



# EMPLOYEE **WELLBEING** at **CORNELL**

## Weekly Update – May 4, 2020

Information and services provided by Cornell Work/Life, Cornell Wellness, and the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program. Explore [past editions](#) or email [wellbeing@cornell.edu](mailto:wellbeing@cornell.edu) to ask questions, request assistance, or suggest a resource. Visit [HR Resources](#) for more information.

## WELCOME TO MAY

We hope those in central New York were able to enjoy the sun and warm temperatures over the weekend - and those located outside of the area experienced similar weather. There are so many positive benefits of spending time outdoors, including the boost it gives our mental health.



In fact, May is [National Mental Health Awareness Month](#). Whether you go on a lengthy run, dig in your flower bed, or walk barefoot on a patch of grass, try to get outdoors more than usual this month – to care for your mental health while you care for your physical health.

Mother's Day will be observed in the U.S. on Sunday, May 10. The past few months have been challenging for many working families juggling home schooling, child care, and careers as a result of COVID-19. Single parents are struggling to do it all and couples are figuring out how to do it all together. Challenges abound in this "new not-so-normal."

Mother's Day can also bring sadness for those who have recently lost their mother or grandmother, are unable to visit loved ones (whether healthy or ill), are coping with postpartum depression, or the loss of a pregnancy/child.

Regardless of whether you celebrate the day, consider offering some words of encouragement, support, and kindness to others over the coming weeks.

## MENTAL WELLBEING

*Mental health resources available to Cornell employees are listed at [hr.cornell.edu/resources](http://hr.cornell.edu/resources).*

### **Cornell Community Chat: Morning Mingle – Living Alone During COVID-19**

May 22, 9-10am. Join us for networking and discussion about social distancing and self-care when living alone. [Register](#)

Each article offers insight and self-care strategies related to daily routines, cultivating resilience, and being an introverted educator. Click to read the full articles.

[How to Salvage a Disastrous Day in Your Covid-19 Quarantine](#) (Chronicle of Higher Education)

“In the midst of this catastrophe, you may experience disruptions of your sleep, appetite, work, fitness, and family life. Some days, you will wake up in a fog. You will wander around in your pajamas, and when you look up from your phone, it will be 3 p.m. Take heart. It is absolutely possible to salvage a disastrous day, even if you are in a crippling multiday slump.”

[Building Resilience](#) (American Psychological Association)

“As much as resilience involves "bouncing back" from difficult experiences, it can also involve profound personal growth. While these adverse events, much like rough river waters, are certainly painful and difficult, they don't have to determine the outcome of your life.”



[Remote Teaching While Introverted](#) (Chronicle of Higher Education)

“As an introvert, the very first thing I have to do is stop hating the whole idea of teleconferencing. I have to mentally prepare myself to do some things I've spent my whole life trying to avoid — things like prolonged eye contact, uncomfortable conversational pauses, and seeing my own self-conscious face as I strain to interact in a virtual setting.”

## PHYSICAL WELLBENG

### Shifting from mindless to mindful eating when working from home

by Erin Harner, MS, RDN, CHC, CDN, Cornell Wellness

The close proximity to the kitchen can present challenges with mindless eating when working from home. You may find yourself eating when you are not hungry or having cravings for sweet, salty, or high fat foods like cookies or potato chips.

The antidote to mindless eating is mindful eating. If you find yourself opening the fridge or wandering to grab something from the cupboard or pantry, try asking yourself "am I hungry?" This simple question can help you shift from mindlessly grazing on unhealthy snacks. If you're not hungry, consider how you're feeling: are you bored? stressed? frustrated? thirsty?



If you are hungry, eat your next meal or grab a snack. Produce and protein snack combinations can help you feel energized, satisfied, and help you stay focused until your next meal. Some delicious combos include carrots and hummus, apples and almond butter, Greek yogurt and blueberries, or some vegetable soup with beans or lentils.

When eating meals or snacks, smell the food, taste the food, and eat the food with as few distractions as possible. If you have children, a partner, or other household members with you, a snack or meal can be a great opportunity to connect with them.

Check out these short video clips from Erin: [Mindless Eating](#) (4 min) and [Mindful Snacking](#) (5 min)

## Hiking/Biking Locations in Tompkins County

There are over 240 miles of hiking trails across Tompkins County, and information and maps are available at [ithacatrails.org](http://ithacatrails.org). These trails in particular, converted from old railroad lines, are typically 8 – 10 feet wide and perfect for use while complying with physical distancing recommendations.

