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YOUR Teen

for parents

Parenting in a Pandemic

**Expert Tips to
Manage Anxiety
and Stress**

**Fun Activities to
Keep Your
Family Busy**

**The College
Kids Are Home:
Now What?**

**Pivoting to
Online Learning**

**How to
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and Connected**

SPECIAL COVID-19 ISSUE
Spring 2020
Vol. 12 Issue 5
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CONTENTS

SPECIAL COVID-19 ISSUE

4 Editor's Letter

COPING

- 7 Quarantine Do's and Don'ts
 - 9 Emotional Well-Being
 - 11 Ask the Doctor: Mom Anxiety Is Real
 - 13 Sheltering in Place Is Hard: 7 Tips that Help
 - 16 9 Free Home Fitness Resources
 - 18 Teen Essay: Everything's Canceled!
 - 20 Poem: It's All Relative
 - 21 #ParentHack
-

LEARNING AT HOME

- 22 My Teenager's School Is Closed: Now What?
 - 25 ADHD Homeschooling Tips
 - 29 Online Learning for Middle Schoolers
 - 31 Poem: Home, Sweet School
 - 32 Life Skills University
 - 34 Hot Button Topic
-

FAMILY FUN

- 35 Games People Play
 - 36 Family Movie Night (and Recipe)
 - 38 83 Things Teens Can Do Now
 - 41 Virtual Field Trips
 - 45 Stuck at Home? Time to Get a Dog
 - 47 In the Kitchen: Cheesy Bechamel Sauce
-

STAYING CONNECTED

- 50 Author interview: *The Power of Showing Up*
 - 53 Finding the Bright Side
-

LOOKING AHEAD

- 56 5 College Research Tasks to Do Now
 - 59 Essay: 5 Truths I Learned about Community College
 - 62 Do We Need an Advisor for the College Process?
 - 64 We Asked Teens: Family Traditions and (Unquarantined) Days to Come
-

COLLEGE KIDS

- 65 Essay: College Cut Short
 - 67 Supporting the Transition to Home
 - 69 Tips for Online Classes
 - 71 Essay: Finding a New Normal
-

- 73 From Our Editor: Bonus Video Interviews with Experts
 - 74 Stuff We Love: Gifts and goodies at every price point (even free!)
 - 79 Poem: On a Roll
 - 80 Last Word: The Greatest (and Most Reckless) Generation
-

Nothing is normal right now. So why should *Your Teen* magazine be any exception? As usual, we have been working hard over the past several months to bring you our newest issue of *Your Teen*. And very much not in the usual way, just as we were getting ready to go to print, coronavirus turned life upside down.

All of us feel the need to talk about what's happening right now, so we decided to hold our regular content till next issue and give our readers, both old and new, a gift: this special digital COVID-19 edition of *Your Teen*. We wanted to get it to you as quickly as possible without waiting for printing and mail delivery, and we hope you find it valuable.

Most importantly, we're hoping that you and your families and friends are staying well. There's no denying that, as our kids would say, this sucks. There's the obvious reality that people are dying from this dangerous pandemic and that healthcare workers and public health experts are busting their tails to stop it, often at risk to themselves. Money is tight for small business owners, many people are losing jobs, and parents everywhere are worrying about their finances.

There's also the small, everyday stuff that sucks, too, and it's okay to say that. Everything is canceled, which means kids missing their spring sports season (maybe the whole thing, who knows?), school theater performances (the hours of rehearsing—I could just cry for them), and trips and dances and competitions and birthdays and just having a social life. We like to claim that our phone-bound teens don't spend enough face-to-face time with friends, but just quarantine your teenager and see how much they crave IRL friend time.

We're not going anywhere for a while. In the midst of these hours and days and weeks together at home, these are some things I hope my teenagers will learn:

1. You have a duty to others.

I know you want to go out with friends (or maybe even “just one friend”) and live your everyday life. Yes, you're young, and maybe you would be okay even if you got sick. But it's not all about you. Sometimes we do boring or uncomfortable or hard things so we can help all of us, because that's what humans do. It's why we follow traffic rules and donate blood and don't litter and a thousand other things. And you know what else? Sometimes it feels good to know you matter (you do), that you are needed (you are). We are counting on you.

2. Nature is soothing, free, and necessary.

It's going to be a long road. We're going to get anxious and antsy. Cooped up at home, we're also going to be way too sedentary. We all need to get outside as often as we can—at a minimum, at least once every day. There's something about fresh air and fat chattering squirrels and daffodils pushing through a mat of last fall's leaves that wakes up couch-dulled bodies and whisks away the fog of worried minds. Coronavirus or not, it's always a good time to take a walk—provided we use proper social distancing.

3. Memories aren't always planned.

We are living in extraordinary times. None of us would choose this, but history is being written right now. Someday, my teenager, if you have kids, you will tell them what it was like to live through the coronavirus pandemic. They'll marvel that you didn't have a vaccine yet, and they'll know (as you know about us) that you must be really old.

EDITOR'S LETTER (cont.)

But you'll remember all this. Sometimes memories are made of vacations and birthdays and holidays and graduations. But sometimes memories are made of blizzards and hurricanes and 9/11 and that time the whole town lost power for two days. Heroic things will happen, sad things will happen, and small, funny, stupid things will happen in the coming weeks and months. You won't get the memories you planned on, but I promise you will get memories you'll hold onto for the rest of your life.

We hope you'll find the information we've compiled in this special edition to be useful, comforting, and uplifting—because we all need to get through this together. And “together” is the key word. You are not alone.

Stay safe,

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I read every article from the most recent newsletter! I'm putting a big plug here for *Your Teen* magazine and following them on Facebook and signing up for their newsletters. Every article is helping a lot.

—Mity F., via Facebook



Great articles with insightful, researched, and credible real-world parenting advice I can use and information I need.

—Alice J., via Facebook



I just discovered the *Your Teen* podcast this week and I wish I'd found it sooner. As a parent of teens, I'm finding value in every episode I listen to. The advice from experts is spot on and the honesty from the hosts is a breath of fresh air! Love it!

—from Bdj65



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COPING

Quarantine Do's and Don'ts for Teenagers

By Bonnie Jean Feldkamp

Communities across the country are dealing with the COVID-19, with different protocols in place depending on severity of the outbreak in a particular location. Most schools have changed to online learning, and some have declared they will be closed for the rest of the school year. It may seem there are no uniform set of rules because we are all operating in different stages of the game. However there are a few guidelines from the Centers for Disease Controls that we should all follow, especially within the framework of social distancing.

DON'T touch your face

Think beyond the regular rubbing of the eyes or scratching your nose. Think of your teen's daily face-touching habits, such as applying makeup, chewing their fingernails, or popping a pimple. All of these habits put their hands on their faces or in their mouths, increasing their risk of becoming sick. Remind your teen to be mindful about how often they touch their face and to avoid it as much as possible.

DON'T go on dates, hang out, or have friends over

Johns Hopkins Medicine defines social distancing as "deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness." Staying at least six feet away from other people reduces the risk of transmitting COVID-19.

Trisha Schroeder of Northern Kentucky says the social distancing guidelines confuse some parents. Schroeder's daughter was recently invited to her best friend's birthday party. The friend had only invited three people over which was well beneath the threshold of the recommended 10 people per group. But small-

er groups are only okay if everyone keeps a safe six-foot distance between one another during the interaction. The CDC also recommends that interactions happen outside.

This is the difficult part for teens and it's also difficult for parents to manage. Simply put: It's best that kids don't get together right now.

Schroeder did not allow her daughter to go to her friend's house for the birthday party. It's a tough call to make, especially when others aren't abiding by the same precautions. But based on the CDC's guidelines, Schroeder made the right decision.

DON'T stay connected to technology 24/7

Technology may be our saving grace through this time of social distancing, but it can also be too much. Sure, family tech restrictions may go out the window while we all watch way too much Netflix and Disney+, but sometimes you need a break. If you find your teen is becoming all-consumed with news updates and feeling overwhelmed by the state of our current reality, it's time to walk away for awhile.

DON'T believe everything you read on the internet

Make sure you check in with your teen to be sure the information they are reading or listening to is reliable and current. Don't let their only sources of information be what someone said on Kik or TikTok or a list of questionable home remedies found on an alternative medicine website. You don't want your teen thinking they can hang out with friends as long as they're drinking elderberry syrup or eating enough garlic.

DO wash your hands

Remind your teen to wash their hands often, not only when coming in from outside, after using the bathroom and before eating, but also before they do anything that involves touching their face. Also, if you use makeup brushes, now is a great time to look up tutorials on YouTube for washing makeup brushes.

DO use Skype, FaceTime, or Zoom to stay in touch with friends

The good news is that we live in a time of technology and teens are already familiar with video chat. It's not the same as hanging out, but it is a great option and one that should be encouraged so your teen doesn't feel isolated from friends.

DO get out of the house

Recommend that your teen put down their phone and get outside. Work in the garden, take the dog for a walk, kick a ball around the yard, and enjoy the sun. Go for a family drive or hike a local trail, being sure to keep your distance from others who might be doing the same. Even people who have been told to "shelter in place" in their community are encouraged to get outside for a run or a walk.

This is not a time to meet up with a friend and walk side-by-side. If your teen doesn't want to walk alone, go with them. Siblings can also walk together. Teens who have a significant other may find it particularly difficult to abide by the rules of social dis-

tancing, but reinforce the reasons for social distancing and let them know you trust them to make the right choices.

DO use this as a time to work on bad habits

Does your teen bite their fingernails? Chew on pencils or the earpieces of their glasses? Now is the time to help them break these bad habits. A home manicure will help encourage them to keep their nails out of their mouth. Using a scented lotion that tastes bad can also help deter nail and cuticle biting. Buy sugar-free chewing gum to take the place of those pencils and eyeglasses. Curbing bad habits now will reduce the risk of getting sick from any virus or bacteria, not just COVID-19.

DO stay updated with reliable news sources

The situation with COVID-19 is changing so quickly that it is important to stay informed. It's good for your teen to check the news for a daily update and then turn it off. Many news outlets are offering coronavirus coverage without a subscription, but remind your teen to check the date of everything they read. For instance, an article published in February is already outdated information. Because the pandemic is affecting each community differently, it's important to stay updated via local news sources and read your state governor's updates.

DO keep living your life

Emphasize with your teen that despite the current circumstances, it's still important for them to do as much as they can to maintain a normal day-to-day life. Staying in touch with friends, keeping up with any school work their teachers send, pursuing their interests at home as best they can, and staying connected with family will go a long way to making them feel happier, healthier, and more able to face this period of social distancing, however long it may last.

Bonnie Jean Feldkamp is a writer, wife, and mom of three kids whose ages span two decades. Find her on Social Media @WriterBonnie

Flattening the Second (Hidden) Curve: Our Emotional Well-Being

How parents can help manage the challenges ahead

In this unprecedented crisis, our collective health is clearly the top priority, and social distancing will serve to flatten the curve. All we need to do is stay home, wash our hands, and apportion resources wisely. Doesn't seem like a lot to ask to manage a pandemic and save each other's lives.

Beware the Second Curve

But just behind this curve is a second one that reflects a shift in our collective well-being. Based on my experience and that of my colleagues, this second curve is already taking shape, in the form of a spike in anxiety, depression, and mental and emotional distress.

For some of the teens, tweens, and families I've talked with, it's a nearly imperceptible quiver in the voice, a half-step quickening in speech. For others, the response is reflective of an underlying sense of foreboding and terror.

"It's like the beginning of a horror movie. I know things are going to be awful in a way I can't even picture. I don't know how to process that, where to put it in my brain so I can calm myself," says one 16-year-old boy.

As one teenager I work with pointed out, we were collectively post-traumatic in previous crises, citing 9/11 as an example. We were reacting. Now, we are effectively pre-traumatic, waiting for the awful things to start happening and not knowing where or when they will arrive.



And then, of course, there are losses some of our kids are already grieving, like graduation, prom, a sports season, or senior trips. And worse, there may be grief at the loss of people they love and fears for the safety of others.

Clearly, we will need to have some protocols in place to bolster our long-term emotional well-being.

Parenting Challenges

As parents, we have a number of challenges before us. The first is trying to explain to kids that those ordinary, everyday things they have been doing their whole lives—playing in groups, going to parties, even attending school—are now dangerous, even life-threatening. This alone is a difficult concept for kids to wrap their brains around.

Second, we are faced with this uncertain purgatory. We don't know how long the quarantine period will last, but we all need to find ways to adapt to new temporary norms while we wait. And this is anxiety-provoking, depressing, boring, and frightening all at once. Laying out a plan for the day, creating a new temporary normal, will prove essential here.

But we also need to keep an eye toward the future. We are, in effect, going to be helping our kids manage post-traumatic fallout on the back end of this situation.

Finally, in the very long run, we are all going to need to back out of the obsessive and

compulsive behaviors we have been encouraging: the vigilance, the handwashing, the distancing, the disinfecting. At some point, we will need to convince children that they can, to an extent, dial back these behaviors, and this may well prove to be tricky for some.

How Parents Can Help Flatten the Second Curve

So, above and beyond the protocols from the CDC and WHO, what can we as parents do to flatten the second curve, and maintain, as best we can, the emotional well-being of our children, and ourselves?

Check in with your kids regularly. Create a new temporary normal for you and your family, with scheduled work time, play time, sleep times, and mealtimes. Spend some time playing as a family. I suspect many of us will create some inside jokes and humor to develop resilience to weather the storm.

Encourage your children to talk to you about their anxiety and fear. Hear them out. Acknowledge their feelings, and do not try to talk them out of feeling that way, even if it's uncomfortable to hear. Even if one or more of your children seems relatively unaffected by the recent developments or is quiet and unlikely to share their feelings, I strongly urge you to make yourself available to them as well. In my experience, every child is already greatly affected. They need to know that they can talk it through, but it may need to be on their schedule, not ours.

Help your kids look outward. Let them know what they can do to be helpful beyond social distancing. They can send encouraging cards to nursing homes, buy groceries for elderly neighbors, or raise funds for laid-off workers (all projects my current clients are working on). Kids want an action plan. They function best when empowered with something to do.

Find ways to keep them moving. I went for a run the other day, maintaining distance rather easily. We need to be creative in keeping our kids moving, playing, and exercising, while keeping all of us safe.

Practice self-care. As parents, your self-care is also critical. Protect time for exercise and meditation. Turn off the news and the Twitter feed for a while. Play a game. Do a puzzle. Your children will be following your lead. You are setting the tone for the way they take in these events as they unfold.

Get help if necessary. Do not hesitate to seek out the help of a professional if you or your children need it. Many therapists are finding ways to meet the needs of our clients virtually, so know that help remains available to you and your family.

A Silver Lining

You are going to be physically and emotionally closer to your family in the coming weeks than any of us could have predicted. This is a silver lining beneath the crisis. Spend some time connecting, or reconnecting, with your kids. This is a time to repair damaged relationships and create some common ground in the weeks to come.

We know what we need to do to flatten the primary curve. If we follow through with some of these ideas, we can help flatten that secondary curve as well, and maintain a sense of emotional wellness for our families and ourselves.

Dr. John Duffy is a clinical psychologist with over 25 years of practice and is the best-selling author of The

Available Parent. He appears frequently on national TV and radio shows such as the Today Show, Fox News, and NPR, and in the Wall Street Journal, Time, and numerous other publications. His latest book is Parenting the New Teen in the Age of Anxiety.



VIDEO: John Duffy, Ph D on Anxiety in Teens During COVID-19

Mom Anxiety Is Real

More than ever, you might be feeling anxious. Here's what you can do about it.



We know that in recent years a rising number of teens have been diagnosed with anxiety disorder. What may be less known is that many mothers also experience anxiety at some point in their lives. *Your Teen* spoke with Dr. Carly Crewe, a general practitioner in Alberta, Canada, and an online anxiety coach for women, about practical strategies for women to manage anxiety and stress.

How can women recognize when they are experiencing anxiety?

There already tends to be a stereotypical cultural norm of mothers as worriers, kind of frazzled and overwhelmed, but anxiety may not be something you recognize in yourself. Women might admit that they worry all the time; have a feeling of being keyed up, restless, unable to relax or just settle down and be still; or have an urgent need to be engaged in busyness. You may be irritable, have flashpoints of anger, or be short-tempered all the time. Many mothers say, “Of course, I’m exhausted and irritable—I have kids!” But at some level you can recognize that you weren’t always like this. All of these behaviors may be symptoms of an untreated anxiety disorder.

