# Tips from your St. Vincent Family Services

# ECMH Consultant

*Supporting Our Children in the time of COVID-19*

# With schools across the country closing, our children will be taken out of their routine and their world will look different for a while. This tip sheet is designed to help you support and guide your children during this time.

# Develop a routine for your child

# Developing your family routine will give your child consistency and security in the home

# Use their school routine as guidance; plan their day around when they would typically eat lunch, take a nap, have a snack, play outdoors, etc.

# Write/draw a schedule and make it visible for your children

# Break the day into small time periods (20-30 min) as schools do with subjects

# If your child has brought schoolwork home have them work on this at set times each day

# Allow for screen time, but limit how much time they can watch TV or play on tablets

# Dedicate time for active play whether it’s in the backyard or inside; play and physical activity will be extremely important for your child

# This health crisis is scary for adults and children alike

# If your child has questions, be honest- keep it simple and age-appropriate.

# Reassure children that they are safe. Let them know it is okay if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope.

# Reinforce the importance of washing their hands often, coughing into a tissue, and getting enough sleep.

# Remain as calm as possible as children follow our verbal and non-verbal reactions

# Allow them to talk about their feelings, and be understanding that they may need extra attention from you.

# Find ways to help manage your stress, stay physically active, take family walks, plan movie nights at home and find healthy outlets

# Take care of yourself!

# Be kind to yourself, and take care of your own emotional needs. Call a friend, bake some chocolate chip cookies, stream a movie. Do what you can to keep a positive attitude while looking after those in your care. This is very important. Even if young children are not directly exposed to the trauma, they can recognize stress and worry in adults and older children in the house.

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*Helping Families Build Bright Futures.*

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