

# Coronavirus Social Media Toolkit



## We are in this together, and we will get through this together. #InThisTogether

As we all adjust to the new reality of school cancellations, work and business closings, and forced time indoors, we know stress levels are on the rise. For families that may already be under strain due to complex issues such as food or housing instability, social distancing and quarantines can exacerbate frustration and isolation, making some especially vulnerable.

In previous times of stress and crisis, we have seen rates of child abuse rise. Now more than ever, we must do what we can to help families, friends and neighbors stay safe and healthy during this uneasy time. For this reason, we are offering a supplemental messaging package for child abuse prevention month that contains:

- **Core messages** grounded in the protective factors that we know reduce abuse and neglect, such as educating and supporting caregivers on ways to manage stress and be resilient, finding and maintaining social connections, and accessing concrete supports;
- **Resources** that can be shared via social media, including images and infographics. For digital resources, please see the attached zip folder titled "[Coronavirus messaging toolkit \(ZIP\)](#)."

## Core Messages

We know from previous epidemics and national emergencies that increased stress and isolation can compound the risk for child maltreatment. In these uncertain times, families need accurate, basic information on how they can stay safe. It is important to your community that you share relevant content and connect those in need of information or assistance with available concrete supports.

Follow these suggested messages to help families as they work to adjust to the new daily routine. You can customize these messages to best meet the needs of the community you serve, including answering questions and highlighting the programs still available to provide support.

## Protective Factor: Parental Resilience

- **Phone a friend.** Find someone who can help you when you're overwhelmed. It might be a trusted friend or a family member. Get into a routine of checking in with each other every day.
- **A good night's sleep prepares you to handle life's curveballs.** Build some consistent sleep habits by going to bed and waking up at roughly the same time every night. Most people need 7-8 hours of sleep each night.
- **Take a "reset" break.** Sitting by yourself, collecting your thoughts, even if it is for just 15 minutes, can help you reset and face the challenges ahead.
- **Flexibility is important right now.** You have permission to break your house rules. If you need a few extra minutes to finish work or dinner, give the kids extra television time. Does it really matter if beds don't get made one day of the week?
- **Be patient with yourself and others.** These are stressful and distracting days. Allow yourself the grace and peace of mind to process all that has come and will continue to come your way. Offer those around you the same.
- **Managing stress is a learned skill.** Anxiety is understandable. Tap into your faith or inner well of resilience when you feel yourself becoming overwhelmed. Step away from everyone else to collect your thoughts and decompress.

## Protective Factor: Social Connection

- **Stay emotionally close but physically distant.** Reach out and connect. Social media and digital tools can help you check in with family and friends without leaving home. A short text or funny selfie can be an antidote to loneliness and social isolation.
- **Maintain your friendships.** Hold virtual dinners, book groups or game nights to stay close while keeping a safe physical distance.
- **Now is the time to talk to those you don't connect with often.** Contact friends and family – especially those you might not see regularly. Reaching out can help others feel safe and feeling supported.

- **A few extra laughs are appreciated these days.** Share your extra smiles. Decorate your porch. Post art projects in your windows. Share your funny stories on social media.
- **Keep it real. This is not a time for perfect.** It is a time for getting by. Don't be afraid to share that the laundry is piling up, that the dog just ate your child's homework, or you felt like you had really accomplished something important by making your bed. Everyone is struggling and coping with a strange new world.

### Protective Factor: Concrete Supports

- **Connect people to organizations that are actively helping families.** Folks in need should be paired with organizations that are ready and able to help.
- **Learn who is doing what in your backyard.** Share their great work on social media. Encourage your circles to support them with donations as they are able.
- **Help meet basic needs, especially for those who may have had their hours cut.** Leave dinner or a bag of kid-friendly snacks on their porch.
- **The collective generosity of our communities adds up.** Donate canned goods, diapers or cleaning supplies to your local food pantry.
- **There are lots of families who can't leave home.** Help out friends and neighbors by offering to make a grocery or pharmacy run for them.
- **Don't spread misinformation.** Stay informed by connecting to trusted sources like the CDC or S.C. DHEC.
- **Look out for each other.** Learn to recognize the signs of distress in a friend or family member and know where you can go to get help.

### Protective Factor: Social and Emotional Competence of Children

- **Children look to adults for guidance.** Your kids are watching you. Keeping your stress in check – especially in front of them – can help kids manage their worries and anxiety.
- **Help kids understand their feelings.** Encourage children to ask questions. This offers you a chance to give age-appropriate information.
- **Routine and structure are your friends.** Involve children in creating routines that include hygiene, learning, exercise, play, mindfulness and nutrition.
- **Be honest and manage expectations.** Children need reassurance as this crisis progresses. Let them know you are there and doing what you can to keep them safe and healthy.

### Staying strong

#### Resources

These resources are designed to help you share information and supports that may be relevant to people in your community. You can use them to answer questions from families or when holding interviews with reporters. As with the other information in this guide, feel free to adapt these resources based on your community's needs. [How to Help Families During Social Distancing.](#)

If you have questions about Children's Trust of South Carolina materials, please contact Bett Williams, chief communications officer, at [bwilliams@scchildren.org](mailto:bwilliams@scchildren.org).

If you need additional guidance on the emerging novel coronavirus outbreak, visit the information webpage at [S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control \(DHEC\)](#).

### Corporate Partners

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