

A Message from the Wheat Ridge Emergency Manager

While we all continue to focus on our physical health to avoid contracting COVID-19 by practicing social distancing, hand washing, and gathering in groups smaller than 10, it is equally important to take time out and focus on our mental health and well-being. The constant updates we receive multiple times a day on the spread of COVID-19 can increase our level of anxiety in addition to the uncertainty of the economy, our children's education, and isolation from those we love.

As difficult as it may be to unplug from the Internet and the news, you are encouraged to try and create positive experiences that are completely offline. For those who find that having a sense of purpose contributes to a sense of well being, there are volunteer opportunities with non-profits organizations. Local foodbanks are in need of non-perishable items and blood banks are seeking donations. We've all seen how communities are coming together and looking out for each other by checking in with neighbors and creatively connecting with those in retirement homes and hospitals who are at high risk and in complete isolation to avoid exposure to the disease (e.g. phone calls, cards, and signage outside windows).

There are simple things we can all do to step back for a while:

- Walk the dog, teach your pet a new trick, or play hide and seek with treats.
- Wave and smile at people, from a safe distance of course.
- Play cards or a board game with your child, or read a book or go old school with kids' activities like "I Spy with My Little Eye" or "Hide the Button".
- Leave a bag of goodies or groceries for a high-risk neighbor.
- Drop off extra yarn to a knitter you know.
- Try meditation. [Insight Timer](#) and [Headspace](#) are just a couple of apps to use.
- Take a walk in the snow or find an online routine and work out in the comfort of your living room.
- Fill the bird feeders and watch our feathered friends from the window.
- Try to keep regular sleep schedules.

Please remember there are resources available for those who just can't rise above the stress and anxiety of what is happening across the country and our world. Every person handles these feelings differently and there are many things we can do to care for our own mental health and that of our loved ones during these difficult times.

Additional resources:

- CDC: [Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19](#)
- CDC: [Taking Care of Your Emotional Health](#)
- *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) Disaster Distress Hotline*: 1-800-985-5990 or text "TalkWithUs" to 66746. People with deafness or hearing loss can use their preferred relay service to call 1-800-985-5990.
- [Colorado Crisis Services](#): 844-983-8255 or text "TALK" to 38255
- *National Suicide Prevention Line*: 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or text the Crisis Text Line (text "HELLO" to 741741)

We are in this together and, by supporting each other, we WILL get through this together.
#WRInThisTogether

Stay Well!
Commander Shellie Salser
Wheat Ridge Emergency Manager