

## COVID-19 Pediatric Update

- Guide to childhood mental health
- Virtual learning & back-to-school

March 2021

Dear parents and families,

As we all know, life has been quite different for some time. A lot of us are struggling with this. Many children and adolescents are experiencing symptoms of anxiety and depression. It is important that you as parents, and we as health care providers, are there for them.

### Guide to childhood mental health

Our pediatricians have developed this guide to help you stay connected with your child and detect if they may be experiencing some mental health concerns.

#### 1. Talk to your child.

Sit down every day, without distraction, and talk. Ask them how their day was. What was the best thing about their day and the worst?

#### 2. Monitor your child's mood and behavior.

- Do they seem like their usual self?
- Are they happy? Sad? Anxious?

- Are they acting out more? Or do they seem withdrawn?
- Are they spending all of their time in their room?
- Do they still seem interested in being with friends and family?
- Has their appetite changed?
- Has their sleep pattern changed?

If you have noticed any of these things, please give us a call. We would be happy to schedule an in-person appointment or virtual visit with you and your child.

## School and learning during a pandemic

Virtual learning has become the norm for many children. Some are thriving in this setting, while others continue to struggle. Here are ways to help them be successful with remote school and provide normalcy to their daily routine.

### Virtual learning tips for children.

1. **Wake up at the same time.**  
Get up when you normally would for school and get ready for the day—get dressed, eat breakfast, brush teeth and prepare your supplies/backpack.
2. **Go to school.**  
Have a space in the home that is designated as your school space—not your bed or bedroom, if possible.
3. **Take recess breaks and get outside.**  
If your remote school schedule doesn't always allow this during the day, then do it after school.
4. **Leave school.**  
At the end of the school day, pack up your things and leave school.
5. **Take a break before starting homework.**  
After school, go outside and get some exercise and plan homework time for later.
6. **Stay connected with classmates and friends.**  
Set up safe, socially-distanced meetings with friends.
7. **Eat dinner as a family.**  
Try to have dinner together and talk about your day.
8. **Get a good night's sleep.**

## Going back to school in person:

More schools in Connecticut are reopening their classrooms. For those of you whose children have been virtual for a long time, we understand that this transition may be difficult. These tips can help you prepare them to go back to school in person.

1. **Talk about the transition.**  
Listen for any concerns your child may have.
2. **Be clear on what to expect.**  
Review school times, bus routine, after school plans.
3. **Establish your normal school-year routines.**  
Make sure they get to bed early, start waking up at the time they will need to in order to leave for school on time, and pack their bag for school at night.
4. **Reach out.**  
Talk to their teachers and guidance department or pediatrician if your child is expressing concerns.

We are here to help you and your family with both physical and mental health. If your child is not feeling well, needs care, or is due for a check-up, please give us a call. We can see them via secure video or in person—safeguards are in place to make your experience in our offices as safe as possible.

## **COVID-19 testing: All ProHealth pediatric locations offer [COVID-19 PCR and POC testing appointments for children.](#)**

- **PCR testing**—next-business day results
- **Point-of-care (POC) molecular testing**—same-day results

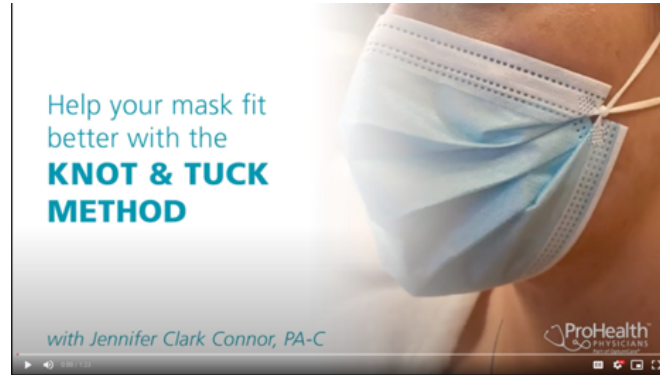
We also encourage eligible members of your family to get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as they can. As of April 1, all CT residents and workers ages 16 and older will be eligible. For step-by-step information about how to get the vaccine in Connecticut, see our [vaccination guide](#).

Thank you for your trust in us.

*Your pediatric care team at ProHealth Physicians*

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## Help your mask fit better



It's no surprise that wearing a mask helps to slow the spread of COVID-19. However, the CDC released some new recommendations for wearing masks to help protect you and others from getting infected by creating a more secure fit to your face.

### **Method #1: Double-masking**

Wear a cloth mask over a surgical mask. This helps to reduce transmission of the virus.

### **Method #2: Knot & Tuck**

Watch this video demonstration of the Knot & Tuck method by Jennifer Clark Connor, PA-C to see the right way to get the best fit - especially important for kids' small faces!

