

CLANN

PARENT HUB SLIGO LEITRIM NEWSLETTER



Childcare
Committee
County Sligo
Cuideir Cairen Néal Chaitín Shligiúch



PARENTING
SUPPORT
CHAMPIONS
PROJECT
Empathise
Energise
Empower

TÚSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



CYPSC CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEES



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WELCOME PARENTS

Welcome to the eight issue of our new Sligo Leitrim Parent Hub Newsletter **Clann** which is Irish for Family. This week we are focusing the newsletter around the topic of Positive Mental Health.

These are extremely unusual times and we are aware that some parents may be finding day to day life exceptionally difficult, struggling to balance, work, caring for children and self care while trying to keep both their own worries and their children's under control.

We want you to know you don't have to do it alone, we are here to help and this edition of Clann is committed to sharing articles, resources, supports and more that may be of help to you.

"I'm always amazed how you stand very tall, how you never give in, you bend, but do not fall"

Paul Homes

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SELF-CARE IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

FOR PARENTS, PRIORITISING YOUR OWN WELL-BEING BENEFITS YOUR WHOLE FAMILY

When you're a parent, self-care often slips to the bottom of the list. But taking care of yourself isn't a luxury. It's essential. And during this difficult time, when children are home and stress is running high, it's more important than ever. Here are five tips from clinicians that can help.

Make time for yourself

Right now, much of the personal time that was part of daily routines — commutes, time alone at home or at the store, social time with friends — is not available for folks with kids at home. Without it, we have to be intentional about creating space to recharge and decompress. This could look like taking a shower or bath, walking around the block alone (or with your dog), or designating time to read or simply zone out after the kids have gone to bed.

Prioritise healthy choices

The added stress and lack of structure we're all experiencing right now can make it easy to slip into habits that feel good in the moment but can be detrimental in the long term. "Make sure you're eating properly, try to get enough sleep (but not too much!), and create a routine that includes physical activity," recommends Jill Emanuele, PhD, a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute. This doesn't mean pressuring yourself to get into tip-top shape, or not eating ice cream or binging your favorite shows. It does mean being thoughtful and intentional about how you're treating yourself and your body.

Be realistic

Perfectionism and the coronavirus don't mix," says David Anderson, PhD, a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute. "It's time to be exceedingly realistic, both at work and as a parent." Avoid burnout by setting realistic expectations and giving yourself grace if you can't meet them. "Practice forgiveness and self-compassion," says Dr. Anderson. Parents should remind themselves that these are unprecedented times. "There's no playbook for this. Remember you're doing your best during a very difficult time. Cut yourself some slack."

Set boundaries

Anxiety is rampant right now. With so much worry and uncertainty floating around it can be easy to absorb other people's fears and concerns without even realising it. If you have a friend or family member who's in the habit of sending worst-case-scenario news or is prone to sending anxiety-provoking text messages, practice a little emotional distancing. Let them know you sympathise but that you're taking a break from worrying news, or simply hit the Do Not Disturb button. You can always reconnect when things are calmer.

Reconnect with things you enjoy

Think proactively of things you can do with this enforced time at home. Get back in touch with hobbies or activities you enjoy but rarely have time for, or make the choice to learn a new skill. Maybe there's a knitting project you've always wanted to try, but you've been too busy. Or you've been meaning to learn how to needlepoint. Maybe you love jigsaw puzzles but with rushing between work and home and caring for kids, it's been years since you had the time to do one. If young children make solo activities unrealistic, seek out activities you can enjoy together, like baking bread, or making art.

Finally, remember, **being kind to yourself will not only help you stay calm during this difficult time, it will help ensure that you have the bandwidth you need to take good care of your family.** When you're running on fumes, caring for others it can tax your already depleted resources to breaking point. **But when you prioritise your needs, you're filling the tank, emotionally and physically,** and that means you'll be in a position to offer comfort and care to others when they need it most.

