

9 April 2020



To all families, service users and students enrolled in Mothercraft programs:

As we enter the long weekend, I am writing to wish you and your families all the best as you celebrate Easter, Passover or any other observance.

Mothercraft remains attuned to any and all announcements from various authorities and orders of government regarding continued closures as well as recommended actions for employers, service providers and individuals to ensure we are doing our part to flatten the curve and so we are ready to return to normal operations once given the go ahead to do so.

In the meantime, ***all of Mothercraft's physical sites remain closed until further notice.*** Staff continue to develop and execute alternate service plans and I trust that you have found our approach to staying connected, providing virtual programming and offering resources to you and your family helpful. As always, if you have questions or are facing challenges, please don't hesitate to reach out to your program manager.

Earlier this week, the provincial government announced funding for a new, COVID-specific program for families with children called *Support for Families*. The program offers a one-time payment of \$200 per child aged 0-12 or \$250 per child for children with special needs (aged 0-21), to offset the costs associated with remote learning. To apply for these funds, visit:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-support-families#section-1>

I have reattached the addendum of resources and links circulated last week for your reference. Be well, stay healthy and take care.

Sincerely,

Michele Lupa  
Executive Director

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## **Addendum:**

We have been compiling resources to share with our staff as they navigate through COVID with their own families. Here are some of the resources we've pulled together:

### ***If you or someone in your family is exhibiting symptoms of illness, here's what to do:***

- Access Toronto Public Health's "Health Advice" page - <https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/covid-19-health-advice/>. This page includes information about how to protect yourself against COVID, symptoms of the disease, when and where to go for diagnosis and assessment (as well as when not to go), treatments and additional supports. You can also contact your medical practitioners' office but please note that many doctors' offices and clinics are asking patients to call before coming in.
- Call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 to speak to someone or visit their website <https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/>
- Use Ontario's COVID self-assessment tool at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-self-assessment>
- Call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 or visit their website at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-medical-advice-telehealth-ontario>

### ***For the latest updates on COVID-19 in Canada and recommendations from the Chief Medical Officer of Health, visit:***

- Public Health Agency of Canada – <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>. They now have a "virtual assistant" on their website so you can chat with someone or be linked to the some commonly asked questions.

### ***If you or someone in your family is struggling or needs help coping:***

- Kids Help Phone has counsellors available to support children and youth (and, in Ontario, post-secondary students) by phone, text or chat 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. Visit their website at <https://kidshelpphone.ca/> or call 1-800-668-6868.
- The Gerstein Centre offers telephone crisis support 24 hours/day, 7 days/week and can be reached at 416-929-5200
- FindHelp Toronto operates the 211 call line in Toronto and across Ontario. They are a repository for all social services in the city (and the province) and can be found at <http://www.findhelp.ca/> or by dialing 211.