Why do women experience anxiety?

Anxiety and stress are really instinctual.

They’re related to the fight-or-flight instinct, and it’s there to protect you and keep you vigilant and safe from threats. This instinct extends to our kids: A threat to your kids also threatens you and your identity as a mother. When your kids are hurt, you are hurt.

From a scientific point of view, these deep behavioral patterns are built into the brain. When our kids are small, we can control these external threats more effectively. We can control them physically to prevent them from running into the street or hurting themselves. This anxiety about controlling threats becomes a behavioral feedback loop: In effect, the brain learns, “I worried about this, and it worked to control the threat.” You do it with your child for 15 years, and it becomes a wired-in, habitual brain process that is hard to stop.

What behaviors do women tend to exhibit that are associated with anxiety?

As our kids enter into adolescence, problems and struggles become bigger and can have huge, life-altering consequences: pregnancy, drug use, jail. So, many women engage in what I call “buffering activities” to numb themselves from feeling anxious. [This could be] any kind of excessive behavior: overeating, overscrolling, drinking too much, overspending, anything that shuts the mind off and helps you to avoid dealing with this thing making you anxious. Helicopter parenting is another manifestation of this—there are few things more distressing than watching our kids suffer or struggle. We want to clear all the obstacles in front of them, to make sure they never make any mistakes and are never unhappy.

Many women have teenagers at the same time they’re experiencing menopause. What impact does that have on anxiety?

Menopause is a tumultuous time for many women, who may experience an increase in anxiety—whether it’s because of an imbalance between estrogen and progesterone or because of insomnia and sleep deficit. Sleeplessness is so often linked to anxiety. For anxious women, you have an overzealous threat-detection system. You have all these anxious thoughts during the day as the brain scans your environment for threats. It doesn’t just settle down at night; the brain is still vigilant at night solving problems while you lie there trying to sleep. Sleep problems may include difficulty quieting a racing brain to be able to fall asleep; prolonged night wakings; hot flashes that wake you; or waking up very early. This becomes a cycle which prevents the restorative, consolidated sleep that your brain needs for memory retention—and to feel refreshed and renewed, and to cope with the anxiety. If your hormones are also imbalanced and you have a

sleep deficit, combined with the challenges that come with having a teenager, it becomes a perfect storm.

How can women cope with anxiety?

Women need community, support, and dedicated mental health care. It’s important to find a care provider who listens and whom you can trust to make sure you get the help you need, which may mean seeing a therapist or taking medication. Women need to talk to someone and realize they are not alone in what they’re experiencing. They need self-care, by which I mean taking 10 to 30 minutes every day and actively, intentionally doing something to maintain your mental health. Something you enjoy or that fulfills you, such as reading, doing a craft or hobby, meditating, or journaling. I really recommend keeping a journal in which you can track your moods and allow yourself to process and identify emotions, and to look ahead. For example, “I have this meeting next week; I’m probably going to feel anxious about this,” and to acknowledge it and take intentional action towards managing it. Our lives are so chaotic, so busy, so scheduled. It’s important to step out of all that to intentionally maintain your mental health and be mindful.

What advice do you have for mothers of anxious teens?

Anxiety can be a heritable condition—if you have anxious tendencies, your child may, too. Women who experience this can so often feel responsible and blame themselves for their child’s anxiety. Instead of feeling guilty, mothers instead should realize they are the perfect parent for their child because they can teach them how to deal with their anxious thoughts. You can really model positive coping strategies and an open mindset for your child if you work to learn these strategies for yourself.

—Interview by Jane Parent

Sheltering in Place Is Hard

7 Tips that Helped Me in My Year of Isolation

Last year, a traumatic experience at work left me gutted. Everything that I believed in, everything that I had worked for, was pulled out from under me. Very suddenly, my life changed dramatically. Sound familiar?

I was scared, uncertain, anxious, depressed—all in equal measure. I couldn't sleep or eat, and I also couldn't picture myself on the other side of things. I didn't have a clear picture of what that would look like.

I ended up sheltering in place. At first, I had to because, per my employer's directive, I was not allowed to talk to other people. Then, I did because I was scared to be with other people. And finally, I chose to because I needed time to heal.

When I do something, I do it really well. I was an all-star. I only left my house when someone made me, and even then, I would only go at times when I was least likely to see other people.

Here I am, over a year later. I'm stronger, and I'm saner (though my family may disagree). I have had to let some things go, and that was and still is painful. But I've also been fortunate enough to move on.

My life is different, but it's still a good life. I realize that the circumstances vary. Last year, I chose to distance myself. And this year, a pandemic is choosing that for me and all of us. It's crazy; I never thought I'd say this,



but I learned some valuable lessons about sheltering in place that are helping me help my own college-age kids:

1. WALK IT OUT.

Whenever I started to feel overwhelmed, I started moving. Sometimes, I walked in circles around my house. Sometimes, I walked for miles outside. Sometimes, I walked for miles on the treadmill. Those walks never failed to help me regain (some) composure.

2. PET YOUR DOG.

Don't underestimate a four-legged friend who doesn't know what's going on and who doesn't care. Our lovable lab didn't leave my side, accompanying me on many of those walks (see #1) and sitting on my feet wherever I landed. I'm not a cat person, but I've been told that felines also provide comfort. And maybe even a hamster would do the trick.

3. START SMALL.

At first, I could barely get out of my bed, and even when I did, I didn't know what to do with myself. So I convinced myself to do one thing: make the bed. And it sounds weird, but I felt proud of myself. Doing that one thing was enough. Even when I found myself still in my pajamas at dinnertime, I didn't care (and I still don't).

4. APPRECIATE YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

Even at my lowest moments, there were times when I was amazed by how kind and supportive my friends and family members were. They were so steady and consistent with their calls and cards and trinkets. This time around, I am determined to be that person for others.

5. FIND SOME MEANING.

I knew I'd never get my old life back, but I still wanted a purposeful existence. And slowly but surely, I built one that combines volunteering with organizations that are near and dear to me as well as some freelance work where I can use my skills and talents to help others.

6. HOLD ON TO THE NOW.

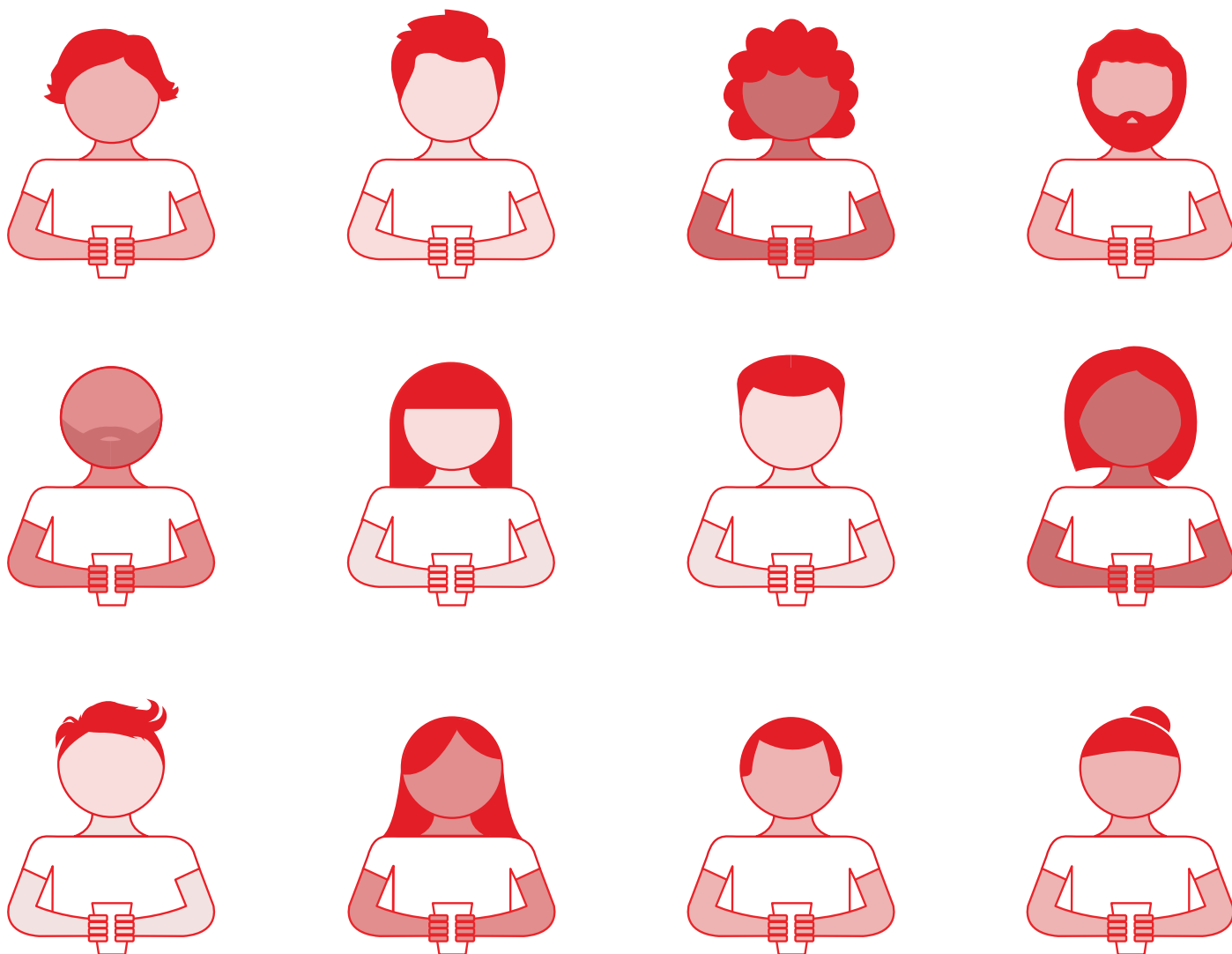
This part was hard, and it still is. For so long, all I could think about was the past and what happened or the future and what it might be like. What I needed to do most was lean into the present. The jigsaw puzzle on the table. The board game with my kids. Bingeing on *West Wing*.

7. ASK FOR HELP IF YOU NEED IT.

Another difficult thing for me to do, but one that proved necessary. Whether it is talking with clergy or getting some professional support or asking a friend to run an errand, there is no shame in letting others lighten our load. And most of the time, they are happy to be able to.

I've always maintained that if I could go back to the way things were, I'd do it in a heartbeat. But that wasn't an option for me then, just as that isn't a choice for any of us now. I ultimately came out of my first shelter-in-place experience weirdly grateful. The relationships I have are more meaningful, the things I choose to do are more purposeful, and the small stuff just doesn't matter anymore. And that I can say with certainty.





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9 Free Home Fitness Resources

to Use When You're Stuck at Home

We know that exercise is important to improve mood, increase energy, improve sleep, and decrease stress. Being stuck socially distancing at home definitely will not help you get to the gym, but thanks to 21st-century technology, there's a lot of fitness you can do from the comfort and safety of your own home.

We've collected some apps and online exercise resources that you and your teenager can do to get fit or stay fit at home that are free and don't require any equipment.

PELOTON

Fitness-tech company Peloton is offering a free 90-day trial subscription to its home-workout app—no stationary bike needed. The home-fitness app enables group participation in classes including yoga, strength training, meditation, and cardio workouts. Previously, the app's free trial period was 30 days and cost \$13 per month.



The Peloton app is available for [Android phones](#) and [iPhones](#).

305 FITNESS CARDIO DANCE PARTY

305 is a 55-minute cardio dance party with a focus on high-intensity rhythmic cardio. Dance like no one is watching with fun workouts that will get your heart rate up, no equipment necessary. Tune in on YouTube Live at 12 p.m. and 6 p.m. EST every day for live at-home [fitness workouts](#). (May not be appropriate for younger teens)

FITNESS BLENDER

Fitness Blender is a site that offers a huge selection of [full-length videos](#) that allow you to exercise at home without equipment. Here you will find fat-burning workouts, kickboxing routines, total body strength training, workouts for boosting metabolism, stretching sequences, and more.

SWEATY BETTY

This resource offers [online classes](#) that are full of easy exercises to do at home. Sweaty Betty provides yoga workouts, high intensity interval training (HIIT) routines, and many other types for you to try. Fitness classes range from complete beginner to experienced athletes looking for more of a challenge.

DO YOGA WITH ME

Do Yoga with Me is a great, free source for [home yoga workouts](#). Many of their classes are filmed outdoors in beautiful British



Columbia, Canada. The website offers high-level instruction and videos which focus on pretty much every part of the body (e.g. hips, hamstrings, back, etc.), so you can target specific areas. The site is offering two months' free subscription and access to all of its premium content.

SPARK PEOPLE

Spark People shares [short videos](#) for all different types of home workouts, no equipment required. There are several categories—abs, cardio, yoga, and Pilates, as well as others that offer healthy cooking and eating ideas. These workouts are great when you are pinched for time. Choose a 10-12 minute routine and squeeze in some activity where you normally would have skipped it altogether.

MAP MY RUN

If you can safely run in your neighborhood or a nearby park respecting social distancing guidelines, [this running app](#) may motivate your runner. Using your phone's GPS, this app records your workout details, including duration, distance, pace, speed, elevation, calories burned, and route traveled on an interactive map.

JOANNA SOH OFFICIAL ON YOUTUBE

Joanna Soh is a certified personal trainer and fitness specialist whose [YouTube fitness channel](#) has over 1.75 million subscribers. Soh offers free videos for every level of fitness, as well as nutrition tips and advice, ranging from 8 minute to full-length workouts. Soh is offering 21 days of full-length workout classes to keep you active while you're stuck at home.

PE WITH JOE, THE BODY COACH TV

Joe Wicks, a YouTube fitness instructor in London, live-streams [30-minute child-friendly workouts](#) every weekday morning which are then uploaded onto his YouTube channel. With millions of children out of school around the world, Joe has volunteered to become their PE teacher. Complete with a warmup, workout, and cool down, schools are even sharing the link to his videos with their students.

Everything's Canceled!

Feelings from a Teen Stuck at Home

I'm almost finished with my junior year in high school, and everything I like doing is being canceled. My state-wide volleyball tournament, my church youth group, school, my school newspaper. All canceled. I'm not even allowed to hang out with my friends. I'm stuck at home with no people to talk to face-to-face except my own family. I know it's necessary, but it's isolating—and frightening.

My first prom will probably not happen. I'm going to miss celebrating my girlfriend's birthday, and since both our birthdays are in April, she will probably miss mine. It's our first birthdays as a couple, and I know this probably sounds dumb to adults, but it's important to me. I feel sad.

My parents tell me to draw, write, keep a journal, make a phone call, talk about my feelings to my brothers, but I feel like I would be judged if they knew what bothers me. It bothers me that I will never get this time back. How do I explain that? I can draw, I can write, but my feelings still stay the same.

I'm home because I need to be.

I am close to my family and I'm glad my brother is home from college, but we are forced in a small area together. We watch movies and have long discussions, but underneath it all, I feel we can't ignore why it's happening. And that's the scary part. The overarching feeling of "danger." I'm missing fun experiences in school, good times with friends, and important events that have been canceled—and there's really no way to make some of them up, ever.

What has to be done will be done. I know my family will do what we're asked to do because my parents are like that. And I would never want to be the one responsible for someone getting sick, being hospitalized, or possibly losing their life.

The thing is, though, I'm a teenager. I don't know much about what's going on and I don't follow the news—my mother does that enough for the whole house. But even she knows how quickly things change and will turn off the news and put on music. Loud.

I am staying at home for the right reasons. But all the things I've only recently been allowed to do—like drive and date—have been taken away now. I don't know what to do about how I feel. And I can't even work out because my gym is closed now, too.

I feel stuck, and I feel guilty for being mad about it.

It's frustrating to be caught between my familiar teenage world and the adult world. I know what I have to do, and I want to be responsible, but part of me wants to laugh and enjoy life the way I was only a few weeks ago. I'm missing the lost moments and I don't think I'll ever get them back.

August Schultze is a junior at a Milwaukee high school. He plays Varsity volleyball and along with being junior class VP, he also writes for his school's newspaper. He hopes to one day attend UW-Madison, but until then, he's enjoying driving and will keep working on getting his curfew extended.





