COVID-19: Children and Families with Special Health Care Needs

There are things parents can do to keep themselves, their families, and their children with special health care needs safe during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Prepare your Home

- Keep plenty of hand soap, tissues, wipes, and hand sanitizer on hand for everyone in your home to use.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, and TV remotes.

Appointments

- Talk to your pediatrician, specialists, therapists, or anyone else who cares for your child about any upcoming appointments.
- Your doctor may suggest other ways to meet, such as by phone or another telehealth option.

Plan Ahead

- Talk to your pediatrician about getting extra medicines or supplies that your child needs, including any medical technology and nutrition support.
- Create a plan of action if your child, family members, or guardians become ill.
Community Supports and Services

- Reach out to family support organizations, such as Family Voices of North Dakota.
- Reach out to a trusted case manager, friend, family member, or community-based organization, such as FirstLink, for help.

Coping and Staying Strong

- Remember to take time for yourself as well and engage in self-care activities.
- Recognize when you may need a break.
- Connect with other families virtually, through video chats, social media or texting.
- Take deep breaths, meditate, and engage in physical activity. Do an activity/hobby you enjoy.

Local Resources

- **Family Voices of North Dakota**
  - Phone: 888-522-9654
  - Email: fvnd@drtel.net
  - Website: http://fvnd.org
- **FirstLink**
  - Phone: 2-1-1 or 701-235-7335 (SEEK)
  - Website: https://myfirstlink.org
- **Special Health Services**
  - Phone: 701-328-2436
  - Email: dohcshsadm@nd.gov
  - Website: https://health.nd.gov/Youth/special-health-services

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Children with Disabilities (2020); Family Voices of North Dakota (2020); FirstLink (2020).