



ALPINE THREADS

Community and Family Life in the California Alps

Summer 2020

IN THIS ISSUE...

Covid-19	2-4
Alpine Watershed Group	5
California Health and Wellness	6
Alpine County Behavioral Health Services	7
Five Minutes or Less for Health Weekly Tip: Buckle Up!	7
Live Violence Free	7
Healthy Eating, in a SNAP!....	8

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*Masthead photo courtesy of
Alpine County photographer
Todd Branscombe.*
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Five Minutes or Less for Health Weekly Tip:



SWIM SAFELY

Swimming is a fun, active, and healthy way to spend leisure time. Take a few minutes to keep health and safety in mind to help prevent illness and injury.

- Ask a buddy to join you when swimming so you don't swim alone.
- Choose swimming sites that have lifeguards.
- Avoid drinking alcohol before and during swimming.
- Don't swallow pool water.
- Don't swim when you have diarrhea. Germs can spread in the water and make other people sick.
- Take a shower and wash your child before swimming.
- Take your kids on bathroom breaks every 60 minutes, or check diapers every 30-60 minutes.
- Change diapers in a bathroom or a diaper-changing area and not at poolside. Germs can spread in and around the pool.
- Wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers before getting in the pool.
- Watch children in and around water at all times.
- Make sure to keep your ears as dry as possible to help prevent swimmer's ear.



<https://www.cdc.gov/family/minutes/tips/swimming/index.htm>

The outbreak of the new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has created a lot of anxiety and uncertainty for all of us, including children and teens. During stressful times, not matter what their age, children want to know three basic things:

Am I safe? | Are you, the people caring for me, safe? | How will this situation affect my daily life?

As parents and caregivers, we need to talk with our kids about COVID-19 to address these concerns. Below are seven tips on how to engage with kids of all ages to help them maintain emotional stability during the crisis, followed by guidance on how to tailor conversations for kids at of different ages.

GUIDANCE FOR HELPING KIDS OF ALL AGES

1. Control Your Own Anxiety

Many of us are worried about the current situation and living with uncertainty isn't easy. Yet, anxiety is "contagious." Your kids will know that you are nervous even if you try to hide it. So how can you keep your cool, despite your own worries? Here are some things that may help:

- Get the most credible information you can. Focus on fact-based, helpful information about the virus.
- Talk with folks who support you.
- Take care of your physical health. Get a good amount of sleep and exercise and use other ways to reduce anxiety, such as meditation, yoga, listening to music, or watching a TV show.
- If your child asks if you are worried, be honest! They will know if you are not telling them the truth. You can say things like: "Yes, I'm worried about the virus, but I know that there are ways to prevent its spread and take care of the family if one of us gets sick."

2. Approach Your Kids and Ask What They Know

Most children will have heard about COVID-19, particularly school-age kids and adolescents. They may have read things online, seen something on TV, or heard friends or teachers talk about the illness. Others may have overheard you talking about it. There is a lot of misinformation out there, so don't assume that they know specifics about the situation or that the information they have is correct. Ask open ended questions:

- What have you heard about the coronavirus?
- Where did you hear about it?
- What are your major concerns or worries?
- Do you have any questions I can help you answer?
- How are you feeling about the Coronavirus?

Once you know what information they have and what they're concerned about, then you can help to fill in any necessary gaps.

3. Validate Their Feelings and Concerns

Kids may have all sorts of reactions to the COVID-19. Some may be realistic, while others exaggerated. For example, if grandma is in a nursing home, they may have heard that older adults get sicker than healthier, younger individuals. You need to be able to acknowledge this valid concern, but can reassure them that grandma has the best medical care to manage the illness. Alternately, a child may be terrified that animals will get the virus such as a beloved pet. Again, take these feeling seriously, but then reassure them that dogs and cats don't get the virus, so there is no need to worry about this.

4. Be Available for Questions and Provide New Information

This outbreak is likely to last a long time, so one conversation won't be enough. At first, your child's emotional reactions will outweigh their thoughts and concerns. As the outbreak continues and your kids get new information, they will need to talk again. Let them know they can come to you at any time with questions or worries. It's also a good idea to have regular check ins, as they may not approach you with their fears.

