



VILAS COUNTY YOUTH COALITION

OUR VISION IS TO PROMOTE YOUTH HEALTH & RESILIENCY



HELP FOR COPING WITH THE CORONAVIRUS

Why is the Coronavirus, also known as Covid-19, so dangerous? How do parents help teens deal with the loss of milestones like graduation? Should adults talk about the virus with kids, and use the same message for 5 year olds as for 8 year olds? What are some ways to decompress during these stressful times? The Vilas County Youth Coalition has answers, here and online!

Our members represent UW-Madison Extension Positive Youth Development, Marshfield Clinic, area schools, Minobimaadiziwin Coalition of Lac du Flambeau, and other local non-profits. Please continue reading to find resources we've been gathering to help families during these unprecedented times.

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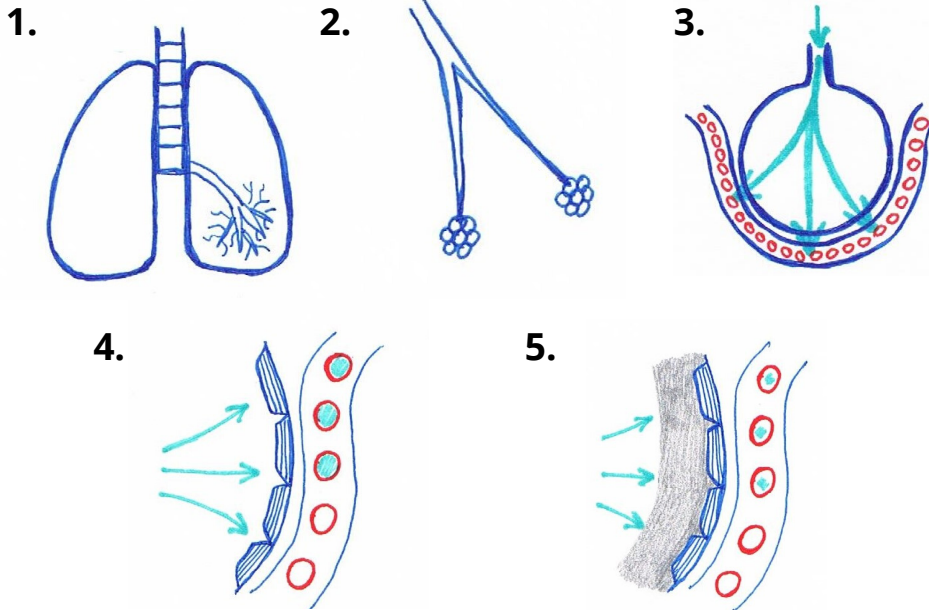
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HOW COVID-19 AFFECTS LUNGS



1. Lungs have bronchial passages that branch out, getting smaller and smaller until they are very thin.
2. The thinnest bronchial "branches" end in clusters of air sacs.
3. Oxygen moves into the air sacs, then capillaries, which are tiny blood vessels that carry red blood cells. These blood cells have already moved through the body and need oxygen. Capillaries then move to the heart, which pumps the freshly oxygenated blood to the rest of the body.
4. Oxygen moving from the air sacs into capillaries has to go through a lining called the epithelium, which is only a few micrometers thick.
5. The Coronavirus creates "debris" that covers the epithelium, blocking oxygen from getting to the red blood cells.

Once the virus starts creating blockages it spreads very quickly, with clear lungs one day and blockages 2 or 3 days later.

The Coronavirus cannot move by itself; people move it.

Scientists are still gathering research on the coronavirus. How long does it stay in the air (3 hours)? On metal? Plastic? No matter how long it stays viable, the important thing to remember is we can avoid getting it! We also should take care to not pass it on to others. People can be carriers - have the virus but not know it - for two weeks before feeling sick. Many people who get it never have symptoms, yet still pass it on. To protect yourself and others:

- Follow the advice of public health officials and avoid public spaces as much as possible.
- When you leave home, wear a mask and use sanitizing wipes provided by stores to clean shopping cart handles.
- Keep at least 6 feet away from other people.
- Avoid touching your face: eyes, nose, mouth.
- Wash your hands often, using warm water and soap for 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer will also help if it's at least 60% alcohol and rubbed on for 20 seconds, but it doesn't work as well as soap.



