from strangers
 - > Do not share personal information like, name, address, location, school information etc.
 - > Strangers are still strangers! It is not “safer” to communicate with someone unknown to you via the internet

This is an uncertain time and everyone seems to have different information, thoughts, and fears. It is critical to talk to your student about how they are feeling mentally:

- Talk about the virus!
 - > Be honest with your student, but be careful to not overshare. Talk to them about age appropriate information so they feel informed. Provide facts based on reliable information and avoid watching too many news segments around them
 - > If you are panicked, they will feel panicked too. Let them ask you questions and speak calmly and openly. Be careful not to promise things you cannot control.
- Continue to keep kids socialized and energized
 - > Kids thrive in routine! Even if your student is not in school, waking up, taking breaks, and going to bed around the same time each day keeps them focused and feeling healthy.
 - > Make sure students are still getting fresh air. Stay away from playgrounds and other students, but encourage going on a walk around the neighborhood at off times of the day or playing in the yard.
 - > Students will miss their peers. FaceTime and Gaming can be helpful tools! Be sure to supervise these interactions, and check out [commonsensemedia.org](https://www.common sense media.org) for game suggestions/resources.

KEEPING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS SAFE

Older populations and those who have preexisting conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, lung disease are immune compromised have much higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19.

- If you are caring for an elderly friend or family please encourage them to STAY HOME.
 - > Offer to go grocery shopping and/or set up a grocery delivery for elderly. When delivering groceries be sure to stay 6 feet away from elderly at all times and disinfect any surface you touch in the process.
 - > Ensure they have enough medication to get through at least a month and go pick up prescription for them. There are some really helpful medication dispensers that you can control remotely to ensure they are taking medication in the right dosage at the right time. Check out elliegrid.com or Amazon for this!
 - > If you have a loved one living in senior living, assisted living, or a nursing home, talk with their facility about what they are doing to protect their residents. What is their plan if one of the residents or staff members contract COVID-19? How will food be distributed? Are visitors allowed?
 - > Remember that social distancing can be lonely and scary for an elderly person living alone. Set up regular phone calls or FaceTime "dates" with them to make sure they do not get too lonely. Ask grandparents if they will FaceTime with your child while they work on school or do a craft. It will give your child a bit of supervision and simultaneously keep the grandparents from getting too lonely.
- If you know someone with a pre-existing condition, do not forget about them!
 - > Offer to grocery shop for them, assist in calling doctors for medicine refills, or picking up prescription
 - > Ask about their mental health! This can be a very scary time. Check in on them on a daily basis.
 - > Offer to FaceTime and do an activity together whether that is watch a movie, read a book, or read a book.

WHEN HOME IS NOT SAFE

While social distancing is critically important to slow the spread of COVID-19, it can also cause increased danger for people surviving violence in their relationships and families.

- In response to the virus please reach out to loved ones, friends, colleagues, and extended family members who might be in violent home situations.
- If someone you know is experiencing violence in the home, offer for them to social distance with you at your home. If they do not feel comfortable doing that, make sure to check in with them every day.
- Coronavirus could lead to people being trapped in abusive relationships because of the economic impact over time. As a community, we must look for increased rates of domestic violence due to COVID-19.
- If you or someone you know is surviving domestic violence, make a "safety plan" or strategy to minimize risk even if the survivor still has contact or is living with an abusive partner.
- If you are surviving domestic violence, please consider contacting a shelter. Many shelters will take you even if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Set up a code word with a friend or neighbor who can call 911 if necessary
- If you need assistance please contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline available 24/7
 - > Call or TTY @ 1-800-799-7233
 - > If you are unable to speak safely, log onto thehotline.org or text LOVEIS to 22522

STAY FED!

- In a time when people are hoarding food and grocery store shelves are empty, please be mindful of those who cannot afford to stockpile for a month at a time. If you see the letters "WIC" on an item at the grocery store, BUY A DIFFERENT BRAND. People who use WIC to feed their kids cannot buy a different brand. If the store runs out of WIC-approved brands, that family will go home empty handed and hungry.
- If you depend on school lunch and/or breakfast to feed your children, see [this list](#) of Houston area school districts offering options to pick up food.

How to Report a Tip



Call 713.222.TIPS (8477)



Use our **Mobile App**

Download app name: Crime Stoppers Houston



Go to crime-stoppers.org

THIS IS A SCARY TIME FOR ALL!

Remember to take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about a pandemic repeatedly can be very upsetting.