5. Empower Them by Modeling Behavior

An important part of prevention is hand washing, coughing or sneezing into your sleeves, wiping your nose with tissue then discarding it, trying to keep your hands away from your face, not shaking hands or making physical contact with others, and wiping surfaces with material that is at least 60% alcohol.

Be sure to demonstrate these behaviors first, so your kids can have a good model. It's a great idea for you to wash your hands with young children singing "Happy Birthday" twice (about 20 seconds) so they know what to do on their own. Wiping surfaces as a family, after dinner, helps everyone feel part of the prevention effort. For older kids and teens, give alternatives to high fives or fist bumps, like elbow bumping, bowing, or using Mr. Spock's "live long and prosper" Vulcan salute.

6. Provide Reassurance

Your kids may worry about how you're going to get through this. Remind them of other situations in which they felt helpless and scared. Kids love family stories, and these narratives carry a lot of emotional weight. Try something like: "Remember that hurricane when a tree fell on the apartment?" or "Remember when the pipes burst in the house and we were flooded?" Remind them that you have been through challenging times before, and though everyone was distressed, everyone also worked together and got through it. Reliving these kinds of narrative helps the whole family to build resilience and hope.

7. Don't Blame Others

In stressful times, when we feel helpless, there's a tendency to blame someone or become more fearful, even when there is no evidence to support these reactions. This can create social stigma and be harmful towards certain groups of people – in the case of COVID-19, particularly people of Asian descent, and people who have recently traveled. The last thing we want our kids to do when frightening events happen is to cast blame on others, either intentionally or without meaning to.

When you ask your kids what they know about the virus, listen for anything that discriminates against a group of people, and address it in your conversation. And make sure not to reinforce negative stereotypes in your own actions and conversations.

GUIDANCE FOR KIDS BY DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL

When you talk to your child or teen, it's important to use words, phrases, and examples that are developmentally appropriate. Here are tips for helping preschool kids, school-age kids, and teens and young adults.

Preschool Kids (Ages 2-6):

Preschool kids are more in tune to and affected by parental emotions than older kids. For them, especially, be sure to stay calm around them. In addition:

- Turn off the TV, computers, smart speakers when they are around. They will hear things or see images that are potentially scary.
- Be careful in talking about the situation with other adults or older siblings around them.
- Younger kids may need a bit more TLC and cuddles than older kids. If you're concerned about transmitting illness, then sitting close, or perhaps sleeping in the same room is comforting.
- Make preventive measures such as washing hands or wiping surfaces a playful game.

School-age Children (Ages 7-12):

Kids in first to sixth grade can understand more about a contagious disease. Explain that the germs causing COVID-19 are like ones that cause a cold. Remind them that these illnesses can spread easily, but that they can also be prevented, which is why we need to wash our hands, use tissues, and use alcohol wipes.

Kids this age thrive on routine. Try to keep to daily schedules as typical as always, even if you are quarantined at home. Explain that the reason you stocked up on a month's supply of food and are not going to school or work is to help your community by not spreading the disease to others.

Younger school-age kids cope with their fears through play. They may play doctor or use a Lego set to create a hospital helping people. This is a normal way for them to manage their anxieties including repeating their games over and over.

Some school-age kids will become more clingy and demanding. Such "regression" is a way of expressing fear. This is not the time to simply tell them to "grow up," even if the behavior is frustrating. They may need more time with you – reading to them, watching a TV show together, drawing, or playing.

(con't)

COVID-19

Turn off the TV other digital media as much as possible. School-age kids may not understand everything they hear and see on the screen. For example, if there are reports of outbreaks or deaths on the other side of the country, they may not know how far this is or that germs cannot spread to their house from distant places.

Adolescents and Young Adults (Ages 13 – 18+):

Teens and young adults have likely heard a lot about COVID-19 and its potential danger. They are old enough to understand how it spreads, preventative measures, and future risks. Have open conversations, beginning with open-ended questions about what they know, what they are worried about, and how they are feeling.

Kids this age are mature enough to watch the news with you or go online and explore trusted sites to learn more about the disease. Sit with them while viewing and have conversations about what they see and read, and how the illness may impact their lives.

