

# Common Questions from Parents of Teens During COVID-19

Email [PatientRelations@actonmedical.com](mailto:PatientRelations@actonmedical.com) for more information.

## How do I help my child deal with the uncertainty of this new social distancing routine?

- Setup a routine and involve your child in the creation of an accompanying schedule. Post all family member schedules where everyone can see them.
- Encourage healthy lifestyle activities including exercise, sleep hygiene, regular meal times, and a healthy diet. Help your teen schedule time for these wellness choices. Here are two great resources from the American Academy of Pediatrics to help support parents:
  - *"Teens & COVID-19: Challenges and Opportunities During the Outbreak,"* <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Teens-and-COVID-19.aspx>
- Concerned about how to set limits for screen time during this time while also ensuring that you are not cutting off your child's access to distanced socialization? Consider this tool, *"Family Media Plan,"* <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx>



## How can I support my child's mental health during this difficult time?

- Acknowledge the several losses that your teen has faced during this pandemic and provide a space for them to explore feelings associated with loss. Acknowledge that it can feel scary to face much uncertainty. Remind them of their strengths with dealing with other uncertain times in their lives.
- Encourage self-care activities like some of the following:
  - Mindfulness activities, such as yoga, meditation, and breathing activities to help reduce stress.
  - Exercise, including walking, running, aerobics, weightlifting, or team sports to benefit physical and mental health
  - Video resources about coping during COVID-19 created by clinicians at Open Sky: <https://www.openskycs.org/services/coping-during-covid.html>
- Seek out mental health support from a professional. You can discuss this with your child's pediatrician.

**Our Behavioral health team at Acton Medical is available to discuss resources for connecting with mental health support.**



## How can I ensure that the needs of my child's IEP and/or 504 plan will be met in this upcoming school year?

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act has not changed due to the pandemic situation. The resources below may be helpful in understanding your child's rights and how to navigate some concerns about COVID-19 educational support for your child.
- Check out the Federation for Children with Special Needs webpage for resources and FAQs about reopening schools for the 2020-21 school year. They also offer a Student Remote Learning Record sheet, and Tips for parents regarding virtual IEP meetings. <https://fcsn.org/fall-schools-reopening-2020-21/>
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has compiled a resource list geared towards the back-to-school transition: <https://namimass.org/resources-for-back-to-school/#1592355508060-e638bd16-9e70>