- [Black Diamond](#)
- [Dryden Rail Trail/Jim Schug](#) (connects to Freeville)
- [East Ithaca Recreation Way](#)
- [South Hill Recreation Way](#)



[Geneva, NY – Hiking Trails](#)

[New York City Parks & Operational Status Page](#)

## POSITIVE NEWS

Tompkins County residents, organized by Mutual Aid Tompkins, built and contributed to many community [food cabinets](#). Visit the website to learn how to fund, build, and/or donate to a cabinet.

[Cornell Health physician educates youth through “health-hop”](#) (Cornell Chronicle) - Dr. John Clarke, Director of Occupational Medicine at Cornell Health, has always had a penchant for music. Although he pursued a career in medicine, it hasn't stopped him from indulging his musical passion. Clarke has created various health-themed [music videos](#) for kids, or "health-hop" songs, over the years on topics ranging from sex and drugs to teen smoking. His latest video, [“Stop Corona,”](#) relays valuable information to help children who may have difficulty understanding more conventional forms of instruction.



Not news, but certainly enjoyable – this [father/daughter singing duo](#) has become a viral sensation on YouTube. Watch and listen as they sing along to favorites.

## ADDICTION & SAFETY

### Narcan Trainings

Narcan is a medication used to counter the effects of an opioid overdose. A directory of Narcan trainings throughout New York State is available at the [NY Department of Health website](#). The Alcohol and Drug Council of Tompkins County is offering free [Narcan](#) administering trainings every week by Zoom on Tuesdays at 12pm and Thursdays at 5pm. Participants will learn to recognize the signs of an overdose and how to administer Narcan. Participants will receive Narcan kits. To register, email [registration@alcoholdrugcouncil.org](mailto:registration@alcoholdrugcouncil.org)

**Additional Addiction Resources** (see the [April 20<sup>th</sup> weekly update](#) for info about substance abuse)

- [Al-Anon and Ala-Teen](#), 607-387-5701 | for families and friends of alcoholics (virtual meetings)
- [Adult Children of Alcoholics](#) (ACA) | for adult children of alcoholics and/or otherwise dysfunctional homes (virtual meetings)

## RAVE Guardian App

This app, free to the campus community, can enhance the user's personal safety both on and off-campus by [turning any smartphone into a personal safety device](#). Use it to set and communicate with emergency contacts, set safety timers, chat with Cornell Police, and more.

## NEW TOMPKINS COUNTY RESIDENTS

### Welcome Someone New

As a colleague to a new team member, you can play a major role in helping someone new to the area feel connected to the Cornell community, especially in this primarily virtual work environment. Below are some tips on how to help them feel more connected.



1. Let them know you're glad they're here. Show genuine interest in their history and interests.
2. Share what you know about useful local resources and community news information.
3. Invite your new team member to join you for a virtual coffee chat or learning experience.
4. Tell your new colleague about the below event and join them!

### Welcome Home Wednesdays – Tompkins Chamber Virtual Sessions

Wednesday, May 6, 2020 (Recurring on the 1st Wednesday of every month), 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM. Have you relocated to the area in the past year to live or work in Tompkins County? Are you interested in learning more about what Tompkins County has to offer? The Tompkins Chamber is inviting new residents to this virtual Happy Hour. Learn about services, programs, and volunteer opportunities in the area. [Register](#) or contact: David Walton, 607-793-4084 x 245, [dwalton@tompkinschamber.org](mailto:dwalton@tompkinschamber.org)

## FOR PARENTS

### Update on Schools, Camps, and Child Care Programs as of Sunday, May 3, 2020:

#### **Schools – K12**

On Friday, May 1, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that New York schools will remain closed for the rest of this academic year. Information about summer school is expected by the end of the May.

#### **Summer Camps**

Several summer camp programs, such as those offered by the Ithaca Youth Bureau (IYB) and the Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC), have announced they will not be offering summer camp this year due to financial and safety constraints. We are aware that some camp programs are hoping to be open for a portion of the summer but they are awaiting guidance.



### ***Child Care Centers & Home-based Child Care***

Child care centers in Tompkins County remain closed for normal operation. Many family child care and group family child care programs remain open. The process of reopening child care centers and the related health and safety regulations is directed by the Tompkins County Health Department and the NYS Office of Children and Family Services.

### **Cornell Information:**

As announced by President Martha Pollack on April 22, a Cornell committee was established to develop plans for phased operational reactivation. We understand the availability of safe and healthy environments for children is a necessity for many Cornellians to return to work. As decisions are made and we learn more about needs and offerings, we will communicate those broadly.

### ***Save the date: Cornell Family Life & Child Care Panel Session***

Monday, May 11, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Panelists include Mary Opperman (Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer), Sue Dale Hall (CEO of the Child Development Council), and additional early childhood and work/life specialists. We will discuss what is known about campus/community care and strategies for families. Stay tuned for details.

