

Tips for Coping with Social Distancing/Self-Isolating/Quarantining from Your School Counsellor

TIP #1: Maintain a Daily Routine

Many of us are stressed for various reasons: worried about loss of employment, loss of income, fear for family members, worrying about friends, etc. This is a strange world we're living in right now, and while we, as adults, are living with so many unknowns, we want to do our best to create a sense of safety for our children. One of the easiest ways we can do this is by keeping them in a daily routine. Children thrive when they have a routine because a routine is predictable, and predictability translates into feelings of safety for children.

I'm not saying you have to have your day scheduled down to the minute, because that is unrealistic, but your day should be generally predictable, with room for flexibility. For example, a daily routine could look something like this:

1. Morning routine (wake-up, make the bed, brush teeth, have breakfast, get dressed)
2. School work
3. Snack time
4. Creative time (colouring, Play-Doh, painting, crafting, etc.)
5. Go outside/do something physical if weather is not cooperating
6. Have lunch
7. School work
8. Free play time
9. Quiet time (reading, screen time, puzzles, etc.) = break for parents!
10. Dinner
11. Bed time routine

This schedule is just an example, I am by no means saying this is what you must do. At this point, we are all just doing our best, coping with being in close quarters with our loved ones, staying close to home, as best we can.

If you're still feeling stuck, engage your kids in your routine planning. Ask what they would like to see as part of their daily routine. Compromise with them; for example if they're asking for more screen time than you would normally allow, is there a way you could meet in the middle? Participating in planning their schedule gives kids more motivation to follow through, and gives them a sense of power and control, which also gives them more feelings of security.

Make taking a break part of your daily schedule too – everyone needs a break! Try to carve out some “me time” during your day (maybe that could be the chunk of time you allow your kids some extra screen time).

If you or your kids are struggling and want some extra support, information, coping strategies, etc., please send me an email! Amanda.LeForte@sd87.bc.ca I'm happy to help however I can, and can be available for phone calls or video chats as needed!