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IT'S ALL RELATIVE

By Deborah Skolnik

The most stressful aspect of quarantine?
It really can't be overstated:
You're now spending 24 hours a day
with people to whom you're related.
Family time's so precious, they say,
and that we should have more of it.
But now that it's unlimited,
we're getting awfully bored of it!
Your husband keeps clipping his toenails.
Why did you marry that man?
Your children are fighting about little things—
were kids always part of the plan?
Just because you're sick of them all,
their habits and their voices,
doesn't mean that this is the time
to start second-guessing your choices.
Remember you love your family,
and that you hold them quite dear.
And look forward to talking to strangers again
sometime later this year!

#ParentHack: COVID Edition

Growing up in a household with five kids, it was common for my mother to hear “You never told us that!”—and for her to respond, “Well, I know I told **SOMEbody**.” I confess, as the mother of just two kids, I’ve been accused of the same. It’s likely I told one of them twice, but thought I told both of them. Or told their father, but forgot to tell them. Family Group Chat to the rescue! Now there’s a handy way to tell everyone the same thing, at the same time.

When our youngest went off to college last fall, Family Group Chat became an especially great way to stay connected, allowing us to share funny little moments in our days, send much-needed pet photos, and keep everyone up to date on family news (Grammie got new kittens! Your cousin is getting married! Dad and I are going on vacation without you!)

Ironically, now that we are all under the same roof unexpectedly due to the COVID-19 crisis, I’m finding that we use Family Group Chat more than ever. Or maybe, to be more accurate, *I’m* using Family Group Chat more than ever. Here are three ways it’s been a game-changer during quarantine:

What’s for Dinner?



This dreaded question can now be asked at any time of the day. In order to shop more efficiently, we’ve been doing a better job of planning our meals for the week. This allows me to post a schedule of dinners (subject to change of course) so everyone is on the same page. Don’t like what’s on the menu for that day? You can FYO (fix your own), or you can use your allowance for Uber Eats.

Chore Day!



On Saturdays, I post a quick punch list of chores that need to be done and put one person’s name by each, including mine and my husband’s, along with the deadline for all the chores to be done. This leaves no guesswork regarding housework and is a visual demonstration that we’re all pulling our own weight. Optional tip: offer a group incentive for when the chores are all done.

Lighten Up!



Family Group Chat can be a great way to cut the tension when we’re all on edge from being in one another’s space. It’s a less invasive way to check in with our kids, and they can choose how and when to respond. Sometimes we send one another silly memes or TikToks as a little peace offering. And, of course, there are still pet photos. Plenty of pet photos. Because nothing says “I love you” more than a photo of the cat sitting on the puzzle you were trying to complete.

**Do you have a
#parenthack?**

Email your story to
editor@yourteenmag.com.

LEARNING AT HOME

My Teenager's School is Closed Indefinitely. Now What?

By Deborah Skolnik

On the evening of Sunday, March 8, my 16-year-old daughter Genie and I were at a local pizza joint. Just as the waiter brought our meals, both of our phones buzzed.

We checked our texts and gasped simultaneously. Due to a confirmed case of coronavirus within our school system, all schools would be closed through March 18, with e-learning not starting until March 16.

Our food went cold as dozens of additional texts poured in. Everyone in town was messaging each other about the news. We all had the same reaction—Wow!—and the same question: How are we going to handle this situation?

Keeping Kids Safe, Sane, Occupied, and Educated during COVID-Related Shutdowns

It's been a week since that night, and a new normal is slowly settling in. I've learned that this isn't a time to panic, but it also isn't wise to treat the furlough like an extended snow day. I thought I'd share how we're getting through this exceptional time, and how you can, too, when your schools close for a while.

Give your teen a day to decompress.

Yes, children need routines, we all know. But news of a major school closure can really rock a child's world.

On her first day out of school, Genie, who's a junior, slept late, FaceTimed with her friends, stayed in pajamas most of the day, and watched TV and TikTok videos. I let her eat when she wanted. Result: She had a chance to unwind and process the shock, as well as acquaint herself with the potential upsides of having a bit less structure.

Next, set up a routine.

After decompression day, start to give your teen's days a shape. "Time can kind of float by when you're home for hours on end," observes Wendy Nash, M.D., a child and adolescent psychiatrist at the Child Mind Institute in Manhattan.

Discuss when meals will be and when screen time is allowed, and set alarms accordingly. Most importantly, have your child stick to a set bedtime and wake-up time, as it's important for good sleep. (And when your child wakes up, have them make their bed—there is nothing that signifies structure and sanity quite like a made bed.)

Institute a social media schedule with fellow parents.

I'm in the process of reaching out to the moms of Genie's pals to see if we can establish set times when the kids can e-socialize with our blessing. When everyone knows the hours, the kids won't have an incentive to

constantly check their phones in hopes that someone's on and ready to chat.

Encourage exercise.

While we're all encouraged to socially distance ourselves, you and your teens can still take walks and hikes, or play a game of ball or frisbee in the yard or nearby park. It will help maintain everyone's physical fitness, and encourage good sleep as well.

Conduct regular check-ins.

If a parent can't be home all day, establish times when you will check in with your child by phone or text. And make your rules clear, advises Dr. Nash.

Explain that there is no smoking, no drinking, and no having people over. Then perform a couple of unplanned check-ins, to make sure those rules are being followed.

Find educational opportunities.

Even if your school hasn't set up e-learning yet, there are plenty of ways your teen can still learn. Try watching the History, Discovery, or National Geographic Channels together, and encourage your child to finish whatever book they were reading for English. There's Khan Academy and IXL online as well, both devoted to teaching kids vital school skills.

Take this opportunity to teach home-based tasks.

On the third day of the school closure, Genie asked me if we could have popovers for breakfast. Instead of just making them for her, I told her we'd bake them together. I showed her how to measure flour (leveling it off by skimming a knife across the top of the measuring cup) and whisk the batter. I made her grease the muffin tins and keep an eye on the popovers as they baked.

According to Dr. Nash, I'm on the right track: "Now is a great time to teach household skills and home management," she says. These abilities will come in handy soon enough, as our teens move on to college or living inde-



pendently. Next up: I'm going to have Genie help me tackle organization projects, such as our neglected coat closet and basement.

Assign chores.

If your teen doesn't already have a chores list, decide which tasks they will oversee for now. I've asked Genie to clear the table and unload the dishwasher after meals, and help me sort the laundry. I'll award extra screen time if she completes these.

Chores, of course, instill a healthy sense of responsibility. And at a time like this, they help your child get into a steady daily rhythm. They can also help keep you from feeling like the housekeeper and becoming resentful!

Keep administering ADHD medications.

Genie doesn't take any, but it's a question that Dr. Nash is getting asked a lot, she says. You should speak with your doctor, but Dr. Nash recommends maintaining any existing medication regimen. "This [situation] is going to require more self-starting than ever, in a way," she explains.

Model a can-do attitude.

Be subtle about your own fears and concerns, and let your children know you're in this together. Teens pick up on your moods, so try to remain upbeat.

So far, these tips have worked out for us. I'll be sticking to them, and relying on them more than ever this week, as Genie's sister, Clara, joins us at home from college as well.

Deborah Skolnik's work has appeared in major magazines and newspapers, including The New York Times, The New York Daily News, Parents, and Good Housekeeping.

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ADHD Homeschooling Tips

Advice for Surviving Virus-Related School Closures



School closures related to COVID-19 are the latest parenting challenge to hit the ADHD community. Suddenly having to help kids learn at home is challenging for all families, but especially for those impacted by ADHD who rely on structure, routine, and staying active for managing their tweens' and teens' symptoms.

But instead of stressing, take some advice from an ADHD specialist and a parent who homeschools her teen with ADHD on why—and how—schooling a tween or teen with ADHD at home is totally doable—and may be even beneficial.

1. Keep a schedule

"It is important that families attempt to do their best to maintain sleep, meal, and activity schedules as much as possible," says Dr. Jennifer Mautone, a psychologist and assistant professor at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

School shutdowns aren't an excuse to stay up late and sleep in. Tweens and teens should stick to their bedtime and wakeup schedule as if they were in school and follow their usual morning routine. Even though the home schedule won't match kids' in-school sched-

ule exactly, families should set aside time each day for opportunities to both learn and play—ideally, outdoors.

Debora Robertson, a Pittsburgh mom who has been homeschooling her teen daughter with ADHD for 10 years, follows a weekly schedule and makes detailed to-do lists. At the same time, though, Robertson says her routine also involves “a lot of thinking outside of the box” and finding new ways to do things.

2. Rely on behavioral intervention strategies

When it comes to handling everything from online learning and homework to family conflicts, Dr. Mautone recommends parents use behavioral intervention strategies that are consistent with best practices for addressing ADHD. The goal is to increase desired behaviors and compliance while decreasing less-desirable behaviors and defiance.

Keep in mind the ABCs:

- **Antecedents**—what comes before a behavior
- **Behavior**—what the child does
- **Consequences**—what happens after the behavior and influences how likely it is to occur again

You can control what comes first (A) and how you react (C), but you cannot control the behavior itself (B). So set your tween or teen up for success by:

- Scheduling schoolwork at times they’re most focused and least fatigued
- Removing distractions
- Getting their attention before speaking
- Giving simple, direct, and specific instructions one step at a time



- Motivating them with “when-then” statements to show that when they perform the desired behavior, then they get a consequence they want
- Deliver immediate, consistent, and fair consequences
- Plan consequences in advance

Parental attention and positive reinforcement are key—and luckily this might be easier than ever if you’re all home together.

3. Help your child stay on track and emotionally healthy

This is a stressful time for families, and because people with ADHD are also more likely to have anxiety disorders, be on the lookout for signs that it’s creeping in. If your child is anxious about COVID-19 itself, the [National Association of School Psychologists](#) offers recommendations for talking with children about the pandemic.

Changes in routine and activities, increased family time, and time apart from friends could also increase anxiety and depres-

sion, so if you have any concerns about your child's mental health, contact their doctor. Also reach out to their prescriber if you suspect that their ADHD medication dosage needs to be adjusted.

And, since schools provide so much more than classroom learning, your child might be missing the counseling services, therapies, or specialized instruction they receive there. The U.S. Department of Education addresses students with disabilities' access to special education services during COVID-19–related school closures. [See the info here.](#)

4. Look on the bright side

Learning at home can be good for your tween or teen with ADHD—and for your whole family.

You might find that your child responds well to one-on-one instruction, like Robertson's daughter. "[Homeschooling] provides my ADHDer a safe, flexible environment," she says. "If something isn't working, we can quickly change it. We can speed up or slow down as needed. She can work on problem-solving skills in real-time, real-life situations, which is super helpful for kids who

struggle with executive function issues."

Even though you'll likely have to facilitate delivery of your school district's curriculum rather than making your own, take this opportunity to enjoy some time to get creative as a family. Robertson recommends activities like:

- Playing a board game
- Building a squirrel feeder
- Developing an exercise workout
- Searching for new recipes online or cooking a family favorite

"Learning isn't about filling in the blanks," Robertson says.

No matter what happens, don't be too hard on yourself. "Just do your best, and focus on maintaining a strong, positive relationship with your children," Dr. Mautone advises. "That is a critical component of supporting all children's growth and development."

Andrea Vardaro Tucker is a Pennsylvania-based mom of two who is board-certified as an editor in the life sciences and has written and edited health-related content for almost 15 years. Find more of her writing at andreavardarotucker.com



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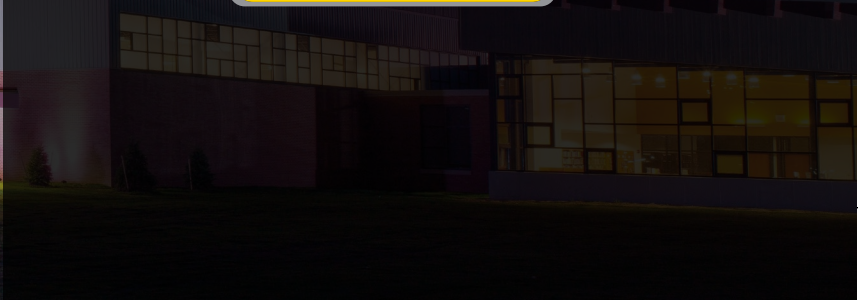


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Online Learning Woes? We've Got You Covered

Expert Tips for Middle School Students



I'll be honest: when I heard that my 5th and 8th grader would be moving to on-line school due to COVID-19, I thought: "I'm glad they are older." Say what you will about teens and tweens— I knew my "older" kids would at least understand the big picture situation and have a grasp of what on-line learning would entail.

Still, I had some anxiety.

"Parents need to realize that online learning is going to look different," says Linda LoGalbo, Director of Curriculum & Instruction at Beachwood City Schools and a former middle school principal. "It's new for everyone, but from a parent's perspective it's a good idea to provide structure and input in the beginning, and then gradually give your student control."

Here are some additional Do's and Don'ts that LoGalbo—and other parents who have been there—recommend for how to help with online classes:

Stay Connected with Teachers

I know my strengths—and being a teacher isn't one of them. LoGalbo says that's okay: Your teen's teachers are still there. Depending on your district, your teacher will likely offer virtual chat sessions and/or email dialogues.

"Teachers miss the day-to-day interactions with students. They want to be connected," LoGalbo says. "We've set up a system so students can have time with their teachers via virtual office hours." LoGalbo recommends that students contact each of their teachers at least once a week with a check-in: "Ask, how did this assignment look, is there any-



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thing I should focus on, etc. Parents should encourage their teens to reach out.”

...And Classmates

My friend Jill Mason is an online training specialist, as well as the mom of 6th and 8th graders. She knows that interaction and repetition are important to learning, and she put her knowledge to use with her son. “Language Arts is his least favorite subject, and he was trying to rush through it. I said, ‘Why don’t you FaceTime your friend and do it together?’ That got him to slow down.”

Don’t Expect a Full Day

How does an eight-hour school day translate to home? It’s not hour-for-hour, LoGalbo points out. Their district recommends students at the middle school level spend 10 to 15 hours a week on schoolwork (or two to three hours a day). That means you probably don’t need to provide additional homework or math problems for your teens.

“Parents know their child best. If your child navigates school well, then they can probably navigate this okay,” she says. “If your child doesn’t navigate traditional school very well, then as a parent you probably need

to step in and help them put some structure to this new model.”

Do Make Them Check Email

“Middle school kids don’t like email; they text,” Mason says. “My question every day has become, ‘Did you check your email?’”

As a mom of teens, and professional educator, LoGalbo agrees: “My kids never

check their email. But in education, we’re old-school and use email. The one thing parents can do is make checking email part of the morning routine.”

Do Reduce Technology Distractions

I’ve worked from home for a few years now; I know the allure of hopping on social media “just for a minute or two.” As a former teacher and mom to four, Lisa Boucher knew this would be the case with her eighth-grade daughter, so they designated a family laptop for work projects only, and have their kids use it within sight of them. “It is hard to resist the temptation to watch TikToks or check Snapchat. The rule is: If they are on the laptop, I keep their phones.”

Do Remember: You’ve Got This

It’s hard not to feel like kids are missing out. LoGalbo keeps her focus on what they’re gaining. “This is a great opportunity for students to become independent learners and to develop grit, self-motivation, and determination,” she says. “These are all important life skills, and this is such a valuable opportunity to learn them.”

HOME, SWEET SCHOOL

By Deborah Skolnik

Schools are closed across the nation
so you designed home education
to keep your kids on the proper path
of science, language, art, and math.
From 8 to 10, they'd all be learnin'
algebra and intro German
And then, from 10 till roughly noon,
they'd practice flute or the bassoon.
Because there now is no school bus,
they could master calculus.
When this virus had come to pass,
your kids would be at the head of their class!
But, you have to understand,
that things don't always go as planned.
Your kids refused to do their work
and you all slowly went berserk.
Instead of Mandarin and art
They learned the next level of Mario Kart
and you've spent days and many nights
refereeing sibling fights.
So now it's time to give a cheer
E-learning now at least is here!
Teachers never seemed so cool—
Happy back-to-(virtual)-school!

Schools May Be Closed, but Life Skills University is Open!

Yes, all of our schools are closed. And for a day or two, our kids may have been excited about this. It's like a snow day... that never ends. (We hope not, but that's the way it feels right now.)

Sure, they will have online schooling of some kind, which will take up some portion of their day. But everything else is canceled. They can't (and shouldn't) go hang out with friends at the mall or the local coffee shop. What is going to take the place of those many hours that were formerly filled by after-school clubs, sports, music lessons, and play rehearsals?

