



COVID-19 FACTSHEET: Parenting Resources and Information

Last updated: March 26, 2020



There are new resources developed to help parents and families cope with the educational and social challenges created by COVID-19. Below is an overview of some of the programs and initiatives available in Manitoba.

PLEASE NOTE: Information related to COVID-19 is changing daily, it is important for readers to confirm accuracy of this information.

1. COVID-19 Information for Parents

Information about COVID-19 is available online to help parents understand more about what COVID-19 is, how it spreads, how to identify symptoms, and what to do to limit contact and reduce risk.

The Government of Manitoba updates: has posted links to helpful resources for Manitoban families and businesses in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Their website also includes up to date information on the current status of the situation in Manitoba, in Canada, and around the world.

- Visit: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/resources/index.html> for resources
- Visit: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/index.html> for news releases and testing information

How to Explain COVID-19 to your Children: Kids Health by Nemours has posted a helpful article about how to talk to your children about COVID-19. Their website also includes sections written for children and teens to help educate families on a variety of health-related topics: <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html>

Winnipeg Public Library: The Winnipeg Public Library has articles and videos for children and parents about COVID-19: <https://guides.wpl.winnipeg.ca/coronavirus/children>.

Information for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Mothers: The World Health Organization posted an article with information for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers about COVID-19. Visit: <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-on-covid-19-pregnancy-childbirth-and-breastfeeding>

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network: has posted informative sheet for helping families cope with COVID-19, including readiness, response, and helping children cope.

- Fact sheets are available in English, Chinese, and Spanish. Visit: <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/parent-caregiver-guide-to-helping-families-cope-with-the-coronavirus-disease-2019>
- NOTE: This document was created in the USA, so the “seeking additional help” section only has links for US residents.

2. Schools

The Government of Manitoba has suspended in-class learning kindergarten to Grade 12 schools for the rest of the school year. Classes will start again, as soon as public health officials recommend that it is safe to do so.

- Teachers and education supports are providing print-based, on-line, and other remote learning options, and connecting with students and families as much as possible via email, telephone, and mail. If this is not taking place for your child and family, please contact your child’s school directly.
- Visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/infomanitobans/eduministerletter.html> for more information about the announcement to close schools
- Visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/infomanitobans/index.html> for up to date information related to schools

For more information, specific to your child’s school division and their response to COVID-19, visit their website:

- [Winnipeg School Division](#)
- [Seven Oaks School Division](#)
- [Pembina Trails School Division](#)
- [River East-Transcona School Division](#)
- [Louis Riel School Division](#)
- [St. James-Assiniboia School Division](#)
- [Division Scolaire Franco-Manitobaine](#)

3. Childcare

The Government of Manitoba has suspended licensed childcare centres’ services.

- Home-based child care centres will remain open because they have smaller number of children.
- Parents who provide critical services, such as front-line health care providers, will have access to other child care options. Families who meet this criteria are asked to make their requests using the [Essential Services Worker Child Care Request Online Form](#). General inquiries can also be directed to 204-945-0776, 1-888-213-4754 (toll-free) or cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca.

Visit: <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/infomanitobans/index.html> for more information.

4. Educational Supports and Activities

With school closures and many community programs and drop-in centres shut down, it can be difficult to keep children entertained and active. Many organizations are moving to online programming to continue programming and community supports.

Mosaic Newcomer Family Resource Center: is providing activities, story readings, recipes and more on their website to help care for, entertain, and educate children at home. Visit: <http://www.mosaicnet.ca/category/covid-19/> for more information.

Winnipeg for Free Facebook Page: is posting information for digital programs, services, and events available to access for free, including virtual tours or educational and cultural sites, online fitness videos and articles, crafts and activities, and more. Visit: <https://www.facebook.com/wpgforfree/> for more information.

Free Online Astronomy Mini-Courses: Discover the Universe is offering daily astronomy activities for children aged 8-12 years: <https://www.discovertheuniverse.ca/astro-home>

YMCA Health and Fitness Videos: are offering free health and fitness videos online: <https://ymca360.org/on-demand#/>

Settlement Service Providers: Many settlement service providers who work with children, youth and parents are no longer providing in-person services or have temporarily stopped their services. To find out which services are open or closed either visit MANSO's website: <https://mansomanitoba.ca/covid-19-sector-scan/>

5. Financial Support for Parents

As a result of COVID-19 many families are struggling financial. The Government of Canada is provided some financial supports for families.

