

TIP OF THE MONTH

Reflections on Parenting During the Pandemic

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Faculty & Employee
**ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM**

The past 15 months have been an extremely stressful and difficult time to be a parent. Whether you became a new parent during the pandemic, have been trying to manage virtual learning for your elementary-aged child while simultaneously working, have shared the heartbreak of lost landmark events with your teenager, or endured any host of other parenting challenges, parents have been asked to bear so much.

Here are a few statistics to illustrate the challenge of the pandemic era on parents:

In August 2020 parents were spending an “additional 27 hours per week on household chores, childcare and education – nearly the equivalent of a second job – on top of their household responsibilities before the [pandemic] crisis.”

Near the start of the pandemic, in May 2020,

48% of adults who are parents said that their stress levels were extremely high, as compared to 28% of adults who are not parents.

Parental burnout has not been uncommon this past year. Parental burnout is a recognized health condition, not just a catchphrase. It is also not a reflection on parental knowledge, effort, character, or commitment of a parent. It’s an intense exhaustion that leads parents to feel detached from their children and unsure of their parenting abilities. Uncertainty and social isolation both contribute to burnout, and we have been living with both in abundance over the past 15 months.

Working mothers absorbed the greater school, labor, and economic burden of COVID. Research shows that working mothers are 28% more likely to experience parental burnout than working fathers. We’ve all had to recognize the social and cultural pressures that we may

have internalized and recalibrate our expectations of ourselves. We are the only living generation of parents who has parented through a global pandemic. Think about that . . . that is remarkable. Take note of that and honor yourself for your resilience and your commitment.

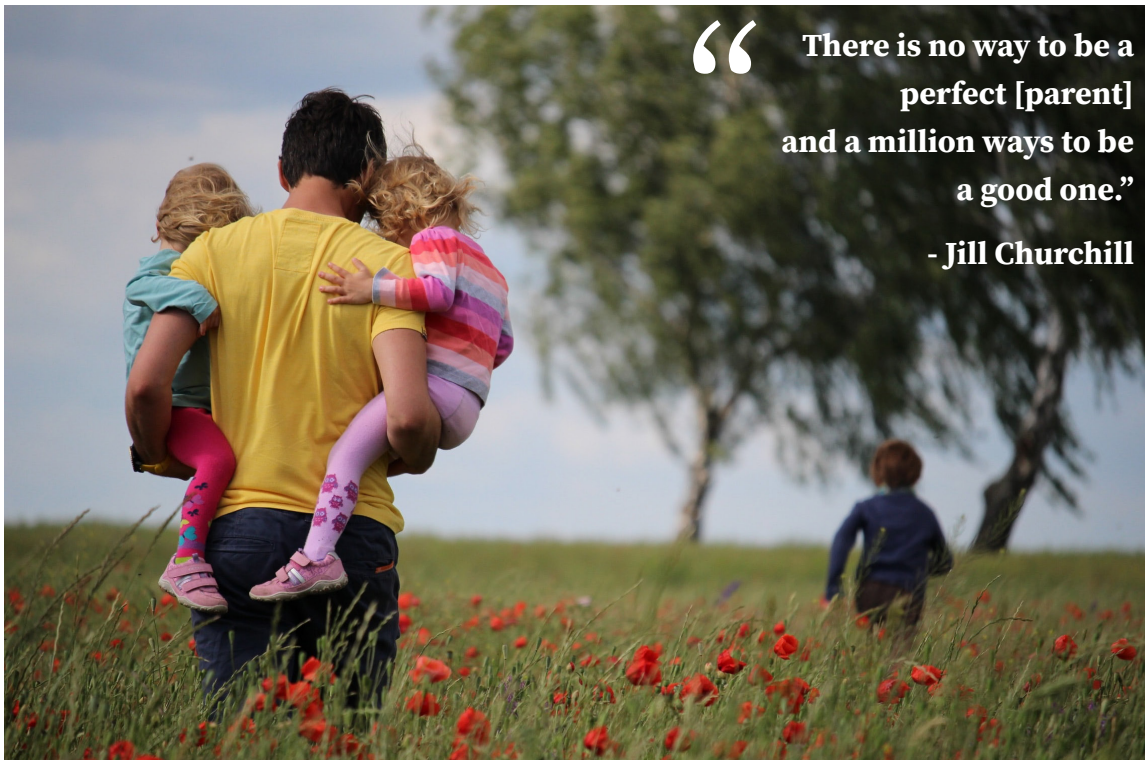
Take some time to reflect on the unexpected surprises you and your children have experienced during the pandemic era.

- What do you want to remember from this period as we return to a normal (or new normal) way of living?
- What do you want to take forward?
- What have you learned is really important for yourself?
- For your children?
- For your family?

Join FEAP and Hoos Well in a webinar on June 24 as we explore more about parenting. You will learn how to share your feelings with your kids, and why doing so is important. We will come to understand the importance and real-life value of emotional intelligence and why it is the greatest gift that we can give to our children. And, we will learn strategies to grow our own emotion skills. [Register for the webinar here.](#)

If you miss the date on June 24, you can watch a recording of the event on our [Past Events page.](#)

For additional counseling, FEAP is available for free, confidential assistance at 434.243.2643 or on our [website.](#)



“

There is no way to be a perfect [parent] and a million ways to be a good one.”

- Jill Churchill

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