### ***Cornell Child Care Center (CCCC)***

The CCCC remains closed for normal operation per the Tompkins County Health Department and Office of Children and Family Services regulations. Limited care is available to children of Cornell essential workers. Email [cornell@brighthorizons.com](mailto:cornell@brighthorizons.com) for details.

### ***Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (DCFSA) Announcement***

Employees who have a Cornell DCFSA account were emailed last week about the possibility of making changes to their contributions. If you did not receive an email or have questions about this, contact the HR Services and Transitions Center (HRSTC) at [hrservices@cornell.edu](mailto:hrservices@cornell.edu) or (607) 255-3936.

### ***Care@Work by Care.com***

Benefits-eligible employees may use their [Care@Work benefit](#) to search for care providers. If someone you know is interested in being hired to provide in-home child care, please encourage them to create a free profile at Care.com. And, check out [Care.com's COVID-19 Guidance](#).

### ***Flexible Work Arrangements & Reduced Work Options***

Employees interested in schedule adjustments or reduced workload are encouraged to speak to their supervisor or local [HR representative](#) about options.

### ***Parent e-Lists & Newsletter***

To receive information from Work/Life in Human Resources about parenting and child care, sign-up for the [parenting newsletter](#). Also consider joining a Cornell [parenting e-list](#) to connect with fellow Cornell parents.

### ***Caring for Grandchildren while Working***

Some Cornell employees are serving as the regular caregiver for their grandchildren, often because their children have careers in essential services. In this situation, the dynamic between the grandparent and grandchild(dren) may be impacted by the grandparent's job demands, home



schooling expectations, whether the child(ren) can still see their parent(s), and worries about exposure and social distancing. Cornell grandparents are telling us:

- There is a change in the relationship – the grandparent used to be “pure fun” a majority of the time but are now serving as parent, guardian, teacher, etc. This can also bring a lot of guilt over the dynamic change and the necessity to juggle work while caregiving.
- Incorporating the grandchild’s “home” routine into the routine at the grandparent(s) requires making some adjustments by all involved.
- Grandparent(s) are needing to be in regular communication with school teachers – sometimes this involves the parent, sometimes not. Figuring out how much to communicate and collaborate can be challenging.
- Helping school children child cope with the grief and loss of an abrupt end to the school year and younger children cope with missing their child care teachers and parents is also difficult.

Navigating these family dynamics often requires patience and a great deal of communication about expectations and the daily/weekly plans. And most importantly, health and safety planning to ensure the physical wellbeing of everyone. If you are an employee in this situation and would like to discuss self-care and work/life strategies, contact Diane Bradac at [worklife@cornell.edu](mailto:worklife@cornell.edu).

*If you are a grandparent that is unable to visit your grandchild due to COVID-19, the Harvard Medical School offers [these suggestions](#) for maintaining connection.*

**[The Kids May Not Be Alright – And That’s Ok](#)** – by Ellen H. O’Donnell, Ph.D., pediatric psychologist at MassGeneral Hospital for Children and instructor at Harvard Medical School

“Resist the urge to minimize or dismiss their worry, anger and sadness. They have every right to feelings of isolation and having to regress to their childhood bedrooms and routines. Separate your feelings from theirs. You may have to grieve your own disappointment at not seeing them accept their diploma and manage your anxiety about seeing them struggle.”



### **[Ithaca Doula Collective Postpartum Community Zoom](#)**

Join a few of the doulas from the Ithaca Doula Collective and other new parents in our community for a virtual meet-up every Tuesday afternoon. Each Tuesday afternoon from 2-3pm for the next 4 weeks, but may extend these sessions into the Spring if warranted.

## **FOR ELDER/ADULT CAREGIVERS**

### **Preventing Scams that Prey on Older & Disabled Individuals**

Encourage your family and friends to do (or not do!) these things, as appropriate:

1. Don’t respond to texts, emails, or calls about checks from the government.
2. Ignore offers for vaccinations and home test kits.
3. Hang up on robocalls.
4. Research or contact you for guidance about questionable emails and text messages.
5. Research or contact you for guidance before making a donation to a new organization.

Visit [ftc.gov/coronavirus](https://ftc.gov/coronavirus) for the latest information and sign up to get FTC’s alerts at [ftc.gov/subscribe](https://ftc.gov/subscribe).

## FOR MANAGERS

### Community Chat for Cornell Managers

with Mary Opperman, Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer

May 5, 1-2pm. Let's get together in our virtual offices and homes to support one another through all that we are trying to manage right now. We'll chat about how you are right now, what challenges are coming up for you, and what creative practices you have put in place that supports you and your team.

