

Keep familiar routines

Everyone is saying this when nothing is routine. But even if you let everyone sleep in an extra hour, do breakfast and morning routine as usual. Post and review. Some work time in morning when fresh. Then some exercise, regular meals, and some movie/screen and activity time. Keep usual bedtimes – parents need the time for themselves end of the night and kids need all usual sleep.

Exercise

Fitness activities by age 4-12.

<https://www.neofitness.com/concepts/neo-kids>

Walk outside and take time to look at plants, bugs and throw rock

Get out the Wii – family/kid memories

Just dance- different family members each pick a song. Or always YouTube

Doing academic things

Engagement and learning more important than worksheets and facts now

Most schools working to provide online instruction and some schedule

<https://www.khanacademy.org/>

Currently they have schedules for the day to guide you for each grade and engaging, interactive academic activities for all ages

Parents can't be constant companions, teachers or saints at this time. You can be enough

Kids will remember this as a boring time but kids love time with their parents. They will remember the extra family time spent even teens

There are a few things that you probably can do that will help both you and your kids feel better and cope better.

Give yourself a break. There are so many ideas- We only provide 1-2 links here.



It's not possible to be a really good parent now- aim for good enough for you and your kids.

Do what you can -be calm as much as you can- and apologize when you can't.



Meditation -everyone thinks they should do more and it will help.

Kids and teens mostly willing to try if you do it together. And you show them how it works

Everyday check ins with what sense here and now- 3 things see or hear or smell

Bedtime a great time because lying still. Give your stuffed animal a ride on belly

There is a way to calm down. Breathe in a little and breathe out a whole lot

Show them how you use it.. Shake up a snow globe. This is mommy's mind now so I can't think well. I need your help. Let's watch the snow fall together. And see if it helps us feel better.

You can make your own globe if crafty
<https://www.susankaisergreenland.com/mindfulness-for-kids->

Parent self care

That metaphor of taking care of yourself first is even more important here

If you are a 2 parent household check with each other on important needs for day both work and time to exercise and be alone.

If you are a single parent, try to create time for you to be alone and debrief. It is ok unless your children are really young

Use the kid movie time to lie down, be alone, or call a friend. Put a quiet zone not on your door

Kids really like to help. Teach them now even if it takes time. Older kids could learn how to prepare meals and do laundry- together with you or alone. Kids of all ages like to help- make a mess



Read, read, listen and write

Kids develop language skills by parents reading with them or reading to parents. Then ask kids a few questions: What is going to happen next? What does that character feel?

Suggest kids pull out and read recent and old favorite books

Authors are reading their books online each day – Storyline Online

Libraries that are closed have a lot of e-books to borrow

25 best podcasts for kids

<https://www.common sense media.org/blog/the-best-podcasts-for-kids>

Family and create their own *gratitude journals*. Possible to find small things even in crisis (cup of coffee, playing a game with brother, talking to a friend) All can write together briefly after dinner