

Hello Ponoka Secondary School Parents!

For those who do not know me, my name is Carmen Rodwell and I am the School Social Worker at Ponoka Secondary Campus. My role with the school is to provide direct support services to families and children facing social, emotional or family challenges as well as provide referrals to appropriate agencies within the community if needed.

I wanted to reach out and let you know that if your family needs any assistance during this time, I would be happy to talk with you and provide you with resources, strategies or referrals.

While I know you may be overwhelmed with information the past couple of weeks I wanted to share a few resources with you.

I have included a handout on how to help your child cope with change. I cannot stress enough the importance of Self care and Co-regulation. I like to use the airplane analogy - they tell you to put the oxygen mask on yourself first, then you can help others. It is important to make sure you are keeping your emotional reserves topped up in order that you can meet the needs of your children/family. In terms of co-regulation, our children take their cues from the adults around them. If the adults are modelling calm, the child will most often follow your lead. Handout #1 ([click here](#))

Limiting your social media and exposure to news will help protect both you and your child from feeling overwhelmed with the situation. In addition, maintaining as normal a routine as possible is reassuring for your child and gives them, as well as yourself, a sense of control in your lives. Handout #2 ([click here](#))

Good mental health habits cannot be stressed enough during these times. Good mental health goes hand in hand with self care. Eating well, getting quality sleep, making time to get outside daily, remaining socially connected. Click on the link below to find a variety of resources to assist you and your child:

[Resources for Parents](#)

The COVID 19 pandemic has brought about many changes but it has also brought OPPORTUNITY. We have the opportunity to connect with our children in ways that we have not had the chance to since the development of the cell phone. Teaching your child(ren) to cook, do their own laundry, build, perform acts of service, build puzzles, play board games and card games are all ways to build lifelong memories that will last longer than the COVID 19 pandemic. I encourage you to explore the many ways you can build

family memories during this time. If you are looking for inexpensive things to do with your child I have included a handout listing things you can do (**but please omit any that are not permitted during social distancing**). (Handout #3 - [click here](#))

I have a number of parenting resources on a variety of topics. If you are in need of assistance in any way I encourage you to reach me through email: carmen.rodwell@wolfcreek.ab.ca or call my office at school 403-783-4411; ext. 4716. I will be checking emails and voice messages between the hours of 9am-3pm Monday to Friday.

Other Help/Support Numbers include:

Alberta Mental Health Helpline 1-877-303-2642

Kid's Help Phone 1-800-668-6868

Remember, stay physically separate but emotionally close!

Carmen Rodwell