

NM PRADER-WILLI SYNDROME PROJECT

APRIL 2020

Helpful Tips for Handling Change and Stress

Nobody likes change! Unfortunately, change is a necessity during times like the one we are currently experiencing. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced everyone to change and adapt to a new way of daily living. For many this means not going to work or school, not seeing their support staff or friends, missing or having to modify visits with therapist or physicians, and not being able to participate in community outings or gatherings with family and friends. With all these changes, and losses we may often feel anxiety and stress and for individuals with PWS who may already experience these emotions, this can be an extremely difficult and disruptive time. Families and people supporting individuals with PWS during this time can utilize the follow tips to help reduce the anxiety and stress that the person may be experiencing.

- **Maintain a structured daily routine-**Individuals with PWS already benefit from structure and routine so it's important to keep a routine going.
- **Arts & Crafts-** working on fun projects or projects that are usually too big/time consuming are perfect to work on right now. Try starting a new hobby you've always wanted to try. Utilize online craft store websites for ordering supplies.
- **Stay connected-**call friends and family on the phone, write them a letter, talk face-to-face over FaceTime, Zoom, or Skype. It's important to not feel isolated during this time so connecting with other people is crucial to maintain social-emotional balance.
- **Exercise-**go for walks, take a hike or a bike ride, try a dvd or online work out. Physical activity of any kind helps not only our physical self, but is also good for our mental health! Be sure to maintain social distancing and small group size when exercising out in the community.
- **Garden or yard work-**has spring arrives here in New Mexico, it's a great time to work on starting a garden or getting your yard cleaned up. Start plants from seeds, clean out garden beds, rake up dead grass and leaves, or pulling weeds are great ways to beautify your outside space! Be sure to wear sun protection like a hat and sunblock and stay hydrated.
- **Theme days-**plan special "themed-days" where your activities, crafts, and meals can all have special, unique theme or concept. Theme ideas include animals, holidays, favorite movies or books, etc. For instance, if you picked animals you could have arts and crafts with animal prints or feathers, put on an animal puppet show, go for a nature walk and see how many animals you spot, make bird feeders, etc.
- **Take some "Me" time-**it's important to take care of ourselves to reduce our own stress. Taking "me" time could be taking a bubble bath, reading a book, watching a movie by yourself, coring, etc. Anything that makes you happy and gives you your own space and time for yourself is great!
- **Reach out-**don't be afraid to reach out to someone if you are struggling. Many people are having a difficult time adjusting to the changes in their world. Let a friend, family member, team member, physician, or mental health consultant know if the stress and anxiety are too much for you to work through alone.

Finding the Right Help During the COVID-19 (coronavirus) Outbreak

The COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak has presented many challenges for people across the United States. The Benefits.gov Program recognizes the difficulties that many are facing and wants to help citizens find the assistance they need, whether it be unemployment, healthcare, temporary assistance, or food and nutrition. Benefits.gov hosts information on over 1,000 federal and state benefits and aims to increase the ease of access to assistance programs for people in need. Considering the coronavirus outbreak, Benefits.gov has compiled a list of resources citizens may find helpful. Below you will find assistance programs available for eligible individuals, spanning from food stamps, unemployment benefits, healthcare benefits, emergency business loans, and more.

Unemployment Resources

Many Americans are facing unemployment or a lapse in employment as social distancing policies are enacted to decrease the spread of the coronavirus. There are resources available for individuals who need unemployment assistance, including [Unemployment Insurance](#), which provides unemployment benefits to those who lose their job through no fault of their own. Pre-check your eligibility for Unemployment Insurance using the questionnaire at the bottom of the page. Depending on your circumstances, you may qualify for [Disaster Unemployment Insurance](#). Check your eligibility using the short questionnaire at the bottom of the page or using the [Benefit Finder](#).

Check out the [Unemployment Assistance](#) category on Benefits.gov and filter by state to see what unemployment benefits are available to you.

Healthcare Coverage

Many Americans may be concerned about their healthcare coverage at this time. For workers – and their families – who have had a lapse of employment or who have become unemployed during the outbreak, [COBRA Continuation Coverage](#) may be the right choice for you.

Many citizens may also be interested in exploring their options in [Medicare and Medicaid](#). Understanding the [key differences](#) between Medicare and Medicaid can help you find the best options for you and your family. The [Medicare](#) program typically provides health insurance for people who are 65 and older while the [Medicaid](#) program provides insurance to low-income individuals, families and children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Use the [Benefit Finder](#) to prescreen your eligibility for both programs and more. Browse the [Healthcare and Medical Assistance](#) category to explore different programs.

Resources for Families in Need

The coronavirus has had an impact on everyday life, and families have been challenged to adjust. For families requiring temporary assistance during the outbreak, the [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families](#) program can help provide financial assistance and related support.

The [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#) serves millions of people annually, ensuring that they and their families have access to nutritious food options. The [SNAP for Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\)](#) provides for the special dietary needs of nursing and pregnant women, infants, and children under the age of five. Read our helpful articles on how [SNAP](#) and [WIC](#) benefits can help you and your family and how to apply. To explore more options, visit our [Food and Nutrition](#) category to find what best suits your situation.

For assistance with heating and cooling expenses, the [Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program \(LIHEAP\)](#) helps provide low-income families with their heating and cooling energy costs. If you're curious about other options for utility assistance, browse the [Housing and Public Utilities](#) category to find programs for your needs.

Use our [Benefit Finder](#), an online questionnaire, to discover more benefits that you and your family may be eligible for and learn how to apply.