Well... I have a few ideas for how to help your teens fill this time. As someone who has sent two kids to college (and yes, they are back and not one bit happy about it), I can attest to the importance of developing those all-important life skills. The ones that our

over-scheduled and academically burned out kids never have time to tackle. Guess what? Now there's time—and we should take advantage of it.

Here's a list of a few items you can put on the life skills curriculum:

Learning to drive

There are so many kids who go off to college with very little ability to drive. They waited so long to get their license that they may have only just received it by the time they head off to school, where they have little opportunity to practice this skill. Most states have graduated licensing requirements that include a certain number of nighttime hours, which can be especially hard to fit in when you're just totally beat by the end of the day. Now that most of us will be working from home, there's ample opportunity to fit those practice hours in. And, the roads should be pretty empty, making it a safer learning experience for all.

Meal planning on a budget

Restaurants are closed except for takeout, which means preparing meals at home will be essential. Even if your kid has some basic ability in the kitchen, do they know how to plan meals on a budget? Have them help brainstorm some meals or recipes they like, create the list of ingredients, and, if they're old enough, send them to the store with a budget to see how they do. Have



them compare the cost of what their favorite restaurant meal costs versus the number of meals you can create at home for the same amount. It's one thing to tell them "it's cheaper to eat at home," but it's a different experience when they calculate it for themselves. Everyday math for the win!

Laundry

We're all trying to be extra clean right now, and clothes are no exception! If your kid has yet to master the art of sorting whites from darks, or how to fold towels and fitted sheets (shudder), boy has your ship come in. Do they know which items will shrink in the dryer? How to clean out the lint trap? What happens when you leave a load of wet clothes in the washing machine too long? Based on what my college kids tell me, some of you have not yet tackled this skill. Do everyone a favor and do it now.

Writing a resume

At some point, your kid will be asked for a resume, either for a summer job or for their college application. And they will ask you this question: "What experience do I have?" Great question! Now's the time for them to make a list of all the activities they have participated in and associate the skills that go with them. Babysitting, pet sitting, and club involvement all show initiative and leadership. Maybe they have some serious IT skills from developing YouTube videos. Do they take great photos for Instagram? An employer might love their help with social media. Are they involved in a sport? Then they are learning good team-building skills. All of these are transferable skills to an employer, they just don't realize it. For extra credit, have them create a LinkedIn profile, which also allows them to link to samples of their work.

Lawn care and vehicle maintenance

Everyone needs some physical activity, and as luck would have it, spring is on the way.



Now would be a great time to teach your teen how to mow the lawn and do the edging. Power equipment—whee! They can also wash the car and vacuum the inside of it. If they do a good job, I'm sure they would appreciate a tip.

Phys Ed/Health

This may also be a great time to knock out those pesky P.E. and Health requirements. We still like to tease my nephew about having to go to "night gym" so that he would be able to get his P.E. requirements in time to graduate from high school. I also remember the time I invited one of my kids to go on a walk with us and she said, "I can't, I have to finish my online health class by tomorrow." Irony, thy name is Online Health. The one thing our kids CAN do right now is go outside to walk, run, or ride a bike. They can also do yoga or Tai Chi or any number of YouTube exercise videos. And there will be plenty of time to do an online health class now, so get 'er done while you can. Your kids will thank you later.

If we get through all these items, I have a whole other list of tasks I'd love my kids to help me with, like organizing the Tupperware drawer, matching up all the orphaned socks, and untangling the ball of cords in our basement (what the heck do those all go to, anyway?). I have a feeling we will never reach that level of desperation. But a mom can dream, right?



Now Here's a Hot-Button Topic

All those things we said we'd teach our kids when we had time? That day has arrived, courtesy of the COVID-19 quarantine.

Way back when we were growing up in the Pleistocene Era, they made us take Home Ec and taught us to prepare mastodon stew and stitch up a handy cloak from its skin. Those were the days! But our teenagers do not seem to be learning these skills—or at least mine aren't—so we've got to find other ways to teach them.

First up: learning how to sew a button. Sure, this skill is not going to pay your kid's rent or save their life. But on the other hand, this simplest of repairs is a worldview masquerading as a five-minute fix. Replace that button and get another year or two out of your favorite pants or shirt. Mend your clothes, and you'll keep them out of the landfill. Resist fast fashion and the culture of disposable everything, and you'll save both your money and the planet.

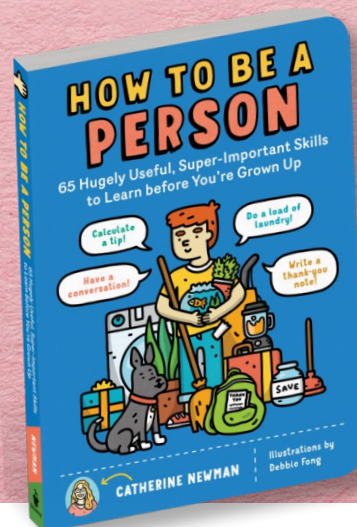
Also, research suggests a connection between doing stuff with our hands and feeling happy. When we perform activi-

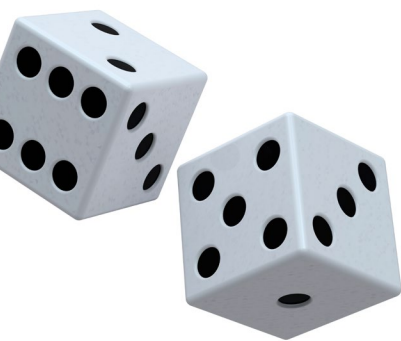
ties that our brains think of as life-sustaining—providing shelter, making food, repairing clothing—our bodies release neurochemicals called dopamine and serotonin, which make us feel good. (That's your brain rewarding you for taking care of important tasks.)

As neuroscientist Kelly Lambert puts it, "Our brains have been hardwired for this type of meaningful action since our ancestors were dressed in pelts." And if anyone needs a little mental reward, it's our teenagers.

Plus, once your kids learn how, they can replace *your* buttons too, so you don't have to spend the rest of the day looking for your glasses. (They're on top of your head.)

Catherine Newman is the author of *How to Be a Person: 65 Hugely Useful, Super-Important Life Skills to Learn Before You're Grown Up*. She also wrote the memoirs *Catastrophic Happiness* and *Waiting for Birdy*, the middle-grade novel *One Mixed-Up Night*, and the kids' craft book *Stitch Camp*. She edits the non-profit kids' cooking magazine *ChopChop* and writes the etiquette column for *Real Simple* magazine. She lives in Amherst, Massachusetts, with her family.





FAMILY FUN

Games People Play: The Coronavirus Edition

Quarantine adds a new meaning to Forced Family Fun

In this new (temporary) reality, many families are rediscovering the long-neglected game closet. But when you've exhausted the old classics like Monopoly, Sorry, and Apples to Apples, what can you do to keep game night fresh? The *Your Teen* staff put our heads together and polled our friends for some suggestions for Forced Family Fun. Read on for inspiration!

We splurged and ordered a **Nintendo Switch** for our house. The kids are loving the chance to play Mario Kart, and my husband and I are reliving fond memories of this game from our college days. Get even more Forced Family Fun by having your teens teach you how to play their favorite videogame!

Family tournament: poker, ping-pong, Mahjong, Liar's Dice, or Minute To Win It (there are tons of examples online.) If we can make a competition out of it, we're down for it!

Board game round-up: We have friends who are playing every game in their house and then deciding whether to keep it or "vote it off the island."

Family Olympics: replace PE with a family sit-up or wall sit challenge. If you're in a warm climate, jump in the pool and have a lap challenge, or do timed walking or jogging laps around the block (maintaining a safe social distance, of course). Perhaps the artist in the house could design and create the medals.

Family "Chopped" challenge: Everyone creates a recipe using the same ingredients and then votes on the winner. Bonus: dinner is done!

Family jam session: Did your teens bring home instruments from school? (We know at least one family who is pretty glad their fourth grader left their recorder at school.) Extra credit: Record it and share it with grandparents. Extra-extra credit: Teach the grandparents how to use YouTube or Zoom.

Project Runway-style fashion challenge using non-traditional materials. Get out the hot glue gun and the Bedazzler and go to town. No t-shirt is safe!

Are **jigsaw puzzles** your jam? Find the hardest one and bring it on! Challenge another family to a duel to complete the same puzzle—who can complete it first, without killing one another?

However your family rolls, the name of the game is to have some fun while staying safe, and hopefully, sane. Game on!

Suddenly, Family Movie Night Matters Like It Never Did Before

Never in history has family movie night had a bigger job to do.

In the throes of a worldwide health crisis—one we're mostly supposed to fight by staying home together—family movie night is being called on to bridge the gap between parents and their big kids who are suddenly home together for an undetermined amount of time.

On top of this (although admittedly to a far lesser degree), March Madness has been replaced by March Sadness, not only because all the NCAA tournaments have been canceled but because spring sports in general have been put on hold.

There's nothing to watch and nothing to practice. So moods are swinging, tensions are tightening, and tempers are shortening.

Nothing can be expected to assuage all this, but a good movie can take the edge off. Movies transport us, teach us, elevate us, make us laugh, make us cry, bring us together, and spark conversation. All of which we desperately need right now. Whether you're a college hoops fan in full-on withdrawal or someone who doesn't know (or care about) one end of the court or field from the other, these family-friendly movies will bring your family together at a time when we could all use a little entertainment.

And speaking of covered, there's the popcorn: no matter how eye-roll inducing the mention of "family movie night" might be (or might get to be, as this thing drags on), the smell of this popcorn has mood-altering qualities. Make up a batch, grab the bowls, turn down the lights, and summon your big kids, because there's more at stake here than just a movie night. On the other side of this crisis, we are going to have tales to tell, and we need stories of families pulling together and staying together to be among them.



FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT OPTIONS

If you're experiencing March Madness withdrawal, these are the movies to watch:

- *Hoosiers*
- *Glory Road*
- *The Mighty Macs*

If you're longing for spring training to start, check out these films:

- *42*
- *Million Dollar Arm*
- *A League of Their Own*

If you're already looking forward to more action on the gridiron, these movies will keep you entertained:

- *Woodlawn*
- *The Blind Side*
- *My All-American*

If running is your thing (or maybe you feel like running away), these films will make you feel the wind in your face:

- *McFarland, USA*
- *Overcomer*
- *1 Mile to You*

If you just like a great inspirational story, these sports films will leave you cheering:

- *Miracle*
- *Full Out*
- *Secretariat*



Chocolate-Covered Popcorn

This is my family's favorite go-to movie snack. It's not just plain popcorn or caramel corn drizzled decoratively with melted chocolate. Please. This is popcorn fully encased in a chewy chocolate coating, almost like chocolate caramel. Make this for your family and, I promise, movie nights will never be the same!

Ingredients:

14-16 cups plain popped popcorn (I use an air-popper and make 1 ½ batches)

½ cup sugar

½ cup light corn syrup

¼ cup butter (no substitutions), cut into chunks

Dash of salt

2 ounces unsweetened baking chocolate, chopped

1 teaspoon vanilla

Nonstick cooking spray

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 300°. Place popped popcorn in a large roasting pan or other large baking pan coated with cooking spray. (If you do not have a large pan, you can use (2) 9×13-inch baking pans and divide the popcorn evenly between them.)
2. Bake at 300° for 15 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes. This removes extra moisture from the popcorn so the finished product will be crisp.
3. Combine sugar, corn syrup, butter, salt, and chocolate in a 2-cup microwave-safe measuring cup or small microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high power for 2 minutes or until boiling, stirring after 1 minute. Watch carefully unless you want to create a chocolate volcano in your microwave!
4. Remove from microwave and stir in vanilla.
5. Carefully pour the chocolate mixture over the popcorn and toss gently to coat using a large spoon or spatula.
6. Serve immediately or allow to cool slightly in the pan. Makes about 14 cups, which sounds like a lot but is usually just barely enough for my family!

Elizabeth Spencer is mom to two daughters (one teen and one young adult) who regularly dispense love, affection, and brutally honest fashion advice. She writes about faith, food, and family (with some occasional funny thrown in) at Guilty Chocoholic Mama, and avoids working on her 100-year-old farmhouse by spending time on Facebook and Twitter.

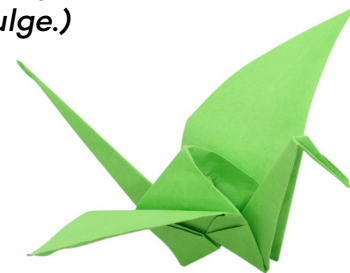
83

Things For Teens To Do While Social Distancing

The first thing to throw out at the prospect of a long-term family quarantine? The usual screentime rules, of course. Nothing's normal, and we can't pretend it is. Still, we know that approximately 23 hours of screens a day isn't good for any of us. Yeah, we know they are technically doing school, but that's online, too. Everyone needs a break. When you're sick of seeing your kid staring at a screen, or—gasp!—they actually get tired of it themselves, here's a list of non-screen pastimes to pass the time. What's on your list? *(Of course, please follow all CDC recommendations regarding social distancing as you indulge.)*

1. Bake something new from a cookbook.
2. Find something in your room you enjoyed when you were younger and try it again, just for fun.
3. Figure out what's a mile or less from your home, and walk to one interesting place.
4. Play a board game.
5. Color, draw, or paint.
6. Walk a dog.
7. Call a grandparent (you'll make their day).
8. Do a crossword puzzle, Sudoku, or word find.
9. Ride a bike, skateboard, or scooter.
10. Write in a journal.
11. Write fanfic based on your favorite book or movie.
12. Shoot hoops.
13. Have a bath.
14. Make slime.

15. Do origami.
16. Play darts, ping pong, or air hockey.
17. Have a Nerf gun war.
18. Try to figure out how to fix something broken in your home.
19. Read. Find a book in your house you've never read before.
20. Cuddle with or play with a pet. Teach them a new trick.
21. Play with siblings.
22. Go for a run or walk.
23. Paint your nails.





24. Go to the park.
25. Jump rope.
26. Start or tend a garden.
27. Brainstorm business ideas.
28. Nap.
29. Create an obstacle course or scavenger hunt.
30. Do a jigsaw puzzle.
31. Ask if there are extra chores you can do for cash.
32. Knit, crochet, or rainbow loom.
33. Think of one adulting thing you don't know how to do, and find out how to do it.
34. Practice or learn an instrument.
35. Try to identify the birds in your neighborhood.
36. See if you can set a record at something.
37. Find or create a geocache (yes, we know there is minor screen involvement).

38. Plan one dinner you'd like to try making.
39. Now that you've planned a dinner, make it.
40. Paint a room.
41. Take your mom's grocery list and buy everything.
42. Create a compelling argument about why you should get to use more technology.
43. Make a bucket list.
44. Bake cookies.
45. Go through your drawers and make a pile of clothes that you want to donate.
46. Write a short story.
47. Build something with toothpicks.
48. Build houses with playing cards.
49. Teach yourself a new card game.
50. Learn how to do an updo.
51. Practice yoga.
52. Try to stand on your head or do a cartwheel.
53. Tour the house looking at all the things on the walls and tables like you're at a museum.
54. Teach yourself cursive.
55. Make a scrapbook of your last year's adventures.



56. Teach yourself to whistle using your fingers.
57. Build a pillow fort for old time's sake.
58. Clean your room and argue for an allowance.
59. Play croquet
60. Get a book out about trees and learn to identify them.
61. Go for a hike.
62. Practice your free throw.
63. Give yourself a facial.
64. Learn how to juggle.
65. Design a family crest.
66. Look through family photo albums.
67. Make a photo collage for your room.
68. Play with sidewalk chalk.
69. Alphabetize the spices in your kitchen.
70. Organize your shoes.
71. Learn how to make a perfect cat eye with eyeliner.

72. Make homemade ice cream.
73. String lights across the ceiling in your room.
74. Learn to write your name in calligraphy.
75. Make a friendship bracelet.
76. Become an expert in some obscure trivia.
77. Drive around town to explore.
78. Ask your grandparents about their childhood.
79. Ask your parents about their first date.
80. Learn how to do henna designs.
81. Read a magazine or newspaper you have never read before.
82. Dream about where you'd like to be in five, 10, or even 20 years.
83. Do an extra chore and surprise your parents.



**your
teen**
for parents

My kids have a very
strict screen time limit
during quarantine.

60 minutes.
Per hour.

