



## EMPLOYEE SERIES

### Tips on ways to cope as a family during self-isolation

Due to the social distancing and isolation requirement currently in place across Australia, you may find yourself at home with your family for long periods of time than usual. This new situation could cause tension, frustration and arguments due to the increased time spent together as a family which usually would be used to engage in other social activities outside of the family unit.

These feelings can be exacerbated by the level of stress you may be experiencing already, due to the uncertainty for you or your loved one's health or changes to your financial situation.

Rather than dwelling on the negative aspects of the situation, spend the time connecting with the people you are living with. You can use this time to improve your existing relationships.



Below are some simple shared activities that all members of the family can enjoy together:

- Board games
- Movie marathons
- Netflix
- Reading books alone – or narrating to each other
- Arts and crafts activities
- Pamper day at home - take turns doing each other's nails, hair, facials or give massages.



Write a list of all the odd jobs that you've been meaning to get done and set a plan of how you may achieve this.



Write a cheat sheet in collaboration with the children for moments when boredom sets in they can refer to the cheat sheet for ideas on what they can do (chores or fun activities)



Think about how you can interact with others without putting your health (or theirs) at risk. Can you speak to your neighbours from over a fence or across balconies? We've seen this in Italy









You could use this time to write letters to people. These could be letters to people that you know or people that you don't know who might be greatly impacted by the virus such as people in remote communities or elderly citizens. You could create a hopeful and heart-warming letter to these more vulnerable people to help uplift their spirits.



Use this as an opportunity to connect with other relatives if you have access to it, use technology to stay in touch. If you have a smartphone, use the video capabilities (seeing someone's facial expressions can help increase connection).



-  Focus outward - check in with your friends, family, and neighbours regularly. Wherever you can, assist people in your life who may be more vulnerable (for example, those with no access to the internet or who cannot easily use the internet to shop online).
-  Manage your stress levels. Exercise, meditate, and keep to a daily routine as much as you can.
-  Keeping a daily routine is essential to managing stress levels and feelings of predictability and security in the house.
-  Write a meal plan for the week – delegate age appropriate jobs for the children to be involved in the preparing of meals.
-  Remember to have some space from one another even if this means going into separate rooms and having a couple hours of solitary time. This time could be used to complete the following activities:
  - Journaling
  - Study or homework
  - Engaging in telecommunication with friends
  - Reading a book
  - Writing a story
  - Mindfulness or Meditation
  - Reflection
  - Playing video games
  - Listening to music or podcasts
  - Drawing, painting or colouring in
  - Taking a relaxing bath or long shower
-  While this may be a stressful situation, it is important to recognise that as a parent you can help your children cope with stress by modelling healthy habits and create a safe space for honest communication about what is going on.

If you would like to book an appointment and /or speak with one of our Counsellors, it's as easy as calling 1300 66 77 00 or New Zealand 0800 327 669 or visit our website [www.accesswellbeingservices.com.au](http://www.accesswellbeingservices.com.au)