

Parent Times

April 2020



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President's Corner

To the entire North Central Parenting Group community:

As you now all know, it is with great sadness that based off the **latest COVID-19 news and recommendations**, on March 17, 2020, we unfortunately had to make the hard decision to cancel all in-person NCPG gatherings for the remainder of the 2019-2020 curriculum year.

Instead, we are now offering supplemental **Virtual Learning Opportunities** for our membership. Our Education Directors have worked hard to quickly coordinate three virtual guest speakers who will be offering Facebook Live presentations (during our regularly scheduled April 8, April 22 & May 6 class dates at 10am) on topics relevant to what we're all going through in this now uncertain time. Please reference our recent member emails and social media posts for complete details. Additionally, we have asked each of our valued NCPG instructors to reach out to their classes directly to share and review any remaining syllabus topics and resources during this challenging time.

Lastly, given the emotional, social, and financial effects that this has had on our members' lives, the Board of Directors has extended **Early Bird Registration** for current members for the 2020-2021 year. Early Bird Registration will now be during the months of April and May, and Open Registration will begin on June 1, 2020. Current members who register between April 1 and May 31 will be able to take advantage of the \$265 early bird pricing and will be guaranteed a spot with their existing group. Open registration for new members will begin on June 1, and the cost of registration will be \$320. Spots after June 1 will be given on a first come, first served basis.

Thank you to everyone who attended our **"Glitz and Glam" Annual Gala** on March 7! It was such a fun evening for everyone, and I would like to offer a special thanks to our amazing **Fundraising Co-Chairs: Melissa Collins, Allison Barnow, and Dilini Malsom** & **Committee Members: Sara Gullickson and Arlee Maracigan** on a job well done! We exceeded our attendance and fundraising goals, and we sincerely appreciate everyone's support and enthusiasm!

Lastly, I am also pleased to announce that our membership approved our **2020-2021 Board of Directors** via an electronic majority vote last month. The new Board includes a wonderful group of members that have volunteered their time to help NCPG run smoothly and within budget, provide great instructors with relevant content to educate our members, curate fun events to allow our members to come together and create new friendships, foster strong partnerships in our community that benefit our members, and most importantly, help represent the voices of their fellow members. NCPG is so lucky to have such an amazing Board for the 2020-2021 year!

If you have any questions or would like more specifics on anything, please email me directly at: president@ncpgaz.org any time. **Please know your flexibility and understanding during this time is greatly appreciated.** We will be in contact with any additional updates and details as they are available.

Wishing You Well,
Megan Garvey (President) and the entire 2019-2020 NCPG Board

The information provided by NCPG instructors should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

ncpg

north central parenting group



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NCPG is a non-profit, non-denominational organization providing classes to parents of infant to elementary school aged children.

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Parent Times

Members, this monthly magazine is for your benefit, so we want to ensure our team is publishing content that is valuable, useful, informative, and fun! Please let us know if you have suggestions, comments, concerns, or any input that would help us to improve this publication. Shoot us an email at communications@ncpgaz.org. Thanks for your help!

Editors – Kelly Anderson & Colleen Fillion

Designer – Neill Fox, foxnoggin.com, neill@foxnoggin.com

Front Cover – Kemper and Karter Spellman

Photographer – Kate Nelle Photography (NCPG member)



Member to Meet

Jessica Phipps

Class: Kinder **Children:** Harlow(5) and Ainsley(3)

Spouse: Colin

How did you meet your spouse/partner:

We both went to NAU and had mutual friends. After we graduated we both moved to Phoenix where we ran in to each other at the Fry's on 20th St and Camelback shortly afer; the rest is history.

Years married: 10

Favorite family vacation spot?

We have 2! Our favorite mountain town is Telluride. My family first visited there in when I was 7 and we grew up taking frequent summer vacations to that sweet little town. Taking my girls has been magical and my sister is even getting married there next summer. My husband grew up vacationing in Coronado each summer and that's become a family favorite as well. Harlow was only 5 weeks when she visited for the first time, Ainsley was 10 weeks.

Favorite date spot or activity when you are child-free?

Yama Sushi House, Clever Koi, Tratto or Mora are go-to's. But we love trying new places so we hop all over the place.

Favorite children's book to read?

Currently, Dragons love Tacos 2. It makes my girls laugh big time and that's just the best!

Favorite adult book to read?

I tend to stick to crime/mysteries and best sellers. Recent fave is "Where the Crawdads Sing"

What do you miss most about being a kid? Not having a care in the world and believing everything just works out.

What's your favorite thing to do with your child/children?

Low key. I love reading or coloring in our down time, both are generally peaceful. Bigger scale, taking them on new adventures, vacations and having new experiences as a family.

Most meaningful moment as a parent?

Sending my oldest off to Kinder. I have never been more proud of how brave she was when she walked in to that big classroom and jumped right in without looking back. That's what all this parenting stuff is about, teaching them what they need to get through this world. Also, cue the big tears for that moment!

If you could give your pre-baby self advice, what would it be?

Don't overthink everything and soak up each little moment and memory.

Who introduced you to NCPG and for how many years have you been a part of the group?

My dear friend, Amy Forsythe, introduced me to NCPG. This is my 6th year!

Best thing learned in NCPG?

Always remember to give yourself grace even when it feels like you are failing. If its something you are struggling with there is likely someone else in the same boat, ask for help and suggestions from your friends and classmates because they have the best tried and true advice. Everything is a phase, just stay consistent and it will work out! And put yourself out there, make new friends and do all the things this group has to offer! Some of my best friends I made from this group year 1, we have had so many laughs, cries, fun adventures, I can't even count.. oh and lots of wine.