Love that extra chore one, are we right? Especially now, when everyone at home means multiplied messes—and more time to teach them the chores we maybe should have insisted on long ago. (No more excuses of extracurriculars and long school days!) Whether it's a must-do or a fun-to-do, the time is now to get creative and (at some point) get off those screens.

Take a Virtual Field Trip to the World's Best Museums



As you and your family are stuck at home self-isolating during this period of COVID-19 quarantine, there is only so much Fortnite, Netflix, and quarantine memes you can absorb before boredom sets in. You may not be able to leave home, but thanks to the internet, you can travel the world and soak in some culture from the comfort of your family's sofa.

Why not take the family to the Louvre this morning? Or solve an espionage case at the Spy Museum together this afternoon? Or learn about the women of NASA who helped the lunar landing happen?

We've collected some of the museums, galleries, and cultural institutions that have virtual museum tours and online exhibits. Where will you take your teenager this afternoon?

VIRTUAL ART MUSEUMS:

[Google Arts & Culture](#) has joined with over 2500 museums and galleries around the world to bring anyone and everyone virtual tours and online exhibits of some of the most famous museums around the world.

British Museum, London

Tour this world-famous museum and discover the ancient Rosetta Stone and Egyptian mummies. You can also find hundreds of artifacts on the museum's virtual tour. 🗺️

The Louvre, Paris

See the Mona Lisa, Winged Victory, and Napoleon's apartment in a fully immersive, 360-degree virtual tour. 🗺️

Guggenheim Museum, New York

Experience the Guggenheim's famous spiral staircase without ever leaving home. From there, you can discover incredible works of art

from the Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, Modern, and Contemporary eras. 🐼

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

This famous American art museum features two online exhibits. The first is an exhibit of American fashion from 1740 to 1895, including clothes from the colonial and Revolutionary eras. The second is a collection of works from Dutch Baroque painter Johannes Vermeer. 🐼

Musée d'Orsay, Paris

View dozens of famous works from French artists who worked and lived between 1848 and 1914, including artwork from Monet, Cézanne, and Gauguin. 🐼

National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul

One of South Korea's popular museums can be accessed from anywhere around the world. This virtual tour takes you through six floors of Contemporary art from Korea and all over the globe. 🐼

Pergamon Museum, Berlin

As one of Germany's largest museums, Pergamon is a historical museum with plenty

of ancient artifacts including the Ishtar Gate of Babylon and, of course, the Pergamon Altar. 🐼

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Explore the masterworks from the Dutch Golden Age, including works from Vermeer and Rembrandt with a street view tour that feels as if you're actually wandering its halls. 🐼

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam

See the world's largest collection of artworks by Vincent van Gogh, including over 200 paintings, 500 drawings, and over 750 personal letters. 🐼

VIRTUAL OPERA AND CLASSICAL MUSIC CONCERTS

Has your teen ever seen an opera performance? New York's **Metropolitan Opera** will offer free digital shows each night at 7:30 p.m, and each night, the institution will post an encore showing of an opera from its "Met Live in HD" series. 🐼

The Berlin Philharmonic isn't performing, but has opened up its archives of hundreds of performances by famous conductors and soloists. 🐼





The Vienna State Opera has also opened its archives and is offering a different opera available to watch each day, for free, via its streaming platform. 🦋

VIRTUAL NATURAL HISTORY AND SCIENCE MUSEUMS

View current and past permanent exhibitions at the **National Museum of Natural History** in Washington D.C. with a variety of free virtual tours. 🦋

The University of Chicago's Oriental Institute Museum showcases art and other archaeological finds of ancient civilizations from the Near East. The museum is home to permanent galleries featuring artifacts from ancient Egypt, Nubia, Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, and Megiddo. 🦋

Visit the **National Museum of Computing** in Bletchley Park, England and learn about the world's largest collection of working historic computers. Learn about breaking the Enigma Code in World War II, or see Colossus, the world's first electronic computer. 🦋

Celebrate Women's History month by visiting the **National Women's History Museum**.

The NWHM website is home to a ton of informative multimedia online exhibits. The subject matter of the exhibits is incredibly varied, with everything from women in Congress to female spies throughout history. 🦋

The popular **Spy Museum** in Washington D.C. is dedicated to all things espionage and offers virtual tours. Visitors can delve into the history of real-life international espionage. View objects used by international intelligence services, including cipher machines, counterfeit currency, disguised weapons, miniature cameras, radio transmitters and receivers, and dead drops. In addition, several of the exhibits are related to specific espionage cases and historic figures. 🦋

VIRTUAL CULTURAL AND WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Google has worked with over 60 world famous cultural heritage sites in the Open Heritage Project to provide 3-D modeling and **virtual tours** of sacred, cultural, and world heritage sites all over the world. It's amazing what is available, and often at a vantage point you would never experience in real life. 🦋



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Stuck At Home? It's Time to Get a Dog

In these days of social distancing and shelter in place, we're all feeling a little lost. How do we retain some semblance of normal? What's a routine that makes sense? How can we find purpose in our days? Do we have to wear pants?

For my two college kids who find themselves home for the foreseeable future, I do have one thing going for me. When they are in this zip code, they do tend to burrow in. Home means staying up most of the night and sleeping through most of the day. It means lying on the couch and watching awful shows on television or reruns of Harry Potter movies. It means Xbox in the basement.

Given our current predicament, this is all fine, but how sustainable is this life?

I obviously wasn't the only one thinking these thoughts. Prior to coming home, my daughter commented that we needed to get a dog. The last time she uttered these words, she was in first grade. Though we tried to resist her as we already felt completely undermanned with three busy kids, we failed/hit the jackpot and added Charlie the chocolate lab to our family. After providing almost 13 years of love and comfort to our family, we had to put her down in September. We weren't ready for another dog, and as empty nesters, we also wanted a breather.

But my, how circumstances have changed. I started thinking about the benefits of her idea:

- She is old enough to truly be responsible for the dog's wellbeing
- She has nothing but time on her hands
- Since no dog sleeps until noon, having a dog will enforce a schedule, which means that I don't have to
- Walking the dog will give everyone some mandatory fresh air
- You have to put on pants to walk a dog (for the record, I think pajama pants are okay for this task)
- Somewhere, there's a dog that needs our family



As we mulled over the idea, our daughter contacted local shelters to ask about fostering (another benefit was watching her use all of her life skills to take charge of this situation). She filled out applications, fielded phone calls and emails, and set up our appointment to go meet the dog who is now snuggling on my red couch.

It turns out that this dog needed us, but we also needed her. We are all smitten with this 86-pound, 6-year-old, blue-grey Pitbull. Her tail hasn't stopped wagging as she follows us around, she loves all of the new sniffs and sights, and she already has a way of keeping watch over us as she wanders from room to room to make sure that we are all where we are supposed to be. As for us, we even think she's cute when she drools. Call it a corona love story.

MY SHELTER PETS ARE MY BEST FRIENDS

#AdoptPureLove



OLIVIA MUNN WITH FRANKIE AND CHANCE: ADOPTED 2016 AND 2014.
They're a little bit of a lot of things, but they're all pure love.



THESHELTERPETPROJECT.ORG

Fusion Cuisine Made Easy: Béchamel for Beginners

What kind of food do we need during a pandemic? Comforting. Delicious. Home-cooked. Pair this tasty sauce—a family recipe shared with us by a 15-year-old cook—with pasta for a meal that fits the bill.



Climbing up the ladder from the designated “stand-and-stir” job to being the actual cook in the kitchen can be a daunting task for most teenagers, one that can include many stumbles. As a recently emerged teen baker and cook in the family kitchen, I can certainly attest to that.

My name is Serene Tarabishi, and I am a 15-year-old writer, baker, and daughter of two Syrian immigrants. I have spent a decent portion of my life in the kitchen, watching my mother cook. After years of observation, I have endeavored to learn many of the recipes that characterized my childhood.

However, this is not as easy as it seems. Arab cooking is very chaotic, and in my search to finally write down some of my mother’s family recipes, I have found myself diving before her to measure out that vague cupful of flour or mug of milk. Since my mom mostly relies on her memory and ink-scrawled paper scraps, trying to actually write down the recipes can be a nightmare.

However, after a couple of tries, I have finally pinned down my favorite béchamel recipe. Béchamel is a sauce based on a roux of flour,

butter, and milk, and it is one of the most basic essentials in French cooking. My family is of Syrian background, a country steeped in many different cultural influences, including French cuisine.

This French influence results in the common use of béchamel sauce in our food, especially with pasta, for a nostalgic childhood treat. Béchamel provides a blank canvas to mac and cheese—allowing teens to add whatever flavor they fancy, be it ginger, curry powder, or garlic. And despite the recipe’s daunting French name, learning to make it is a surprisingly easy and constructive way for teens to gain more experience cooking.



Cheesy Béchamel Sauce

SERVES 7 | PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES | COOK TIME: 15 MINUTES

Ingredients:

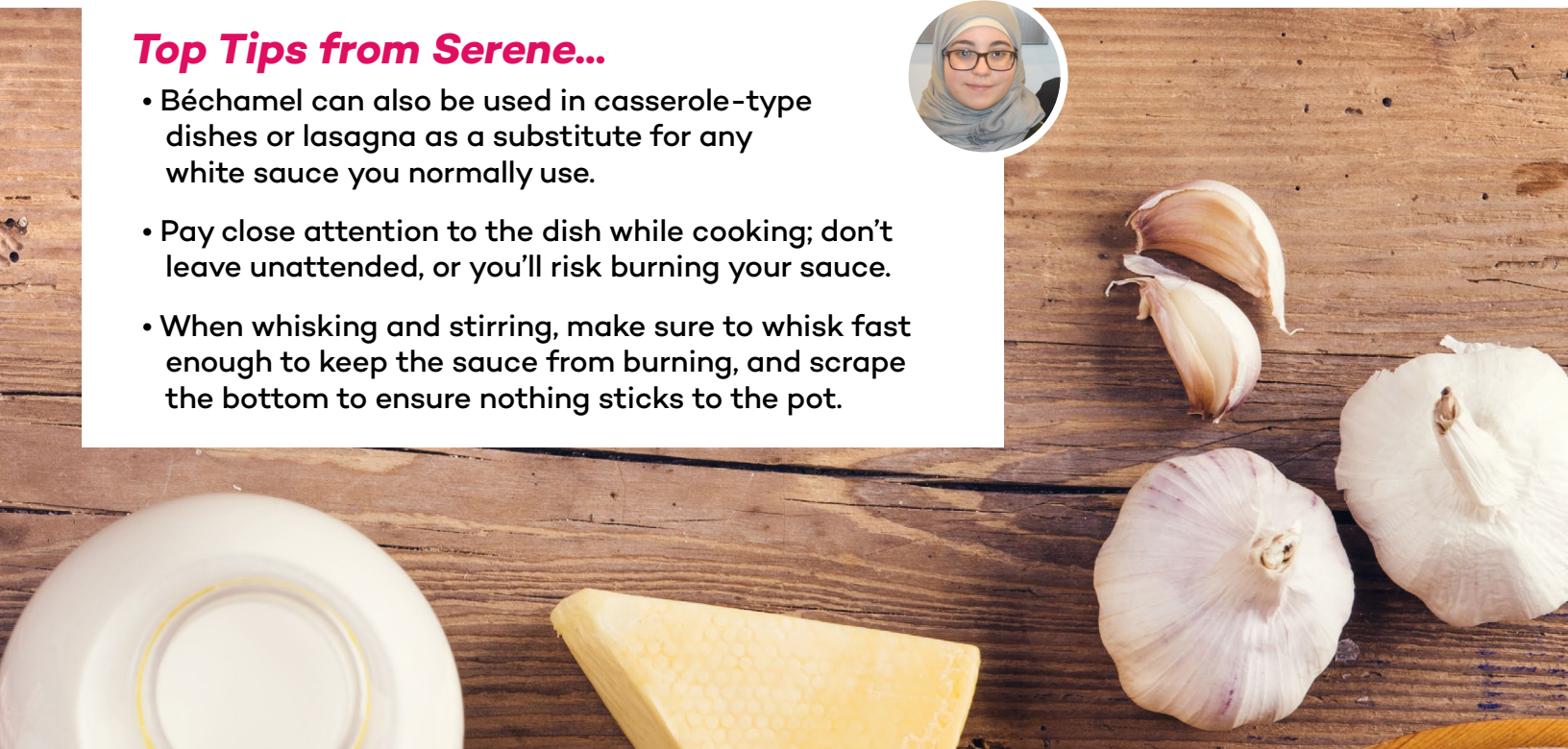
4 tbsp unsalted butter
2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed into a paste
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
4 cups whole milk
3/4 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
3/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese
Fresh and finely grated ginger (powdered ginger works as well)
1/8 tsp ground nutmeg
Black pepper
1 tsp kosher salt

DIRECTIONS:

1. Melt butter in a saucepan on medium-low heat, and add garlic once melted. Allow garlic and butter to simmer for about 2 minutes while whisking. Always keep a close eye on the butter while simmering; don't allow the butter to brown in the pan.
2. Add flour slowly and whisk on medium heat until butter and flour are combined (about 2 minutes). Add milk slowly in 1/2-cup increments, making sure to keep whisking quickly as the milk is being poured into the pan to prevent it from burning.
3. Add nutmeg, salt, pepper, and ginger to taste into the béchamel while constantly whisking (about 5 minutes).
4. Add shredded cheese into the sauce, and whisk vigorously as the cheese melts into the mixture. Continue whisking until béchamel has reached the desired consistency (about 5 minutes). Add milk to thin if necessary.
5. Serve with freshly made pasta and a sprinkling of parmesan cheese.

Top Tips from Serene...

- Béchamel can also be used in casserole-type dishes or lasagna as a substitute for any white sauce you normally use.
- Pay close attention to the dish while cooking; don't leave unattended, or you'll risk burning your sauce.
- When whisking and stirring, make sure to whisk fast enough to keep the sauce from burning, and scrape the bottom to ensure nothing sticks to the pot.



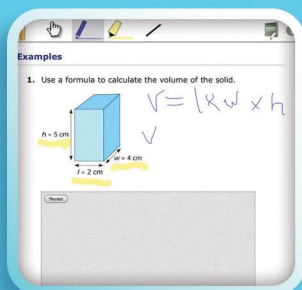


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STAYING CONNECTED

Interview with Parenting Expert Daniel Siegel, M.D.



Daniel Siegel, M.D. is a professor of clinical psychiatry at UCLA School of Medicine and the author of six parenting books. His latest, *The Power of Showing Up: How Parental Presence Shapes Who Our Kids Become and How Their Brains Get Wired*, relates to parent-child attachment and how focusing on the four S's of attachment—safe, seen, soothed, secure—can help parents optimize child development. *Your Teen* spoke with Siegel to get the low-down on the four S's. Especially in stressful times like these, connection with our kids is the foundation of resilience.

Can you explain how the four S's apply to parents of teenagers?

The four S's apply throughout the lifespan. The first "S" is Safety, which is two components. Of course, one is protecting your child. When the child is an adolescent this becomes especially challenging because their task is to go out and try new things and take risks when your drive is to keep them safe. So that's a real conflict there.

The other aspect of keeping them safe is to avoid being a source of terror for your kids. When the caregiver, the attachment figure, is the source of terror, there's a biological paradox set up because one system in the brain says, *Oh, I'm terrified. I should go to my attachment figure to be protected.* The other system is a little deeper in the brain, and it says, *Oh, I'm being terrified. I should get away from the source of terror.* So if the parent is the source of terror, it's unresolvable, and it leads to something called disorganized attachment.

And when you talk about the parent being the terror, is that only in an abusive environment or can that be in a more loving environment as well?

That's a really great question. Can this disorganizing attachment arise even when there isn't developmental trauma of abuse and neglect? The answer is absolutely, yes. A parent comes home and is screaming at the top of their lungs because they're so frustrated with work and they're out of control—even if they're not abusing the child, that can be terrifying for the child.

Do you believe that at some point most of us will engage in some of that behavior?

Totally. There's no such thing as perfect parenting. The key thing is that relationships are messy, and it's the repair process that is so important. Not—"Did you do it perfectly?" It's—"Do you make a reconnection and repair after a disconnection?"

We covered the first S for Safe. The next one is Seen. What does that mean?

This means you try to sense the mental life beneath behavior. So, if an adolescent comes home and is really upset about school and throws her backpack down on the floor, here's an example of not seeing your kid and instead responding to the behavior: "Don't throw your backpack on the floor like that."

