

UVA FEAP ON THE FLY

We Have to Reframe our Parenting to Meet the Demands of a Pandemic

April, 2020

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Do you want to help your kids during this time of uncertainty and anxiety? The most important thing that you must do is take care of and nurture yourself. This is no longer optional, it is mandatory.

Children won't remember the specifics of the Coronavirus, how long it was or what they missed out on specifically, but they are going to remember – impressionistically - what it was like to be with their family. Manage your expectations, both of yourself and your children, and focus on developing daily habits that promote positive coping and resilience.



[Mindfulness for Busy Parents](#)

Two Things that Contribute to Chronic States of Stress in Kids and Teens

- Parents/Caregivers who are chronically stressed
- When there is a gap between what a parent/caregiver/teacher expects from a child or teen and what a child or teen's capacity allows him/her to do

Instead

- Reality check your expectations
- Focus on Play and Playfulness

A FEW DAILY HABITS TO EASE THE STRESS OF QUARANTINE

1. **PROVIDE SAFETY MESSAGES/NOT DANGER MESSAGES:** Let kids know that washing their hands, not being able to see their friends or go to the playground right now is to keep them and others safe; not because going outside is dangerous. If kids only hear about the dangers, and not that our actions are designed to keep them safe, when it is time for them to resume their normal routines, they will remain afraid. Safety messages communicate that they can trust us to keep them safe and to let them know when it is safe to return to normal life.
2. **REDUCE INCOMING STRESSORS:** Limit your intake of news and social media and limit your kids exposure too.
3. **GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK:** Feeling overwhelmed means that our internal resources don't feel adequate to manage the incoming demands. Don't put more pressure on yourself by expecting that you can work from home, suddenly become a terrific teacher and do it all smoothly. It is enough to keep your family healthy, keep food on the table, and be as emotionally generous with your kids (and yourself) as you are able to muster in the moment.
4. **MOVE YOUR BODY:** Moving your body boosts your mood, increases your energy and reduces stress. It doesn't have to be formal, but try to do it every day. Walk, dance with your kids, do a yoga or exercise video with your teen or play a daily game of Chase with your younger ones.
5. **CONNECT WITH OTHERS DAILY**
6. **FOCUS ON COPING NOT TRYING TO CONTROL**

[A Magic Wand to Manage Your Stress When You Get Triggered](#)

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