



choose
well

Parenting in the time
of COVID-19

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We hope these resources help you, as parents, interact constructively with your children during this time of confinement. These tips for parents and guardians cover planning one-on-one time, staying positive, creating a daily routine, avoiding bad behavior, managing stress, and talking about COVID-19. Use them with your kids, and have some fun in doing so.



“Live one day at a time (or one moment if you have to). Blend little by little and celebrate even the smallest breakthrough.”

—Andi Parker-Kimbrough

One-on-One Time



School shutdown is also a chance to make better relationships with our children and teenagers. One-on-One time is free and fun. It makes children feel loved and secure, and shows them that they are important.

Set aside time to spend time with each child. It can be for just 20 minutes, or longer – it's up to us. It can be at the same time each day so children or teenagers can look forward to it.

- **Ask your child what they would like to do-**Choosing builds their self-confidence. If they want to do something that isn't OK with physical distancing, then this is a chance to talk with them about this.
- **Switch off the TV and phone. This is device-free time.-**Read a book, dance to music, do a chore together.
- **Ideas with your teenager:** Cook a meal together, exercise together, and talk about something they like.
- **Ideas with your baby/toddler:** sing songs, play, read a book.

Keeping it Positive

It's hard to feel positive when our kids or teenagers are driving us crazy. We often end up saying "Stop doing that!" But children are much more likely to do what we ask if we give them positive instructions and lots of praise for what they do right.

1. **Praise your child when they are behaving well**-Try praising your child or teenager for something they have done well. They may not show it, but you'll see them doing that good thing again. It will also reassure them that you notice and care.

2. **Say the behavior you want to see**-Use positive words when telling your child what to do; like 'Please put your clothes away ('instead of 'don't make a mess')

3. **It's all in the delivery**-Shouting at your child will just make you and them more stressed and angrier. Get your child's attention by using their name. Speak in a calm voice.

4. **Get real**-Can your child actually do what you are asking them? It is very hard for a child to keep quiet inside for a whole day but maybe they can keep quiet for 15 minutes while you are on a call.

5. **Help your teen stay connected**-Teens especially need to be able to communicate with their friends. Help your teen connect through social media and other safe distancing ways. This is something you can do together, too!



Structure Up

COVID-19 has taken away our daily work, home and school routines. This is hard for children, teenagers and for you. Making new routines can help.

- Create a flexible but consistent daily routine
- Teach your child about keeping safe distances
- Make handwashing and hygiene fun
- You are a model for your child's behavior

At the end of each day, take a minute to think about the day. Tell your child about one positive or fun thing they did. Praise yourself for what you did well today. You are a star!



Bad Behavior

All children misbehave. It is normal when children are tired, hungry, afraid, or learning independence. And they can drive us crazy when stuck at home.

1. Redirect-All children misbehave. Stop it before it starts! When they start to get restless, you can distract with something interesting or fun: "Come, let's play a game together."

2. Use consequences-Consequences help teach our children responsibility for what they do. They also allow discipline that is controlled. This is more effective than hitting or shouting.

3. Take a Pause-If a 10-second pause. Breathe in and out slowly five times. Then try to respond in a calmer way

Keep using Tips 1-3

One-on-One time, praise for being good, and consistent routines will reduce bad behavior.

Give your children and teens simple jobs with responsibilities. Just make sure it is something they are able to do. And praise them when they do it!



Keep Calm and Manage Stress



This is a stressful time. Take care of yourself, so you can support your children.

You are not alone- Millions of people have the same fears as us. Find someone who you can talk to about how you are feeling. Listen to them. Avoid social media that makes you feel panicked

Take a break- We all need a break sometimes. When your children are asleep, do something fun or relaxing for yourself. Make a list of healthy activities that YOU like to do. You deserve it!

Listen to your kids- Be open and listen to your children. Your children will look to you for support and reassurance. Listen to your children when they share how they are feeling. Accept how they feel and give them comfort.

Take a Pause- [1-minute relaxation](#) activity that you can do whenever you are feeling stressed or worried.

Talking about COVID-19



Be willing to talk. They will already have heard something. Silence and secrets do not protect our children. Honesty and openness do. Think about how much they will understand. You know them best.

Be open and listen- Allow your child to talk freely. Ask them open questions and find out how much they already know

Be honest- Always answer their questions truthfully. Think about how old your child is and how much they can understand.

Be supportive- Your child may be scared or confused. Give them space to share how they are feeling and let them know you are there for them.

It is OK not to know the answers- It is fine to say “We don’t know, but we are working on it; or we don’t know, ‘but we think’.” Use this as an opportunity to learn something new with your child!

Heroes not bullies- Explain that COVID-19 has nothing to do with the way someone looks, where they are from, or what language they speak. Tell your child that we can be compassionate to people who are sick and those who are caring for them.

End on a good note- Check to see if your child is okay. Remind them that you care and that they can talk to you anytime. Then do something fun together!

There are a lot of stories going around- Some may not be true. Use trustworthy sites: [WHO](#) and [UNICEF](#).



*Life is not about waiting
for the storms to pass.
It's about learning how
to **DANCE IN THE RAIN.***

-Vivian Greene

For more information click the below links:

[WHO](#)

[UNICEF](#)