

OCTOBER 2025

ISSUE 15

WORLD HEALTH NETWORK

KIDS' ZONE

COVID-CONSCIOUS MAGAZINE



COZYING UP WITH THE MENTAL HEALTH EDITION

HALLOWEEN COSTUMES TO
WEAR WITH YOUR MASK

CHECK US OUT ONLINE AT:
WHN.global/KidsZone

COVID AND MENTAL HEALTH

THERAPIST SPOTLIGHT

SHORT STORIES FROM OUR READERS

... AND MORE INSIDE!



EXPLORE | SHARE | CONNECT



Art by Grae Salisbury

COVID-conscious: Keeping COVID risks in mind when exploring, sharing and connecting with others.

Synonyms: COVID-cautious, COVID-aware, COVID-informed, Still COVIDing, COVID-safe, COVIDing-inclusive

ABOUT US

KIDS' ZONE COVID-CONSCIOUS MAGAZINE IS A FREE PUBLICATION CREATED BY THE WORLD HEALTH NETWORK'S PSYCHOSOCIAL CHILDREN'S GROUP.

OUR MISSION IS TO FEATURE MATERIALS FOR KIDS THAT HIGHLIGHT STORIES, ART, SCIENCE, AND LIFESTYLE OF COVID-CONSCIOUS FAMILIES.



FEATURING WORKS FOR AND BY KIDS OF ALL AGES. ADULTS CAN SUBMIT THEIR OR THEIR CHILD'S WORKS AT WHN.GLOBAL/KIDSZONE



= ARTICLES WRITTEN IN US-ENGLISH



= ARTICLES WRITTEN IN UK-ENGLISH

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*The contents of this magazine, such as text, graphics, images, and other material, are intended for informational and educational purposes only and not for the purpose of rendering medical advice.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?



The Month Ahead

Here's our pick of October's main events!

ALL MONTH:

NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

NATIONAL BOOK MONTH



5 OCTOBER WORLD TEACHERS' DAY

6 OCTOBER - 13 OCTOBER SUKKOT

10 OCTOBER WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

13 OCTOBER INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

16 OCTOBER WORLD FOOD DAY

20 OCTOBER DIWALI

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31 OCTOBER HALLOWEEN

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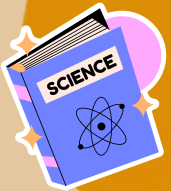
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SCIENCE

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THOUGHTS FROM A THERAPIST

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ARTIST'S EXPERIENCE

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Explore art outlining an artist's Long COVID journey



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An interview with Breathe Easy Sheffield



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A book review about a fun way to explore a serious topic!



GAME ZONE

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Would you rather, mental health edition



PET PORTRAITS

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See some ridiculously awesome rats!



SHORT STORIES

PAGE 25

Read a short story submitted by our readers!



Editor's Note:

Cozying Up to Mental Health

by: TRak 



As the leaves change colors and we enter the cozy seasons, we invite everybody to join us in delving into our October issue of Kids' Zone: Cozying Up with the Mental Health Edition.

World Mental Health Day is on October 10. In this issue, we explore mental health vocabulary, COVID's impact on mental health, thoughts from a therapist, safer fall holiday celebrations, and other resources from our readers and editors.

Here are some existing resources to support mental health for COVID-Conscious individuals:

- A directory of COVID-Conscious therapists can be found at <https://www.covidconscioustherapists.com/>
- A variety of communities exist online for COVID-Conscious individuals to connect on social media platforms.
- Connect with groups of like-minded individuals in your area at <https://www.covidmeetups.com/>
- Join the WHN Kids Connect Call on Tuesdays at : 10am ([join here](#)) and 6pm ([join here](#)) ET

We hope you enjoy this issue and would love to hear from you about other resources that are supporting your mental health during the ongoing pandemic.

Do you have resources to share with the Kids' Zone Community? Submit them at: <https://whn.global/kidszone/>

MENTAL HEALTH VOCABULARY



Mental Health: Emotional, social, and psychological wellness and how it influences how we behave, think, and feel.

Anxiety: A feeling of worry or nervousness that can interfere with daily life.

Depression: A mental health condition characterized by overwhelming feelings of sadness, loss of interest in activities, and changes in sleep, appetite, and daily functioning.

PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder): A mental health condition that develops after seeing or experiencing a traumatic event. Symptoms include anxiety, flashbacks, avoidance, and more.

Cognitive fatigue: Extreme mental exhaustion (often resulting from illness or stress) that impacts memory, concentration, and problem-solving.

Neurotransmitters: Chemical messengers in the brain that send signals between neurons.

Serotonin: A neurotransmitter that helps regulate mood, appetite, and sleep.

Dopamine: A neurotransmitter that is linked to motivation and pleasure signals.

Cortisol: A hormone related to stress that is released by the adrenal glands and helps regulate the 'fight-or-flight' response.

Acetylcholine: A neurotransmitter that is important for movement, memory, and learning.

Self-care: Practices people do to take care of their mental health.

Boundary setting: Communicating and maintaining relationship limits to protect oneself.

Affirmations: Statements people say to themselves to build confidence and productive thought patterns.

Psychologist: A trained professional who can diagnose and treat mental health conditions using therapeutic techniques.

