



KIM JOHNSON  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • [www.cdss.ca.gov](http://www.cdss.ca.gov)



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PIN 20-14-CCP

TO: ALL LICENSED CHILD CARE LICENSEES AND PROVIDERS

FROM: ***Original signed by Pamela Dickfoss***  
PAMELA DICKFOSS  
Deputy Director  
Community Care Licensing Division

SUBJECT: **RESOURCES TO SUPPORT SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC  
HEALTH EMERGENCY**

**Provider Information Notice (PIN) Summary**

PIN 20-14-CCP provides resources for providers and families to support the social and emotional development of children during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) public health crisis.

California families and child care providers are adapting to the changes in their daily lives caused by the COVID-19 public health crisis. It is a stressful time for all, and a particularly important time to support children and families' mental health and well-being. During these challenging times, the Department would like to connect providers and families with resources to help support the emotional and social development of children in care.

The impact of the COVID-19 public health crisis goes beyond possible infection from the virus. Pressures and strains related to this crisis are compounded by economic distress due to lost wages, school closures, and prolonged physical distancing, all of which can trigger the biological stress response. It is essential for providers and parents to understand how stress brought on by the public health crisis can impact children and adults.

The Department recognizes the emotional impact of an emergency on a child varies depending on a child's individual experiences, the social and economic circumstances

of their family and communities, and the availability of local resources. According to the [National Association of School Psychologists \(NASP\)](#) most children will manage well with the support of parents and other family members, even if they might be showing some signs of anxiety, stress, or other concerns, such as difficulty sleeping or concentrating.

The chart below reviews some common signs of distress in children and strategies providers and parents can incorporate to support children from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

Age Group	Common Signs of Distress	Provider Strategies to Support Children
<p>Infants and Toddlers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- loss of playfulness and engaging smiling</li> <li>- avoiding eye contact, difficult to soothe</li> <li>- exhibiting high levels of distress when separated from their primary caregiver</li> <li>- regressing of physical skills such as eating, sitting, crawling or walking and appearing clumsier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Provide a routine schedule</li> <li>+ Incorporate sensory experiences</li> <li>+ Encourage physical activity</li> <li>+ Support sleeping and eating routines</li> <li>+ Consider laminating photos of family members for the child to hold or refer to when they express distress or anxiety over separation</li> <li>+ Work on language and communication skills, some activities may include singing.</li> </ul>
<p>Preschoolers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- thumb sucking</li> <li>- bedwetting</li> <li>- clinging to parents</li> <li>- sleep disturbances</li> <li>- loss of appetite</li> <li>- fear of the dark</li> <li>- regressing behaviors</li> <li>- being withdrawn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Make time for exercise</li> <li>+ Create an emotions board to identify and express emotions</li> <li>+ Create scripted stories</li> <li>+ Provide a balance of active and quiet activities</li> <li>+ Incorporate music, reading and art activities</li> <li>+ Talk about what is happening in a calming manner</li> <li>+ Consider laminating photos of family members for the child to</li> </ul>

		<p>hold or refer to when they express distress over separation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Provide sensory play experiences</li> <li>+ Follow a consistent routine and/or daily lesson plans.</li> </ul>
Elementary school children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- irritability</li> <li>- aggressiveness</li> <li>- clinginess</li> <li>- nightmares</li> <li>- school avoidance</li> <li>- poor concentration</li> <li>- withdrawal from activities and/or friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Model healthy coping and patience</li> <li>+ Encourage children to be problems solvers</li> <li>+ Combat negative thinking through practicing positive self-talk and making time for positive daily reflections</li> <li>+ Encourage outside time, and engage in hobbies they might enjoy</li> <li>+ Maintain contact with your support network of friends and family</li> <li>+ Acknowledge daily routines and activities may be different and allow for repeated questions and conversations</li> </ul>
Adolescents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sleeping disturbances</li> <li>- eating disturbances</li> <li>- agitation</li> <li>- increase in conflicts</li> <li>- physical complaints</li> <li>- delinquent behavior</li> <li>- poor concentration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Encourage physical activity</li> <li>+ Provide time for writing and self-expression</li> <li>+ Provide opportunities for humor and laughter</li> <li>+ Acknowledge daily routines and activities are different and allow for repeated questions and conversations</li> <li>+ State new safety measures as “what we know to do now” aware that information continues to evolve</li> </ul>

Additionally, [Zero to Three](#) recognizes that strong, caring and loving relationships can shield children from the impact of negative experiences and caregivers play an important role in helping young children heal from traumatic experiences.

It is important to remember that children look to the adults in their lives for guidance on how to react to events. As an adult it is okay to calmly acknowledge your own concerns and feelings. Teaching children positive preventive measures such as social distancing, more consistent handwashing, and being available to talk and listen about their own fears and concerns is vital in being responsive to their individual needs.

California's playbook on [Stress Relief during COVID-19](#) provides guidance on how to notice stress in kids and outlines tools and strategies on how to reduce stress for children and adults. In addition, it urges providers and families to utilize resources outlined below to provide safe spaces, both physical and emotional, for the children and families of California. These resources can be used to create trauma informed environments that allow for both children and adults to validate their emotions and process their stress in a safe and healthy way.

### **Resources for Providers and Families:**

California COVID-19.CA.GOV

- [Managing Stress for Health](#)
- [Playbook on Stress Relief during COVID-19](#)
- [Resources for Emotional Support and Well Being](#)

California for All Kids: Masterplan for Early Learning and Care:

- [Trauma-Informed Practices Tips & Tools](#)
- [Help for Providers](#)
- [Help for Families](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- [Talking with Children about Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [Helping Children Cope with Emergencies](#)
- [Coping with Stress](#)
- [Taking Care of Your Emotional Health](#)

Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

- Taking Care of Ourselves: Stress and Relaxation  
<https://www.ecmhc.org/relaxation.html>

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL):

- [Practical Strategies for Teachers/Caregivers](#)

National Association of School Psychologists: Health Crisis Resources

- [Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting from COVID-19](#)

University of California Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center:

- [Articles on Caregiving/Parenting during COVID-19](#)

US Department of Health and Human Services

- [Protective Factors to Promote Well Being](#)
- [Coping with Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks](#)

Zero to Three

- [Coronavirus Resources for Early Childhood Professionals](#)

If you have any questions, please contact your local [Licensing Regional Office](#).