Instead, when the backpack gets thrown, you begin to wonder what your teenager was experiencing that led to throwing the backpack. You could approach her and just say, "Sweetie, how was your day? It looks like it may have been a hard day."

Or as you get into it, you might say, "I wonder if you're feeling really frustrated or did something really upsetting happen?"

Just like that. Frustrated, upsetting, hard day. All those things relate to the mental experience beneath the behavior throwing the backpack.

Can you show your teenager that they are seen by not reacting?

Yes. There are times to communicate with words, and there are times just to say, "Hey, welcome home. I'm in the den. I'm here if you want to talk." You're showing, I heard the backpack go down. I imagine there's some distressing feelings. I'm here, but I'm not in your face saying, "What's going on with you? How are you feeling? What happened today?"

You've now described Safe and Seen. Tell us about the third one: Soothed.

Soothing is how you tune in when the adolescent comes to you after you say, "I'm here if you want to talk." She comes to you, and she's crying. Here's what you say: "Sweetie, tell me what's going on." Or, "Wow, it sounds like it's a hard day." It's an invitation to join you, not to get your judgment about her tears.

Let's say that your daughter auditioned but didn't get the part. You could say, "Oh, don't

worry about it. That's just a stupid play anyway. It means nothing, right?" You want your daughter not to make such a big deal of the audition, but what you're doing is you're obliterating the reality that it mattered to her. She feels bad that she didn't get the audition. So you're actually insulting her by just saying, "Oh, don't worry about it." Even though your intention was good.

Connecting would be about saying, "Tell me how you feel. I want to know what's going on." The first thing is to be present without giving a lecture, just to hear.

From my experience with adolescents, it really needs to be like that because if you start shoving your opinion on an adolescent, they're just going to push back and do the opposite. You want to let the questions come from them for the most part. You want her to develop the skills of self-reflection so she can develop an internal compass that will drive her in the way she needs to go.

So my goal at that moment is not to teach you or tell you that you were wrong. It's just to soothe.

And they get soothed because they know when they come to you with something really distressing, you're not going to lecture them. You're just going to be there for them literally. You're right there.

The final S is Secure. What's that one about?

Security is all about emotional resilience. A kid who has experienced *Safe*, *Seen*, and *Soothed* will feel *Secure*. Secure means I have flexibility in how I think, and I have grit. When things get tough, I can keep on trying it a different way, like with the audition thing. And this is how you develop resilience. You develop emotional intelligence and social intelligence. All of that is about secure attachment.

—Interview by Susan Borison

Let's not

Party

Meet up

Bro-hug

Defy

Let's

Stay put

Binge watch

Video-happy-hour

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TOGETHER, WE CAN HELP SLOW THE SPREAD.



Finding the Bright Side

Staying Positive Despite the Coronavirus



National and global crises can be overwhelming, anxiety provoking, and depressing. We can feel as though we have no control—and as parents, this a horrible feeling.

But we do have control of certain things. You know the saying: “We can’t control everything that happens to us, but we can control how we respond.”

This is great advice to keep in mind as we choose how we respond to this latest crisis in dealing with the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Already, there are many positive stories and reminders about prioritizing what is important. Hopefully, by sharing some that I found inspiring and heartwarming, you will feel more ready to take on this major curveball that has been thrown our way.

For starters, here’s a positive take from a meme by the nonprofit To Write Love on Her Arms:

Conversations will not be canceled

Relationships will not be canceled

Love will not be canceled

Songs will not be canceled

Reading will not be canceled

Self-care will not be canceled

Hope will not be canceled

May we lean into the good stuff that remains

I'm also feeling inspired by NBA team owner Mark Cuban who pledged to continue to pay the people who work in the Dallas Mavericks area during the NBA suspension.

Dan Gilbert, owner of the Cleveland Cavaliers is compensating all of the hourly and event staff team members at Rocket Mortgage Field House as if the regular season were still taking place.

And Zion Williamson will cover all the salaries for the New Orleans Pelicans arena staff for the next 30 days. And he's only 19 years old!

Then, there was a co-worker of mine who apologized for being late by explaining: "My older neighbors are self-quarantined after being exposed to the virus at a funeral in Washington, DC last week, so I was running a few errands for them."

At *Your Teen*, we asked our followers for ideas on what to do with all the extra family time now that schools are closed, college kids have returned home, and many parents are working from home. The response was wonderful, upbeat, and encouraging. Just a few of their ideas:

- hiking*
- cooking new recipes together
- learning to play at least one of their teenager's video games
- arts and crafts projects
- scavenger hunts*
- board games
- spring cleaning
- sewing

** depending on CDC recommendations*

And the list goes on.

Remember, creativity relieves anxiety and stress!

Another post suggested that this could be our finest hour if we all come together! As this parent put it, "This is one of those times in life, in history, when your actions are about something bigger. They are about someone else. They are about something greater, a greater good that you may not ever witness. A person you will save who you will never meet."

What can we do for others? Even small things can count in a big way.

- We can call people—especially older friends, and relatives who are staying home and missing out on important social contact.
- We can make cards and send them to nursing homes where even family members are restricted.
- We can help elderly or compromised neighbors take care of lawns and gardens.
- We can offer to shop for people who can't or are afraid to do so. We can make them a meal or bake something special. Or if we have an extra roll or two of toilet paper, maybe share it with a neighbor who isn't so fortunate.

As a coach of a high school girls' lacrosse team, our school and our season are now on hold. We are not sure when it will resume. But we are staying positive, especially for our seniors. As we told our team at the end of our last practice, "We will come back from this stronger and better, if we believe we can." Our team's theme before each game this year has been "Best One Yet." We don't know how the game will turn out, but going into it we believe the outcome will be good.

At a time like this, we all have to believe.



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5 College Research Tasks To Check off the List Now

Now is a great time to get a jump-start on the application process

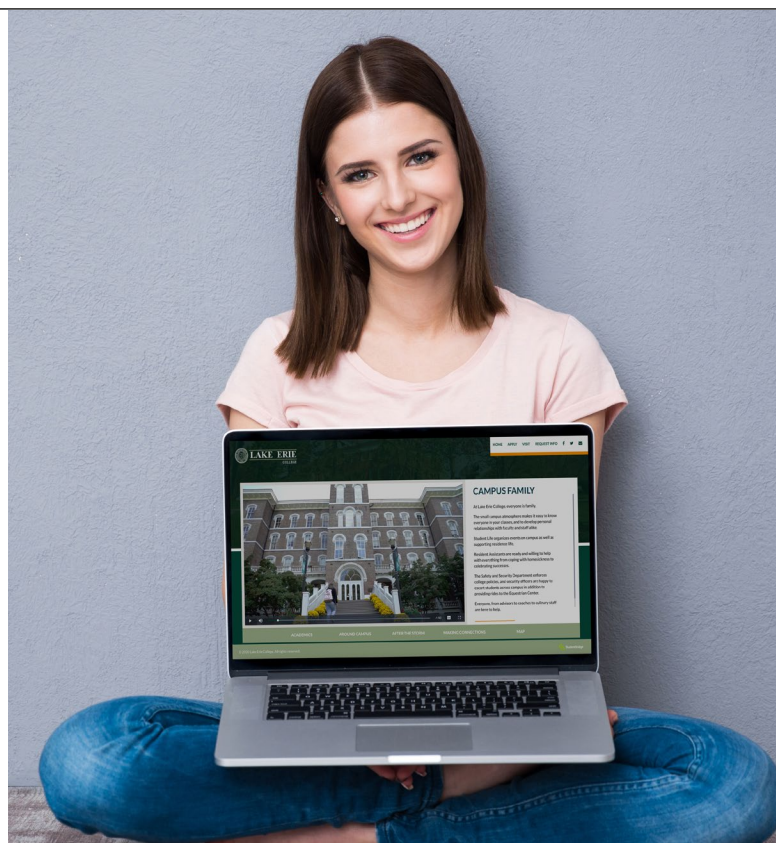
If you're a parent like me who's been giving your teen a little side eye when they wander downstairs at 1:30 p.m. in their pajamas, you probably wish they could be doing something productive right about now. In addition to helping out around the house (and I wish you luck with that), there is actually something important that older teens could be doing. This could be an ideal time for your high school juniors to get a jumpstart on the college application process.

It might actually help them to have something positive to focus on for the future, and they are likely more motivated than ever to envision a time when that future will arrive!

Here are five college research tasks your teen can knock out now or work on over the summer, without the pressures and deadlines of schoolwork and extracurriculars getting in the way.

1. Create a deadline checklist

Once the application process starts, the deadlines start arriving fast and furious, so start by noting the important dates in a



master planner, suggests Mike Brown, vice president of enrollment at Lake Erie College in Painesville, Ohio. "From testing dates to application deadlines, scholarship deadlines, and housing requests, you don't want to miss a date," he says. When my son was applying to college, he discovered that even though he hadn't planned to apply during the first wave, one of his schools required all applicants to submit by December 1 to be considered for merit scholarships—something he would have missed if he hadn't really scoured the website. Note: testing dates have changed due to the COVID crisis, so be sure to stay on top of them at collegeboard.org and act.org.



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2. Spend time making a high school resume

Many colleges invite students to upload a resume as a part of the online application, and now is a great time to work on putting one together. “Anything from having a job to pursuing an independent project to training for a sport or doing community service can be listed as an activity when you’re making a high school resume,” says Sara Harberson, a former dean of admissions and the founder of the blog Application Nation. However, Harberson notes, the more hours a student has devoted to a specific activity, the better, so be judicious in how you include activities. “A one-week internship is not the same as doing a dedicated experience all summer,” she says.

3. Start college applications

Individual colleges don’t usually update their applications until August 1, says Harberson, but teens can start working on supplemental essays or tackling a writing prompt from the Common App. Even though applications don’t open until August 1, the Common App writing prompts are available online, and they will remain the same for 2020-2021 applications. Spending some time thinking about the topic and

how to start a college essay will pay off, says Brown. “I want to know you better after reading the essay, so make sure your voice shines through,” he says. Your teen can create an account at commonapp.org any time and add to it as they go through the process.

4. Take a virtual campus tour

While it’s impossible to know right now whether colleges will be able to host visitors this summer, it’s likely they will offer special sessions for prospective students as soon as they are able to do so. For now, the best way to get the vibe for a particular college is to take a virtual tour, which you can either find on the college’s website or on YouTube. Doing a virtual tour now may help your student decide which ones they want to visit in person when the time comes.

5. Work on test prep

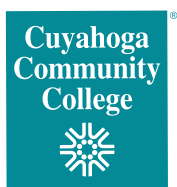
This is nobody’s idea of a fun quarantine activity, but now may be the best possible time to undertake test prep for the ACT or SAT. Even if your teen feels confident with their current score, Harberson says taking the test again can help since many colleges “superscore,” looking at the best score from each section even if you took them on different days. “That can be enough to bump you into the next scholarship bracket,” says Brown. “And the time and effort required to take the test again shows some moxie and what kind of student you are going to be.” Check out test prep options offered online at khanacademy.org/sat in partnership with the College Board.

Yes, you’ll probably be the one getting some side eye from your teen when you suggest these activities, but they might just thank you when they’re ahead of the game come next fall. Maybe.



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5 Truths I Learned About Community College

Why Attending a Community College Was Right for Me

If someone told me in high school that I would transfer to three different schools during my undergraduate career, I would have just given up. However, as a sophomore at Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) in Cleveland, Ohio, I am more than excited to transfer into my third university next year and receive a dual degree—a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Public Health.

In my senior year of high school, I applied to eight four-year universities and was ecstatic to be accepted into my top-choice school. The only expectation I set for myself was to attend a four-year college straight out of high school.

However, the reality was that partial scholarships were not enough for my family's financial needs, and I did not qualify for any federal loans. Nevertheless, I went to that private college and spent much of the first few months completely overwhelmed as I tried to figure out how we were going to pay for my education.



During my winter break, my family and I brainstormed how to pay for the fall semester balance after not being able to qualify for the Parent Plus Loan that I'd counted on. The financial obstacle was too great to overcome, and after completing one semester, I ultimately decided to attend community college.

Why community college?

Fortunately, I was offered a full academic scholarship to attend Tri-C. As a result of not having to worry nonstop about how to pay for college, I began to make substantial academic and personal progress.

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Now, after completing my first semester at community college, I have realized the importance of attending a school that understands that life is not linear.

Having navigated both the four-year traditional and two-year transfer route, I have been able to see the advantages and disadvantages of both and can help dispel some of the myths about community college.

5 truths about community college

1. The curriculum is not easy. I honestly expected my GPA to skyrocket after one semester at Tri-C, but it increased by one-tenth of one point because I was held to the same standards in my honors classes as I was at my previous institution. Simply put, my classes aren't easy A's, and I am more than prepared to tackle any university's curriculum.

2. Attending community college is not a setback. There seems to be a stigma surrounding open-enrollment institutions, based on the amount of puppy-eyed emojis on my Facebook post and the overcompensating smiles I received from my old high school acquaintances at my local grocery store. I earned a full-tuition scholarship to attend my community college, yet people feel sorry for me.

3. A vast network of support is available. Truthfully, I had to adjust to having walk-in appointments with the financial aid and academic counseling offices. It felt weird to have such easy access. I now have a village of faculty members who are committed to helping me solve various life problems.


4. An associate degree is legit. Once I receive my associate degree, I will have satisfied all general education requirements and at community college price. My closest school friend will graduate with her associate degree in the IT technical field and is already employed. Employers value the associate degree, so why question its credibility?

5. The classrooms mirror the world. I love having classmates of all different ages, nationalities, and racial backgrounds. At my previous university, I was typically the only Black person in my class. Being in class with people of all ages adds another layer to my college education. My education is enhanced because I am surrounded by people who are moving through life with a similar ambition yet with diverse backgrounds.

What's Next

I currently am following multiple pathways that will allow for a seamless transfer into a four-year university. I may even be on track to receive my master's degree debt-free. My community college experience helped me remain productive and focused while receiving a high-quality education.





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COLLEGEADVANTAGE

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The College Process: Find Help, or Go it Alone?

Now more than ever, you may have questions about how to prepare for the cost of college. Should you involve an outside expert to help you with the planning process? Maybe.

My son recently picked his high school freshman classes, and I realized math is going to be more important than ever. Not for him, though: for me. How many credits does he need of this or that subject to graduate? How many years of Spanish will a college require? And oh, by the way, are we saving enough for college? When it feels overwhelming, I think: “Maybe we should get some help with this.”

High school counselors can be a great help with the college prep process. But sometimes parents want more insight. How do you know when it’s time to seek more help for financial or academic planning? And, in the wake of the Varsity Blues college admissions scandal, how do you find the right

independent college consultant if that’s the path you choose to take?

“It’s like anything. Sometimes you do your taxes yourself. Sometimes it’s out of your comfort zone, and you hire an accountant,” says Tim Gorrell, executive director of the Ohio Tuition Trust Authority, which man-



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ages Ohio's 529 Plan, CollegeAdvantage. "Some people value the insight of an objective third party."

Here's some expert advice about when to seek help versus going it alone.

Am I Saving Correctly for College?

With high school graduation approaching for my kids, I look at their savings and wonder if we're investing correctly. We picked the investments ourselves—in our case, through a 529 plan. But should we have consulted with a financial advisor first?

"There are great online resources to help families navigate college financial planning, including tools that show where you should be at different life stages for your children," explains Gorrell. "With CollegeAdvantage, about 50% of our participants choose the Direct Plan, meaning they don't invest through a financial advisor."

My husband discovered a great resource that was immediately and easily available to us: My son's 529 plan could be set to self-adjust based on his age. "Age-based investments automatically adjust to become more conservative as your child approaches 18. These plans recognize that you have a target date for utilizing the funds," explains Gorrell.

Feeling somewhat reassured about the financial aspect, I turned to my other question: Do we need college process help?

How to Find a College Consultant

"The common time to find a college consultant is late 10th grade," says Mark

Sklarow, CEO of Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA). "If parents start the college talk too early, it creates pressure. Life isn't just about getting into college—it's also about enjoying the moment."

So, what does an independent college consultant do? As Sklarow describes it, consultants can provide guidance on how to align interests with potential careers and how to create a list of colleges based on those goals. What they don't do is get kids into a specific "dream school." The IECA certifies independent college consultants based on several factors, including ethics and experience.