By Rae Jacobson

FOSTERING ALCOHOL-FREE HEALTHY COPING TOOLS THAT WILL LAST BEYOND COVID-19

Mental Health Ireland have worked with Alcohol Action Ireland to share a set of advice guidelines to help people understand the risk of turning to alcohol during these tough times. This advice comes at a time when the alcohol off-trade business is reporting exceptional sales as people look to stock-up with excessive amounts of alcohol at home.

The current public health pandemic COVID 19 is understandably causing many of us stress and upheaval. We are worrying about ourselves, our loved ones, our very way of living. For many of us the current stresses are bringing to the fore earlier traumas and collectively we are also absorbing the multiple anxieties of those around us.

During times like this, it might be difficult to stay on top of how much we are drinking, or indeed there might be an inclination to drink more heavily and more frequently as we reach out for something to numb the tension. Unfortunately, this leads to a corresponding rise in anxiety, depression and irritability and so to greater stresses. Relationships may also be coming under pressure as the drinking is increasing.

However, this can also be a time when we can develop healthy coping tools that will last long beyond Covid19. Here are some ways to mind our mental health while observing a low-risk relationship with alcohol.

Stay within the weekly low-risk alcohol guidelines

Low-risk drinking reduces the risk of alcohol-related problems.

The recommended weekly low-risk alcohol guidelines are less than: 11 standard drinks for women & 17 standard drinks (SD) for men.

Drinks should be spread out over the week –no more than 2 SD/day for men, or 1 SD/day for women.

Have 2-3 alcohol-free days per week. For more on these guidelines and what is a standard drink check out the HSE site [askaboutalcohol.ie](https://www.askaboutalcohol.ie). The Ask About Alcohol drinks calculator also provides fact-based non-judgmental information about how drinking affects health, wallet and weight.

Look after your mental health & well-being

This is a difficult time, but it doesn't have to be as hard as we might think. Physical distancing is different from social isolation. The increased time spent at home can be tough for some families but it can also be an opportunity to reconnect with loved ones. Connecting with others can help us regain a sense of purpose and belonging. It's also important to get out and about and connect with nature – while maintaining a physical distance of course. If possible, we should include activities in our routine, such as walking, running, cycling or gardening. If we can, spend time in green, natural space, this can benefit both our mental and physical wellbeing. It can improve mood, reduce feelings of stress or anger, and help us relax a little. These are healthy coping mechanisms that, if fostered now, will endure long after this situation is over.

Alcohol can pose a definite risk to our mental health and can make the symptoms of mental health conditions worse. However, your mood can improve when you cut down or stop drinking. For more on this see Ask About Alcohol's information on mental health and alcohol.

Stick to routines

Try to stick to routines including eating well, staying active, going to bed on time and getting up at the usual time. Sticking with routine will help to ensure a sense of normality. So even though life as usual has been interrupted, we should try to maintain structure to our day. Be aware of sleep patterns and the things that might help to get a good night's sleep, for example having a bath, winding down screen-time, and avoid drinking alcohol. If the uncertainty of the current situation is causing you to lose sleep, talk about your worries with friends and family rather than trying to cope alone.

Find alcohol-free ways to manage in these tough times

For those of us working from home or self-isolating, we likely have more time than usual to fill, and sometimes it is tempting to use alcohol to fill this void, but be wary as this will easily become an unhealthy habit, or way to cope. Rest assured, there are lots of other beneficial ways to spend your time. Reconnecting with hobbies or interests; connecting with loved ones, learning a new skill or engaging in some mindfulness, meditation or relaxation techniques.

Help is available

There are useful self-help strategies at Ask About Alcohol which go through the steps of deciding to change, planning to change and actually changing drinking behaviour. If you are currently in recovery or indeed would like to access individual help for the first time, you may be concerned about how you will receive it under 'physical distancing' conditions. There are lots of great options for receiving support online or over the phone: The HSE Drug and Alcohol Helpline and email support service is open Monday to Friday 9.30am -5.30pm and is available at 1800 459 459 and at helpline@hse.ie.