Teens and young adults may be help you shop for supplies, play with younger siblings, prepare meals, and do other tasks to prepare for possible quarantine. Including them in the effort to protect the family helps them feel valued, and this empowerment lessens anxiety.

No one knows at this point how serious the impact of COVID-19 will be. Living with uncertainty is not easy. However, we can help each other become more resilient, emotionally stable, and as physically protected as possible through a carefully planned means of engaging with our kids in this time of crisis.

Gene Beresin, M.D. is executive director of The MGH Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds, and a staff child and adolescent psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital.



Smoking/Vaping & Coronavirus (COVID-19) Give your lungs a fighting chance

How is your risk of COVID-19 increased?

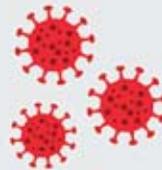
SMOKING OR VAPING

CANNABIS OR TOBACCO

- Damages lungs
- Harms the immune system (body is less able to fight diseases)



COVID-19 Exposure



Infection is **↑ more severe**



We can help you quit!

CALIFORNIA SMOKERS' HELPLINE

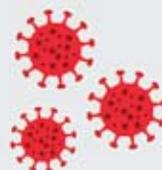
☎ 1-800-NO-BUTTS or 1-844-8-NO-VAPE

💬 Text QUIT SMOKING or QUIT VAPING to 66819

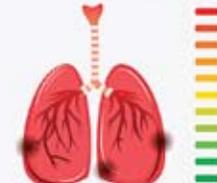
When you quit smoking or vaping, **your lungs and your immune system get healthier**



COVID-19 Exposure



Infection is **↓ less severe**



For more information visit: tobaccopreventiontoolkit.stanford.edu



or





Sierra Nevada Red Fox

Written by Helen Fillmore

The Sierra Nevada red fox (*Vulpes vulpes necator*) received a lot of attention this winter when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed to add it to the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife under the Endangered Species Act. While it is a subspecies of the more commonly known red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), the Sierra Nevada red fox (SNRF) is particularly unique, rare, and difficult to study. For those of us who aren't wildlife experts, this may have come as a surprise, as foxes maintain international notoriety and are perhaps one of the most iconic wilderness mammals in the northern hemisphere.

Characteristics and Habitat

SNRF are a small canid species weighing on average between 7 lbs. (females) to 9 lbs. (males). They have long snouts, large ears, and slender legs and bodies. They show a variety of colors based on their genetic makeup, but the white tips of their long bushy tails are evident on all. SNRF are a native montane fox species found in high elevation ecosystems (typically above 5,000 ft.). Their summer habitat is thought to be above the treeline, and it includes meadows and open woodlands. In the winter, they move to slightly lower elevations where they occupy open mixed conifer forests. They are a predatory species, and their diets typically consist of small rodents. They roam alone and avoid creating packs, which makes it challenging to track population dynamics. SNRF are distantly related to coyote and gray fox species in California, but genetic evidence suggests they avoid interbreeding with outside species.



Artwork by Helen Fillmore

Range and Distribution

Historically, the SNRF range included the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range, western Nevada mountain ranges, and the southern Cascade Mountain Range in California. Current population distribution is much smaller but still uncertain. Prior to 2010 when a small population was confirmed near Sonora Pass, SNRF were thought to be extinct in the southern reaches of their historical range. They maintain exceptionally low population densities—estimates suggest one individual per square mile—which makes it particularly challenging to estimate total population. Evidence suggests there are fewer than 50 and as few as 15 adult SNRF in the Sierra Nevada region of their range.

Research and Conservation

Foxes are generally thought to be cunning, elusive, and independent by nature, but SNRF exemplify these characteristics in ways that challenge the ability of wildlife experts to monitor their behavior, population, and distribution. Much of what we know about SNRF are documented interviews of fur trappers in the early 1900s and one multi-year field study on the isolated population near Lassen Peak in northern California (east of Redding). In 2010—prior to the identification of the Sonora Pass SNRF population—the U.S. Forest Service published a conservation assessment outlining a range of threats to the species based on a synthesis of the “woefully little information” on SNRF and other mountain fox species in the western United States. In it, they maintain that additional monitoring and research are needed to develop a more robust conservation strategy for this species.