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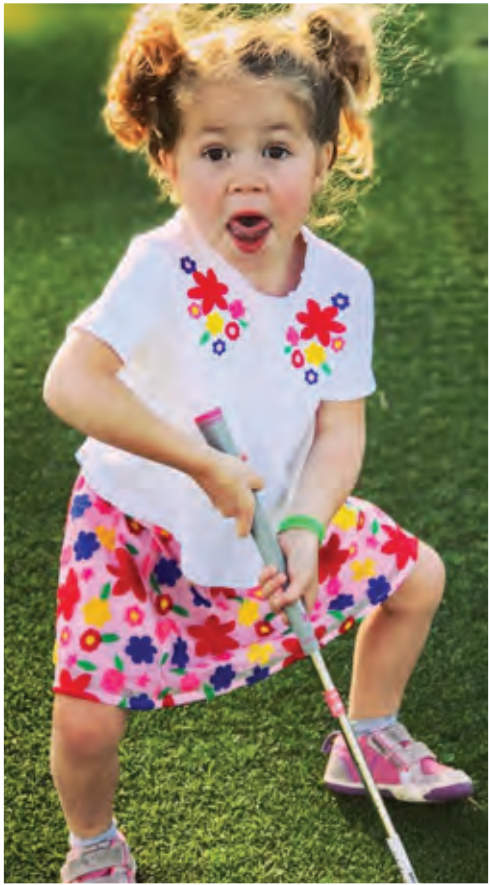
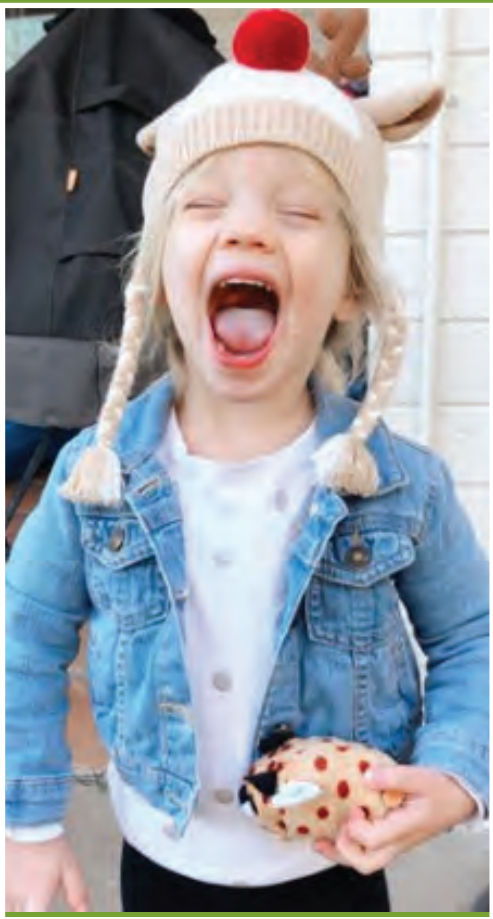
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Spring Smiles



2019-2020 Calendar

Class Schedule

8:45 am Nursery opens
9:00 - 9:40 am Refreshments served
9:45* - 11:30 am Classes are held
***Teachers will start promptly at 9:45!**
11:45 am Nursery closes
11:30 am - 1:15 pm Pre-Infant & Pre-Teen Class

Class Dates

Classes will be cancelled until further notice. Please see website for updates and the 2020-2021 schedule.

***Parent Times* magazine will be distributed digitally in May.

Board Meeting Schedule

May 4th

Saint Barnabas on the Desert Episcopal Church
6715 N. Mockingbird Lane
Paradise Valley, AZ 85253



Board Announcements

Treasury

NCPG continues to offer scholarship opportunities for both membership and nursery dues.

For more information please contact: treasurer@ncpgaz.org

Sponsorship

If you would like to be a sponsor of NCPG next year, or know a company that would, please email us at sponsorship@ncpg.org and we will send information on sponsorship & advertising opportunities.

Communications

WE WANT YOUR PICTURES!
Next month's theme for *Parent Times* is:

PROOF OF MOM!

Please send us any and all pictures of your kiddos WITH you.

In addition, communications would love any **Member-to-Meet nominations** for our upcoming 2020/2021 newsletter year!

Please send all birth announcements, snapshots of NCPG kids and parents, and professional photos to be considered for the front cover in hi-resolution to communications@ncpgaz.org.



Public Relations



Our private **NCPG Instagram** page [@ncpgaz](https://www.instagram.com/ncpgaz) is live! Please request to join this new account. Thanks!



Please continue to use the members only **NCPG Facebook Group** to ask questions, share advice, local events and deals, and to buy and sell. We just ask that we keep everything respectful and positive on the page. Please request to join the group and you will be approved: [ncpgaz](https://www.facebook.com/ncpgaz)

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This is a simple and automatic way for us to support NCPG every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to North Central Parenting Group.

Use the same account on AmazonSmile as your regular Amazon account. Your shopping cart, Wish List, baby registry, and other account settings will all be the same. On your first visit to AmazonSmile, you will need to select North Central Parenting Group as your charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. AmazonSmile will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make will result in a donation. *Please let all your friends and family members know about it!*

When I finally get to leave the house
without the kids:



"YES, PLEASE GET A NEW
CUP EVERY TIME YOU
NEED A DRINK OF WATER.
I LOVE DOING DISHES,"

—SAID NO MOM EVER

When you're trying to get your toddler's
legs into a one-piece pajama



Education: Classroom Norms

Be Respectful:

Be respectful to yourself, others and the learning environment. This includes keeping cell phone use to a minimum and having no food or drinks in the classroom (water is allowed).

