



BRIEFING NOTE

**COVID-19 media briefing notes - Karen Redman
April 15, 2020**

Sympathy statement

I would like to echo Dr. Wang's comments and express my sincerest sympathies to those who have lost loved ones to COVID-19.

We are also thinking of all of you who are currently ill, or who have sick family members or friends.

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Talking to teens about Covid-19

To continue our efforts to keep Regional residents safe, I would like to take a moment to encourage parents to talk to their teenage children about Covid-19.

Many teens don't see Covid-19 as a threat to their own health and well-being.

Help them understand that not practicing physical distancing can make them, their parents or other family members very sick. Especially if someone has a compromised immune system or other health condition.

What's more upsetting to them is the social isolation they feel at a time in their lives when socializing with friends is so important to their development and mental wellbeing.

Here are some tips to start the conversation:

- It's okay for them to be sad and disappointed – listen and sympathize.



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- Expect frustration about their social lives – social isolation is very uncomfortable for teens and it's especially difficult when their friends may not be sticking to the rules.
- Stick to a routine as much as possible (e.g. meal times, homework time, etc.)
- Treat teens as problem solving partners (e.g. ask them to help create daily schedule.)
- Allow privacy and alone time. They can connect with their friends online.
- Enlist another adult to talk to your teen if they prefer.
- And lastly, model good behaviour for your teens by not bending the rules with your own friends and family.

We need everyone practicing physical distancing in order to slow the spread of Covid-19. And the more we distance, the sooner we can start socializing again.