While SNRF continue to elude even the best wildlife observation equipment, it is important for the public to report any red fox sightings if you are within their historical range. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife maintains an online portal for reporting red fox sightings that can be accessed here: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Sierra-Nevada-Red-Fox>

Resources: Red Fox Range Map: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=83981&inline>

Sierra Nevada Red Fox Conservation Assessment: https://www.fwspubs.org/doi/suppl/10.3996/082017-JFWM-067/suppl_file/10.3996082017-jfwm-067.s7.pdf

Sierra Nevada Red Fox Fact Sheet: https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5282562.pdf

Did you know that TEXT MESSAGES can HELP YOU QUIT TOBACCO?

Text2Quit, an automated, personalized, text message-based cessation intervention. It offers advice, support, and reminders. There is also a personalized web portal and email follow-up (Text2Quit).

StopMySmoking, a young adult-focused intervention that offers 24/7 craving support through on-demand assistance, message-timing control, and optional pairing with a quit buddy (StopMySmoking), are two examples of cell phone-based interventions.

The US Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS) also provides several targeted text message-based smoking cessation interventions:

- **SmokefreeMOM**
- **Smokefree Teen**
- **Smokefree Vet**
- **Smokefree Español**
- **Smokefree VET en Español (SmokeFreeTXT)**

Tobacco Quitting Aids and Tips

A big part of quitting smoking is getting through the physical withdrawal. There are lots of quitting resources at no cost.

CREATE A PLAN USING THESE IDEAS:

- List your reasons for quitting
- Pick a quit day
- Prepare for your quit day
- Find support to quit: 1-800-NO-BUTTS or 800-QUIT-NOW
- List smoking triggers and habits
- Tell people. Make them your allies
- Clean house of smoking supplies, lighters, matches, ashtrays. Stock up on substitutes for the cigarette: sugarless gum, hard candy, straws, cinnamon sticks or carrot sticks.
- Schedule a dental cleaning
- Reflect:
What worked and what didn't?
What you can do differently this time?

TIPS TO MANAGE QUIT DAY:

- Don't smoke, not even just one
- Use nicotine replacement therapy if needed
- If you are having strong cravings and withdrawal despite using medication, talk to your doctor about adjusting medication
- Remind yourself of reasons to stop smoking
- Drink plenty of water or juice
- Keep physically active daily
- Avoid things and people that trigger smoking
- Attend support groups, counseling, or class
- Practice relaxation
- Keep your hands busy

AIDS TO REDUCE CRAVINGS:

Nicotine replacement:

- Skin patches
- Lozenges
- Gum
- Inhalers
- Nasal sprays

Staying quit:

Use your quit-smoking plan to guide you.

Have resources to lean on:

- support groups
- nicotine replacement
- medications
- coaching,
- your doctor's advice



CALIFORNIA
SMOKERS' HELPLINE
1-800-NO-BUTTS
You can quit. We can help.



If you are in crisis or experiencing elevated stress, help is available now. Alpine County Behavioral Health Services is here for you **530.694.1816** or you may reach out to these organizations via phone, chat or text.

You are not alone.

You are not alone.

If you're experiencing feelings of worry, irritability, or low mood right now, you're not alone. While it's necessary to keep up-to-date and make changes to daily life in order to help control the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus), the constant news cycle coupled with social distancing measures can have a real impact on mental health.

- Teen Line:**
Text "TEEN" to **839863** between 6:00pm-9:00pm PST. Their online message board provides a place to talk with peers, including concerns around the Coronavirus.
www.teenline.org/board
- The Peer-Run Warm Line (24/7)** Call **1-855-845-7415** for peer-run non-emergency emotional support.
www.mentalhealthsf.org/peer-run-warmline
- SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Line (24/7)**
Call **1-800-985-5990** or text **TalkWithUs** to **66746** to connect with a trained crisis counselor.
www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24/7)** Call **1-800-273-8255**
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org



Five Minutes or Less for Health Weekly Tip:

BUCKLE UP!

The simple act of buckling up is the best way to save lives and reduce injuries from crashes. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for people between the ages of 5 and 34. Child safety seats reduce the risk of death in

passenger cars by 71% for infants, and by 54% for toddlers ages 1 to 4 years. Using seat belts reduces serious injuries and deaths in crashes by about 50%. Take a minute to make sure you and your passengers are buckled up for safety.

