

Wellbeing. Done Well.



School's Closed Finding Child Care *Suggestions*



School closures due to COVID-19 precautions have parents scrambling to manage childcare and going to work. And parents who can work from home are challenged trying to remain productive while juggling in-home care for their children.

At this time, it may be necessary to be creative and collaborate with neighbors, friends and family members to explore options and get the support you need. Here are a few suggestions.

Ask for help. We live in a culture where there is so much emphasis placed on self-reliance it can be difficult to ask for or accept help. Being independent is fine, but getting help is just as important as giving it. Especially now when parents everywhere need to find safe and effective childcare. By reaching out, you will be combining your ideas and abilities with others, and the outcome may be better than if you had tackled it on your own.

Community Services. Some communities are offering limited emergency child and youth care for health-care workers and other first responders. Monitor your government websites for possible new and emerging options.

Check spiritual communities. They may have volunteers who would enjoy helping.

Collaborate with your peers. Create lists of high school-age children who can watch the younger ones while their parents work.

Check with your employer. Some organizations are working on childcare options, including access to temporary in-center care, or subsidies for the cost of childcare through backup services, such as [Care.com](https://www.care.com).

Take Care of Yourself

Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can be stressful. Here are some tips to help you manage stress and anxiety.

- Practice good self-care
- Minimize exposure to media/news
- Get facts from reputable sources
- Acknowledge feelings
- Eat well, go for a walk, talk with family and friends
- Focus on things in life that are going well and what you can control
- Practice relaxation techniques

For more ideas, go to Concern's [Mental Health Resource Center](#) where you'll find a wealth of evidence-based strategies that can positively influence both physical and mental wellbeing.

When to get help

If you're feeling overwhelmed and stress is interfering with your everyday life, consulting with a counselor may be beneficial. For a consultation with Concern, call 800-344-4222 or visit our website at employees.concernhealth.com

Pool resources. It may not be advisable for kids to be placed with grandparents who are among the highest risk groups. When families are unavailable to help, you can turn to friends and neighbors. Cooperation is more important now than ever.

Some neighborhoods have established ad hoc cooperatives to share childcare responsibilities. If that's an option, consider the following safeguards.

- Limit the number of families involved to help reduce spread of illness between multiple families.
- Keep the group small. The smaller the group, the lower the risk.
- Ask participating families to take their children's temperature before getting together. Remind children and adults to stay home if they have a fever (above 100°F), coughing, or are otherwise unwell.
- Frequently clean high-touch surfaces, toys and keyboards.
- Practice social distancing measures whenever possible. Play games that involve fewer opportunities for touch. Teach kids proper hygiene habits.

Check your network. Is a parent of one of your child's friends working from home? Maybe there's a stay-at-home mom or dad in your neighborhood who can watch your kids. If you don't use a babysitter or nanny regularly, consider nanny-sharing, giving the sitter a higher salary while reducing costs for parents. Or maybe you and another parent (or two) could hire a sitter together and share the cost.

Other resources

- **Care.com** – Digital platform that provides comprehensive solutions to connect parents with caregivers. Care.com is increasing capacity to help families with school and work closures and plans to emphasize help for healthcare workers and first responders.
- **Nextdoor** - Neighborhood hub for trusted connections and exchange of information, goods, and services. Posts made to the website are available only to other Nextdoor members living in the same neighborhood.
- **Bambino** - Babysitting app that uses social media to find sitters recommended by your friends and neighbors.
- **Sittercity** – Online service that helps parents find babysitters, nannies and childcare.

This information is intended for informational purposes only and should not be used to replace professional advice, parental assessment, or to endorse one childcare option over another.

Employees and eligible dependents can request Concern counseling and work/life services 24/7 by calling or visiting our website.

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employees.concernhealth.com