That leads to more math: How much is an expert going to cost? Fees vary by region but tend to fall in line with other consultative services, like a family therapist. It's important to note that this cost isn't something that can be paid for from college savings vehicles like a 529 plan.

Sklarow suggests parents explore the need for a consultant in three situations: 1) the college process is becoming a source of tension for a family, 2) the high school counselor's focus doesn't seem personalized (or your high school does not provide college counseling), or 3) there is something unique in the child's experience, like a special skill (music or athletics) or health consideration (such as anxiety or depression).

"It's all about finding the best place for your child and the best match for your financial ability," he adds. "Consultants can really make sense of an overwhelming amount of information that is out there."

For the time being, I feel like we can go it alone—but it's great to know that we don't have to.

What's a fun tradition your mom or dad started that you want to continue with your kids?

(We won't always be quarantined. Let's dream of days to come!)



"Growing up, I was blessed to be able to travel with my parents to new places and see beautiful things. This helped me grow into a strong, individual teen; I developed worldly skills and learned important cultural values in different parts of the world. One of the places I love most is Turks and Caicos because of its lush tropical scenery, beautiful weather, and the laid-back island atmosphere. When I have kids, I'd like to travel around Europe with them from an early age. My travels taught me to keep an open mind, and that is something I'd like to pass on to my children."

15-year-old actress, singer, and model Seanna Pereira has guest-starred on TV shows including "24: Legacy" and has headlined feature films. She also serves as an ambassador for the Ryan Seacrest Foundation where she volunteers in children's hospitals, connecting with young people facing daunting medical challenges.

"My dad and I love to watch *Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives* together, and that inspired us to find our own 'hidden gem' restaurants. On weekends, we explore the world through food. Living in Los Angeles, we can taste foods from a lot of different cultures. This is the time each week when we get to be together, put away our worries, laugh, and have fun. When I have kids of my own, I want them to feel as special as I do when I'm out trying new foods with my dad."

—Riley, *El Segundo, CA*

"Every year since kindergarten, either my mom or dad has always taken my sister and me to get ice cream on the last day of school. This annual tradition remains a delicious celebration of finishing another year—and the start of an exciting summer break to come. Whether grabbing Blizzards at Dairy Queen or sharing a sundae at a local ice cream parlor, nothing beats the feeling of eating a scrumptious serving of ice cream with your family, dreaming about the fun summer days ahead."

—Katie, *Cincinnati, OH*

"A fun tradition that my parents started is going to downtown Cleveland to see the Christmas lights. We also go out to dinner together, and I would love to continue this tradition with

my kids because I get to spend time with my family."

—Sarah, *Shaker Heights, OH*

"Ever since I was a baby, my mom and I have enjoyed walking on the beach. We came to New York from Michigan about five years ago, and it's been easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the city. Both of us share a love for the natural environment, and as extremely busy people, the beach helps us feel more relaxed, less anxious, and appreciative of life. I want to make the beach a safe haven for my children in hopes that they grow up to love it as much as I do."

—Liliana, *Brooklyn, NY*

"Playing tennis and riding our bikes on Saturdays was tradition in my family. We don't do it as much anymore because our schedules vary, but having that special time together helped me respect and enjoy my family more."

—Fe, *Fort Washington, MD*

"[My favorite tradition] is sleeping in our sleeping bags under the Christmas tree on Christmas Day after we open our presents. We always laugh, but we also argue and fight, and that makes it fun because of the goofiness."

—August, *Milwaukee, WI*

COLLEGE KIDS

College Cut Short By Coronavirus

By Jody Podl

I saw a meme that pretty much sums up the last few days: “What a year this week has been.”

A week ago, I had flown across the country to visit my daughter, a sophomore in college. Our son, a college senior also joined us, eager to check out his little sister’s territory. We looked forward to spending some quality time on campus with her which included meeting all of her friends and a field trip to either Universal Studios or Joshua Tree.

Less than 24 hours in, my son received notification that his spring break was extended and that learning would continue online. He had heard rumors, but it’s not real until it’s real. “I can’t believe that I may have attended my very last college class,” he said in disbelief. Abject misery.

All of us spent the rest of the day in a disappointed daze. Like every second semester senior, there was so much that he was looking forward to. And let me be clear: not

one of those things included moving back home at 22.

The lone positive?

At least he wouldn’t have to worry about missing classes during March Madness when he refuses to leave the couch for the first four days of the tournament. We know how that story ended. First the conference tournaments. Then the Big Dance. Then the NBA and every other sport for that matter. More abject misery.

Meanwhile, my daughter finally succumbed to the fact that her spring break plans to an international destination were a no-go. To our relief, she and her friends quickly devised Plan B which satisfied our requirements that she stay in the United States.



It was hard to talk about anything else but the coronavirus, even as we watched the finale of *The Bachelor* together. At this point, colleges were sending students home left and right, and her profes-

sors were practicing with Zoom, but it's not real until it's real.

The next morning, my daughter called sobbing.

A professor had sent out an email that informed students that campus was shutting down—for the rest of the semester. A few hours later, we received the official email from the president of the university. Even more abject misery.

I don't think I have ever felt so incompetent as a parent. I'm not one to jump in and fix things for my kids, but I do live by the mantra that every problem has a solution. But this one doesn't. My kids were thriving at college, and now they are going to have to come home and learn online. Really? Academics aside, they are being separated from their friends and their activities and their lives.

And quite frankly, I don't want them at home either. Not because I don't love them to pieces but because they need to be where they are so they can complete their amazing metamorphosis into adulthood. Home means regression to the mean for all of us.

Adjusting to the New Normal After Coronavirus

All I can do is validate how they feel, which is easy because I feel the same way. They are grieving and angry, and I don't blame them one bit. So I hold back my own tears and say that I'm so sorry, which seems incredibly inadequate.

But already, I've seen glimpses of their resilience that makes me want to cry even more. We returned to my daughter's college a few days later to pick up some duffel bags to bring home for her. She was wiped out and admitted that she hadn't slept much, but she was calm and ready to face what was next. She also started working me to get a dog to help her survive the next several months, proving

that she's moving forward and preparing herself for what's to come (and that she has some excellent negotiation skills).

My son and I talked a lot about how he'll spend his days. Always a planner, he realized that he needs to push himself to use his time well. He's thinking about what that will look like. Maybe he'll learn more about cooking so he can add to his three-recipe repertoire. Maybe he'll train for a long run. Or maybe he'll get back into reading.

While it's not fair that their lives have been disrupted, they will ultimately make the best out of an unfortunate and frightening situation. There will still be hard moments and hard days. And no matter what routine we ultimately fall into over the next weeks/months, we will all still be wishing for something different.

Making the Pivot

My wish for my own kids—and for all of the college students who are so disappointed right now—is that they figure out how to pivot. The first step has already begun. As social distancing and travel restrictions and closures have continued to mount, they have come to realize that what is happening is bigger than they are. As the president of my daughter's college remarked, this may well be the most significant event of their lifetime.

There is no doubt that they will look back and remember how bitterly upsetting this time was, but I do have one more wish: that they will feel proud about how they responded to it. That when they tell the story of the coronavirus to their own children, they will be able to share the compassionate, thoughtful, and productive ways in which they made the best of an uncertain time. That they used their considerable strengths to enrich their lives in new and different ways. In their own time (which, sadly, they'll have a lot of), they'll find ways to power themselves and others through the coronavirus crisis.

So Your College Kid Was Sent Home From College—Now What?



You may have received an eerily quiet phone call recently from your adult child at college, saying that their school is closing, and they are forced to come home. Problem is, they don't want to come home. Most students enjoy the freedom and stimulation of college life. They are delighted to come and go when and where they please. No one tracks them, tells them to do chores, or nags about homework. They have been able to reinvent themselves and make friends and connections with a clean slate.

As much as we love our adult children, we don't want them home either. All week, we have been meeting with clients who are filled with dread, concern, and anxiety. Their newly arrived college student doesn't seem interested in the online classes they are meant to be taking. They balk at the request to empty the dishwasher.

Social distancing seems absurd to some young adults—they feel invincible. They are secretive and coming home much later than their high school days. When asked about their whereabouts, they bristle and seem shocked you would even be interested, let alone ask. They're adults now. Who do we think we are?!

Their outbursts at the injustice, the constricting rules of home, their pesky younger siblings, and the devastation of having their lives uprooted feels melodramatic and a tad overdone. Yet, they have a point.

How can parents help?

LISTEN

Don't minimize their disappointment, even if it sounds overstated or selfish. They need to get it out.

GIVE THEM TIME TO ADJUST

Their response to the situation will change over time. The grief cycle is different for everyone and cannot be rushed. Feeling anger is appropriate and is better expressed than repressed. Remind yourself that this is a temporary period.

HELP THEM FIND WORDS

When we feel overwhelmed or emotional, our brains don't function as well. We can struggle to find the right words to express our feelings or may not even be able to identify them. Parents can often find words easier and it can be powerful. Help them out by naming their feelings: "You must be so disappointed," "This really isn't fair. I don't blame you for being angry/frustrated/down," "It must be depressing to sit in your old bedroom," or "It must be awful to feel like your life is going backwards just when you started loving it."

SEE IT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECONNECT WITH YOUR ADULT

Your child is different now than when they

first left for college. They have grown and changed. We need to respect the changes and learn about them in new ways. How? By asking questions, and refraining from judgment or critical comments, even when what they share is frightening or shocking. This might very well be the last time they live at home for an extended period of time. How do you want them to remember it?

PRAISE THEM

Yes, they are adults, but who doesn't want acknowledgement and validation? We all need it. They deserve it. They got themselves home and are adjusting, whether they like it or not. When we acknowledge the positives, they are more likely to continue the positive behavior. Some studies suggest we get better behavior by making five positive statements for every negative comment. This is harder than it sounds, but boy does it help!

Our college kids have worked hard to get to college, to survive the changes and challenges of an environment away from home. They've forged friendships, bonded over bi-

zarre professors, crazy parties, heartache, and even homesickness. They are not only disappointed; they are at risk of depressive and anxious symptoms. They are experiencing a loss and will need to grieve. The good news is that it won't last forever. And we have it within our power to help them find a way to accept the situation and make the most of it.

Identical twins Amy Kay Cole, Ph.D., and Anne Laptin, MS, psychology professor and social worker, maintain thriving private psychotherapy practices in different parts of the country. Check them out at twincandor.com and on Instagram and Facebook.



7 Helpful Tips for Taking Online Classes for College Students



As more people in the United States are being diagnosed with COVID-19, colleges and universities are beginning to move all of their face-to-face classes to online only. The Michigan community college where I teach has advised professors to start making this transition as well.

So before I let my English students leave our last classroom session (knowing I likely wouldn't see them in person again for the remainder of the semester), I gave them some tips on making a smooth transition to virtual classes amidst the uncertainty we're all facing.

1. Check your email several times a day

I stressed this to my students immediately. Professors will be communicating with them via email and through their online learning system. It is up to the students to stay on top of checking this form of communication. They no longer have the weekly or biweekly in-person check-ins to help fill that communication gap. They are going to have to step up their game to stay in the know.

2. Get a class buddy

Students should get a phone number and/or email from a class buddy if they don't have one already. That way, they can verify assignment instructions and due dates with their buddy. This helps with accountability and motivation to stay on task.

3. Communicate regularly with the professor

If a student felt apprehensive about communicating with a professor before the coronavirus outbreak, they must get over that now. Without proper communication with their professors, students are likely to get confused or even fall behind. I reminded my students that professors want them to succeed. They should email me with questions or concerns and I will be happy to guide them along.

4. Go through the syllabus and write down all due dates

Students must be prepared. If they haven't done so already, they should write all due dates in their planner or set digital reminders on their phones. They will no longer have the in-person reminders I give them to keep them on track.

5. Master your online learning system

For students who have been reluctant to use their institution's online learning system, they must do it now. They should know how to submit a paper, retrieve documents, participate in an online discussion, view videos, and other tasks. If they are struggling, they need to reach out to the professor or the technology department at their school for help.

6. Utilize all of your online resources

Just because a school no longer has face-to-face learning does not mean that all of their resources are closed for the rest of the semester. Students can check to see if their writing center is available for online tutoring, for example. Further, they can utilize library services either through the library's database website or by calling the library's reference desk for help. It would be wise for a student to call each department to see what resources are still being offered virtually as well.

7. Schedule work time

As a professor, I worry about what my students will do with all of their "free time." Often physically going to school helps students maintain their schedules. So with the added freedom of online classes, they may have a difficult time getting into a routine. It's imperative that they set up a schedule for their work time as soon as their school makes the transition to online instruction. Without a schedule, students are much more likely to put off their work until a much later time—or worse, never get assignments done at all.

As a professor, this move to online classes worries me. Now students must quickly learn to be that much more independent and intrinsically motivated. They are used to getting face-to-face interaction at least once a week, being reminded what's due, and given examples and instructions to help guide them through assignments. I don't want my students to feel like they are being left alone to figure things out—because it doesn't have to be that way at all.

Angela Anagnost-Repke is a writer and writing instructor with M.A.s in both English and Counseling. She has been widely published and is currently at work on the cross-generational memoir, Mothers Lie.

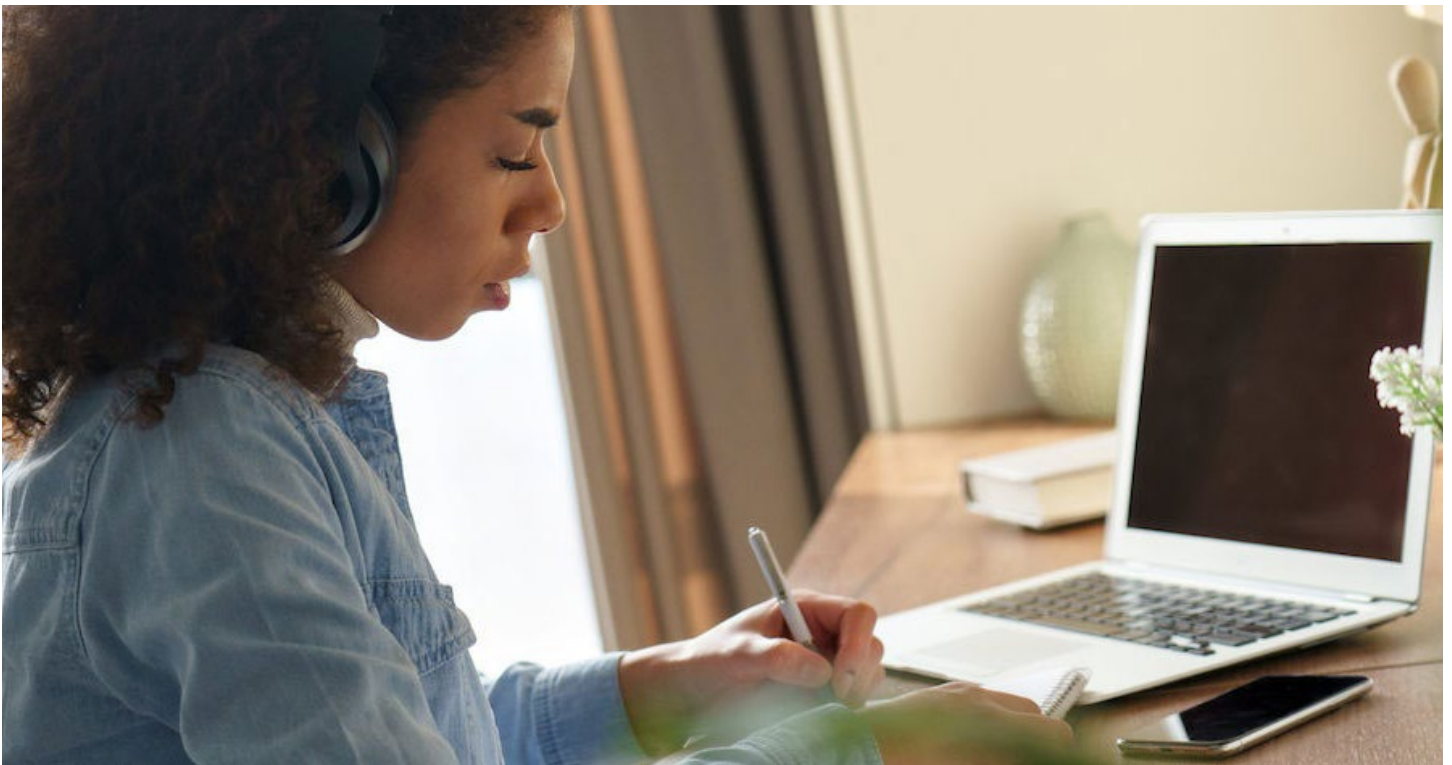
Finding a New Normal. Again.

