

Some thoughts about supporting family mental health during COVID-19

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camh

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Neurodevelopmental Centre



"There are two main ways to speak truth, one is through stories; the other is through studies. But people don't care about what you know, until they know that you care"

Cormac Russell

The many family faces of COVID-19 who need support

1. Dear in headlights face
2. Detective/Scientist frantic problem solver face
3. Angry outraged face
4. Worried and frightened about the future face
5. Lone and ALONE warrior face
6. Covid-numbed face

We all wear many faces

“Having a child with a disability makes you instantly and constantly vulnerable. In a world where we are supposed to be ‘strong’, feeling vulnerable is very uncomfortable.”

Sue Robins

Family Distress Scale (Weiss & Lunsky, 2010)

Please rate where you fall on this continuum of distress from 1 to 10:

| |
|---|
| 1 Everything is fine, my family and I are not in crisis at all |
| 2 Everything is fine, but sometimes we have our difficulties |
| 3 Things are sometimes stressful, but we can deal with problems if they arise |
| 4 Things are often stressful, but we are managing to deal with problems when they arise |
| 5 Things are very stressful, but we are getting by with a lot of effort |
| 6 We have to work extremely hard every moment of every day to avoid having a crisis |
| 7 We won't be able to handle things soon. If one more thing goes wrong - we will be in crisis |
| 8 We are currently in crisis, but are dealing with it ourselves |
| 9 We are currently in crisis, and have asked for help from crisis services (Emergency room, hospital, community crisis supports) |
| 10 We are currently in crisis, and it could not get any worse |

<http://www.midss.org/content/brief-family-distress-scale>

What depletes you?



What nourishes you?



What helps families

Check in's

Listening

Helping them to identify what would be most helpful

And what is NOT helpful

What about growing up in Holland?

“When I explained that having a brother with Down syndrome might change things, my daughter disagreed saying ‘No, I hate both my brothers equally.’”

www.sibcollab.ca

www.sibs.org.uk

Managing stress and paying attention to mental health

It is just as important in this time to take care of your mental health as it is your physical health. You may find these resources helpful. CAMH has also created some **additional information sheets for people with developmental disabilities and their families**. Learn more below.



Help when you're feeling worried



Talking to a loved one



When you have to stay at home



CAMH: mental health & COVID-19



CID Easy-Read Guide: Look after your mental health during Coronavirus



Tips for managing your Mental Health during COVID-19 from Autistica



Mental Health Guide for Families



Watch a video series about Mental Health featuring Special Olympics Athletes

CAMH Resources:

<https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-health-and-covid-19/covid-19-additional-resources>

Mental health and COVID-19: Help when you're feeling worried

Easy read: Information for people with developmental disabilities and their families

COVID-19 is an illness caused by a virus, like a cold or flu. Some people may not know they have it at all. Other people might have a fever or a cough, or a hard time breathing. They may feel weak in their muscles. For some people, COVID-19 can be very dangerous.

The COVID-19 pandemic can make people feel stressed. We can't do the things we usually do, like go to work, go to a sport practice, or see our friends or family.

When we get too stressed, it can be hard to think straight and get things done. It is good to find ways to deal with stress, so it doesn't get too big.

What has worked for you before when you were stressed? Try doing some of those same things now.

Tips to help when you're feeling worried

Be kind to yourself

This is a scary time. Everybody is feeling some fear or anxiety. That is okay.



Get the facts

Make sure you get information that is true and easy to understand. Don't believe everything you hear. It might be wrong.



Stay balanced

Stay informed, but know when you need to take a break from news.



Find out what COVID-19 means for you

Find out how dangerous it is for you to get this virus. If you have health problems already or you are older, you might want to be extra careful and stay inside.



Take one step at a time

There will be some difficulties along the way. Try to solve them one step at a time. Get someone you trust to help you.



Call someone

Is there a friend, family member or helper who can help you with your stress or worry?



Mental health and COVID-19: When you have to stay home

Easy read: Information for people with developmental disabilities and their families

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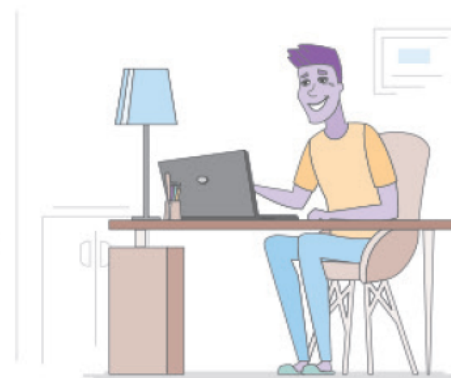
You may see lots of information about COVID-19, but it is not always easy to understand, and it can be confusing. Here is some good information for people with developmental disabilities and their families:

- Read **COVID-19 questions and answers from people with disabilities**.
- Watch a **video version of our Q&A** about COVID-19.
- Read **COVID-19 Q&As from families**.