Be Kind:

NCPG is a community where parents support one another. Remember to disagree lovingly so it is a safe environment for all.

Be Responsible:

Teachers are responsible to create data driven, research-based lessons. All members are responsible for confidentiality within the classroom. NCPG believes in a safe environment where members feel free to share openly and honestly.



WHEN IT'S 7PM, YOUR CHILD DIDN'T EAT
THEIR DINNER, THE HOUSE IS A MESS AND
YOU'VE GOT 101 THINGS TO DO





How to Homeschool During The Coronavirus Crisis With Free Resources

By Lisa Tolin
Head of special projects for TODAY Digital.

You're a home-schooler now? Check out these free resources for activities kids will love.

With schools closing to stop the spread of coronavirus, you may find yourself working from home with a new side-gig: teacher.

If you're new to homeschooling, you're probably wondering how you can help your kids learn and keep them occupied while you work. Is it possible to avoid a screen time free-for-all and keep your sanity?

With everything from free lessons from Scholastic to

a daily doodle with Mo Willems, these resources will help:

Check The School Website

First things first, see if your teacher or school has learning packets or classes via Google classrooms or Zoom. States and cities that are shutting down schools generally provide some online resources. New York City has grade-by-grade guidance. Check with your child's teacher or principal for guidance.

NBC Learn's Parent Toolkit has guidelines for what students ought to know by the end of the year.

Find A Schedule

Looking for a coronavirus school schedule at home? This sample homeschool breakdown has been making the rounds as a COVID-19 daily schedule.

If you're trying to figure out how to engage your kids after March Break, take a look at this COVID-19 daily schedule.

You may want to try to follow your child's regular school schedule, or decide on a plan with a family meeting. These printable schedules let you plan out your day.

Keep in mind younger children may only be able to focus on a task for 10 or 15 minutes. Take lots of movement breaks, sing songs and get outside when you can.

Watch Webinars

Mo Willems, of "Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus" and "Elephant and Piggie" fame, is hosting "lunchtime doodles" at 1 p.m. EDT.

Jarret J. Krosoczka, author of the "Lunch Lady" graphic novel series and the National Book Award finalist "Hey, Kiddo," is hosting daily drawing webcasts on YouTube at 2 p.m. EDT for all ages.

Khan Academy is a great, free resource for instructional videos on many topics.

Mystery Science is offering free science lessons during school shutdowns.

TED-Ed has video lessons and series by top educators, made into animated videos for kids.

Play Some Read-Alouds

Some of your children's favorite authors are offering daily read-alouds during the crisis.

Mac Barnett ("Sam and Dave Dig a Hole," "Mac B: Kid Spy") will read daily at 3 p.m. EDT and **Oliver Jeffers** ("Stuck," "Here We Are") at 2 p.m. EDT.

Peter H. Reynolds, author of "The Dot" and "ish" will have daily Facebook Lives.

Kate Messner, author of the new middle grade novel "Chirp" and picture book "The Next President" with **Adam Rex**, shares an array lessons from other authors on her website.

Romper put together "Operation Storytime" with read-alouds from enough authors to fill a virtual library.

COVID-19 DAILY SCHEDULE		
Before 9:00am	Wake up	Eat breakfast, make your bed, get dressed, put PJ's in laundry
9:00-10:00	Morning walk	Family walk with the dog *dogs if it's raining
10:00-11:00	Academic time	NO ELECTRONICS Sudoku books, flash cards, study guide, Journal
11:00-12:00	Creative time	Legos, magnets, drawing, crafting, play music, cook or bake, etc.
12:00	Lunch	
12:30PM	Chore time	A: wipe at kitchen table and chairs B: wipe at door handles, light switches, and desk tops C: Wipe front/backrooms - areas and floors
1:00-2:30	Quiet time	Reading, puzzles, nap
2:30-4:00	Academic time	ELECTRONICS OK Ipad games, Prodigy, Educational show
4:00-5:00	Afternoon fresh air	Bikes, Walk the dog, play outside
5:00-6:00	Dinner	
6:00-8:00	Free TV time	Kid shows x3
8:00	Bedtime	All kids
9:00PM	Bedtime	All kids who follow the daily schedule & don't fight

Authors who are planning new read-alouds and lessons are sharing their schedules in a google doc created by literacy advocate **Olivia Van Ledtje**, and more are sharing resources with the Twitter hashtag #kidlitquarantine.

And major children's publishers, including **Penguin** and **HarperCollins**, are planning daily read-alouds and activities.

Use Free Educational Websites

Many educational websites are offering free subscriptions during school closures.

The Facebook group **Amazing Educational Resources** gathered them into a public spreadsheet. It includes resources for reading, math, history, Chinese, coding, music and more.

Scholastic learn-at-home is offering free online resources during the crisis, including 20 days of lessons for grades pre-K to 9 and up to three hours of lessons a day.

Open Culture has free textbooks, movies and audio-books and links to free online courses from professors.

continued...

Audiobooks And Podcasts

The streaming audio service **Pinna** is offering families and teachers two free months of access to their audio streaming service for kids ages 3-12. To activate, go to pinna.fm and use the promo code: PINNA4KIDS.

There are plenty of educational and entertaining podcasts for kids, including **NPR's** *WOW in the World*, *Story Pirates* and *Brains On!*

The **Story Seeds** podcast shows the creative process in real time, with kids and authors collaborating on story ideas. And Grim, Grimmer, Grimest with author Adam Gidwitz (“A Tale Dark and Grimm”) offers safely thrilling spooky tales.

The But Why? podcast includes an episode to explain what’s happening with coronavirus to kids.

Check Out eBooks

Many libraries are closing, but online resources remain available. Check **SimplyE**, **Libby** and **Kanopy** to get free resources with your library card.