In an infectious disease outbreak, when social distancing and self-quarantine are needed to limit and control the spread of the disease, continued social connectedness to maintain recovery are critically important. Virtual resources can and should be used during this time. Here are some resources recommended by SAMHSA that can be used to virtually support recovery from mental/substance use disorders. For more help from SAMHSA:

Toll-Free: 1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727) | Info@samhsa.hhs.gov | http://store.samhsa.gov

VIRTUAL RECOVERY RESOURCES

- **Alcoholics Anonymous:** Offers online support <http://aa-intergroup.org>
- **Cocaine Anonymous:** Offers online support and services <https://www.ca-online.org>
- **LifeRing:** LifeRing Secular Recovery offers online support <https://www.lifering.org/online-meetings>
- **In The Rooms - Online Recovery Meetings:** Provides online support through live meetings and discussion groups <https://www.intherooms.com/home/>
- **Marijuana Anonymous:** Offers virtual support <https://ma-online.org>
- **Narcotics Anonymous:** Offers a variety of online and skype meeting options <https://www.na.org/meetingsearch/>
- **Reddit Recovery:** Offers a virtual hang out and support during recovery <https://www.reddit.com/r/REDDITORSINRECOVERY/>
- **Refuge Recovery:** Provides online and virtual support <http://bit.ly/refuge-recovery1>
- **Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART) Recovery:** Offers global community of mutual-support groups, forums including a chat room and message board <https://www.smartrecovery.org/community/>
- **SoberCity:** Offers an online support and recovery community <https://www.sobercity.com/>
- **Sobergrid:** Offers an online platform to help anyone get sober and stay sober <https://www.sobergrid.com/>
- **Soberistas:** Provides a women-only international online recovery community <https://soberistas.com/>
- **Sober Recovery:** Provides an online forum for those in recovery and their friends and family <https://www.soberrecovery.com/forums/>
- **We Connect Recovery:** Provides daily online recovery groups for those with substance use and mental illness <https://www.weconnectrecovery.com/free-online-support-meetings>
- **Unity Recovery + WEconnect + Alano Club:** Providing daily virtual meeting for those in recovery and for their family members <https://unityrecovery.org/digital-recovery-meetings>

HOTLINES

SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline
Toll-Free: 1-800-985-5990 (English and español)

SAMHSA's National Helpline
Toll-Free: 1-800-662-HELP (24/7/365 Treatment Referral Information Service in English and español)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
Toll-Free (English): 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Toll-Free (español): 1-888-628-9454
TTY: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)

TO FIND LOCAL RESOURCES:

*The Vilas County Youth Coalition has a site, **stoptheuse.org**, that lists local organizations to help those struggling with substance misuse. A Recovery Coach is available to call you to discuss options for you or a loved one.*



How to Help Youth Deal with Change and Loss

Older high school youth may experience unique grief at this time of physical distancing. The life that they imagined has become a very different reality. During this period of their development sports, clubs, friends and celebrations are all very important to them. They may also face the unexpected death of a loved-one without access to traditional ways of grieving. While you cannot change the circumstances, you can support your child through this turbulent time.

Article Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension

What is grief?

- Grief is a response to loss and our children may be experiencing a significant amount of loss.
- Grief is a normal part of the human experience.
- Grief comes in many shapes and forms.
- Grief is not experienced in a particular order.
- Grief may be experienced in all of the stages described below, or just a few.



The following stages provide examples of how your youth may be feeling, what they may be thinking, or how they might be behaving. This is not a diagnosis of your child, rather a guide for the signs you *might* observe and symptoms they express.

What are the stages or categories of grief and what do they look like?

Shock and Denial

When dealing with a sudden and overwhelming experience, it is not uncommon to pretend the change is not happening. Denying the severity of this unprecedented event gives them more time to absorb all the change.

- You may see: no change
- You may hear: *"This will all be over tomorrow"* or *"Kids my age don't get the virus"*

Anger

Anger may come out misdirected at family members or inanimate objects. Not all youth will experience this stage. Some may linger here.

- You may see: youth acting irritable, bitter, and/or resentful
- You may hear: *"It's not fair!..."*

Bargaining

During grief, youth may feel vulnerable and helpless, especially within the context of a global health crisis. In those moments of intense emotions, it's not uncommon to look for ways to regain control or to want to feel like you can affect the outcome of an event.

- You may see: an increased need to control small things
- You may hear: a lot of *"what if"* and *"if only"* statements

Depression

Depression may feel like the inevitable landing point of any loss. However, if youth feel stuck here or can't seem to move past this stage of grief, talk with a mental health professional. A therapist can help you work through this period of coping.

- You may see: a change in sleep activity or eating habits, lethargy or apathy, helplessness or hopelessness. Watch for a change in positive mood or interest in activities that once made them happy.
- You may hear: *"I don't understand how I feel"*

Acceptance

Acceptance doesn't mean youth have moved past the grief or loss of their expected high school experiences. It means that youth have accepted the situation and have come to understand what it means in their life.

- You may see: future planning, an increase in problem solving
- You may hear: *"It is what it is"* and other language indicating they are planning ahead

Creating new meaning

When the immediate loss has come to completion, there will be time to support your youth in exploring how these losses have shaped them.

- You may see: healthy reflection on what was learned
- You may hear: *"I've changed from this.."*

What can I do to help?

- Let them express their feelings. It is sad and frustrating– let them feel sad, let them express thoughts in their language.
- Validate their feelings. Don't dismiss the problem or emotion. Don't say things like "get over it" or "at least you're not..."
- Ask questions, don't push, be genuine and supportive and be comfortable with silence.
- Remember their grief is about a young person, not you; their experiences/perspective may not be the same as yours.
- Involve the youth in the solution about how you can help them. For example, help your youth explore activities that might help manage symptoms, and brainstorm strategies that interest them.
- Don't make promises you cannot keep.
- Don't give advice or try to fix the problem yourself

What if I need more help?

The following pages have more tips and resources. So does our website, www.vcyouthcoalition.org.

Tips for Coping with Stress

Note: The following tips, and much more, can be found at:

COVID-19: Resilient Wisconsin - <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/resilient.htm>

UW-Madison Division of Extension Responds to COVID-19; Help for Health & Wellness, Communities, Families, Agriculture, Personal Finances, and Youth - <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/covid19/>

With social distancing, many of us are struggling with feelings of loneliness. Social distancing really means physical distancing, or staying physically away from other people. We still can connect socially with others! Social isolation and loneliness can be bad for our health, and there are many ways to stay socially connected with friends and family, even if you are not able to visit them in person.

Stay connected

- Make a phone call.
- Write letters.
- Video chat with friends, family and neighbors.
- Help others by calling to check in on older children who may be alone while parents or guardians are at work.
- Get together creatively. Video conference a family dinner or a game night, visit a virtual museum, or have digital scavenger hunts (who can get a picture of mushroom fastest?).
- If you have a smartphone or tablet, try a new app! Technology can help you stay connected in fun, new ways.
- Talk about more than just the weather. Reminisce about a family photo, pull out an old joke book, practice asking meaningful questions. Interview older relatives to create a record of your family's history.
- Brainstorm a list of people that you could reach out to - and make a plan to do so.