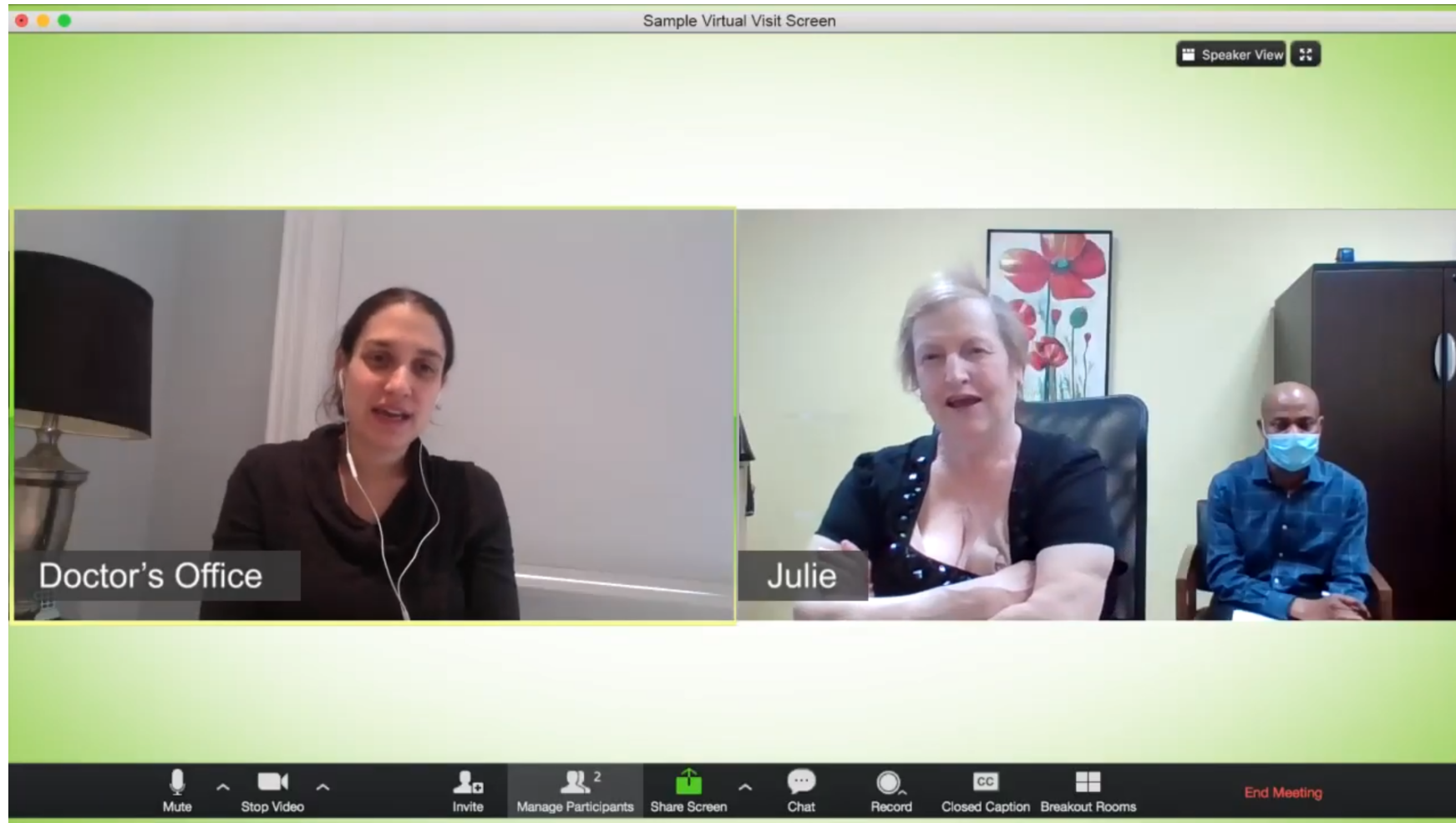
What to do when you have to stay home

When someone is sick with COVID-19, they should stay away from other people so they don't get sick too. You might be sick and live with other people, or someone else in your home might be sick. When that happens the person who is sick should try to stay by themselves in one part of the home and not spend time with the other people.