The Epic! reading app announced Monday that it would be free to parents for the rest of the school year. To unlock free at-home access, students and their families need a digital invitation from a teacher or school librarian, who can sign up free to provide access to their students and even assign books to read remotely.

Print Activity Sheets

Many children’s book authors offer free activity sheets on their websites.

Jarrett Lerner, author of “Enginerds,” is creating new worksheets every few days that let kids finish a comic or complete a drawing with their own silly ideas.

Author/illustrator **Elise Gravel** also made some new (relevant) worksheets, like make your own silly virus. Your local independent bookstore may be shutting down but offer free delivery or limited pick-up hours. Consider open-ended activity books along with reading material that your child loves.

Get Physical

With kids kept indoors more than usual, don’t forget to provide plenty of wiggle time.

Mark Kanemura, a former backup dancer with Lady Gaga and contestant on “So You Think You Can Dance,” is offering virtual dance parties on Instagram.

Cosmic Kids Yoga has free yoga resources for young children. And **Go Noodle** features short videos to get kids moving.

Just because you’re quarantined doesn’t mean you’re under house arrest. Take your work outside and let the kids dig, or just observe nature. They can track what they see in a science notebook.

Be Creative

This whole exercise is going to require loads of creativity for any parent, especially those working while homeschooling.

Keri Smith, author of the “Wreck This Journal” books, is creating daily exploration prompts at her website. And illustrator Carson Ellis is providing illustration prompts on Instagram.

Author **Kate DiCamillo** is providing weekly writing prompts on YouTube. Bonus: Writing time for kids is quiet time for parents.

Author and illustrator **Dan Santat** is giving kids a chance to earn “badges” during the pandemic, with extra points for leaving parents alone to work.

Americas Test Kitchen Kids is offering free recipes, activities and experiments for kids during the coronavirus crisis.

Sign up for the **PBS Kids** newsletter for more activities to try with kids.

National Geographic Kids also has quizzes, puzzles and games. And **Quizlet** provides free learning games and tools.

Watch Documentaries

If your kids **Netflix**, you can chill (or get some work done). And there are plenty of quality films to get you through quarantine.

Common Sense Media keeps a list of the best documentaries for kids: commonsensemedia.org


For an all-family TV break, shows about cooking and travel can be great cross-overs.


Be kind to yourself; remember this is temporary and no one expects perfection. If you make good use of the new Disney Plus streaming service, your kids may remember it as the best school year ever!



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2

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3

PICK YOUR SEMESTER
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#2 May 11th - May 21st
#3 June 1st - June 11th
#4 June 15th - June 30th
#5 July 6th - July 16th
#6 July 20th- July 30th
#7 Aug 10th - Aug 20th

4

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What Adolescents Really Need from Parents

By Jill Suttie

In a Q&A, neuroscientist Ron Dahl explains how parents can help younger teens avoid depression and anxiety as they become more independent.

As a parent of adolescents, I've often worried about their health and happiness. They seem to be under a lot of social and academic pressure, suggesting they need more guidance from me to help them get through. But how can I support their independence and autonomy while making sure they don't fall through the cracks or become depressed or anxious?

To find out more about how parents can best help their budding teenagers, I spoke with Ron Dahl, a neuroscientist and professor of human health and development at the University of California, Berkeley.

Dahl, one of the leading experts on adolescent development, has spent years studying depression, anxiety, and sleep disorders in adolescence, using intervention studies and, more recently, fMRI technology to increase our understanding of what's going on. His findings have helped uncover the neural underpinnings of adolescence and have led to some interesting discoveries about the role of social supports in teen life. They point the way toward helping our young teens get what they truly need during this very risky yet exciting time of life.

Jill Suttie: Why do you think it's important to do neuroscience research with young teens?

Ron Dahl: We don't think that we're doing primarily neuroscience research; we're doing developmental science research, and an important dimension of teen development is their biology and how neural systems develop. That said, people have become overly enamored with brain science, and sometimes it's naive. Ninety percent of what we're going to learn from neuroscience, any really wise person would say anyway; but that other 10 percent matters. There are some things that are counterintuitive—that are unique insights—and the value of science is to provide those kinds of insights. Still, it should always be a two-way street; it should inform the real world. The teachers, the parents, the clinicians you're dealing with should drive the science and vice versa.

JS: Speaking of counterintuitive, some of your research suggests that parents—maybe even more than peers—have an important role to play in helping prevent adolescent depression. How do parents affect their young teens?

RD: In that transition from childhood to adolescence—or early adolescence—both parents and peers are very important. In that 9- to 14-year-old range, kids become more interested in being admired and respected. We don't know exactly what it is that kids become sensitive to, but it's something about status, being accepted, belonging, being admired, and being valued that

becomes more salient. And that makes sense. Anthropologists who study kids across a lot of different cultures will talk about how reputation effects become important in adolescence. People think that for adolescents, it's all about peers and peer groups; but it's not only that. They care and value being admired by adults, too—caring teachers, coaches, and parents. Yes, there's an increased salience around peers, but it's not one or the other, and there are individual differences. For some kids at higher risk for anxiety or depression, it seems as if the parent role may be more dynamic and more important for longer. If they are struggling with issues of self-identity and where they fit in, it may be because those things are precarious for them, and a parent can provide extra scaffolding that helps them get through.

JS: But how do you get adolescents to listen to you, especially depressed adolescents?

RD: The principle is simple; but applying it is very, very challenging. One of the techniques I use is motivational interviewing or motivational enhancement. What you've got to do is ask your adolescents a series of questions or get them to reflect with you a little bit, helping them identify something they want to do, and then giving them some approaches or ways to think about their situation. If we wait until things have unraveled to a large degree, coming in as a parent and trying to change them is really hard to do in these delicate ways. Staying involved and monitoring and

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building on your relationship can help promote autonomy in a way that actually brings you close.

