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For Immediate Release

Helping Youth Adapt to Challenging Times

We live in a constantly changing world which can be challenging to everyone. In the few weeks, our daily routines have been completely disrupted; we are no longer attending school or work, we are missing birthday parties and church services. This has led to parents becoming teachers and for some trying to continue to work remotely, for others maybe they are working full time in critical positions and trying to maintain a controlled family life. Our children who are missing their friends, teachers and recreational events are struggling with fear, confusion and in some cases are developing anxiety. All of these things can be overwhelming for adults, but can also be quite overwhelming for our youth as they try to find a new normal in our current way of life.

Here are a few things for us to remember and ways to help our children through this ever changing time.

- **Be A Good Role Model:** Pay attention to how you react, be as calm as you can. Practice good hygiene. Eat a balanced, healthy diet. Be aware of how you talk about COVID-19, if it's true remind them they are in good health and so are those they love. Listen completely to their concerns and answer their questions honestly. Make sure your answers are age-appropriate for the youth you are talking to. Ensure you have the most up-to-date and correct information, The Center for Disease Control (CDC) is a great place to look.

- Focus on Positivity: Use this time to spend some quality time as a family, be creative and make your activities as fun as possible. Spend time working on a 4-H project, putting together a puzzle, playing games, write a letter to a loved one and enjoy the unscheduled time.
- Establish a new daily routine: Set aside time for school, free-time and family time. Routines help everyone feel more in control, respect each other's space and a need for quiet time, stay connect to friends virtually.
- Limit social media and monitor television: Many things on social media are not accurate. Television does not always provide completely accurate information either and cause more fear and anxiety.

These are just a few of the ways you can help to make this change easier to manage for your children. Information in this article was provided by the National Association of School Psychologists: <https://www.nasponline.org>, there are additional methods to support your children there. If you are in need of activities for youth of all ages visit the Buffalo County Extension website at buffalo.unl.edu or contact Kerry Elsen, kerry.elsen@unl.edu.