



SPECIAL KIDS' CORNER

Ottawa County CSHCS

COVID-19 Guide: Resources & Information
 for Special Needs Families

Feb. 2022

From the Desk of Leslie Ver Duin, BSN RN
 CSHCS Coordinator & Child-Health Team Supervisor



Dear CSHCS Families,

Welcome to a special edition of our Ottawa County CSHCS newsletter. This COVID-19 Guide contains important resources and information gathered especially for special needs families regarding testing and ordering free test kits; school guidance and disability resources; free masks, including helpful tips from Mott's Child-Life Specialists; OCDPH Family Vaccine Clinics; helpful ideas for managing chronic stress; and a great list of community resources for family support.

We warmly invite you to join our Special Families' Corner Facebook group, created to provide special needs parents and caregivers with support, information and resources (see link p.7). Also see on the same page the CSHCS Family Phone Line 1-800 359-3722, another valuable resource to help you connect with parent-to-parent support, find information, resources, and more!

Be sure to check out our regular edition of our CSHCS newsletter for program updates, meet our new nurse, and to find resources galore, including webinars, grant and scholarship opportunities, and fun events. As always, we are available if you need us. Our contact information is listed below.

In health and hope

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Special Parents Corner:

Finding ways to manage chronic stress

by CSHCS Parent Consultant, Amy Fontaine

For many of us, the challenges presented by the pandemic have added to the already weighty demands of raising a child(ren) with special needs. While it's true that we aren't new to stress and that we've had to develop good coping skills out of sheer necessity, it is also true, that after two long years of living in a pandemic, our stress has become chronic. The negative affects of chronic stress on our physical and mental health, requires us to redouble our coping efforts, and develop new strategies to protect and renew our bodies, minds and spirits.

Here are some common issues facing special needs parents/caregivers and some solutions for help managing chronic stress.

When we are so busy taking care of others, being strong for others, it's difficult to pay attention to how we are feeling physically and emotionally.

Solution: Take a moment to stop and focus on how you're feeling in your body. Do you need to release some tension? If so, try 5-5-5 breathing to help. Take a 5 second deep breath in through your nose. Hold it for 5 seconds, then slowly exhale through pursed lips for 5 seconds. Repeat a few times, and then a few times a day! It really helps!

Solution: Give journaling a try. Sometimes while writing, a solution to a problem will become obvious, and often, writing about challenges, can get them off your mind and heart.

We aren't getting enough time for exercise, healthy eating, or sleep.

Solution: Find ways to move and have fun daily, and make it a family affair! Balloon volleyball, or a dance party in the living room, anyone? Here is a great list of sensory movement activities to try together: [Monthly Movement Activities - The OT Toolbox](#)

Solution: Keeping healthy snacks on hand, and meal planning can start you on the track to healthier eating. Set small goals and soon, little steps will add up to big changes. Here is a list of delicious, easy, kid-friendly and healthy meals for inspiration: [40 Best Healthy Recipes for Kids and Families | Recipes, Dinners and Easy Meal Ideas | Food Network](#)

Solution: A good night's sleep can give you the energy you need to get through the day. To help achieve this elusive goal, see these tips for better sleep from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine: [Healthy Sleep Habits - Sleep Education by the AASM](#)

All parents worry, but special needs parents carry a larger load.

Solution: Use the 'Circle of Influence' method to help you manage worry, decide what is within your control, and what is outside of your influence. This link will teach you how to use this simple, yet amazing tool: [Circle of Influence: How to Eliminate Worry Using this Model from Stephen Covey \(meetgroove.com\)](#)

Solution: Take a worry break. Set a timer, and allow yourself to think about your worries for a specific period of time. When the timer goes off, shift your focus or find a distraction.

Solution: Focus on gratitude. Write in a gratitude journal, or try one of these gratitude activities with your family to shift your focus from your worries to the things you are thankful for. [Gratitude Activities for Kids - 127 Pediatrics](#)

Solution: Use a Brain Dump organizing system to ease your worry and manage your life. You'll love these! [8 Easy Brain Dump Ideas – Let's Live and Learn \(letsliveandlearn.com\)](#)

Solution: Find community resources and support to help lighten your load. Our [Special Families' Corner Facebook](#) group is a great way to find support from fellow special needs caregivers who get it. We'd love to have you! We've also given you a list of community agencies that provide support to special needs families on page 6..