JS: Your research has shown that adolescents need a lot of social support, and that this is reflected in their brain physiology. How do you explain the relationship between social support and physiological changes in the brain?

RD: First of all, there is no experience we have that doesn't have some biological form. For example, we use a term—social evaluative threat—to talk about the fear one feels that someone's going to evaluate you. More than for physical danger, social evaluative threat creates a powerful physiological response, because for much of human history, being accepted within the tribe was important for our survival.

Interestingly, even though the most dangerous thing we do in modern society is to drive 70 miles per hour down the Interstate, we don't have much arousal in those situations. But stand up in front of people and tell something about yourself, and your arousal level will be really high. For adolescents, the intensity of emotion around being evaluated is even more remarkable. Neural systems evolved to make those assessments—to be extra vigilant in adolescence with respect to: Am I valued here? Do I fit in here? Do I belong?

What's relevant about that for anxiety and depression is that depressed and anxious young people replay these questions over and over through rumination and worry. Think about an experience when you were in middle school where you made one tiny mistake—maybe you were misunderstood or someone disrespected you in some way or you felt embarrassed. Those experiences cause a powerful physiological response. And if you mentally replay the scenario over and over, each time the neural systems will fire and fire. The physiological correlates in the brain

are just reflecting patterns of behavior and emotion that get activated in those situations.

JS: Knowing that adolescents are focused on social scrutiny, it seems that being able to manage one's worried thoughts and emotions could be beneficial for navigating that successfully. What can parents do to help their teens this way?

RD: The feeling of being valued and competent, feeling good about ourselves, is shaped a little by what people tell us; but it's shaped a lot by our experience of actually being competent. This is important, because sensitive parents have the right idea: They want to say the right thing and give their kids a message that they are good at something. But that may ring hollow if you're telling your child he's a good student and he gets a bad grade, or if you're telling your child she's a good athlete, but she doesn't make the team.

What's needed instead is a mastery curve experience—where your kids work at something, they struggle, but they get better and better at it. A mastery curve creates one of the most solid supports for adolescents, and it's rewarding, too. It's part of the reason why kids who won't spend three hours a day doing anything else will spend 14 hours a day playing video games.

One thing we learned about helping kids with anxiety is that you can give them all the cognitive information in the world about how something's not dangerous, and it will have no effect on their behavior. They need to learn through their own experiences—such as graded exposure, where they face something a little difficult, see they can handle it, then try something a bit harder still. Kids at this time of life naturally become bolder, more exploratory—even kids who are anxious become a little more sensation-seeking. This is an opportune time to help them find a path to mastery, through patterns of experience.



JS: How can parents support their kids in gaining mastery experiences?

RD: We developmental scientists tend to use the term scaffolding a lot. The idea is that parents provide support; but you only use scaffolding to the point that it's needed. The art of weaning this away is where the action is. Anything that feels like a parent trying to direct a kid toward what they [the parents] think the adolescent should do is likely to be counterproductive.

If you think about the need to be admired and valued, the implication of having some adult tell you what you should do makes you feel diminished. Even if 90 percent of what you say as a parent is useful information, what youth hear is the 10 percent that makes them feel incapable. The fact that they aren't fully capable of making decisions themselves is beside the point [to them].

I love the quote by Maya Angelou: 'People will forget what you said, they will forget what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel.' I think that's particularly true of kids this age. To feel expanded has tremendous salience. As soon as you catch them taking a positive step in the right direction, you've got to recognize it and admire it, and not step in and tell them, "You're going in the wrong direction." As you soon as you do that, you lose them.

At a practical level, you want to create a context that gives them a range of options and let them find something relatively prosocial and healthy to explore. Wise and well-resourced parents with insight do this intuitively. But, part of the problem with kids from disadvantaged backgrounds is that if they don't happen to be good at the few things available to them at their school—the few sports, or whatever—they may fail to find a positive mastery curve experience. The opportunities may be really limited.

JS: What is the role of purpose in all of this?

RD: It fits in at the very heart. What gives you the feeling of an

expanded sense of self is being able to contribute to something larger than yourself. Wise people have been writing about this long before neuroscience came along.

I often use the term "igniting passions" as part of what's happening biologically as puberty sets in, and these ignited passions can be attached to various things—a particular activity, a particular person, falling in love for the first time. But it can also attach to a sense of purpose and meaning, and that's a wonderfully positive framework for thinking about what's happening in kids' brains at this time.

JS: You've studied how kids handle peer rejection and found it's important for parents to model calm behavior themselves in stressful situations. Do you think parental stress is a factor here?

