



Coping Skills by Prevent Child Abuse America

"As a scientist, I know that the risk to our children for experiencing child abuse and neglect during times of extreme stress and uncertainty, like anticipation of natural disasters and outbreaks like this, is actually quite high. School and workplace closings greatly increase stress in parents lives, resulting from loss of income due to unpaid leave, an unexpected or irregular need for childcare, and even food insecurity when school meal programs and other valuable resources become unavailable. Also, an unintended consequence of social distancing is separation from social support and connectedness, which science shows are protective of mental health and positive parenting and discipline strategies." – Melissa T. Merrick, President & CEO, Prevent Child Abuse America

Connect with family, friends, and neighbors (from a safe distance):

- Call/Skype/FaceTime/Zoom with your loved ones that do not live in your home
- Look at photo albums or create a family tree
- Write letters and make cards
- Host a virtual meal, book club, dance party, etc.
- Play an online game with others
- Go outside and talk to a neighbor from a safe distance

Tips for Staying Active & Engaged as a Family:

- Play cards, board games, do puzzles
- Make art or do crafts together
- Cook and bake together (great opportunity to talk about math as you prepare the recipe)
- Build forts, design marble runs, make an obstacle course, etc.
- Make up a play, perform a concert, create an art gallery, put on a puppet show
- Have a dance party, do fitness activities together
- Write stories or poems and read them aloud, have story time
- Go outside and garden or do yard work together
- Pick a topic that you want to explore/research as a family – sports, animals, astronomy, etc.
- Sing and play instruments
- Establish routines – it is more important now than ever to create a sense of structure at home with device-free meal times, physical movement, and a balance between academics/work and enjoyable activities that can reduce stress, as well as provide opportunities to connect with family and friends. Also, eating healthy meals, exercising, and getting adequate sleep are essential to physical and emotional health.

For more information on how to manage stress and anxiety and for other resources for parents on how to talk with children about COVID-10, establish routines during school closures, and modeling proper hygiene, visit the **Prevent Child Abuse America website:**

<https://preventchildabuse.org/coronavirus-resources/> or call 1-800-244-5373