



### THE EXPERIENCE OF SINGLE OR CO-PARENTING CAN BE ISOLATING AT THE BEST OF TIMES, AND DURING THE CURRENT COVID-19 OUTBREAK THIS CAN BE A TIME OF INCREASED LONELINESS.

Single parents, and parents who are on their own for extended periods of time, need extra support now more than ever, especially those who are currently in lockdown or areas with restrictions. It is a time of high anxiety for us all and being on your own with a baby, or young children, during COVID-19 adds additional worry and stressors.

The lack of contact with loved ones and the sole responsibility of managing a home and caring for a baby, and young children, can be overwhelming. We are here for all of the incredible single parents who are doing it all on their own through one of the toughest years we have all experienced.

Remember: *"Life may be tough, but you are tougher!"*

The lack of physical contact with loved ones can create a loss of real human connection, missing out on the hugs and closeness of friends and family is really challenging. Hold your little ones close and consider this time as a chance to slow down the fleeting moments of parenting, and the busy lives that we are all so used to.

Single parents can struggle to find any time for themselves and for self-care. During these times of heightened anxiety, it is so important to be able to fit this in somewhere.

The freedom to take some time out to recharge is simply not available to many single parents yet the need for true connection with loved ones is something we all experience. Connecting with loved ones needs to be somewhat reimagined.

Exposure to social media as a single parent can enhance the feelings of isolation even more as the photos of other families in lockdown together can trigger the feelings of loneliness. Adding in the effects of continued restrictions and COVID

related issues, many single parents are feeling less connected than ever before. Getting caught up with social media at bedtimes or throughout the day can lead us to waking up feeling overwhelmed, in the comparison trap or even more worried about coping with COVID on your own.

It is so important to remember that you are not alone in this although it might feel like it. In fact, for the first time in most of our lives we are more connected than ever; all experiencing the same issues.

### Below are some ideas for single parents to stay connected and supported:

- Acknowledge your feelings and know that you are not alone
- Learn to let go of high expectations on yourself at this time, if you don't get everything on your list done that is ok
- If you can be flexible, this can lessen stress, as things are changing so quickly and flexibility allows you to adapt
- It is ok if you are watching more Netflix than usual, or if your little ones are also having a little more screen time than usual
- Remember that there is only so much that you can physically and emotionally do each day and that 'good enough' is absolutely fine
- Connect with other expectant and new parents in trusted online spaces such as the Gidget Virtual Village
- Reach out to others as much as you can virtually, stay connected to the family and friends who are a good support and it might alleviate some of those feelings of isolation
- Reach out to those who you feel will really listen and connect with trusted sources of support



# fact sheet

## COVID-19 SUPPORT AND CONNECTION FOR SINGLE PARENTS







SELF-CARE TIP Support single\_11.8.20

- Work out ways to take small windows of time to nurture yourself while your little ones are sleeping
- Have a regular review of your social media and consider muting or removing any of the sources that are making you feel negative or that cause you to compare yourself or your situation to others
- Fill your feeds and news sources with non-sensational, honest and positive connections
- Make a list of the activities that you can do at home that you know will leave you feeling energised, it may not be ideal but for now you could do some online yoga or a dance party in the loungeroom with your baby or children included or watching on
- Reach out to your most trusted loved ones and let them know how they can support you, most people are waiting to hear how they can help during these tough times
- Can you connect with nature close to home or in your yard each day?
- Reassure yourself that this too will pass
- Try a simple gratitude practice at night, think of or list 3 things you were grateful for each day 🌸

**Please reach out to Gidget Foundation Australia if we can help.**



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Gidget Foundation Australia exists to promote the importance of emotional wellbeing among expectant and new parents, their healthcare providers and the wider community to ensure that those in need receive timely, appropriate and supportive care.