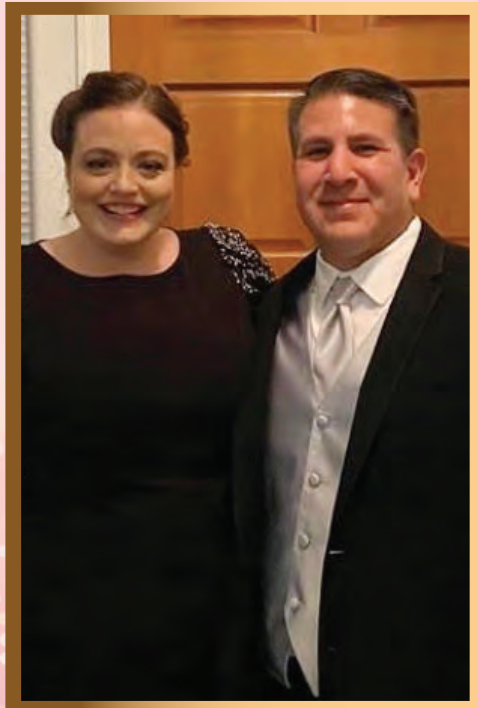
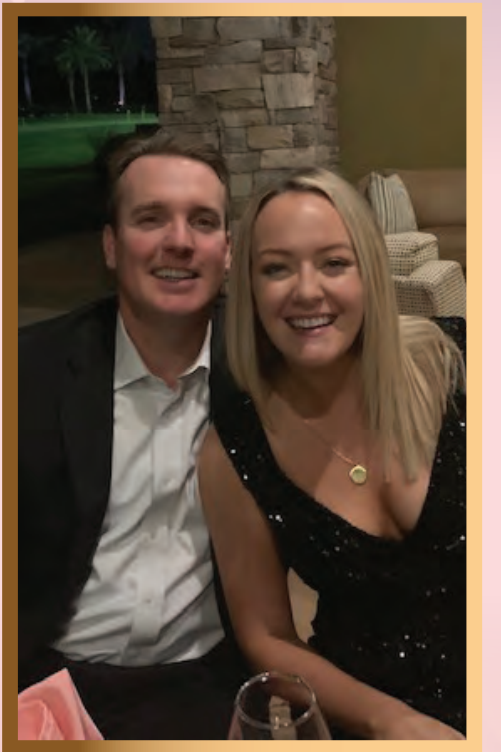
RD: We humans tend to think that the content of our words is what's most important, and we forget that the tone of voice and the feeling conveyed are really powerful signals. We can be saying exactly the right words and be conveying a message we're not even aware of. This is particularly true of anxious kids, because they are particularly sensitive to this.

If you think about young kids, the most important cue about whether the environment is safe is the parent's emotions. One thing we've learned from our work is that if you're trying to push away the negative, you're actually engaging and activating the negative. Trying not to be anxious or angry is not going to work.

You've got to activate the positive. It's not just about being calm. That's hard to do—you can't fake it. Kids have good phony meters. But finding something you like about your child and what they did, and connecting to that and feeling good about that, or finding a source of gratitude to share, become important in preventing negative spirals. I think increasingly our models around depression are less about diminishing the negative and more about promoting the positive.



Glitz & Glam 2020





Liz Imparto
(Pre-K)



Amy Stewart
(1A)



Lesley Issak
(4B)

How Can I Teach My Kids That No Means No

Liz Imparto (Pre-K)

This is where consistency is going to pay off. If you want to say ‘no’ and you are aware that you cannot follow through with the ‘no’, it is best not to say ‘no’ in the first place. Also, it’s important for the parents to support each other so that they don’t end up with one saying ‘no’ and they other saying ‘yes.’

Amy Stewart (1A)

- Strive to learn your child’s specific developmental understanding to set realistic expectations and recognize potential barriers to “no”.
- Set and communicate clear expectations
- Create patterns of consistency with all members of the parenting team including nanny, grandparents etc.

Lesley Issak (4B)

The answer seems so obvious, doesn’t it? If you consistently follow through when you say “no”, your child should learn that you mean it. So why do we all struggle with this one so much? Some of us have strong-willed children who really want to find out everything for themselves, so a “no, don’t climb up those shelves” isn’t a “no” until they see for themselves that shelves can’t hold the weight of a child. In these situations, you’ll do better to control your child’s environment by limiting what they have access to (and you’ll be decreasing the amount of times you have to say “no” each day).

I would suggest looking at the big picture on this one, not just each individual time your child ignores your “no”. Do you mean all of the things you say? Maybe your child hears you on the phone telling Grandma that she can’t visit right now because you are entertaining the neighbors, and your child can see that the neighbors are not, in fact, in your home. What message does that give your child? In general, do you say what you’ll do and then do what you said? If you promise to play tea party before lunch and then busy yourself doing something else, and you do this on a regular basis, then your child understands that you don’t mean what you say.

It also sets a very flexible boundary if you are saying “no” to your child, and then don’t get up to physically disengage your child from what he or she is not supposed to be doing. Or if you say “no” and then allow them to negotiate a “yes” out of you, any resourceful child is going to keep taking advantage of that situation! Repeating yourself several times before following through, or giving multiple warnings, also train your child that they have many chances before you actually mean “no”.

So if your child can consistently see you being truthful, following through on your word, and always following up on your “no” - they will learn that “no” means no. Now, if you could only get your spouse to learn the same concept...