Canada Child Benefit: In May, the Government of Canada will automatically increase Canada Child Benefit (CCB) for parents.

- Check your bank account to make sure that you are getting CCB.
- If you do not receive a CCB, you (and your spouse if you have one) need to file a tax return as soon as possible.
- For more information about the Canada Child Benefit go to: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/child-family-benefits/canada-child-benefit-overview.html>

Canadian Emergency Relief Benefit: If you are unable to work because your children are out of school due to COVID-19 and you can not find childcare, you may be eligible for the Canadian Emergency Relief Benefit (CERB). Also to be eligible you would have had to have made \$5,000 in income from work (employment or self-employment), EI maternity or

parental benefits in the last year, AND you have had NO income from employment, self-employment, any EI benefits for at least 14 days in a row.

- There will be an online portal where you can apply for the benefit starting April 6th. Visit the Government Canada's website for updates related to CERB: <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/economic-response-plan/covid19-individuals.html>
- If you have an employer, you can ask them if they offer paid family leave, or will use the new federal wage subsidy to keep you on the payroll while you work different hours or work from home. Your employer can find out about that subsidy here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/news/2020/03/canadas-covid-19economic-response-plan-support-for-canadians-and-businesses.html>

6. Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports

It is normal and understandable to feel anxious, depressed, or scared right now, especially as a parent. Children are also feeling confused, scared and isolated.

Tips for Parents: Here are some tips for parents to support their children's wellbeing:

- Children may respond to stress in different ways such as being more clingy, anxious, withdrawing, angry or agitated, bedwetting etc. Respond to your child's reactions in a supportive way, listen to their concerns and give them extra love and attention.
- Children need adults' love and attention during difficult times. Give them extra time and attention.
- Remember to listen to your children, speak kindly and reassure them.
- If possible, make opportunities for the child to play and relax.
- Try and keep children close to their parents and family and avoid separating children and their caregivers to the extent possible. If separation occurs (e.g. hospitalization) ensure regular contact (e.g. via phone) and re-assurance.
- Keep to regular routines and schedules as much as possible, or help create new ones in a new environment, including school/learning as well as time for safely playing and relaxing.
- Provide facts about what has happened, explain what is going on now and give them clear information about how to reduce their risk of being infected by the disease in words that they can understand depending on their age. This also includes providing information about what could happen in a re-assuring way (e.g. a family member and/or the child may start not feeling well and may have to go to the hospital for some time so doctors can help them feel better).

Source: https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/helping-children-cope-with-stress-print.pdf?sfvrsn=f3a063ff_2

Crisis Lines and Support Services: Many organizations are available by phone and online to help cope with the mental and emotional stress caused by COVID-19, and take care of your wellbeing.

Klinic Community Health: has a 24-hour crisis phone line for mental health emergencies and also offers personal counselling services by phone or in person (by appointment only). Klinic also offers support to farm, rural, and northern Manitoba communities through phone and online counseling.

- Crisis Line: 204-786-8686 (Winnipeg) 1-888-322-3019 (outside Winnipeg)
- To book over the phone counseling appointments: 204-784-4090
- Visit: <http://klinic.mb.ca/> for more information on additional supports.

The Canadian Mental Health Association: has temporarily discontinued in person service, but posted helpful links for managing stress, finding health related information, and crisis phone lines. Visit: <https://mbwpg.cmha.ca/news/cmha-manitoba-and-winnipegs-adapted-service-delivery-due-to-covid-19/>

Anxiety Disorders Association of Manitoba (ADAM): has established an anxiety support phone line for anyone seeking support during this challenging time at 204-925-0040. The line will be checked regularly between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekends. People are asked to leave their name, phone number or email address and an ADAM representative will get in touch with them within a short period of time. Relevant information can also be found on their website at www.adam.mb.ca.

Kids Help Phone: If your children need someone to talk to they can call Kids Help Phone which is a 24/7 national support service. They offer professional counselling, information and referrals and volunteer-led, text-based support to young people in both English and French.

- Call 1-800-668-6868,
- Text CONNECT to 686868, or
- Live chat: <https://kidshelpphone.ca/live-chat/>