



Finding Calm in a Pandemic

A Message from the Building Better Lives Initiative of the
Franklin County Family & Children First Council



“Pandemic” is a scary word! We all want to try to stay calm, but right now, everything seems to be pushing us toward panic. So, how do we find calm during a crisis that is changing everything?

The first step is to calm our brain so that our body can be calm. This is called “**Regulation.**” Our brain and body must be regulated *first* before we can talk to other people and before we can think clearly.

Here are three things to help stay calm, even when things are tough.

1. Prepare A Schedule & Routine (Something you do at the same time every day)



Our brain likes things that are familiar. Right now, everything around us is changing, so we want to have a routine for the things in our life that we *can* control, for example:

- Create a daily schedule of mealtimes, work, play and relaxation
- Plan for positive experiences every day, like a phone call with a loved one
- Turn off phone notifications and cable news announcements to limit surprises

2. Move! Move! Move!

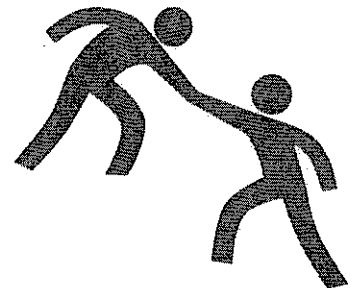
Our brains *love* rhythm, and the easiest way to get rhythm is through movement. Even when we are stuck inside or can't be around other people, there are ways to move. It only takes a short movement break of 5-10 minutes to help our brain be happy and calm, for example:

- Listen to music (*Bonus:* Add dancing or drumming for extra rhythm!)
- Take a walk outside
- Do art projects, like drawing, coloring, or knitting
- Do tasks at home such as cooking, washing dishes, vacuuming, or cleaning flat surfaces
- Follow a guided yoga video online, or doing simple stretches

3. Connect with People

Our brains are built to be with other people. When you feel upset, even just a 5-minute chat with another person will make a positive difference!

- Call a friend or loved one to check in (Note: phone call is better than texting)
- Wave and a quick chat with a neighbor from a safe distance
- Sit with someone who is calm, or video “chatting” with friends or family
- Play simple games or read a story together



Summary

Regulation is the key, especially during difficult times. **Routine, Movement** and **Connections** are all key things to regulating our brains. If we can find ways to combine all three of these (e.g., Schedule exercise with family members, etc.), then we will quickly find calm for our brains and bodies.

For more information and help, visit www.helpmykid.org; or email: information@helpmykid.org