

10 PARENTING TIPS TO HELP DURING COVID-19



The US and the world are experiencing unparalleled health, economic, financial and emotional consequences due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. As we grapple with day to day uncertainty, parents are particularly challenged with helping their children cope effectively. Below are tips and behavioral strategies for parents developed by Science Cheerleader Felecia, a doctor in Clinical Psychology.

1. Routine: Try to stick to a daily routine for your family. Routines provide structure to the day and help children with daily behavioral expectations.

2. Sleep: Maintain a regular sleep schedule for your children. Although children don't have to get up to leave the house for school, keeping a consistent wake up and bedtime will help minimize the likelihood of them developing sleep issues.

3. Family Time: Maintain protected family time. With everyone doing their own thing in their rooms, it might be easy to slip into a routine of not carving out together time. Consider eating at least one meal together each day to catch up and see how everyone is coping.

4. Activity: Get moving! Try to have your family engage in some sort of physical activity each day for at least 30 minutes. Low stress ideas include stretching, yoga, jump rope or even dancing to YouTube videos.

5. Creativity: Arts and crafts help boost creativity. Consider scrap booking projects or making photo collages to display past birthday, trips, and holiday pictures. You can also find a project on SciStarter to get some at home ideas!

6. Flexibility: Stay flexible! Make sure that you leave room in your daily routine for those things that may come up unexpectedly.

7. Quiet Time: Be sure to allow yourself and family daily alone time. This will help give yourselves a chance to rejuvenate. Consider using the many available meditation and relaxation apps. (Breathe2relax, Calm, Insight Timer)

8. Connect: Be sure to encourage your children to stay connected with family and friends. Although you and your family may not be able to get together in person, consider using technology platforms like FaceTime, WhatsApp video, Line etc. to maintain family bonds and support.

9. Monitor Social Media: Be sure to oversee what your child/teen is posting and reading on social media platforms. With the recent deaths and trauma due to online bullying, it is important to make sure that your child is not being bullied or bullying others online.

10. Teach Safe Internet Habits: Make sure to warn your children about potential online dangers including entering chat rooms. Warn them about not sharing personal information with people on the internet including information that could lead a potential predator to your home, neighborhood or their school.

RESOURCES

- ★ InfoAboutKids.org
- ★ The National Parenting Center (TNPC.com)
- ★ Resilience Booster (.apa.org/topics/parenting/resilience-tip-tool)
- ★ Military OneSource (militaryonesource.mil)
- ★ Parenting2Go app (mobile.va.gov/app/parenting2go)

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Dr. Sheffield has also written over three dozen parenting and self-help articles for the general public. Her volunteer endeavors include being a part of Science Cheerleaders a non-profit organization comprised of current and former NFL/NBA professional cheerleaders with STEM careers who use their public speaking appearances to encourage, engage and empower more girls and women to pursue careers in the STEM field.

