



heartlinks

Sharing, Learning, Building

Looking after YOU

Maintaining your health and wellbeing during COVID-19

It is **normal** to feel afraid, anxious or overwhelmed during these uncertain and rapidly changing times, so it's important to:

- **Allow yourself time to adjust and acknowledge your feelings:** Whilst not dwelling on them, naming our feelings helps us manage them far more effectively
- Practice **Mindfulness:** Even 3 minutes a day has proven benefits. Suggested Apps are Calm, Insight Timer and Buddhify
- Show **compassion and kindness** to yourself and to others and where possible, practice gratitude and enjoy the simple pleasures of life
- Focus on maintaining a **“calm and cautious”** perspective, challenging negative thoughts you may have with realistic thoughts or evidence
- Monitor your exposure to constant media reports or other messaging: You are allowed to **‘turn down the noise’**
- If **working from home** or self-isolating, where possible:
 - Think ahead and plan for what you may need, such as:
 - Food and medications
 - Cleaning products
 - Work materials
 - Games and other activities for your children
 - Access to internet and phone services
 - **Be organised and plan your day** with a realistic to do list
 - Implement **routines and set boundaries** between work and personal time, and allocate specific work hours in a dedicated work space: Our emotional health is strongly affected by regular routines so try to maintain your normal wellbeing routines
 - Take regular breaks and keep **MOVING**
- Be conscious of **eating healthy food, exercising regularly, getting outdoors** as much as possible [ensuring you follow health official directives] and getting enough, **quality sleep**
- **Relax & reset:** Take time to do something that is relaxing for you
- Be cautious of not becoming a ‘Do It Yourself [DIY]’ expert which may lead to injuries
- If you have financial concerns, speak to your employer or to Centrelink

Children:

- **Readjust your expectations** of what they, and what you, can achieve in a day: Whilst having boundaries and maintaining safety, you may need to be more lenient with children’s screen time
- Try and incorporate as much **fun and play** in their day as possible
- Children may need extra attention at this time: They will remember your calm, patience, love and care during this time more than any ‘home schooled lessons’
- **Provide truthful information**, at an age appropriate level and **minimise their exposure** to news reports or overheard conversations
- **VCE students** may require extra practical and emotional support during what is already a stressful period: Check with your school for advice on how best to support their studies



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Keeping safe:

- Isolation, financial hardship, job loss and uncertainty may add additional strain to you, your family or your support network. If you or someone you care for is unsafe developing a safety plan may [help](#) : If you are in immediate danger call 000

Staying connected:

- It is especially important during this time to **maintain social connections**, even whilst adhering to 'social distancing' policies
- Utilise available technology such as the telephone, Whatsapp groups, online tools such as Google Hangouts, Facetime, Zoom
- **Be creative:** Set up challenges for yourself or with others, share thoughts about TV shows, create an online book club etc
- Participate in community 'online' events

Heartlinks:

Heartlinks is a social enterprise of Family Life and provides children's and parenting counselling services, offering bespoke professional support and learning through individual and family-focused support, seminars and tailored group workshops. Our qualified and experienced counsellors have expertise in a range of areas and counselling support will be tailored to your individual needs.

All Heartlinks services are in the process of transitioning to online platforms and can be adapted to suit the changing needs of the community. If you and/or your family are in need of support or you can't find the right supports, give Heartlinks a call on 8599 5433 to discuss your needs.

Bookings and more information:

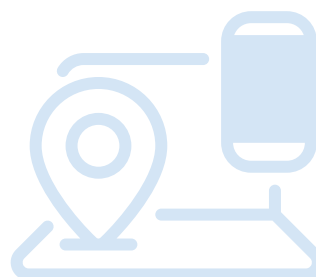
To book or for more info, visit us at heartlinks.com.au
Email heartlinks@familylife.com.au or call (03) 8599 5488

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/heartlinksau>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/heartlinksau>

Services:

- **Counselling:**
 - Fee for service counselling offered via secure video or telephone
 - Expert support focussed on parenting, child behaviour, family relationships
 - Support to manage working from home and self isolation, with a focus on how to support your children
- **Parenting workshops:** Group or one to one workshops
 - Focusing on topics such as positive parenting during Covid-19
- **Trauma informed training, for professionals and volunteers:**
 - Generates an understanding of trauma and its effects on the individual and the systems around them to inform organisations responses
- **Here4U: Active bystander training: Social Awareness Training for your Organisation**
 - Provides participants with the tools to identify, respond and support women and children experiencing domestic abuse in our community
 - How to support men's behaviour and attitude change, and challenge social norms that support violence against women including racism, homophobia and ageism



Social Enterprise