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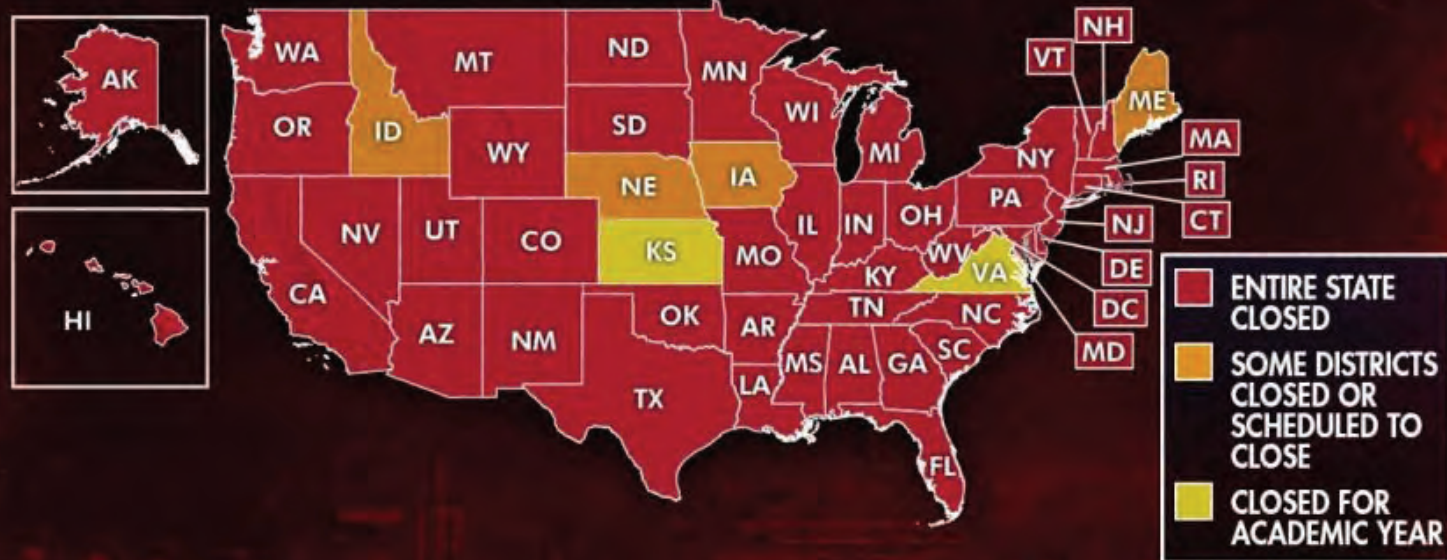
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CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

SCHOOL CLOSURES



HOW PARENTS CAN HOMESCHOOL THEIR KIDS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

(CNN) Monday, March 16th, 2020

Millions of parents and guardians who are used to sending their children off to school are now faced with the task of educating them at home.

Districts across the country are closing schools due to the spread of COVID-19. This means millions of parents and guardians who are used to sending their children off to school are now faced with the task of educating them at home.

The transition can be daunting because it's so unfamiliar. CNN talked to several parents, teachers and homeschooling experts about how to make the most of homeschooling for your family.

Keep in mind that homeschooling isn't school. The most important thing to keep in mind about temporary homeschooling is that it's simply not the same as "regular" school.

Kids used to the school environment won't be as focused. Lessons won't be as professional as the ones they're used to getting. Since local governments are encouraging people to minimize interactions with others, socializing will be hard.

Kimberly Fox, a staff developer for The Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University, said it's important for parents to suspend disbelief and doubt and embrace the new format.

"We don't have to be school," Fox said. "Under these circumstances, we're not going to entirely replace all of the structures that happen at school. But we can do a couple of things to make kids feel more secure and to make us feel like we're making the most of this time."

LET YOUR KIDS MAKE SOME DECISIONS

Several schools and school districts have set up online learning platforms or have given students packets of homework to finish. While these assignments are required, parents should give their children some say in the other things they'll learn.

Jamie Heston, a board member of the Home-school Association of California, said the best way to do this is to have your kids make a list of things they'd like to do and learn. From there, she

said, you can minimize the options as a family.

"There are lots of ways you can have fun and have it be educational, [and] not just be sitting at a table with a book open," Heston said.

Some ideas include math and chemistry through baking, botany through gardening, or learning about outer space through a mobile app.



MAKE A SCHEDULE

Once you and your kids have identified the subjects they'll study, make a schedule and display it in a place where everyone in the family can see it.

Most children work off a schedule in classrooms, so recreating something similar at home can make the transition a bit easier.

However, Jen Reyneri, who has homeschooled two sons, ages 16 and 12, said every family should embrace the opportunity to create a rhythm of life that works for them.

"Include chores, family dinners or breakfasts, and family projects in your new family routines," said Reyneri, who runs a blog and co-owns an Italian restaurant in Hobe Sound, Florida. "Because this is such a unique situation, it's also OK to let everyone sleep in a bit later."

You might find it helpful to set aside time for educational games on a computer or mobile advice, too.



RECOGNIZE THAT KIDS HAVE DIFFERENT NEEDS

Recognizing that children have different needs that need to be met can get complicated in families with several children.

Monica Smith, who lives in Healdsburg, California, has twin 7-year-old boys and said one was recently diagnosed with ADHD. She said her district just completed an individual education plan for this child, and she admitted she is anxious about how she'll be able to manage his special needs while also being there for her neurotypical child.

“Without the help of [school] resources, I’m nervous about how to best meet his needs and keep him engaged,” she said of her special-needs child. “I also need to be conscious of what his twin brother needs, and make sure he doesn’t feel ‘ignored’ just because he has the ability to work independently.”

“Nobody knows your kids better than you do,” said J. Allen Weston, executive director of the National Home School Association in Denver. “It’s OK to take the time to give [each of them] what they need.”

INCORPORATE RECESS

In a typical school setting, kids are allowed to go to recess or get some sort of outdoor time during the day. Homeschooling shouldn’t be any different.

Dr. Jessie Voigts, a homeschooler and founder of Wandering Educators, a global community of educators sharing travel experiences, said it doesn’t matter if this time is structured or not, so long as the kids get outside.



“A walk in the woods is not only healthy for your body and spirit, but your mind, too,” Voigts said. “What new plants are growing? What bugs can you find under decaying logs? Count the tree rings in a downed tree. Reroute a waterway in a little creek. See how the sun moves through the sky. There are so many ways to learn.”

DOWNTIME IS YOUR FRIEND

Downtime, or time for children to work on things quietly and independently, is just as important as activity time outside.

Hannah Gauri Ma, a homeschooler and blogger currently living in the United Kingdom, said this space allows for independent exploration but also can help reduce friction.



