

COVID-19 Mental Health Resources

Many of the school districts in the San Francisco Bay Area have offered recommendations and resources on their websites for supporting students during COVID-19 related school closures. For example, the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) website features a page titled [“Helping Children During the COVID-19 Pandemic”](#) with recommendations for having conversations with children about the disease, maintaining learning routines, and caregiver self-care, as well as additional contact information for services like the Child Crisis hotlink and the Safe & Sound 24 Hour Parent Talk Line. The SFUSD website also lists [Family Continuity of Learning Resources for Engaging Students at Home](#), including age-specific recommendations, exercises, and instructions for social emotional support (e.g., mindfulness exercises), reading/literacy, writing, mathematics, and health and physical movement (including a [presentation](#) for elementary school students on the COVID-19).

Additionally, school districts are continuing to provide free breakfast and lunch meals to eligible students during school closure. Packaged meals are available at specific school sites for pick-up and take-away (“grab and go”) Monday through Friday on a first-come, first-serve basis. Families should consult their child’s school district website for specific recommendations, resources, and meal pick-up information.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website features a special section about how to [“Manage Anxiety & Stress”](#) related to the outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The website provides extensive information, including recommendations for parents and responders, and links to additional resources, including a [“Coping After a Disaster”](#) activity book for children ages 3-10.

People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment plans during an emergency and monitor for any new symptoms. Additional information can be found at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [website](#). The public may also call SAMHSA’s Disaster Distress Hotline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746.

Finally, there are a range of digital mental health tools already available, including online therapy companies like [TalkSpace](#) and [BetterHelp](#), crisis counseling resources like [Crisis Text Line](#), and mental health chat bots like [Wysa](#) and [Woebot](#). However, potential users should exercise caution and be aware of whether a tool is actually claiming to provide health care (vs. peer counseling or general wellness) and whether it claims to be HIPAA compliant. Scientific evidence for the efficacy of these specific digital mental health tools is also unclear.

Links:

<https://www.sfusd.edu/helping-children-during-covid-19-pandemic>

<https://www.sfusd.edu/learning/resources-learning/continuity-learning/families>

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/19AkaS8pkV82ZJYJ7YTKrIPTQ501v5kz1P0h7MPbC-rg/edit#slide=id.g712728f476_3_6

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/readywrigley/documents/RW_Coping_After_a_Disaster_508.pdf

<https://www.samhsa.gov/disaster-preparedness>

<https://www.crisistextline.org/>

<https://woebot.io/>

<https://www.wysa.io/>

<https://www.talkspace.com/>

<https://www.betterhelp.com/>