Being at home all the time can be really hard. You might feel sad, scared or mad that this is happening. It can be hard to sleep.



Talk to your Family Doctor, virtually



<https://youtu.be/AOKJKBSAFWA>

COVID-19 Hospital Transfer Form for Patients with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

| | | |
|--------------|------|-------------|
| Name: | | DOB: |
| First | Last | |

ALERTS (write detailed notes in the box below):

Medical

- ☐ I have allergies (may include food, latex, medications including general anesthetic)
- ☐ I have swallowing difficulties
- ☐ I have a family history of complications with anesthetic

Attachments

- ☐ note/summary from my family doctor
- ☐ behavior plan
- ☐ advance care plan
- ☐ information about communication tools or device
- ☐ substitute decision maker documentation

Important information about my care

- ☐ I need someone who knows me well to be with me. I need this to be able to communicate with staff and/or to remain calm and keep everyone safe
- ☐ I have communication support needs (e.g., device, board, speech impairment, ESL, deaf/hard of hearing, blind)
- ☐ I need sedation for painful procedures (e.g., swabbing, IV, bloodwork)
- ☐ I may hurt myself when scared or confused
- ☐ I may hurt others if scared or confused
- ☐ I might try to run away if I am scared or confused
- ☐ I have a hard time staying still
- ☐ I have physical care needs (e.g., eating, mobility, bathing)

Notes:

Health decisions are usually made

- ☐ On my own ☐ With support ☐ By my substitute decision maker

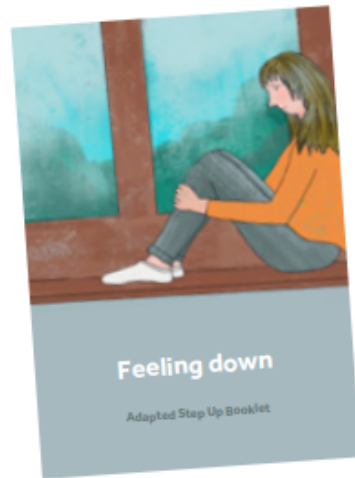
People who are important to me and how to reach them

<https://ddprimarycare.surreyplace.ca/tools-2/covid-19-tools/covid-19-hospital-transfer-form/>

COVID Self-Help Booklets

All our lives have changed because of coronavirus.

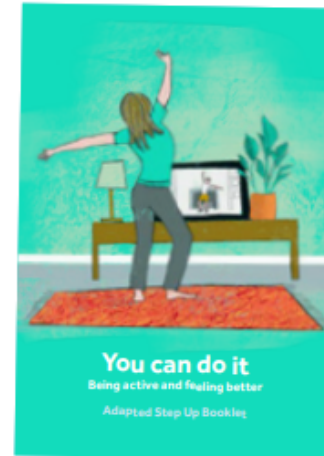
If you feel down:



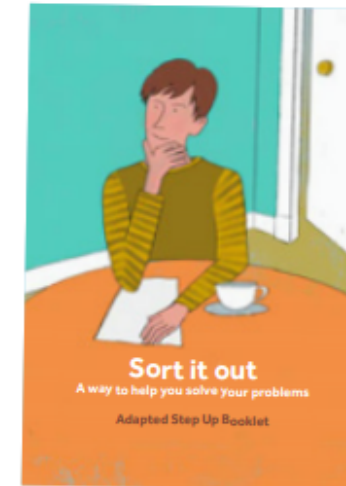
If you feel anxious:



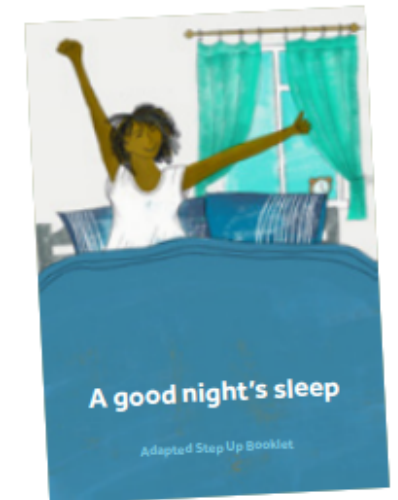
Being more active:



Solving your problems:



Sleeping better:



<https://www.sclد.org.uk/covid-19-guided-self-help-booklet-series/>

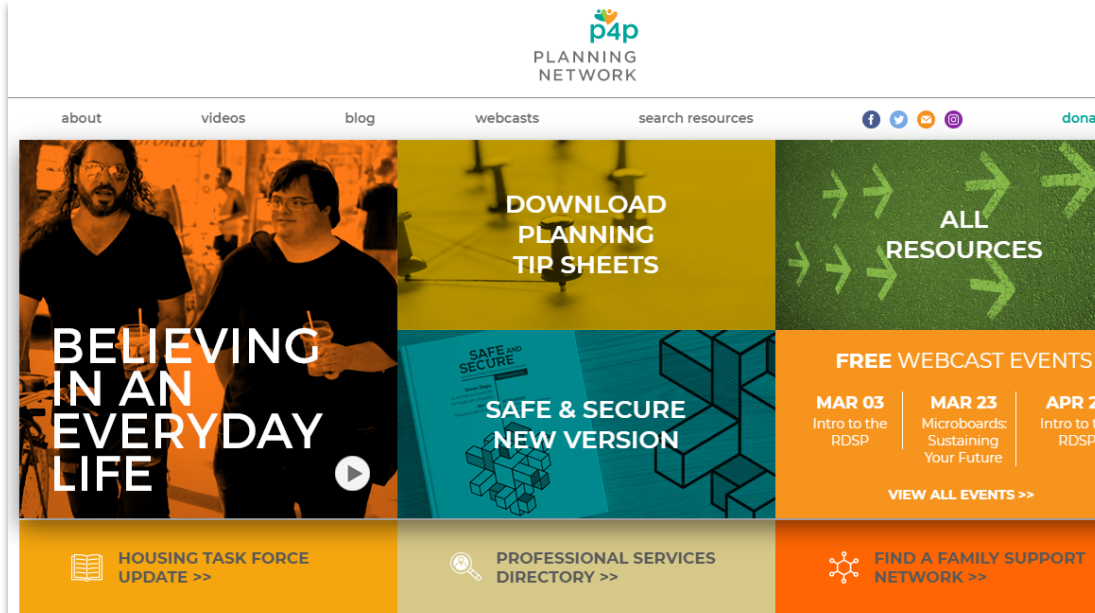
RESOURCES

www.sibcollab.ca

<https://www.porticonetwork.ca/treatments/disorders-qr/dual-diagnosis>

www.iflibrary.ca

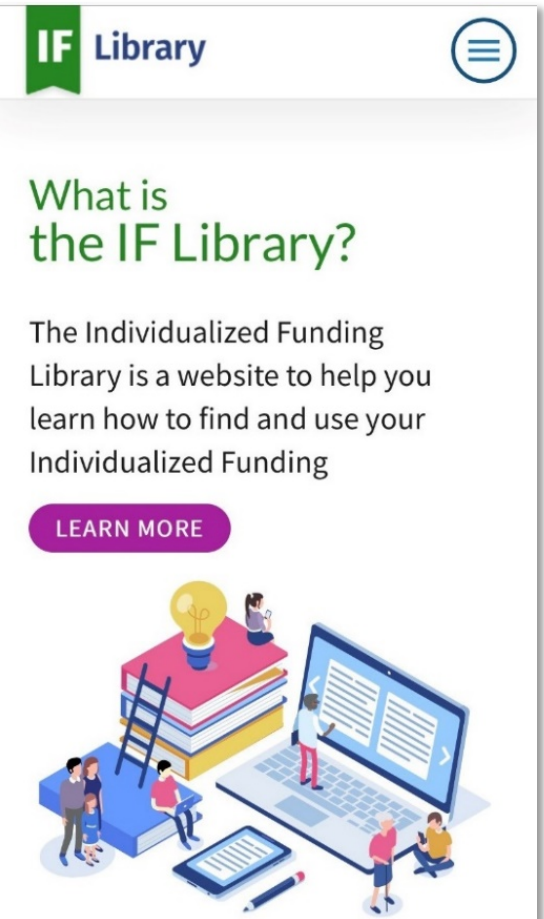
www.planningnetwork.ca



Dual Diagnosis An information guide

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Questions?

Thank you!



HCARDD is a research partnership to improve the health of Ontarians with developmental disabilities.

Visit our website to find health care tools for clinicians and patients, as well as to watch our health care practice videos.

Follow us on social media **@hcardd** for news and updates. Please contact us for more information

www.hcarddcovid.com/info

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