Things feel overwhelming and you are having trouble coping.

Solution: It is always okay to ask for help! When connecting with friends and family, or your regular circle of support just isn't enough, reach out to a therapist, counselor, or doctor for professional help. One good thing to come out of the pandemic is the opportunity to see professionals online. Here is a list from OC CMH providers who are using telehealth and/or online services: [Community Mental Health - Ottawa County, Michigan \(miottawa.org\)](#)

More Resources for Mental Health Support During the Pandemic

[COVID-19 Parental Resources Kit \(cdc.gov\)](#)

[Resources for Families Coping with Mental and Substance Use Disorders | SAMHSA](#)

[Coronavirus - Mental Health Resources \(michigan.gov\)](#)

COVID Testing Information & Resources

Ottawa County COVID-19 Testing Locations and Pre-Registration:

[COVID-19 Testing Locations - Ottawa County, Michigan \(miottawa.org\)](https://miottawa.org)

FREE, At-Home COVID-19 Test Kits:

The federal government is providing four FREE at-home COVID-19 test kits for all households. Get delivery to your mailbox by ordering your free test kits here:

[COVIDtests.gov - Free at-home COVID-19 tests](https://COVIDtests.gov)

People without Internet access or who need assistance ordering test kits can call **1-800-232-0233** (TTY 1-888-720-7489). See additional information for support for seniors or those with disability below.

Insurance Reimbursement for At-Home COVID-19 Tests

As of Jan. 15, 2022 the federal government requires insurers to pay for up to eight at-home covid tests per person per month.

To learn more about how to get at-home testing kits covered by your insurance, visit: [How to get your At-Home Over-The-Counter COVID-19 Test for Free | CMS](#)

When to use an at-home COVID-19 test:

- If experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, such as sore throat, fever, or cough test right away
- If close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, test after 5 days
- Prior to or after traveling
- Prior to or after attending a large gathering

Test Interpretation and steps to take following at-home testing:

[Test for Current Infection | CDC](#)

Help with Ordering Free COVID-19 Test Kits & More!

Those with a disability and the elderly now have resources to help them order test kits, get accessible testing instructions, help with administering the tests, and access other valuable resources.

The Disability Information and Access Line (DIAL):

Phone: 888-677-1199

Email: DIAL@usaginganddisability.org

DHH Video Relay Service (VRS): Dial 711

In addition, the DIAL can connect those with disabilities to resources for accessing and overcoming barriers to vaccination or testing, and to information and services that promote independent living and address essential needs, such as food, housing, and transportation.

Eldercare Locator:

Phone: 800-677-1116

Email: eldercarelocator@n4a.org

Website & Live Chat: [Eldercare Locator \(acf.gov\)](https://EldercareLocator.acf.gov)

In addition, Eldercare Locator provides connection to a broad range of reliable state and local resources, agencies, support services and information for seniors and their caregivers.



School & Disability COVID-19 Resources

Quick Reference Guide to Isolation & Quarantine

From the Ottawa County Department of Public Health, based on MDHHS and CDC guidelines (Jan. 27, 2022)

[Isolation & Quarantine in Educational Settings 1/19 \(mriottawa.org\)](https://www.mriottawa.org/Isolation%20and%20Quarantine%20in%20Educational%20Settings%201/19)

School Guidance from Ottawa County (Jan. 21, 2022):

[Microsoft Word - Ottawa County School Guidance for 2021-2022 Year.1-21-22.v2 \(mriottawa.org\)](https://www.mriottawa.org/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Ottawa%20County%20School%20Guidance%20for%202021-2022%20Year.1-21-22.v2)

School Guidance from MDHHS (Jan 20, 2022):

[MI Safer Schools Guidance for Managing Students Exposed to COVID-19 734750 7.pdf \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov/MI_Safer_Schools_Guidance_for_Managing_Students_Exposed_to_COVID-19_734750_7.pdf)

CDC Articles: COVID & Disability:

[People with Disabilities | COVID-19 | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19/peoplewithdisabilities/)

[COVID-19: Toolkit for People with Disabilities | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19/toolkit/peoplewithdisabilities/)

Caregiver Articles from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

[COVID-19: Caring for Children and Adolescents with Special Health Care Needs - HealthyChildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org/healthychildren/16-to-23-year-olds/COVID-19-Caring-for-Children-and-Adolescents-with-Special-Health-Care-Needs.aspx)

[How can I help my child, who has a developmental disability, cope during COVID-19? - HealthyChildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org/healthychildren/16-to-23-year-olds/How-can-I-help-my-child-who-has-a-developmental-disability-cope-during-COVID-19.aspx)

Mask Information & Resources



Mask Up, Mask Right Michigan Campaign!

Well-fitting and properly-worn masks are strongly advised for use inside public areas, regardless of vaccine status

[Coronavirus - MDHHS asks Michiganders to "Mask Up, Mask Right"](https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus)

FREE KN-95 Mask Distribution:

In an effort to help curb COVID-19 transmission, the State of Michigan and the Federal Government are distributing millions of FREE KN-95 masks. More protective KN-95 masks are recommended by the CDC, and especially for those who are risk for severe disease from COVID-19.

Free KN95 masks are available, while supplies last, in Ottawa County at township, village, and city offices, local libraries, and at the OCDPH lobby located at 12251 James St. Holland.

Free KN-95 masks can also be found, while supplies last, at local Meijer stores and many pharmacies. Walmart and Sam's Clubs expect to begin distributing KN-95 masks during the second week of February.

Find a KN-95 mask distribution site here: [Michigan.gov/MaskUpMichigan](https://www.michigan.gov/MaskUpMichigan) or call the COVID-19 hotline at 888-535-6136.

Tips for mask wearing from Mott's Child Life Specialists:

[5 Ways to Get Young Kids to Wear Face Masks \(uofmhealth.org\)](https://www.uofmhealth.org/5-Ways-to-Get-Young-Kids-to-Wear-Face-Masks)

Children's N-95 Mask Buying Resources:

[Where To Get Kids' KN95 Masks And Surgical Masks | HuffPost Life](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/where-to-get-kids-95-masks)

[Children's Masks - Bona Fide Masks](https://www.bonafidemasks.com/childrens-masks)

Mask Information and Resources:

[Masks and Respirators \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/masks/)

[How to Care for Your N95 Mask - MIBluesPerspectives](https://www.mibluesperspectives.com/how-to-care-for-your-n95-mask)

COVID-19 Vaccination Information & Resources

Everyone 5 and older is Eligible for a COVID-19 Vaccine:

- Pfizer-BioNTech is the only vaccine approved for ages 5 through 17.
- Pfizer and Moderna are both a two-shot series, so keep in mind the need to return for a second dose in three or four weeks when you're scheduling your first appointment.
- Boosters are now recommended for anyone 12 years or older, to be given 5 months after the second shot in the original series.

Ottawa County COVID-19 Vaccination Registration & Clinics

[Ottawa County | Vaccinate West Michigan](#)

Ottawa County Family COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics



OCDPH Family COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics

Feb 15	7:00 am — 9:00 am	12251 James St. Holland
Feb 17	1:00 pm — 6:15 pm	12251 James St. Holland
Feb 18	7:00 am — 9:00 am 3:30 pm — 7:00 pm	1207 South Beechtree St. Grand Haven
Feb 21	2:30 pm — 6:00 pm	12251 James St. Holland

Walk-ins* accepted until 15 minutes before the clinic end time

Or you can schedule your appointments here:

[OCDPH Family Clinic | Vaccinate West Michigan](#)

Remember to bring your vaccine cards!

