



WCDSB Parent Webinar

Parenting strategies to support your families well-being through uncertainty and rainy days.

Parents, we hope this training and resource finds you and your family well. To best support your family's well-being through COVID-19 it's important to direct your energy towards the things you can control and away from what you can't. Rain is what helps us build and practice the skills that will protect us now and in the future, and we can use this time to help our children navigate uncertainty and build a bigger umbrella of coping skills.

The tips found in this training will help you and your family do what is in your control to come out of this period of difficulty stronger than you were before it began.

You have been provided with a 50-minute training designed to watch or listen to at your convenience. The accompanying worksheet provides a summary of the content and a great starting point for practical action.

[Click here to access video!](#)

[Click here to access audio!](#)

RETURN TO FAMILY

Focus on the bonds in your family unit

- Allow your children to re-establish the unconditional belonging that family can provide. Show your children with your actions and attention that you enjoy their company and are happy to be spending more time with them.
- Use this time to be more present with your children and deepen your understanding of them. Pay attention to how they are coping, their strengths and the weakest parts of their umbrellas.
- Stay open emotionally by experiencing and expressing all the different emotions this time of stress and challenge is bringing up. Remember to use self-compassion, be kind to yourself and those around you. We are all struggling.

Taking Action: Try the “High-low-high” activity with your family. Ask each person to share a high point, a low point and another high point in their day.

PRIORITIZE SELF-CARE

Take care of yourself so you can take care of your family

- Lighten the daily schedule by developing a calming strategy. Give yourself space between the uncomfortable feelings and focus on breathing, prayer, meditation and calm rather than constantly reaching for distractions.
- Create a new structure to your days, doing your best to incorporate exercise, movement, slow food and taking care of your body and mind, while teaching your children to do the same.
- Increase good quality sleep for the whole household. By limiting screen time before bed, and putting an emphasis on quality sleep, your immune system will function well and you will be better able to cope with the daily stresses we are facing.

- A smart use of screen time during this season where screen time has increased is important. Using it as a family bonding tool by watching movies and having conversations about what you're watching can support the whole family.

Taking Action: Work as a family to create a daily schedule that supports learning and work, while also taking care of your bodies and minds.

MODEL POSITIVE COPING

Our kids take their cues from us

- Practice flexing the coping skills that are hard for you in front of your kids. Our children are watching and learning what to do when faced with unpredictable circumstances.
- Embrace the opportunity to try new things, be flexible and capture the positive changes you are experiencing.
- Tap into a challenge mindset so you can see obstacles as something to overcome instead of a block to your progress. Let's raise the next generation of problem solvers.

Taking Action: Set aside time each week as a family to talk about obstacles you each encountered and how you overcame them, and brainstorm ideas together for obstacles you see for the coming week.

SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S COPING EDUCATION

The Umbrella Skills are essential now more than ever

- To raise the next generation of humans who are able to get through difficulty, they will require the Umbrella Skills. Much more than academics will predict our success.
- Notice your child's strong coping skills and help them tap into those strong skills to get through this uncertainty.

Taking Action:

- Do the [Umbrella Assessment](#) with your child and use this time to build the skills that may be a challenge for your child.
- Have important conversations with your children:
 - I'm so lucky to... (focus on gratitude and appreciating the positive)
 - What can we do now? (savour the small things we are adding back into our life)

NEXT STEPS

If you are looking for more support over the coming weeks and months, please reach out and ask! Below are many free resources to support you on this journey:

- We have lots of coping skill videos available on our [Facebook](#) page and are active on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).
- We have created a [summary of activities](#) you can use at home.
- Our [Mental Health Awards & Scholarship](#) are open for nomination until Friday, April 24, and it's a great activity for your children to complete right now. Your child can receive \$500CAD for demonstrating positive well-being and using their coping skills to overcome challenge.
- We are continuing to develop and share new resources regularly. Sign up to receive our parenting emails [here](#) and feel free to send an email if you have any questions to askdrjen@umbrellaproject.co.

Health & Happiness,
Dr. Jen Forristal, BSc, ND