Psychiatrist: A medical doctor who can diagnose, treat, and prescribe medication for mental health conditions.

MENTAL HEALTH WORD SEARCH

Find the mental health terms in the word search below:

A	F	F	I	R	M	A	T	I	O	N	S	D	L	D
T	S	I	G	O	L	O	H	C	Y	S	P	E	O	I
Q	G	W	T	M	M	Y	C	Z	O	N	N	P	S	P
R	K	H	W	S	R	V	E	W	I	Y	Z	R	I	T
T	I	U	S	Q	I	W	C	X	F	U	K	E	T	U
N	I	N	O	T	O	R	E	S	V	W	L	S	R	S
R	A	M	F	P	K	X	T	I	K	B	W	S	O	E
M	E	N	T	A	L	H	E	A	L	T	H	I	C	L
R	N	S	X	Y	Y	Z	S	N	I	W	B	O	A	F
C	D	Q	H	I	C	P	A	J	I	H	G	N	T	C
F	C	Y	M	T	E	O	Z	G	Q	M	C	S	Q	A
V	M	R	B	G	A	T	U	Y	K	H	A	Y	Q	R
L	N	U	Z	S	W	Z	Y	S	O	I	S	P	S	E
A	C	E	T	Y	L	C	H	O	L	I	N	E	O	P
S	E	I	R	A	D	N	U	O	B	X	R	N	Z	D

acetylcholine
boundaries
dopamine
psychologist
serotonin

affirmations
cortisol
mentalhealth
ptsd

anxiety
depression
psychiatrist
selfcare

*puzzle generated using <https://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/word-search>

HALLOWEEN

5 COSTUMES THAT GO GREAT WITH YOUR MASK

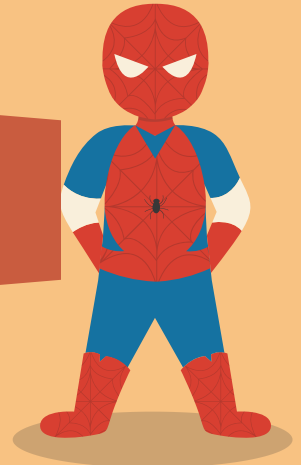
INFLATABLE COSTUMES

SUPERHEROES

MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

HAZMAT SUIT

ANIMALS



SPOOKY GUACAMOLE RECIPE



*AI-generated image

What You'll Need:

- 3 ripe avocados (they should feel soft when you gently squeeze them)
- 1 lime
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped onion (ask a grown-up to help!)
- 1 small tomato, chopped into tiny pieces
- 1 clove of garlic, minced (grown-up job!)

Let's Make Guacamole:

Step 1: Cut the avocados in half and take out the big pit in the middle. Ask a grown-up to help with the knife part.

Step 2: Scoop out all the green avocado with a spoon and put it in a bowl.

Step 3: Use a fork to mash up the avocado. You can make it as chunky or as smooth as you like!

Step 4: Cut the lime in half and squeeze the juice into your mashed avocado. This keeps it from turning brown!

Step 5: Add the salt and mix it in.

Step 6: Add the chopped onion, tomato pieces, and garlic. Stir everything together.

Step 7: Taste it! Does it need more salt or lime? You decide!

Step 8: Serve with tortilla chips and enjoy your homemade guacamole!

Fun Tips:

- If you don't like onions, you can leave them out
- Some people like to add a tiny bit of hot sauce, but ask first!
- Guacamole tastes best when you eat it right away

Avocados provide....

1. **Heart-healthy fats:** Rich in monounsaturated fats, particularly oleic acid, which help reduce inflammation and lower bad cholesterol levels while supporting cardiovascular health.
2. **High fiber content:** Provides about 10 grams of fiber per cup, which aids digestion, helps maintain stable blood sugar levels, and promotes feelings of fullness for healthy weight management.
3. **Nutrient powerhouse:** Packed with essential nutrients including potassium (more than bananas), folate, vitamin K, and vitamins C and E, while enhancing absorption of fat-soluble vitamins from other foods.
4. **Disease protection:** The combination of healthy fats, fiber, and antioxidants like lutein and zeaxanthin may help protect against chronic diseases and support eye health as we age.



October 5th is World Teachers' Day. We asked our readers:

Who is your Favorite Teacher and Why?

My favourite teacher is Nina Wildflower. They are a science teacher with a passion for music. They have been advocating for COVID-safety for several years.

I always enjoy their posts, photos, and videos on masking and being COVID-cautious at home and at work.

They gave me a lot of strength to continue being a lone masker and to advocate for COVID safety. I think they are doing a great job at normalizing respirators and taking precautions against airborne viruses.

Here is their advice on masking

Here is their music

I wish Nina were my teacher when I was at school. I really admire their integrity and creativity.

Go, masked teacher Nina!

-Aspa



Minecraft is my favorite teacher because it is a lot of fun and teaches me how to protect myself against zombies.

-L, age 12



"My kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Ray, was extraordinary. I struggled with being away from my family and frequently complained of stomach aches at school. Mrs. Ray's solution? Red hot cinnamon candies—her 'magical cure' for my ailments. Of course, the real magic wasn't in the candy itself. She understood that what I truly needed was to feel loved and seen, and those small moments of care made all the difference. Great teachers don't just teach subjects; they recognize what each child needs to thrive - and we always remember those teachers!"

