



FAMILY CONCERNS

Recent survey comments indicate that many primary care clinicians are worried about the toll their work is taking on their families. They are struggling to balance increased home and work responsibilities. Many worry about being unavailable to their families during a difficult time. Some shared concerns about the risks of being a primary care clinician in the age of COVID and fears of infecting family members. Clinicians who have lost child care support or who are attempting to homeschool their children are particularly stressed.

How can you protect and reassure your family? How can you balance your work and home responsibilities at a time when both are far more intense than unusual?

- 1) **Be honest and flexible** with yourself about what you can and cannot do. There are only 24 hours in a day. Talk with your family and be clear about your limits. If you have the resources, consider hiring help. If you don't, really think about what is necessary vs. what is not. Try to identify and accept what must be different for now, and respect that you are doing the best you can in the midst of a global crisis with marked and ongoing uncertainty and stress
- 2) **Talk to your family** about how you use PPE, cleaning, and social distancing to keep yourself, and them, as safe as possible. Openly discuss your family's rules for social distancing, and have plans for testing and quarantine with any potential exposure.
- 3) **Be mindful of "letting your guard down"** regarding infection control in yourself and your staff. A "precaution checklist" akin to the checklist airline pilots use may help you and your family adhere to best standards and catch behavioral drift early.
- 4) **Create a post-work routine for yourself** that helps you leave work at work. Try to maintain firm boundaries between "work" and "home" to protect your time away from the responsibilities and challenges of clinical practice
- 5) **Create "COVID-free" zones;** parts of your day and places in your home that you step back from the news, COVID-focused conversations etc.
- 6) **Talk to your kids about COVID,** and answer their questions in a developmentally appropriate way. We have listed child-friendly resources and guidance for parents below.



Society for
HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

RESOURCES:

Child Mind Institute: Resources to support parents with balance of work, child care and self-care

<https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/>

APA: Advice and guidance on caring for, educating and supporting loved ones during COVID-19

<https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/parenting-caregiving>

Johns Hopkins Teen Guide for Coping during Corona Virus

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns-hopkins-childrens-center/patients-and-families/documents/covid-19-resources-for-families/covid19-teen-info-sheet.pdf>

Dayton Children's Hospital - How Healthcare Providers can help their own kids during this time

<https://www.childrensdayton.org/the-hub/how-health-care-workers-can-care-their-own-kids-during-covid-19>

Tips for Toddler Coping

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3210-tips-for-families-coronavirus>