Take good care of yourself

- Get outdoors as much as you can. Sit on your porch, go for a walk, work in your yard, or plant a container garden. The Vilas County Youth Coalition has directions for the garden at www.vcyouthcoalition.org
- Maintain a regular routine, including mealtimes and bedtimes.
- Find ways to share your skills and talents from a distance. Make a call to a church, school, community center, or organization to learn how you can help from home.
- Perform random acts of kindness. Send notes or cards to a local residential care facility. Make signs to cheer people up and/or thank essential workers. Make a donation to a local food bank or shelter, or send a note or letter of gratitude to someone in your life.
- Begin or continue a gratitude practice. Make a list of things you are thankful for, or send a note or letter of gratitude to someone in your life.
- Consider a new hobby or revive an old one. Try learning a new language, line dancing or playing bridge online.
- Check some things off your to-do list. Organize family photos or clean out a closet.
- Try to move your body every day in ways that are safe for you.

Most Important:

If you need medical care or advice, stay home and call your doctor or clinic. If you have an emergency, call 911. If you become sick or feel unwell, make sure a family member or friend knows that you are sick and have them check on you by phone or video chat every day.

Source: Stay at Home Tips: What to do if you live alone. UW-Madison Division of Extension

Disaster Distress Helpline

SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline provides 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters. The Disaster Distress Helpline, 1-800-985-5990, is a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster. This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories. Stress, anxiety, and other depression-like symptoms are common reactions after a disaster. Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.



Fun Fact:

Research has shown that focusing on pleasant memories affects our brains almost as much as the original feeling!

Dopamine, a hormone that makes us feel good during a fun experience, is also released when we remember it.

This is a GREAT time to get out those photo albums and videos of family vacations and tell some stories!

Local Resources

HELP WITH FOOD

Vilas County Food Pantry in Eagle River: (715) 479-9581

Feed Our Rural Kids (FORK): (715) 410-8167

Lakeland Food Pantry in Arbor Vitae: (715) 358-2222

Lac du Flambeau WIC: (715) 588-3371

Vilas County WIC: (715) 479-3656

Note: WIC and QUEST/FoodShare cards have been updated to help more families during COVID-19 with an easier application process and higher benefits. Contact Social Services for help with FoodShare benefits.

Vilas County Social Services

(715) 479-3668

Vilas County Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC)

(715) 479-3625

Vilas County Energy Assistance Program

(715) 479-3668

Lac du Flambeau Tribal

Coronavirus Hotline

(715) 588-4300

Vilas County Public Health

<https://health.vilascountywi.gov/>

(715) 479-3656



Vilas County Youth Coalition (VCYC)

The Vilas County Youth Coalition is a group which aims to strengthen and promote youth health and resiliency by providing intergenerational partnerships, positive opportunities, various community activities, and by encouraging respect, individuality, and active healthy citizenship.

Our website has many resources for families:

Links to fun things to do in Vilas County

Substance use and Mental Health resource guide

Gardening tips

More tips for coping with COVID-19

Links to 4-H activities and NASA experiments

www.vcyouthcoalition.org

SHOW YOU CARE. DON'T SHARE

FACT:

70% OF CHILDREN WHO ABUSE
PRESCRIPTION DRUGS ADMIT TO GETTING
THEM FROM FAMILY OR FRIENDS.

See: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. National Institute of Mental Health.



If you use medications and would like to keep them secure, we have **free** lock boxes! These are small metal boxes with keys and/or combination locks. Call or email the VCYC to get one.

The Vilas County Youth Coalition is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that was founded in 2001. For more information:

www.vcyouthcoalition.org

Or contact us:

(715) 479-3749

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Minobimaadiziwin Coalition

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Lac du Flambeau School

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Marshfield Clinic Health System

STOP THE USE

ADDICTION AFFECTS EVERYONE



GET HELP HELP SOMEONE FIND A DROP BOX GET INFO

FIND HELP IN YOUR COMMUNITY

StopTheUse.org

stoptheuse.org lists local help for substance misuse. A Recovery Coach is available to guide you to the organization that best fits your needs.