-Rachel, age 47



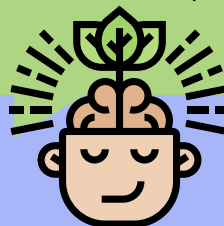
My favorite teacher is my mom because she knows us personally and she knows what we need to learn. I also enjoy spending time with her.

-K, age 10



My favorite teacher is my grandfather because he developed my interest in philosophy.

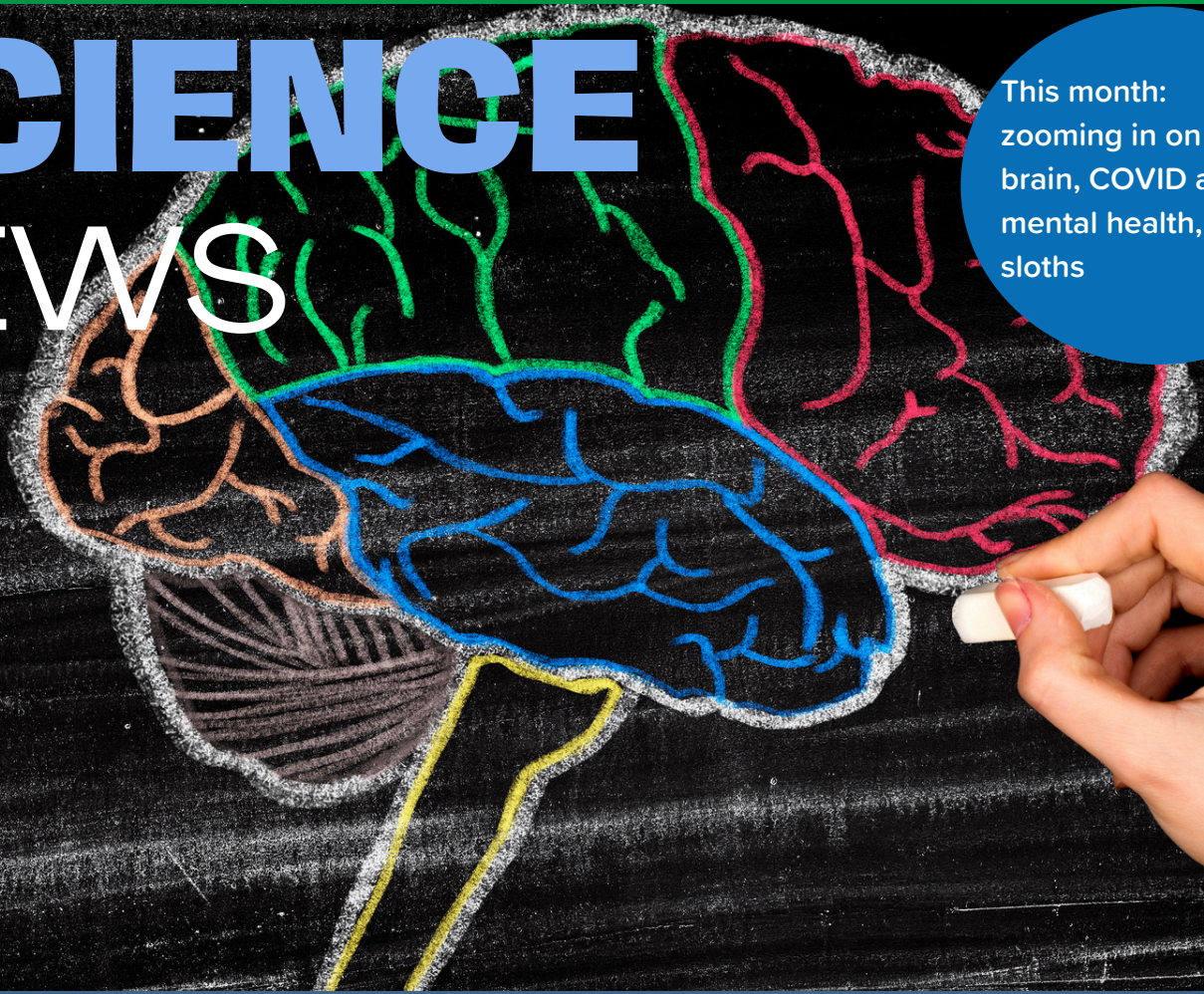
-VB



SCIENCE NEWS

by TRak

This month:
zooming in on the
brain, COVID and
mental health, and
sloths



To go along with this month's theme of understanding mental health, let's take a look at one part of the brain that is essential to thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, and understanding.

The prefrontal cortex is located at the very front of the brain, right behind your forehead. It is one of the slowest parts of the brain to develop and is not fully formed until you are an adult in your mid-20s.

Compared to other animals, the prefrontal cortex in humans is the most unique and developed.

Since this region of the brain is still maturing throughout childhood, a lot of concern has been raised by researchers regarding the impact of COVID on the prefrontal cortex.

The prefrontal cortex is essential for:

💡 Decision-Making: Considering different factors before you make a choice.

🧠♀ Self-Control: Avoiding being impulsive by thinking before you act.

📌 Planning: Coordinating the different steps necessary to complete a task.

🧩 Problem-Solving: Working through puzzles and different situations as they arise.

🗨️ Social Skills: Communicating and interacting with others.

Have a science project or experiment you would like highlighted? Or a science question you'd like answered? Submit it to us at [WHN.global/KidsZone](https://www.whn.global/KidsZone)

The Science Behind COVID and Mental Health



IT'S World Mental Health Day on October 10, so it's a good time to discuss the impact of COVID on mental health!

What is mental health? Mental health is our emotional, social, and psychological wellness and how it influences how we behave, think, and feel. Mental health is important because it impacts how we relate to the world, ourselves, and others.

Since the introduction of SARS-CoV-2, many studies have analyzed how the virus impacts brain structure and the prevalence of mental health disorders.

Researchers have found that COVID infection is associated with increased prevalence of anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders. Additional literature indicates that these effects are more likely in women, younger adults, and individuals with low-income, but can impact anybody. Moreover, multiple studies show that individuals with long COVID are significantly more likely to experience severe depression and anxiety. However, regardless of acute illness severity, even asymptomatic infections can lead to impacts on the brain.

Unfortunately, children similarly experience increased rates of psychiatric diagnoses following COVID infections. In addition to anxiety and depression, children can experience sleep problems, PTSD, difficulties with memory and concentration, and mood swings. Other, more severe concerns are also observed.

When scientists look under the surface at the brain, they continue to find COVID infection associated with overall changes in brain structure. They have seen reduction in gray matter, which helps process information, build memories, interpret sensory information, and aid in movement. They have also found an overall reduction in brain size. Many areas of the brain are impacted by the virus including the portions of the brain critical in memory, emotion, smell, and more.

Researchers are learning more every day about the effects of COVID on the brain. However, one thing remains clear: the best way to avoid the impact of COVID on mental and brain health is to avoid infection and reinfection with the virus.

*Words underlined in this article link directly to research studies

ALL ABOUT... SLOTHS

IT'S International Sloth Day on
October 20!

Here are some fun facts about
these furry friends!



There used to be sloths the size of elephants! All 6 living sloth species share a common ancestor with giant ground sloths. The largest, *Megatherium americanum*, was about 20 feet long. You can learn more about giant sloths [here](#).



Sloths are 3 times stronger than people!
Sloths can pull up their entire body weight with one arm. They also have a unique tendon locking system that allows their hands and feet to lock in place so they can hang upside down without expending energy. This is how they can sleep when hanging!

Sloths only poop once a week!
And when they do go, they lose $\frac{1}{3}$ of their body weight! They won't poop unless they are on the ground. They also wiggle around the base of the tree to dig a little hole, before pooping.



Sloths are practically blind in the bright sunlight. Sloths have a condition called rod monochromacy - which means they have no cone cells in their eyes and are completely color-blind. They can see poorly in dim light and are completely blind in the bright sunlight.



Their fur is a living, breathing microcosm. The sloth's fur is home to many different kinds of living things including microbes, fungi and algae. A single sloth can be a home to 950 moths and beetles at once!

EXPLORATION COVID-CONSCIOUS CAREERS

This month we are highlighting COVID-conscious therapists. Therapists are mental health professionals who specialize in working with individuals, families, and/or groups of people to help them overcome struggles by using tools and practices involving thoughts, emotions, and communication.



My voice matters

I get to set my own boundaries

It's okay to feel angry, scared or overwhelmed

I am protecting my family and my community

I'm doing my best under difficult circumstances

I can be present in this moment

I'm part of creating a better future

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COVID-conscious Therapy

Submission by Olivia Belknap, Therapist Associate

I'm a COVID-conscious Marriage and Family Therapist Associate in California, and I love working with COVID-conscious clients. My clients find me because they know I won't make negative judgments or assumptions about them because they continue to take COVID seriously. I've been running therapy support groups for COVID-conscious people and I feel so happy to be able to create a safe space for people to share their feelings and express themselves with others who understand why they're still trying to avoid COVID.



I am not alone

I'm proud of who I am

My family loves and cares for me

It's okay to stand out or look different

It's okay to be sad or scared sometimes

I can do hard things

I am a health hero!

I am brave and strong

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Affirmations

I know how hard it can be to be one of the only ones you know still taking precautions, so I also created an affirmations series to help lift your spirits when you're feeling low or remind you that what you're doing matters. If you're a kid who is still masking, I think you're awesome! You're doing a good thing by protecting yourself and the health of your friends, family and community. It's okay to feel sad, or lonely if you're the only kid masking in your class, but I want to let you know that you're not alone and lots of people are supporting you from afar.

Helpful handouts

I've also created one-page handouts like, "Why Your Patient is COVID Cautious", the "Long COVID Info Sheet", and "COVID Safety Isn't an Anxiety Disorder" to give to health care providers or loved ones to help explain why you're taking precautions and why it's important.

Why Your Patient is Covid Cautious:

A guide for healthcare workers with patients who request Covid precautions



Covid safety in the healthcare system

- As a healthcare worker, the safety and well-being of your patients is likely very important to you.
- The healthcare facility you work for may no longer require Covid safety measures, like universal masking or testing.
- When healthcare facilities don't implement Covid-safe policies, patients are more likely to avoid accessing care, leading to worse health outcomes.
- When healthcare providers adopt Covid-safe practices, it makes healthcare more accessible and helps patients feel safer in their provider's care.
- Many patients have ongoing concerns about contracting Covid while accessing healthcare services. Many of these patients already have long Covid, are considered high risk, or have high risk family members.
- The mortality rate of nosocomial COVID-19 is nearly 10%, with some studies showing higher rates (Kim et al., 2023).
- Long COVID and associated conditions (LCACs) can qualify as a disability under the ADA/Section 504, entitling patients to accommodations.

What we know about Covid & Long Covid

- 75.4% of U.S. adults had at least one increased-risk condition, 40.3% had at least two, and 18.5% had three or more conditions (Ajulu et al., 2022).
- CDC defines high-risk populations: "racial and ethnic minority groups," pregnant people, infants, age 65+, developmental disabilities, mood disorders, diabetes, asthma, autoimmune diseases, & more
- CDC says: symptoms can last weeks, months, years or be lifelong
- American Medical Association: at least 20-30% of patients will develop Long Covid
- 200+ potential symptoms, across all organ systems
- Risk increases with each infection (Bowe et al., 2022)
- 70% of individuals with long Covid exhibited evidence of damage to at least one organ (Li et al., 2023)
- Covid is airborne and can have in the air for multiple hours.

How you can support Covid cautious patients

- Patients have valid reasons to want to avoid Covid infections, and asking providers for safety precautions can feel scary for patients. Empathizing with patients' concerns can help them feel safer with you.
- You can support patients by: wearing an N95 mask, adding air filters to help clean the air of viruses, opening windows for ventilation, offering them first appointment of the day and permit waiting outside before appointments (Bonus: lots of these measures keep you safer too)
- Advocate for increasing Covid safety measures in your workplace.
- Learn more about Long Covid and share information with your colleagues.

Created by Olivia Belknap, M.S.
All sources linked in QR code

LONG COVID INFO SHEET

75.4% of U.S. adults had at least one increased-risk condition, 40.3% ≥ 2 & 18.5% ≥ 3 conditions (Ajulu et al., 2022).

CDC defines high risk: "racial and ethnic minority groups", pregnant people, infants, age 65+, developmental disabilities, mood disorders, diabetes, asthma, autoimmune diseases, & more

CDC: symptoms can last weeks, months, years or be lifelong.

American Medical association: 20-30% will develop long Covid

200+ potential symptoms


Risk increases with each infection (Bowe et al., 2022).

70% of individuals with long COVID exhibited evidence of damage to at least one organ (Li et al., 2023).

Many LC patients meet criteria for ME/CFS (Jason & Dorn, 2022).

Children are impacted at similar rates to adults

Multiple potential pathogenic pathways




Created by Olivia Belknap, M.S.
All sources linked in QR code

POTENTIAL SYMPTOMS



Brain: memory loss, concentration problems, dizziness/balance issues, autonomic dysfunction, depression, anxiety, increased suicidality, PTSD, psychosis, stroke, sleep issues, tinnitus, increased risk of neurodegenerative diseases



Gastrointestinal: GI disorders (IBS, IBD), constipation, loss of appetite, new food sensitivities, abdominal pain & heartburn



Respiratory: cough, breathing difficulty, hypoxia, chest burning, pulmonary embolism



Cardiac: myocarditis, tachycardia, atrial fibrillation, micro-clots, inflammation, arrhythmias, heart attack



Reproductive: menstrual changes, clotting, worsened PMS, miscarriage, stillbirth, erectile dysfunction, decreased sperm count, fertility issues



Immune system: immune dysregulation, increased susceptibility to fungal/bacterial infections, lymphopenia



Musculoskeletal: musculoskeletal & joint pain, loss of muscle tissue & decreased skeletal muscle mass



Other: Fatigue, weakness, seizures, POTS, paresthesia, loss of vision/hearing/smell/taste, kidney problems, swelling legs/feet, rashes, hair loss, liver damage, autoimmune diseases, inflammation, pancreatic problems & more

Created by Olivia Belknap, M.S.
All sources linked in QR code

Covid Safety Isn't an Anxiety Disorder:

Why Health Care Professionals should avoid pathologizing Covid precautions



What we know about fear & anxiety

- In the DSM-5 TR, Criteria D for a diagnosis of "Specific Phobia" states "the fear or anxiety is out of proportion to the actual danger posed by the specific object or situation and to the sociocultural context."
- We know that "anxiety and fear responses are necessary components of adaptive behavior" (Ahmari et al., 2009).
- So what about those who have fears about Covid?

