

# SPECIAL CARE KIT

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS FOR COVID-19

## INTRODUCTION

In this current pandemic situation, there are vulnerable populations who may be suspected of or diagnosed with COVID-19. Given that it can be an anxiety-inducing experience for individuals with special needs as well as their caregivers, they may require additional support to understand what is happening or is going to happen to them. This will help the individuals cooperate and cope better with the procedures of testing, diagnosis and treatment. On the other hand, frontline healthcare workers may not have the experience and know-how in managing these individuals. This can also increase their stress in an already demanding work environment for the healthcare workers.

This set of materials aim to provide support for the individuals with special needs who have to go through COVID-19 procedures. Clinical staff will also be able to use the materials to better communicate with and manage individuals with special needs presenting in their care, from the PHPCs, to ambulance staff, emergency rooms, and admission in the isolation wards. The materials are visually-enhanced, which can be used for individuals with special needs, intellectual disabilities, or any person who have limited communication and language ability to interact with the clinical staff.

We hope these materials can not only support the vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 pandemic, but also become a resource for the different agencies/organisations beyond the current situation, as we strive to build an inclusive society.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These resources are put together with support from the Ministry of Health (MOH) in collaboration with the following organisations:



## HOW TO USE

**Individuals with special needs may require additional support to understand what is happening around them.**

### **For clinical staff**

Provide support to the individual suspected with COVID-19 by:

1. Checking in with the caregiver about the level of understanding of the individual with special needs.
2. Using one of the social boards/stories to explain what is happening. Choose the relevant material based on the individual's ability to understand. Make copies for the individual to refer to if necessary.
3. Helping the individual reduce anxiety by using the visual cards.

Do:

- a. Speak slowly and calmly
- b. Use simple words
- c. Allow time for the individual to respond
- d. Enlist the help of the caregiver when necessary
- e. Note: Some individuals may need to hold on to a preferred object to calm down.

### **For caregiver**

1. Support your child by completing the "About Me" form and pass a copy of the form to the doctor/nurse. You may want to prepare a few copies to pass to the different people who may be supporting your child such as the PHPC staff, ambulance staff, emergency staff and the ward staff.
2. Inform the clinic/ambulance staff that your child has special needs.
3. Use the social story/board to explain to your child what is happening
4. Use any visuals that your child is familiar with in addition to the suggested visuals provided.

# SPECIAL CARE KIT

Resources to support individuals with special needs for COVID-19

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## Helping the individual to understand what is going to happen/is happening

FROM HOME TO EMERGENCY/HOSPITAL

- Visual Schedule
- Social Story

## Helping the individual to stay calm

RELAXATION EXERCISES TO HELP THE INDIVIDUAL TO REDUCE ANXIETY:

- DEEP BREATHING
- HAPPY THOUGHTS
- MUSCLE RELAXATION

## Helping the healthcare workers to understand the individual

ABOUT ME – INFORMATION OF INDIVIDUAL

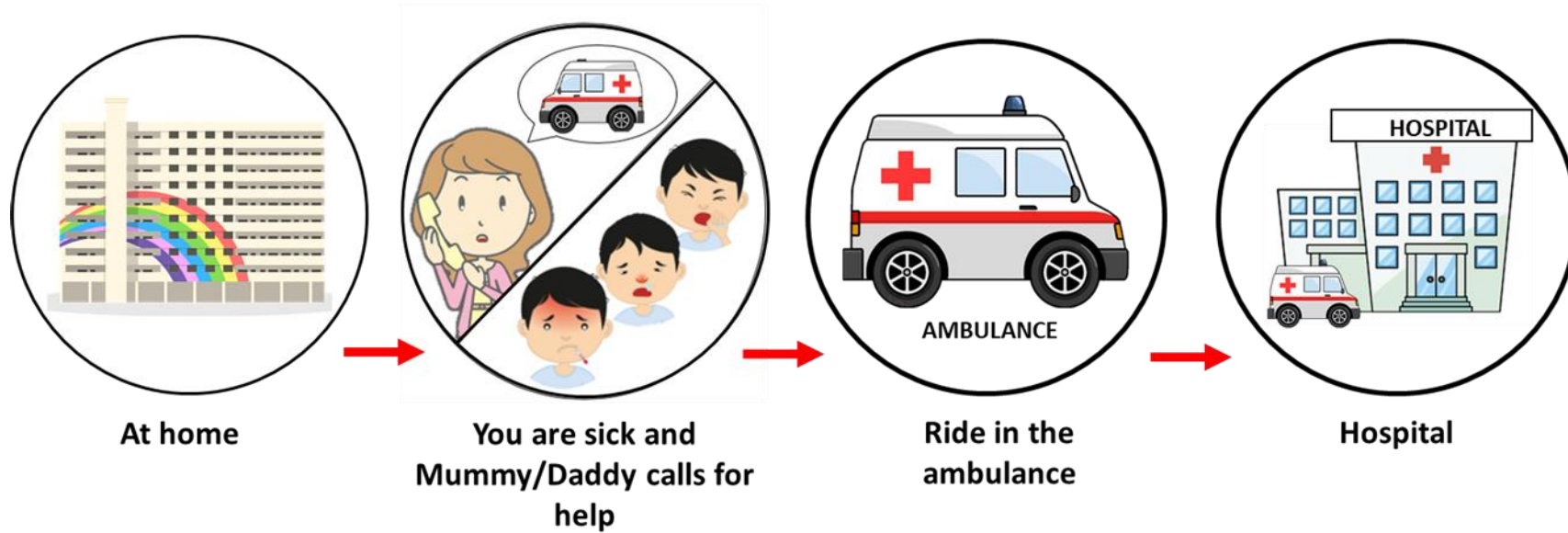
## Supporting the caregivers

CAREGIVER GUIDELINES FOR COVID-19 EMERGENCY



For Caregivers' Use

## VISUAL SCHEDULE FOR JOURNEY FROM HOME TO EMERGENCY



## SOCIAL STORY: FROM HOME TO HOSPITAL



FLU



COUGH



FEVER



SORE THROAT

I am feeling unwell while I am at home.



My Mummy/Daddy is worried and calls for help.



I go into the ambulance with Mummy/Daddy. There are so many sounds in this space!



Mummy/Daddy is with me so I feel safe. I can be brave and stay strong on the way to the hospital.



I am now at the hospital to see the doctor. The doctor will help me.



I can go home when I am better.

## RELAXATION EXERCISE: DEEP BREATHING

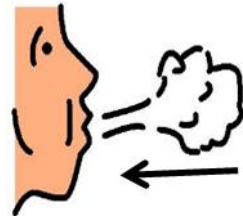
**Step 1:**



**Good Sitting Posture**

Sit up and put your feet on the floor.

**Step 2:**



**Take A Deep Breath**

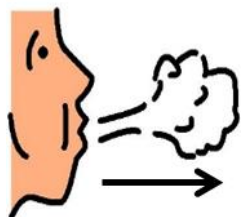
**Step 3:**



**Hold Your Breath**

Count to 4 quietly in your head.

**Step 4:**



**Breathe Out From  
Your Mouth**

Count to 4 quietly in your head.

**Step 5: Repeat 5 times**

## RELAXATION EXERCISE: HAPPY THOUGHTS

**Step 1:**



**Good Sitting  
Posture**

Sit up and put your feet on the floor.

**Step 2:**



**Think Happy  
Thoughts**

Think about something you really like.



## RELAXATION EXERCISE: MUSCLE RELAXATION

**Step 1:**



**Good Sitting Posture**

Sit up and put your feet on the floor.

**Step 2:**



**Clench Your Hands  
And Arms**

Count to 10, then relax.

**Step 3:**



**Raise Your Eyebrows  
As High As You Can**

Count to 10, then relax.

**Step 4:**



**Stretch Your Legs And  
Point Your Toes Up**

Count to 10, then relax.

**Step 5:**



**Squeeze All The Muscles In Your Body**

Count to 10, then relax.

## ABOUT ME

My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old. I am a boy / girl.



“Hi Doctor/Nurse!  
When you come in,  
please tell me your  
name, who you are and  
what you are doing.”

I communicate through...

Sentences

Pictures

Words

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

Gestures

I like: 😊	I don't like: ☹️

I feel scared/upset when...

I feel better when...

I might need help with...

## CAREGIVER GUIDELINES FOR COVID-19 EMERGENCY

Dear Caregivers,

You may want to use this with your child:

### 1. Social Story:

- a. From Clinic to Hospital
- b. Emergency Visit
- c. Staying in the Hospital

The stories will help better explain the above procedures to reduce your child's anxiety due to the COVID-19 screening procedures.

### 2. Child Profile Form

Complete the "About Me" form to help doctors and nurses better support your child in the event that he/she has to undergo any screening/admission procedures. Pass it to any healthcare staff after completion.

### 3. Self-care

Your child may feel your anxiety. It is important for you to stay calm.

### 4. Additional resources

For more resources, you may refer to:

[www.superherome.sg/covid19](http://www.superherome.sg/covid19).

### 5. Available hotlines

If you feel the need to talk to someone, you may wish to call up the following hotlines:

Organisation	Hotline
<b>National Care Hotline (24 hours)</b>	6202 6868
<b>Caregivers Alliance Singapore (CAL)</b> (Weekdays 9am to 6pm, excluding public holidays)	West Cluster: 9720 7590 9770 7996  Central Cluster: 9729 8628 9826 7115  East Cluster: 9736 9170
<b>Caregivers Association for Mentally Ill (CAMI)</b>	6782 9371
<b>TOUCH Caregiver Support</b> (Weekdays 9am to 5pm)	6804 6555



The information provided in this publication is meant purely for educational purposes and may not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should seek the advice of your doctor or a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition.

Information is correct at the time of printing (May 2020) and subject to revision without prior notice.