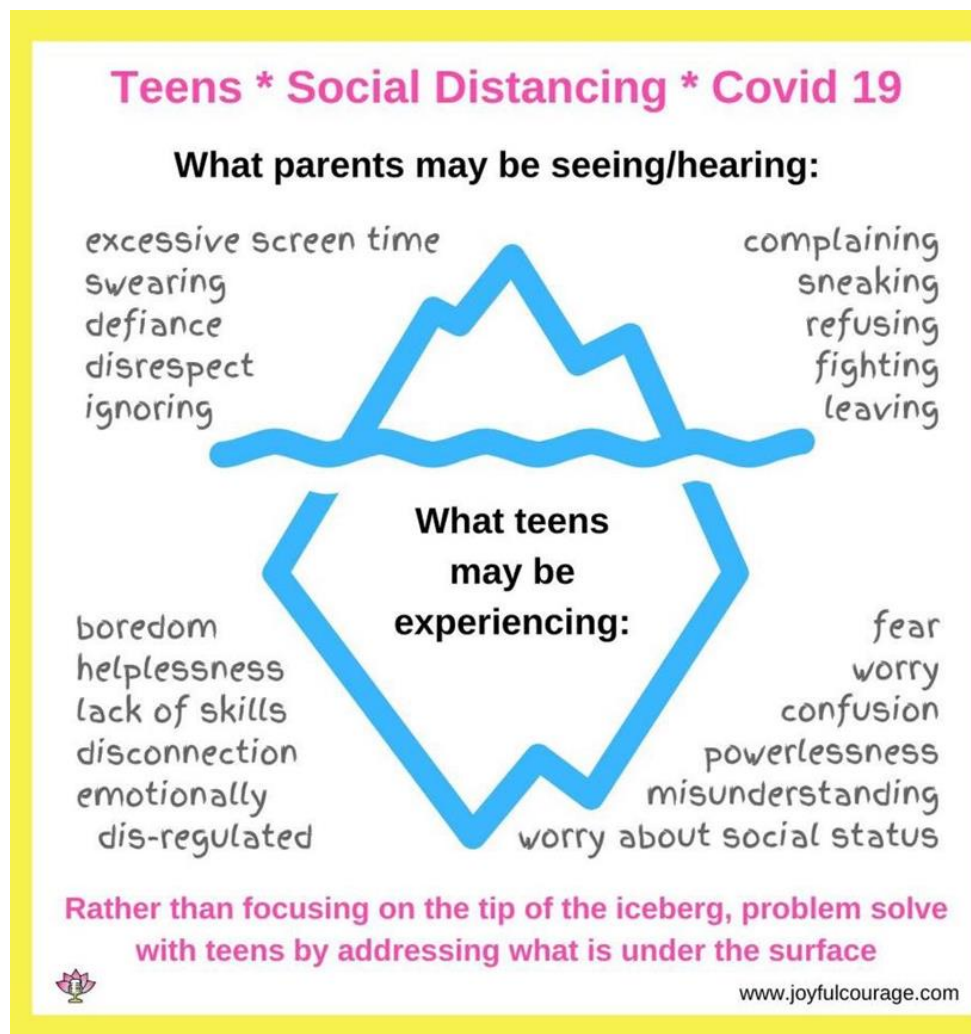


## Tips for Supporting Your Child/Youth during COVID-19 Outbreak

The uncertainty surrounding school and business closures may be very upsetting to our student athletes. Here are a few suggestions for helping your child navigate these unprecedented times.

1. **Be reassuring.** Youth will take their emotional cues from the significant adults in their lives. Your reactions are important. Youth need factual and age-appropriate information about the disease and risks associated with it as well measures to keep themselves safe. Reassure them that they are safe and that you and other adults will take care of them.

2. **Listen and Observe.** Let the child/youth guide you to learn how he/she may feel or how much information he/she needs. If the youth is not focused on the spread of the disease, just let them know that you are there. Be available to answer questions that are appropriate to their developmental age. Pay attention to changes in behaviour or social interactions.



**3. Monitor the news and social media.** Be aware of information child/youth may be exposed to in the news and through social media. It is helpful to have open discussions about what is seen and/or heard in order to help put it into perspective. Try to avoid watching or listening to information on the news that may be upsetting when your child/youth may be present. In general, constantly watching for updates in the news may increase our anxiety and by extension anxiety for our youth.

**4. Emphasize resiliency.** Help child/youth understand people’s strengths in overcoming difficult situations. Focus on the youth’s own competencies in terms of how he/she has coped in daily life during difficult times. In age appropriate terms, identify other situations from which people and communities have recovered.



**You can't calm the storm... so stop trying. What you can do is calm yourself. The storm will pass.**



**5. Maintain a normal routine as much as possible within the family.** Allowing youth to deal with their reactions is important but so is providing a sense of normalcy. Keep a regular routine and schedule or help create new ones in a new environment, including school/learning as well as time for safely playing and relaxing. Spending time with family continues to be an important source of stability and connectedness.

**6. Ask for help if your child/youth needs it.** If you feel your child/youth requires extra support, consider contacting mental health supports in your community. Here is a list of mental wellness professionals that the NSA has provided in the past. While many of these consultants are not taking on new patients at this time, this information may be helpful in the future:

Blue Oaks Counselling & Wellness: 705-444-0381  
Wilde Enterprises Counselling Services: 705-445-9662  
Turning Point Counselling: 705-443-8535  
Tory White: 705-796-3903  
Krista Lloyd Counselling: 705-532-1665  
Dr. Edward Noble: 705-444-1488  
Michelle Rich 705-444-3372  
Sarah Harrison: 705-441-5504

**7. Be aware of your own needs.** You will be better able to support your child/youth if you can express your own emotions in a productive manner, as well as getting appropriate sleep, nutrition, and exercise and extra support if needed.

Sources:

- World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/helping-children-cope-with-stressprint>
- The National Association of School Psychologists on-line resource database: <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-andpublications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources>
- Trauma, Crisis Intervention and Resilience in Children and Youth <https://www.tcdsb.org/ProgramsServices/SpecialEducation/psychology/linksandresources/Documents/Trauma%20Crisis%20Intervention%20and%20Resilience.pdf>
- [schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors/professional-development/learn-more/helping-kids-during-crisis](https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors/professional-development/learn-more/helping-kids-during-crisis)

*\*This document has been modified from the original created by the TCDSB in March 2020.*