What we know about Covid & Long Covid

- 75.4% of U.S. adults had at least one increased-risk condition, 40.3% had at least two, and 18.5% had three or more conditions (Ajulu et al., 2022).
- CDC defines high-risk populations: "racial and ethnic minority groups," pregnant people, infants, age 65+, developmental disabilities, mood disorders, diabetes, asthma, autoimmune diseases, & more
- CDC says: symptoms can last weeks, months, years or be lifelong
- American Medical Association: 20-30% of patients will develop Long Covid
- 200+ potential symptoms, across all organ systems
- Risk increases with each infection (Bowe et al., 2022)
- 70% of individuals with long COVID exhibited evidence of damage to at least one organ (Li et al., 2023)
- Covid is still a novel virus, and while we know a lot about the harm it can cause, there are likely many health problems that may take years to come to light, much like HIV and AIDS.

Putting it all together

- With all that we know about Covid, the harm it can cause, and the potential for many negative long term health outcomes, it is very reasonable to take steps to avoid infection. The best way to prevent long Covid is to prevent infection in the first place.
- Taking safety precautions like wearings masks, avoiding large gatherings, and limiting time in indoor spaces are all rational choices that are proportional to the dangers of a Covid infection.
- We would never deter someone from wearing their seatbelt or helmet, applying sunscreen, or using condoms. Covid safety measures are no different than these other precautions many of us use on a daily basis.
- You can help support patients by wearing an N95 mask, and adding air filters to help clean the air of viruses. (Bonus: these measures keep you safer too!)



Created by Olivia Belknap, M.S.

My advice for dealing with mask bullies

First of all, I would suggest telling a trusted adult about what's been happening so they can help advocate for you. Bullying is never okay, especially when it comes to things we do to protect our health and safety. I would tell kids who are being bullied or teased for wearing masks that I'm proud of them for doing the right thing, even when it's really hard, and that lots of other people are proud of them too. Doing what's best for you, even in the face of peer pressure, shows that you're a very strong person, which is an impressive trait to have. You're being a leader by protecting yourself and your community. If you can, it can be great to connect with other people who are still masking to help you feel less alone.

it's okay to...



ask for support or accommodations



Bring your HEPA filter



wish you had more community



be the only one masked



ask to meet outside

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it's okay to...



be the only one you know taking precautions



say no to events that aren't safe for you



set boundaries with friends and family



grieve experiences you're missing



ask others to mask in your home



wish that things were different

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it's okay to...



mourn the loss of pre pandemic life



feel worried about the future



keep talking about COVID



advocate for precautions in your community



find an affirming therapist to talk with



find new friends you're in alignment with

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it's okay to...



ask other people to test before meeting up



bring up hard conversations with loved ones



let go of relationships that no longer fit



take breaks from media



feel overwhelmed or scared



change or update your precautions

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it's okay to...



wish you were more in alignment with loved ones



feel angry about how the pandemic has been handled



speak up for what matters to you



stick to your values



not always have the answers



take some time for yourself

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Long COVID Transformation

by Grae Salisbury

A dear friend once told me that being chronically ill is like being the heroine in a "Magical Girl" anime. You secretly fight demons very few others see or even believe in. You struggle. You need special magical tools. You are lonely and yet you are not alone. There are others out there like you, although it might take some time to find them.

Like Magical Girls, we also long for a "normal" life... but we have invisible battles to fight & a world/our very lives to protect. Or, to also make use of less aggressive language, we have peace to foster and relations to strengthen with our broken bodies that are trying their best.

Accepting that I have Long COVID might be less glamorous than having magical powers, but it's still an important step in my journey. The next step for me has been allowing myself to feel grief as I slowly collect my gear. My meds & supplements, my compression clothing, my sensory sensitivity garb, my water bottle, my cozy PJs, my heating pad... My transformation sequence will change over time, but I am more ready and more prepared now than I was before.

If you have seen any *Sailor Moon*, you might recognize many of the poses in this character's transformation sequence!





Aspa Interviews:

Breathe Easy Sheffield

Hello Jade and Chloe! It's lovely to e-meet you. Tell me about Breathe Easy, what is it?

Hello! Lovely to e-meet you too. Breathe Easy Sheffield is a small organisation that puts on Covid-safer indoor events, and advocates for more Covid safety in public spaces. We are just about to formally launch our lending library of clean air equipment too - with some help from Smart Air. *(We will soon have a page on our website about this, as well as extra purifiers, but for now we just have a booking form).



I was reading the description of some of your events, and I loved that you used the term 'COVID-safer', as opposed to 'COVID-cautious'. Can you tell me a bit more about it, as well as about your events? How do you make them COVID-safer? (probably a bit of overlap between the different questions)

Whilst we do need to be cognisant of risk, we didn't want people to think we are trying to avoid Covid because we're overly cautious or anxious people in general. We might describe ourselves as Covid-conscious; we're aware of the very real risks that Covid still presents, and we take sensible actions to try and prevent infection.

We say that our events are Covid-safer because no matter what precautions are in place we couldn't 100% guarantee that you wouldn't catch Covid at them. But we do put lots of measures in place to make sure this is a lot less likely than similar events where the organisers haven't thought about risks from airborne infections.

At a Breathe Easy Sheffield social everyone must test for Covid before arrival, and is asked not to attend if they are unwell. It has never happened, but anyone who is visibly unwell would be asked to leave. We have two SA600 air purifiers running inside at all times, and the venue's fresh air ventilation system is on. We also monitor CO2, and if levels rise above 1000ppm we will open the door to the outside. Masks must be worn at all times inside, but can be removed on the outside terrace. As a group, we are respectful of those who want to remain masked outside and not be in close proximity to those who are unmasked on the terrace.