Take a break from the 24-hour news cycle

The links between anxiety, depression and alcohol are well established. Logging off from social media and the 24/7 news cycle will ease anxiety and help us avoid using drinking as a coping mechanism. While it's true there is a lot of positive help online, take care to stay away from negative social sites and comments that are whipping up fear and worry. Get your facts from trusted Irish sources such as the HSE and the department of health and the World Health Organisation. Find out more about how to disconnect from negative digital spaces here. Also, beware of fake news and always get your information from reliable sources. RTE is providing easy to access information for young people – and parents, giving factual information and tips on how to keep young people entertained.

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MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS AND SERVICES DURING CORONAVIRUS

Face-to-face services are limited at the moment because of the coronavirus outbreak. But a number of services are providing online and phone services.



GROW MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY

INFORMATION LINE 1890 474 474
SIX-WEEK GUIDE ON COPING WITH COVID19, CONSISTING OF PODCASTS, PRACTICAL RESOURCES AND INFORMATION.
VISIT GROW.IE
INFO@GROW.IE

EXCHANGE HOUSE IRELAND NATIONAL TRAVELLER MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

TELEPHONE AND ONLINE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS ARE AVAILABLE WHILE FACE-TO-FACE AND GROUP SERVICES HAVE STOPPED.

CALL 01 8721094 AND PRESS 1 FROM 9AM TO 5PM EVERY DAY
VISIT EXCHANGEHOUSE.IE

TRAVELLER COUNSELLING SERVICE

ONLINE COUNSELLING TO MEMBERS OF THE TRAVELLER COMMUNITY WHO NEED SUPPORT DURING THIS TIME.
VISIT TRAVELLERCOUNSELLING.IE

TURN2ME

FREE ONLINE COUNSELLING AND ONLINE SUPPORT GROUPS FOR PEOPLE OVER 18
VISIT TURN2ME.ORG

MYMIND

ONLINE COUNSELLING SERVICE
VISIT MYMIND.ORG
HQ@MYMIND.ORG

AWARE

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT TO ANYONE OVER 18. ISSUES RELATING TO MOOD OR THE MOOD OF A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER, OR WHO HAS DEPRESSION OR BIPOLAR.

PHONE 'SUPPORT AND SELF CARE PEER GROUP' FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING:
ANXIETY

MILD TO MODERATE DEPRESSION
BIPOLAR DISORDER
MOOD-RELATED CONDITIONS
FREEPHONE SUPPORT LINE 1800 80 48 48 10AM TO 10PM EVERY DAY
SUPPORTMAIL@AWARE.IE
VISIT AWARE.IE

CRISIS TEXT LINE IRELAND

CONFIDENTIAL MESSAGING SUPPORT SERVICE

TEXT TALK TO 086 1800 280 EVERY DAY 24 HOURS A DAY - STANDARD MESSAGE RATES APPLY.

LGBT IRELAND

LGBT+ HELPLINE 1890 929 539 EVERY DAY

GENDER IDENTITY FAMILY SUPPORT LINE 01 907 3707
ONLINE INSTANT MESSAGING SUPPORT 6.30PM TO 10PM MONDAY TO THURSDAY, 4PM TO 10PM FRIDAY AND 4PM TO 6PM SATURDAY AND SUNDAY.
INFO@LGBT.IE FOR SUPPORT OR INFORMATION
VISIT LGBT.IE

MENTAL HEALTH IRELAND

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES
INFORMATION LINE 01 284 1166 FROM 9AM TO 5PM MONDAY TO FRIDAY
VISIT MENTALHEALTHIRELAND.IE
INFO@MENTALHEALTHIRELAND.IE

SHINE

REMOTE SUPPORT AND AN OUTREACH SERVICE TO PEOPLE WHO USE SHINE SERVICES BY PHONE AND EMAIL.
VISIT SHINE.IE/COVID-19
PHIL@SHINE.IE

SUICIDE OR SURVIVE (SOS)

FREE ONLINE WELLNESS WORKSHOPS AND PROGRAMMES
VISIT SUICIDEORSURVIVE.IE

STRESS CONTROL

STRESS CONTROL CLASSES TO LEARN NEW STRESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND MIND YOUR MENTAL HEALTH FROM HSE HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

THE PROGRAMME IS FOR 3 WEEKS ON MONDAYS AND THURSDAYS FROM MONDAY 13 APRIL 2020.
VISIT [HSE HEALTH AND WELLBEING](http://HSE.HEALTH.AND.WELLBEING) FOR MORE INFORMATION.