* Checking for schedule changes prior to walk-in arrival is advised

OCDPH Guide to COVID-19 Vaccines for Children ages 5-17

[Infographic - 8.5x11 \(miottawa.org\)](#)

MDHHS: COVID-19 Vaccine Q&A for Parents

[Parent FAQs 5.14 Final 725378 7.pdf \(michigan.gov\)](#)

CDC: COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens

[COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens | CDC](#)

American Academy of Pediatrics Video on COVID-19 Vaccines

[COVID-19 and kids: How mRNA vaccines work - YouTube](#)

Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (MIS-C) in Children

[Coronavirus - MIS-C Children \(michigan.gov\)](#)

Other ways to find COVID-19 vaccine locations near you:

- Search at: [vaccines.gov](#)
- Text your zip code to **438829**
- Call Ottawa County **2-1-1**
- Call The Vaccine Scheduling Hotline: **1-800-232-0233**
- The Michigan COVID-19 Hotline: **1-888-535-6136**
- Call The Disability Information and Access Line (DIAL): **1-800-677-1199**

Community Support Resources:



Call 211 for Help Accessing Resources: Find food, housing and other basic needs, COVID-19 information, mental health resources, and much more!

- 2-1-1 is free & confidential
- Call specialists are available 24 / 7
- Dial 2-1-1 or go to: <http://www.call-211.org/>



**OTTAWA
FOOD**
Hunger | Health | Community

Ottawa Food is a collaboration of over 45 agencies and individuals working to ensure that community members have access to healthy, local, affordable food. Food resource links:

[Find Food | Ottawa Food](#)

[Mobile Food Pantry Schedule – Feeding America West Michigan \(feedwm.org\)](#)

<http://www.doubleupfoodbucks.org/how-it-works/>

[MDHHS - Food Assistance \(michigan.gov\)](#)



739 Paw Paw Dr.
Holland, MI 49423
616 392-2368

Food Club & Opportunity Hub

Qualifying low-income residents pay a small income-based monthly membership fee. Points are awarded by family size and members spend points in a grocery store-like setting. Healthier foods cost fewer points. Newly expanded shopping hours make it easier to shop. Learn more here:

[From Hunger to Hope \(hzfoodclub.org\)](#)

[Community Action House](#)



MDHHS MI Bridges: Access and apply for benefits & services, explore resources, and manage your case at this link: <https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/>



Ottawa County
Where You Belong[®]

Ottawa County Community Action Agency (CAA):

Ottawa County CAA helps families, who are facing financial hardship, with emergency utility assistance, food security, home repair programs and weatherization, tax preparation, and more. To learn more, call **616 393-5603** or go to:

[miOttawa - Community Action Agency](#)



Ottawa County
Where You Belong[®]

Ottawa County Community Mental Health (CMH):

Ottawa County CMH provides mental health services to special needs families, such as respite, counseling services, and more. To learn more, or to see if your family qualifies, contact the CMH Access Center: **1-877-588-4357**

[Community Mental Health - Ottawa County, Michigan \(miottawa.org\)](#)

Mental Health Emergency Resources:

Ottawa County

24/7 Crisis Line:

866-512-4357

or TTY 711

For anyone in a mental health crisis
in need of immediate help

National

24/7 Crisis Text Line:

Text "HOME" to

741-741

www.crisistextline.org

Ottawa County

Suicide Prevention Coalition Resources

[Suicide Prevention - Ottawa County,
Michigan \(miottawa.org\)](#)

24/7 National

Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Free and confidential support
for people in distress

Family Center for Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs

The parent-directed section of CSHCS



Contact the Family Center for:



Help with CSHCS Enrollment and Program Assistance

Locating Resources to help your family during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Conference Scholarships for a parent/youth to attend a disability-related conference

Camp Scholarships (Apply January—March)

One-On-One Parent Support—Connection to a nationwide network of trained parent mentors for support from a caregiver who has experience with your child's diagnosis

Health-Specific Resources—national, state, & local resources for your child's diagnosis

Transition support for youth and their families

Call the Family Phone Line at:

800-359-3722

Monday—Friday 8 am to 5 pm

csfhcsfc@michigan.gov

Note: *The Family Center serves all children and youth who have—or are at an increased risk for—physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional conditions, regardless of CSHCS enrollment*



Special Families' Corner

Facebook Group



**Parent and caregiver support for raising children
and young adults with special needs**

Learn about issues affecting special needs families

Hear about events and community resources

Get support from fellow parents and caregivers

Join our growing community of parents & caregivers today!



Request to join us at Special Families' Corner:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/480920718777204/>