We have different measures in place at different events, for example, when we put on a gig (the first Covid-safer gig in the UK we think! Validated by none other than Clean Air Club Chicago) we said that people could briefly remove their masks to drink. We brought even more air purifiers than usual to this event space to account for this additional risk. We also required attendees to test for Covid before arrival, and had the ventilation system on the highest setting.

-Tell me about the Covid-safer Screening of The Wild Robot! I wish I could have joined you, I haven't been to the cinema since 2019, when I watched 'Little Women' three times! [LITTLE WOMEN Clips & Trailer (2019)](<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CKXsLGxsDO>)

I also hadn't been to the cinema since early 2020 so it was a real treat! We wish you were there too. We worked with the Odeon in Sheffield, which were very lovely - all their staff masked, unprompted, while we were in the foyer. Everyone had to wear a mask during the screening, and we asked all attendees to test for COVID before travelling into the city centre. We didn't take an air purifier with us, but we did talk to the Odeon about their ventilation during the booking process. The screens all have fresh air pumped in from outside, and we were informed that the screen we used was vented straight from the outside, and not through other screens. We took our CO2 monitor with us, which showed reassuringly low levels (sub 700, and often in the 500s) throughout the film. We didn't have popcorn, but many of us enjoyed slushies through our Sip Valves!



-Tell me about the importance of running face-to-face COVID-safer events as opposed to running the events completely online. Also, do you live-stream your events?

Most, if not all, of our attendees have felt very isolated since the pandemic started and it has been amazing to be able to feel safe in an indoor venue, and to connect with others who share similar values. We have monthly socials at a supportive venue in the city centre, where we can use the whole space, including a bar with a member of staff who tests and masks - so we get to feel normal, and have something we have been missing out on for years. We do have members of our community who are unfortunately not well enough to join us in person, but we have a lovely supportive online group too - we have a weekly online chat, monthly online game nights, and the occasional film screening which keeps us connected and helps friendships to grow.

When we started Breathe Easy it was our intention to live-stream as many events as possible. Live streaming works well for events that are 'one-to-many' like a talk, but aren't great where everyone is socialising, and these have been the majority of our events. We streamed our launch event last June and involved online attendees by discussing with them how they would like COVID-safer events to be run, whilst in-person attendees chatted in small groups.


We also live-streamed the gig, which worked pretty well, and it was really nice to be able to involve folk from a wider geographical area, as well as those who weren't well enough to attend in person.


-How can others replicate what you do if they don't live in Sheffield? Can you give our readers the recipe or some advice?


Also, if you are thinking of changing cities, can you please move to Manchester?


This is a great question, and very timely, because we have just launched our guide to putting on COVID-safer events! This is for organisers who do not currently have any COVID mitigations in place but would like to start - but if you are already COVID-conscious and want to use the guide you are very welcome to do so! It might be good for your next birthday party or family gathering.

In our guide we stress that it is always better to do something, rather than to do nothing, when thinking about COVID safety. We talk about 7 easy ways to reduce the risk of COVID transmission:


 **Sickness Policy** - An event sickness policy encourages people with symptoms of illness (e.g. coughing, sneezing, vomiting, fever) to stay away. This helps to remove the risk (infectious people) altogether.


 **Remote Access** - Offering options for people to join your event remotely means that if someone is unwell, they are more likely to attend online rather than showing up in person. This helps remove the risk (infectious people) altogether. An additional benefit is improving inclusion for people who cannot attend in-person events.

 **Testing** - Testing requirements encourage people who test positive for COVID-19 to stay away. This helps to remove the risk (infectious people) altogether. Rapid Antigen Tests (also known as Lateral Flow Tests or LFTs) for COVID-19 are not perfect but rarely return false positives; if someone tests positive, they almost certainly have COVID-19.

 **Ventilation** - Ventilation means providing fresh air and removing polluted, stale air. It helps to dilute and remove aerosols that carry viruses like COVID-19 and flu through the air, which float and move like smoke. Someone who has COVID-19 will be breathing it into your event space. Without ventilation, the volume of infectious aerosols in the shared air at your event will increase throughout.

- Air Purification - Air purification uses air filters to remove particles such as allergens, exhaust fumes and viruses from the air. While purification doesn't stop all infections, particularly those passed on at close-range, studies show it reduces risk of infection from airborne diseases such as COVID-19. HEPA-grade purifiers filter 99% of infectious particles.

 **CO2 Monitoring** - CO2 monitors tell you how ventilated your event space is. Humans breathe out carbon dioxide (CO2), so the level of CO2 in a space tells you how much of the air has been breathed out by other people and is a useful proxy measure for the risk of infection with airborne illnesses. As a general rule, a higher level of CO2 means a higher risk. When you let in fresh air to your event space, CO2 levels and infection risk will reduce.

 **Wearing masks** - Masks are highly effective at filtering out viruses if they are well-fitting and good quality. When in close contact with someone with an airborne illness (e.g. sitting next to them inside for an hour), a mask is the most reliable tool we have to prevent infections. Masks can prevent you from both catching and spreading illness.

