



BRIEFING NOTE

COVID-19 media briefing summary - Karen Redman Friday, May 1, 2020

Disaggregation of numbers

This past Monday, I had the pleasure of visiting with some staff at Public Health and would like to recognize the hard work and dedication of the Epidemiologist and Health Analytics team - especially in the area of gathering the critical statistics we rely on daily.

In addition to all the other important data they have been generating, they have supplied the numbers of COVID-19 cases in each municipality.

I would like to remind everyone that this data reflects the positive cases identified through testing of prioritized groups and settings in Waterloo Region, like long-term care and retirement homes.

There is a concentration of Long Term Care, retirement homes and residential care facilities in certain municipalities that increases the rate of cases for those communities.

This data should not be misinterpreted to give a false sense of security to those who aren't in one of those settings.

As I've said before, COVID-19 is still in our community and is especially impacting Long Term Care and Retirement Homes.

New cases due to community spread of the virus are being identified each day and the risks of contracting the virus are the **same** throughout the whole of Waterloo Region.

Each day Public Health staff report on the numbers, but we have to remember that each of those numbers represent a friend, or a loved one and a member of our Waterloo Region community.

This is why I ask you to continue to practice physical distancing.

Lessening the stress for children

We've been at this a long time and I know it is beginning to wear on individuals and families.

We can all agree that COVID-19 has changed our lives and we often find ourselves longing for a time before the pandemic.

It's especially challenging for children who may not understand the reasons they are being kept home and away from their friends and extended family for so long. They are understandably anxious and are looking to adults for cues to when things will return to normal.



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I've addressed talking to children about COVID-19 in some of my past videos, but here are a few things you can do as a parent or caregiver to help ease their stress and uncertainty.

- Keep familiar routines up as much as possible;
- Provide facts about what is happening in our community and give clear information in an age appropriate way;
- Listen to concerns, acknowledge their feelings, and provide reassurance;
- Include them in phone calls and video calls;
- Explain why physical distancing is important to stop the spread of COVID-19 and;
- Together, find one thing to be thankful for each day.

Social Distancing in Good weather

The forecast this weekend and beyond looks promising with sunshine and milder temperatures to come.

It's okay to go outside and enjoy the warmer weather, fresh air and sunshine, but **please** try to stay close to home and in your own neighbourhood.

Thank you for staying home, for practising physical distancing as much as possible **and** for everyone doing their part to keep our community healthy and safe.

We are in this together and we will get through this together.

Have a good, safe weekend!