- Buckle your seat belt every time you drive or ride in a motor vehicle.
- Make sure children are properly buckled up in a seat belt, booster seat, or car seat, whichever is appropriate for their age, height, and weight.
- Make sure all passengers are buckled in before driving.

<https://www.cdc.gov/family/minutes/tips/seatbelts/index.htm>



Live Violence Free has trained advocates available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you are experiencing abuse or violence, or have in the past and are looking for someone to talk to, call us at (530) 694-1853. This includes not only physical, but also sexual, emotional, verbal or technological abuse.

We are here for you, including being available for questions or concerns you may have during this time. We hope you are safe and well, and look forward to seeing you again soon.

Location:

100 Foothill Rd, Suite A, Markleeville, CA 96120

Office hours: **Mon-Fri 8am-4pm** Phone number: **530-694-1853**

**24-hour crisis line:
530-544-4444**



Alpine County Public Health is now on Facebook & Twitter

Like us and follow us for up to date information and tips about healthy living and emergency preparedness in beautiful Alpine County!

Alpine Threads Editorial Board

First 5 Alpine

100 Foothill Rd.
PH: 530-830-2845
www.first5alpine.com

Alpine County Health and Human Services

75 B Diamond Valley Rd.
PH: 530-694-2146
FAX: 530-694-2252

The Learning Center and Local Child Care Planning Council

100 Foothill Rd.
PH: 530-694-1148

Website Links

- www.alpinecountyca.gov/calendar
- www.first5alpine.com
- www.alpinecounty.com
- www.alpinewatershedgroup.org
- www.alpinebiomasscommittee.wordpress.com
- www.spnawareness.org/

ATTENTION LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS & AGENCIES

If you'd like to share your website link send it to Gina at gina@originalmatteoni.com and we'll add it to our column.

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Disclaimer: This wellness-focused publication is not intended to provide timely news and/or personal, political or discriminatory statements. Alpine Threads Editorial Board reviews all content.



ALPINE THREADS

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Phone: (530) 694-2146

Addressing the needs of the
Alpine County Community

Healthy Eating, in a SNAP!

Black Bean and Vegetable Quesadillas

Serves 6 - 45 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 (15.5-oz) can black beans no salt added
- 2 Zucchini medium
- 4 cups Fresh spinach
- 1 cup Canned Corn (or 1 ear fresh corn)
- 4 ounces Low-fat cheddar cheese
- 1 tablespoon Canola oil
- ½ teaspoon Ground cayenne pepper
- 2 teaspoons Water
- ½ teaspoon Ground black pepper
- 6 8-inch whole-wheat flour tortillas
- 3 tablespoons Fresh parsley or cilantro optional



Directions

1. In a colander, drain and rinse black beans.
2. Rinse zucchini. Cut into thin slices or shred with a grater.
3. Rinse and chop fresh spinach. If using fresh parsley or cilantro, rinse and chop now.
4. If using fresh corn, peel. Use a knife to cut corn kernels off of the cob. If using canned corn, drain.
5. Grate cheese.
6. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, heat oil. Add zucchini and cayenne pepper. Cook until zucchini is semi-soft, about 5 minutes.
7. Add corn and spinach. Cover and cook until tender, stirring a few times, about 5 minutes more. Remove from heat.
8. Add black beans to the veggie mixture. Stir to combine. Smash beans lightly with a fork. Add 1-2 teaspoons water to make a bean-and-veggie paste.
9. Season mixture with black pepper. If using parsley or cilantro, add now. Transfer mixture to medium bowl. Reserve skillet.
10. Spread vegetable mixture evenly on half of each tortilla. Fold tortillas over. Press lightly with spatula to flatten.
11. Spray skillet lightly with non-stick cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat. Add one folded tortilla. Cook about 4 minutes per side, or until both sides of tortilla is golden brown. Repeat until all quesadillas are cooked.
12. Cut each quesadilla into 2 wedges. Serve while hot.

For more recipes, borrow SNAP-Ed cookbooks from the Library and the Woodfords Indian Education Center.

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SMOKERS' HELPLINE
1-800-NO-BUTTS

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