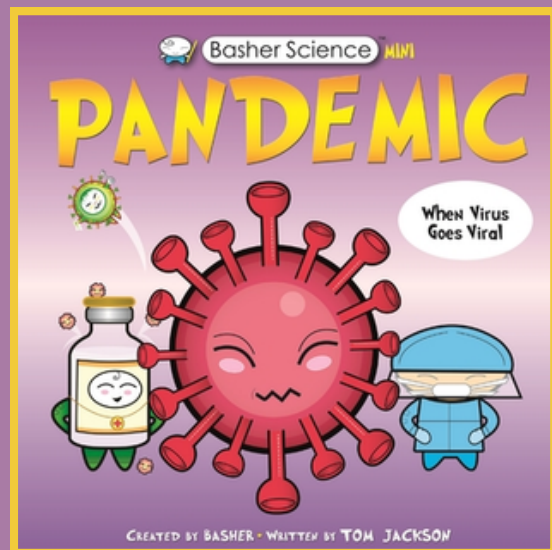
The guide goes into more detail about how to put each measure in place, and there are links to the science behind each measure, in case someone asks how you know these things work.

-Thank you so much for your wonderful work and your valuable insights!

Book Review Basher Science Mini: Pandemic by Tom Jackson



Book Review by Rachel



A Fun Way to Learn About a Serious Topic!

Have you ever wanted to learn more about germs, or what makes diseases spread so quickly around the world? “Basher Science Mini: Pandemic” is the perfect book to answer all your questions! This colorful little book takes scary topics like viruses and pandemics and makes them way less frightening by explaining them in a fun, easy-to-understand way.

What makes this book special is how it uses Basher’s famous cartoon-style illustrations to turn germs, viruses, and even things like “Social Distancing” into cute characters that tell you their own stories. You’ll meet some of history’s nastiest diseases (don’t worry, they’re not scary in this book!), learn how vaccines work like superheroes fighting the bad guys, and discover why washing your hands is so important. The book doesn’t just teach you science facts – it also helps you understand your feelings about difficult times like pandemics.

This book is packed with real science information that will help you understand what is happening with COVID-19 and why doctors and scientists work so hard to keep everyone healthy. If you’ve ever felt confused or worried about pandemics, this book will help make sense of it all while keeping you entertained at the same time!

WOULD YOU RATHER

Mental Health Edition

always feel
understood

or

always feel
appreciated

have a
perfect memory

or

be able to forget
anything
you want at will

be recognized for
your intelligence

or

be recognized for
your kindness

sleep for an hour

or

read a book for
an hour

go for a run

or

go for a bike ride

call a friend

or

text a friend

make someone "laugh"

or

tell someone
"good morning"

leave a kind note
for someone

or

volunteer

play a sport

or

exercise another way
for 30 minutes

listen to music

or

watch a funny
show

watch a show on
Netflix

or

watch a show
on YouTube

do a breathing
exercise

or

color

chew gum

or

eat a healthy
snack

do a dance video

or

say one positive
thing about yourself

have alone time

or

play a board game



PET PORTRAITS



Thunder

These are some of Rachel's pet rats. Fancy rats can make **WONDERFUL** pets!

But not everyone understands these pets. Do you have an odd pet?



Mashed Potato Head



Sasquatch

Meet Sasquatch. She is an Agouti Fancy Rat. She likes to spend her time cuddling in rat piles and eating. Rats are nocturnal and sleep mostly during the day.

Sassy was named because she has gigantic feet relative to her body size.



Ember

Do you love your pet?

Send us pictures for next month's Pet Portraits!

<https://whn.global/kidszone/>

We can't wait to meet everyone's critters!

Stories from our Readers

The Story of Hestia

**A Retelling of a Greek Myth
By Camille Alexander, age 12**



The eldest daughter of Kronos lived in his stomach for many years. When she emerged from his mouth, she was little more than a flickering flame.

While she had been in her father's belly, Hestia had taken care of her siblings. She had nurtured them to strength while they slept and had helped them reach their full power.


Now that the Titans had been defeated, Hestia tended to the hearth of Mount Olympus. As goddess of the glowing hearth, she was more at home in any hearth than on any throne.

From her seat in the hearth, Hestia was able to watch over her siblings and continue to help them to grow, only now she could help her nephews and nieces.

Hestia saw her family in their thrones in front of her. She saw them at the war table, watching them guide their favorite mortals through the fighting. She saw them at council, and she saw them making choices.

Hestia's flames reached high in the air. They matched the other gods' moods, whether they're angry or sad or cheerful. It may seem like Hestia's job isn't very important, but she enhances and encourages her family.

Hestia doesn't just watch over her family; she watches over everyone. Next time your fireplace is lit, remember she's watching over you.



TO FEEL INTRIGUED ENERGIZED AND ENGAGED

Kids' Zone Magazine is a free, volunteer-made digital publication.

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WHN.global/KidsZone

Welcome to the World Health Network Kids' Zone Magazine! Although COVID-19 is a serious topic, living a COVID-conscious lifestyle can be fun and rewarding. In this magazine, we highlight the many ways kids explore, share, and connect!

LET'S JUMP INTO THE KIDS' ZONE!