CLANWILLIAM INSTITUTE

INDIVIDUAL, COUPLE AND FAMILY THERAPY SESSIONS ONLINE AND PHONE.
VISIT CLANWILLIAM.IE
RECEPTION@CLANWILLIAM.IE

SAMARITANS

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT TO ANYONE IN DISTRESS OR STRUGGLING TO COPE.
FREEPHONE 116 123 EVERY DAY 24 HOURS A DAY
JO@SAMARITANS.IE

PIETA HOUSE

TELEPHONE AND TEXT-BASED SUPPORT COUNSELLING FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE SUICIDAL OR ENGAGING IN SELF-HARM.
FREEPHONE 1800 247 247 EVERY DAY 24 HOURS A DAY
TEXT HELP TO 51444 - STANDARD MESSAGE RATES APPLY
VISIT PIETA.IE

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SERVICES AVAILABLE IF YOU NEED THEM

Leitrim Community Support Helpline

1800 852 389

Sligo Community Support Helpline

1800 292 765

Lifestart Supporting Parents 086 8276055

Samaritans 116 123

Childline 1800 666666

Sligo FRC 087 9143646

Mohill FRC 071 9631253

West Sligo FRC 087 3650949

Home Youth Liaison Service 071 944441/

087 9791979

St. Michaels Family Life Centre

071 9170329

Sligo Youth Information Centre

071 9144150 / 085 8041020

Cranmore Resource House 071 9147070

Ballymote FRC 071 9197818

Social Services 071 9145682

STSG (Traveller Support) 071 9145780

Foroige 071 9146526

Y.A.P.S./ ncycs 071 9144150

MSLETB 071 9159500

Diversity Sligo 087 0669649

DVAS 071 9141515

One Family 01 662 9212

Moving Parents and Children Together

(M-PACT) 085 8759313

Tubbercurry FRC 085 2258991

Sligo County Childcare Committee

071 9148860

Leitrim County Childcare Committee

071 9640870

MABS 076 1072730

Don't be afraid to ask for help. We are all in this together.

Find us on Facebook & Instagram
Parent Hub Sligo Leitrim



Instagram

Email aolishsligochildcare@gmail.com if you would like us to email you our newsletter each week.

Online resources to explore...



The lust for life website is full of articles and resources to help you mind your mental health at this time.

<https://www.alustforlife.com/>



Mental Health Ireland

Mental Health Ireland aim to promote positive mental health and well-being for all individuals and communities.

The website is full of articles, supports and resources to support parents and children's mental well-being.

<https://www.mentalhealthireland.ie/>



Powerful video by Mental Health Ireland explaining how to access your local Mental Health Services

<https://youtu.be/Wd25oIL78ko>



Podcasts, promoting positive mental health

<https://audioboom.com/channels/5013394>



A website promoting positive mental health in Sligo and Leitrim, where you will find services, resources, tips and general information.

<http://www.alive2thrive.ie/>

Useful Links for Parents

The Sligo Leitrim Directory

Services in Sligo and Leitrim for children young people and families.

www.sligoleitrimdirectory.ie

Parenting 24/7

An online resource offering evidence based key messages on what works best for children and families at different stages of childhood and in different situations.

www.tusla.ie/parenting-24-seven

Sligo Leitrim Parenting Hub

The Parent Hub Sligo Leitrim have a new Facebook page, providing up to date news on parenting issues in Sligo/Leitrim and general information on all things parenting see

<https://www.facebook.com/SligoLeitrimParentHub>



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