[Register](#)

### Manager Wellbeing

During a time when managers are operating with a great deal of uncertainty, trying to adjust how/where work gets done, leading and guiding others to the best of their ability, and being emotionally available to individuals, managers are also facing their own caregiving demands, stressors and worries.

If you are a manager, your ability to be an effective is impacted by your own wellbeing and how you role model wellbeing to those on your team. Effective role modeling can include:

- Being aware of Cornell wellbeing programs/resources, using them, sharing stories of how you've used them, and inviting others to use them with you.
- Use vacation and HAP time when needed and encourage others to.
- Define your boundaries regarding work hours, response times, etc. Be consistent with following your own boundaries and encourage others to set and maintain them as well.



### Articles

- [Managers Should Not Expect Full Productivity Right Now](#) (Society for HR Management)
- [How to hold work meetings and events that connect people](#) (Ted)
- [How to Handle the Pressure of Being a Manager Right Now](#) (Harvard Business Review)
- [This is the most essential skill leaders need to work through the COVID-19 Crisis](#) (Fast Company)

## LEARNING & LISTENING

### Cornell Shelter in SPACE Remote Learning Program

Astronauts are experts at the lifestyle of being confined to a specific space, and they are our inspiration for this program to connect those doing distance learning to the wonders of the Solar System. [This document](#) serves as a portal to resources available through SPIF, Cornell University's Astronomy Department and Carl Sagan Institute, NASA, and other organizations.

### Cornell Adult University – Free Virtual Programs

CAU will host its first ever [Virtual Summer Program](#) from July 5-August 1 free of charge. Adults may access diverse online content including Cornell faculty lectures, interactive webinars and discussions, virtual tours, Q-and-A sessions, and social hours. Youth and teens can participate in online activities such as Q-and-A sessions with Cornell students, campus tours, info sessions with colleges, trivia, contests, and more. A schedule with descriptions of activities and registration info will be made available in the coming weeks.



## Cornell Organizational Development & Effectiveness – Upcoming Programs

- [Time Management While Working Remotely](#) May 5; 11 am-12 pm and May 6; 1-2 pm
- [Navigating Change](#) May 6; 10-11 am and May 15; 10-11 am
- [Decision-Making](#) May 11; 2-3 pm and May 13; 1-2 pm

## Department of Music – Quarantunes

Despite being unable to present performances in person, Cornell Music faculty and students have been hard at work on a variety of projects to share with you.

## ACCESSING BUSINESSES & SERVICES

### [Yes, We're Open Guide](#) - (IthacaTimes)

Despite current conditions, increasingly Ithaca's food, beverage, retail and service businesses are open for business. Use this guide to stay informed about how to access them. The guide is searchable in print, online and mobile.



### [Things to Do in New York City](#)

The latest info about entertainment resources, restaurants still serving, closures, and more.

### Tompkins County Department of Motor Vehicles

The Tompkins DMV is open for many services by mail: plate surrenders, registration renewals, plate transfers, duplicate registrations, and duplicate titles. If you live in another county that is not providing DMV services, Tompkins County can serve you. Contact 607-273-7187 (M-F AM only).

### Cleaning Out the House & Junk Removal and Hauling

Using this time to do some spring cleaning? Most agencies that accept donated items are not accepting them at this time. You can still post items for sale on Craigslist or Facebook or leave free items at the end of your driveway. Regardless of what option you choose, practice social distancing and cleaning guidelines.

For junk removal/hauling, a staff member recently recommended [JDog Junk Removal](#), a veteran owned company with local service options. Please note: Cornell does not endorse/guarantee the service.

### Wi-Fi down? Free outdoor signals available at:



Newfield - park near the Town Hall or Newfield Public Library

Trumansburg - Ulysses Philomathic Library

Brooktondale - Parking lot at Brookton's Market

### Energy

- NYSEG - Programs to manage bills and maintain service are available. Call 800-572-1111 Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. to speak with a representative.
- [Home Energy Assistance Program](#) - federal program that helps low-income households meet the high costs of home energy. Income and resource eligibility standards change annually. Call 607-274-5264

## HELP OTHERS

### **Ithaca Bakery Adopt-A-Nurse**

Ithaca Bakery adopt a doc or nurse: Needing a way to say thank you to our local medical workers? Offer a meal to your local staff at Cayuga Medical Center. Send breakfast or lunch to the department of your choice and Ithaca Bakery will deliver it in your name or the name of your department. Call 607-273-7110.

### **Be a Digital Volunteer for the Smithsonian**

The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum, education, and research complex, but even they could use a little help sometimes. Help make their collections more accessible by volunteering online to transcribe historical documents or edit Wikipedia articles related to their artifacts and research. <https://www.si.edu/volunteer/DigitalVolunteers>