“Kids will react differently to a parent as ‘teacher,’ and they will push back in ways they don’t at school,” said Ma, who runs the popular Loving Earth Parenting website. “Allow for the fact that kids will be holding a lot of tension around all these sudden and often stressful changes to their routines and lives.”

USE ARTS AND CRAFTS

Art is an important part of education, and homeschooling provides parents with an opportunity to get creative with crafts.

Amanda Kingloff, the founder of Projectkid.com, a website with tips for crafting, suggested getting creative with materials for different art projects every week. In particular, Kingloff advised reusing washers, buttons, fabric swatches and ribbons, as well as used jars, plastic bottles and cardboard tubes from toilet paper rolls to form the basis for recycled art.

“You probably have these things around the house anyway,” Kingloff said. “Many of these materials allow kids to create three-dimensionally without the challenge of sculpting something or making something out of clay.”

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Photo by Ben White on Unsplash

Miscarriage is lonely, but you are not alone.

By Maegan Slowakiewicz

[Trigger warning: This essay describes one woman's emotional journey with miscarriage.]

My OB-GYN's waiting room (which was once a space where I happily awaited hearing my baby's heartbeat), now became a ticking time bomb to my doctor telling me what I already knew in my heart: I had lost my baby.

There are a myriad of things that are horrific about miscarriage. It is physically horrible, emotionally draining, mentally unbearable, and turns your world upside down. But other mamas in my life (including my own mother) who opened up to me and told me about their experiences demonstrated a breathtaking sense of bravery and resilience.

It wasn't until after I lost my baby at 10 weeks and confided in my friends and loved ones about my experience, did I realize that nearly everyone I talked to knew someone who went through this heartbreaking ordeal. But by far the most beautiful result of these discussions was the conversations I had with other women who went through this themselves: the women who hugged me, cried with me and supported me.

When so many women suffer from this loss, why is it that so many of us feel so incredibly alone when it happens?

When there is pain and heartache involved, it can be hard to open up about your personal experience—but the most difficult conversations are often the most important to have. The more we open up about our heartbreaks, the more we can support other mothers who may be suffering in silence.

After a certain period of time during your first trimester, your growing child becomes a reality and it starts to feel safe to peruse Pinterest and start daydreaming of nursery designs. You may have even gone shopping already, strolling the aisles and buying a few things, tucking them away in a closet or drawer.

When I lost my child at 10 weeks I had already figured out what my announcement would look like as I imagined revealing our little presence to the rest of the world. But then, suddenly, the rug was ripped from beneath my feet. A future I had begun to visualize was erased before I could even wrap my head around what was happening. My family of five vision had slipped through my fingers.

The social media algorithms became absolute torture. Only a few weeks prior I was clicking through a zillion baby ads and pregnancy articles daydreaming about my tiny person growing inside me—now they have been nothing but a constant and incredibly painful reminder of what could have been.

The little face at the ultrasound I saw only once has now transformed into a tiny silhouette I can only imagine in my mind, chasing after my other children in the yard, never having the chance to leave footprints behind.

After ending up in the hospital from a miscarriage gone completely awry, what was once a very personal and heart-breaking experience had become public.

Having to explain my presence at the ER to complete strangers was difficult each time I had to page for help.

But it did force me to address one of the most painful moments in my life by opening up to those who were concerned for my health and well-being. It helped me begin the conversation I needed to in order to start walking the path of healing my heart.

Your body heals slowly, your mind even slower, and your heart may never heal completely. But for any mama reading this who has had a miscarriage please remember: you are not alone.

I feel your pain as you may occasionally bring yourself to touch the few new baby items you bought—bittersweet gifts that may bring you to tears.

I cheer you on as you sincerely congratulate the other women around you who are pregnant or are just beginning their motherhood journey, no matter how much it stings inside.

I congratulate your strength as you wake up each day and continue to heal.

You are not alone, and many, many other women around you can relate to you, support you and feel your pain as you look down at your overwhelmingly empty lap.

I'm so grateful for my village during this time. The village that is motherhood is one of the most beautiful things about being a mother and I never want to forget just how much I needed them right now or just how strongly they came through for me. Because when they need me, I'll be there in a heartbeat.

Another article worth reading:

The 5 Stages of Grief after a Miscarriage—and How to Deal with Them, by Carly Snyder, MD
<https://www.mother.ly/life/stages-of-grief-after-miscarriage>

Craft: Recycled Milk Jug Watering Can



Kids love to help take care of plants inside and outside of the home. Let them help by giving them their very own watering can!

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Cleaned, empty milk jug
- Scissors
- Glitter, markers to decorate the outside

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Poke several small holes in the lid to let a drizzle of water out
2. Decorate and personalize the outside of the jug
3. Let your kids start watering those plants!

Recipe: Easter Egg Smoothie Popsicles

TIME: 10 minutes **SERVINGS:** 6 popsicles

INGREDIENTS:

- 1.5 cup mixed strawberries and raspberries
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1/2 banana
- 6 plastic easter eggs
- 6 popsicle sticks

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a blender, blend strawberries, coconut milk and banana until liquidy with no chunks of fruit.
2. Line up your eggs so the pointy side of the eggs face down. Using a chopstick or a pen, poke a hole in each plastic egg on the wider side of the egg. Wash well after.
3. Fill a squeeze bottle with smoothie mix. Make sure your eggs are closed tightly, then carefully fill each Easter egg with the smoothie mixture.
4. Add a lollipop stick to each egg in the hole in the egg.
5. Freeze Easter Egg Smoothie Popsicles for a minimum of six hours, preferably overnight!





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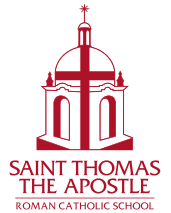
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