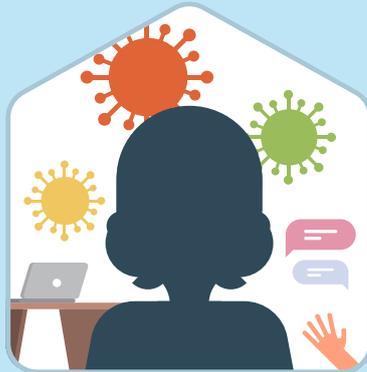


Coping with COVID-19 as a Single or Divorced Parent

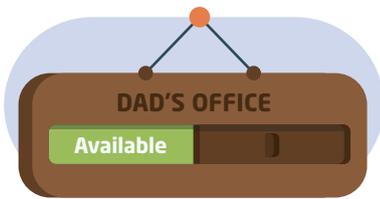
Being a single or divorced parent during the COVID-19 pandemic can be especially challenging and overwhelming.

Evelyn Soh, Social Worker at the Child Development, National University Hospital, shares some strategies for your wellbeing.



Make a plan for juggling work and childcare

Use timers and visual aids so that your child knows when you are available and when you need to work.



Build up your social support



- Reach out to family, friends or others like your child's teacher whom you have previously turned to for help.
- Schedule regular video call dates with relatives and friends to recreate a sense of community.

Psychological wellbeing

- **Accept** what is happening at the moment, with its accompanying feelings of anger and frustration. All of us are experiencing things differently.
- **Lower your expectations:** Expect that there will be days when you can feed, bathe and send your child to bed and your home is still in a mess.



- **Back to basics:** Set your priorities for the day.
- **Go easy on academics:** It is almost impossible to work from home, handle household chores and be your child's teacher.
- **Practise self-care:** Take small breaks in a day, time to calm down or engage in a simple exercise.

Plan ahead on behaviour issues



- While children can keep one another company, being cooped up can also lead to more bickering among siblings. Have a discussion to keep things from escalating. Model constructive ways of dealing with a conflict.
- With restrictions imposed due to the pandemic, your child may feel anxious and this may result in regression and tantrums.
- Very young children may express their anxiety by sucking their thumb or wetting their beds at night. They may not understand the effects of the outbreak and depend on adults to help them feel better.
- Be sensitive to your child's feelings and be generous with praise. Keep your eyes open for good behaviours. Immediate praise helps to reinforce desirable behaviours.

Figure out what works and doesn't for you



All of us are trying to navigate this crisis. How we cope differs from person to person, and will depend on our work demands and how independent our child is.

A strategy that works for someone, may not work for you. Let it go.

If you need counselling in the areas of financial, legal, emotional and parenting issues, tap on the following resources:

- **AWARE (Association of Women for Action & Research) Women's helpline:**
1800-777-5555
Monday to Friday, 10am to 6pm
- **#asinglelove.sg:**
<https://asinglelove.sg>
- **HELP (Help Every Lone Parent):**
<http://www.helpfsc.org.sg>



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COVID-19 resource page for parents and caregivers
<https://www.nuh.com.sg/nuhkids-covid19>