A College Freshman on Quarantine

As a college freshman, this school year has already been full of uncertainty and new experiences. Before the coronavirus, the uncertainty was exciting, and, as paradoxical as it may sound, expected. It was through this uncertainty that I would learn to live on my own and be a young adult. It was through this uncertainty that I found new friends, new passions, new ways to thrive— my new normal.

While I did miss my parents, living in a college dorm was good for me, and I loved it. Coming home for a month for winter break

was a big adjustment. I found myself missing college quite a bit. When the new semester started, I was so happy to be back with my friends, with my way of life, with my normal. I had a schedule that worked well for me and I was thriving. I found myself going to bed completely satisfied and happy almost every night. My happiness, in large part, was directly related to stage managing the spring play at our campus theatre. I loved the experience and it became the highlight of my day. My new normal was school, dinner, rehearsal, and it was wonderful.



As spring break was drawing near, I was looking forward to going home to see my parents and my pets. But I was also aware that I would be away from rehearsal and my friends for a week. It was going to be bitter-sweet for me. I was aware of the coronavirus, but it was in the background, as all world events had been while I was living in this isolated world of a college campus.

The week before spring break, the coronavirus situation was getting more dire.

It wasn't the highest thing on my radar, though, because on March 3, my college town was struck by a massive tornado. Normal had gone out the window, and we were getting it back just in time for it to be gone again.

By the following week, word was circulating that the school might take an extended spring break. Rumors were flying about what was or wasn't going to happen, based on what other colleges were doing. Within days, the campus president announced that we would take an extra week of spring break, and prepare to potentially begin online classes afterwards.

My biggest concern was whether or not we would continue rehearsals. The department head was in support of the 12 of us continuing rehearsals as normal. So I packed up my truck, ready to head home for spring break. I assumed I would return in a week for rehearsals. But then the announcement came that classes would be online for the rest of the semester. The play has been postponed until fall, and move-out times have been released to clear out all dorms.

My new normal was gone.

Even worse, I didn't know that my last day on campus would be my last normal day. It had been just another day in my new college life. While I'm extremely grateful that I have a

good home life and access to internet and computers to continue my schooling, I'm also devastated that the way of life I loved so much has ceased to exist. Now I have to figure things out yet again.

I was thriving in college, and my life was honestly better than it had been in a long time. To have that taken away so suddenly, without even being able to say proper goodbyes to my actors and friends, is heartbreaking. I went from living in a dorm surrounded by other college students, and always having someone to hang out with, to living at home with no one to talk to except my parents. I'm grateful that I can still talk to my friends online, but it's not the same. I don't even have anything to talk about, because every day is the same now.

I've been trying to go easy on myself this week.

It is my spring break, after all. But I know that in order to bring some normalcy back in my life, I need to find a new routine. I don't know what my classes are going to look like. I don't know what my daily schedule will be. I don't know how long I will be living like this. I don't know what my new normal will look like.

What I do know is that the sacrifices everyone is making are important and necessary. What I do know is that for me to stay mentally stable through this, I need to make a routine for myself. And stick to it! Little things, like changing clothes every day, sitting down to do schoolwork, reading a book, and exercising, are all going to be increasingly important to me as this stretch of social isolation continues. While my first year of college life was cut short so suddenly, I'm hoping that I can find a way to thrive in this new normal that I have now.

Emma Waltenbaugh is a college freshman from Tennessee who has a passion for helping others and advocating for her peers.

Expert Advice for Pandemic Parenting of Teenagers

Day one was kind of fun. We were all a team enjoying the new normal. Day two was still okay. By day three, it all fell apart. There are too many meals and too many dishes. We have toilet paper, but how much is enough? And it looks like there's no end in sight.

Some researchers are saying that social distancing could continue for quite a

long time. I can't envision what my life and my family's life will look like in another few weeks, let alone months. And it seems like I'm not alone. So *Your Teen* set out to get as much helpful advice as possible during this trying time. We got so much advice that we couldn't even fit it all in this special issue. I've done many interviews with outstanding experts, each

one taking a slightly different parenting angle, but all sharing valuable info that we want to bring to you. Check out the links below to see video interviews with our experts.

Wishing your family health (and sanity) during this most unusual time.

Stay safe,
Sue

Parenting in Close Quarters

with Amy Speidel

For Parents of "Lazy" Kids

with Psychologist Adam Price

Setting Reasonable Expectations

with Psychologist Tori Cordiano

For Parents of Teens with Anxiety

with Psychologist John Duffy

For Parents of Defiant Teens

with Psychologist Neil Bernstein

For Parents of High School Juniors

with Ned Johnson, Founder of PrepMatters

For Parents of Home From College Kids

with Deborah Paris, LISW

Senior Year Disappointments

with Psychologist Wendy Mogel

For Parents of Teen Girls

with Katie Hurley, LISW

Teens and Technology

with Diana Graber

Two months ahead of the US

with Tammar Stein

STUFF WE LOVE

During these tough times, it's important to still celebrate the special occasions and milestones that mark our lives; we just have to be a bit more creative about how we go about it. Mother's Day and Father's Day are still coming; and while graduation ceremonies are on hold, we can still find ways to congratulate our seniors and wish them well. The future is coming—it's just not quite here yet. In the meantime, here are a few options for helping make someone's day, including some that are low- or no-cost.

Spring Awakening

Spring has sprung! Celebrate with these floral finds.



Petal to the metal

Say it with flowers! Set yourself apart from the crowd with a colorful passion flower from Passion Works. Not only are these sculptural flowers made from upcycled aluminum, but they are also made by artists with developmental differences. Do good and look good! \$12-\$100, depending on size.



Flower power

Brighten up your home with the chic Halston Vase by The Citizenry. Available in grey, cream, or blush, this clay vase is hand thrown and glazed in Dublin, Ireland. Love the look? Check out the entire Halston line of mugs, pitchers, and bowls. \$100



Let it grow

After being cooped up all winter, nothing feels better than getting out into the garden. Avid gardeners and black thumbs alike will find a friend in Daisy Rain Garden System. Each kit contains three "Sprinkler Pots" equipped with their own integrated sprinkler for easy irrigation. Just add water! \$119

- * Try yoga, meditation, or Tai Chi outside
- * Plant some quick-blooming flowers to grow from seed, like zinnias, sweet alyssum, calendula, phlox, or petunias
- * Tie a basket to your bike and take a picnic lunch, book, and blanket to your favorite nature spot

STUFF WE LOVE

To Mom, With Love

Whether you need some ideas for your mother, or need to drop a few well-timed hints of your own, these mom-approved items might be just the ticket.



Hangin' tough

Let your hoodie do all the talking with this cheeky favorite from One Tough Bitch! Available in three color combos, this loose-fitting comfy sweatshirt comes with a dose of hang-tough attitude. \$40



Sweet dreams

Falling asleep listening to music or meditations just got a lot easier, thanks to SleepPhones. This soft lightweight headband contains two flat speakers, letting even side sleepers get in on the aural action. (Oh, and they're wireless and Bluetooth-enabled, too.) \$99.95



Care package

Self-care is more vital than ever in the wake of COVID-19, and having a Therabox subscription delivered to your doorstep can provide a much-needed dose. Created and curated by therapists, this monthly subscription box includes a suggested "happiness activity" along with between six and eight wellness items sure to soothe mind, body, and soul. \$34.99/month



In the mood

Choose your own olfactory adventure with Moodo. This smart home diffuser allows you to plug and play various scents based on your mood—with scent capsules ranging from "Sea Breeze" to "Eucalyptus Nights" to "Spice Bouquet." \$99.90

- * Tie a bouquet of flowers from the garden with ribbon and attach a hand-made note
- * Create a photo book of your favorite moments together
- * Bake a special treat for Mom; if she lives close by, drop off half at her house and share the other half with her live by FaceTime or Zoom



Father's Day Finds

What do you get the guy who has everything? Here are a few ideas, for starters.



Smooth operator

Bourbon and whiskey aficionados are always on the hunt for the latest and greatest accessories, and these 9-ounce Eparé Double-Wall Whiskey Glasses deliver. A double-walled design ensures optimal insulation so that Dad can savor his drink in style. \$17.95



Take a seat

Whether Dad enjoys fishing, golfing, camping, or tailgating, this portable BTR ("Better than a Rock") Stool provides the perfect perch for enjoying the great outdoors. Lightweight and foldable with a detachable seat, the BTR Stool makes a great companion for any adventurer on the go. \$55



Making the cut

Calling all carnivores! Handmade and custom laser-engraved by Naked Wood Works, The Grillfather Cutting Board is sure to get plenty of use by the grill this summer. The board is offered by Amazon Handmade, an artisan-only community that sells handcrafted goods from around the globe. \$49.99



- * Line up the family for one full Saturday of labor for Dad's "most-wanted" project—cleaning out the garage, organizing the basement, or working in the yard
- * Detail Dad's car—wash and wax the outside and vacuum the inside. Don't forget to dust the dash and shine the tires!
- * Create playlists of favorite tunes for him to use when he is working, working out, grilling, and chilling

STUFF WE LOVE

For the Graduate

Congratulate your grad and send them off with a gift they'll love.



Thanks for the memories

For teens headed off to college, a memory book can be just the key to fending off homesickness and keeping kids connected to home. Compile a greatest hits collection with Motif, a service that helps curate and design hardcover photo books via an easy-to-use app. \$14.99 and up



The quilt picker-upper

Repurpose those cherished school and sports tees with a Project Repat T-shirt quilt. Available in five sizes, these cozy custom quilts are backed with soft fleece and will gift your teen a mosaic of memories that lasts forever. \$75-\$189.99



Oh, the places you'll go!

Does your graduate dream of study abroad some day? (Some day, when life is normal again!) We see Paris, we see France, we see these gorgeous travel backpacks by Casery. Equipped with stylish rose gold hardware, these vegan leather backpacks are built for travel with a built-in laptop section and a sleeve to slip over roller bag handles for on-the-go ease. Your teen will be ready to take flight, whenever we're actually able to do that again. \$89-99



Hero style

After graduation, the rest is still unwritten, but your teen will always be the hero of their story. Help them own it with a statement Hero Necklace from Isabelle Grace Jewelry. Available in sterling silver or 14-karat-gold filled, this heart charm contains a genuine ruby stone—and the assurance that you believe in your teen as they start a new chapter. \$49

- * Decorate their room with streamers and balloons in the colors of their new school
- * Create a slideshow of all of their school photos from K-12, set to their favorite music, and share the link with friends and family
- * Host an online party with their friends and ask them each to share one favorite memory from high school and one new thing they're looking forward to



The kids are home. Now what?

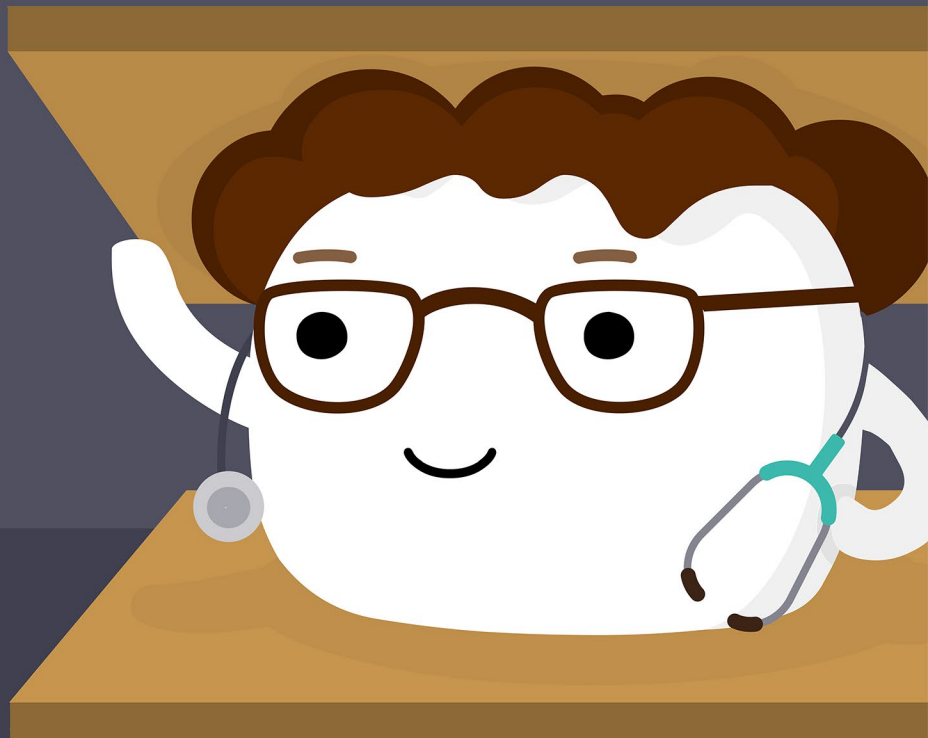
Visit smore.com/corona for creative ways to keep kids engaged.

Smore helps educators and professionals create and share beautiful newsletters.

Through the month of April, we're providing families and educators with the resources they need to keep students and community members engaged, educated, and informed.

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ON A ROLL

By Deborah Skolnik

Who knew we'd expend such labor
trying to find some toilet paper?
In light of the current COVID scare,
no one has a square to spare.
We're searching hard, but as we feared,
the TP has all disappeared.
The Charmin bear has ceased his roar
in every local grocery store.
But don't give in to your darkest fears —
you'd need T.P. to wipe those tears!
More Charmin will surely arrive any day.
Till then, good luck - and CYA!
HANG IN THERE, EVERYBODY!

THE LAST WORD

By Stephanie Schaeffer Silverman

Coronavirus (Un)Concerns

The Greatest (and Most Reckless?) Generation

I thought my teens were going to be the biggest problem during COVID-19.

Like everything with my teens, I was wrong. It started with a mid-March phone call with my parents, ages 80 and 88, from their home in Sarasota.

“So, what’s on tap for the week?” I asked, bracing myself for the, “Well, we had to cancel this and cancel that due to corona.” As background, there is nothing my mother likes less than plans that have changed.

“Mahjong tomorrow at The Elks, bridge game on Thursday at Glen Ridge, and then we have the Paul Anka concert at the Van Wezel.”

I thought she was kidding.

“Wait, you’re not going to all of those things, right?”

“Stephanie, we are not going to stop living our lives.”

Um, did I say that?



I take a breath because what I want to say is: *The average age at The Elks is probably 75, at Glen Ridge, 85, and average age at Paul Freakin' Anka? Deceased.*

"I didn't say that. What I am SUGGESTING is that if you were going to do 10 things, maybe you do eight things instead."

Silence. This conversation is going nowhere fast.

I call my sister instead.

"Mom and Dad are not listening at all."

I share the conversation with her. She tells me that she was just about to call them to tell them to not get on a plane to Cleveland in a few weeks.

I tell my sister if she wants to remain the favorite daughter, she may want to wait a day or two.

As if she were reading my mind, a friend texts me:

I think I might write a letter to the governor of FL that he needs to set more restrictions because his constituents are high risk and not listening to advice!

I text back: "Oh, yours too?"

Yeah, they are playing golf right now—but they are each in their own cart.

"Seriously?"

Yeah. My parents are acting like teenagers ... and my dad just called me bossy.

Is this the same generation that insists we call them when we land, tells us to rush our kid with a 101 fever to the doctor, and berates us for running our kids from activity to activity? What happened to those people?

What's going on here? This entire generation is suffering from denial—they don't think their group is at risk. In China the fatality rate for infected adults over 80 was 15–18%. There's also an entirely different theory: They have nothing to be afraid of. They've survived the Great Depression and many ups and downs in the market, have raised their kids, and, if they are lucky, have already enjoyed retirement for some time.

Basically, they are giving COVID-19 the finger. If COVID-19 is how they leave this earth, then so be it. They've had their journey.

But I can't. First, I've got to get my parents (and, yes, my teenagers) to stay put.

Stephanie Schaeffer Silverman is publisher of Your Teen Magazine.

YOUR Teen

for parents

Did you find this guide helpful?
We hope so! Please take a moment
to share it with a friend!

We're all in this together.

—The *Your Teen* staff

...and for more great advice
on raising teens:

