



ALOFT
INTEGRATED WELLNESS

SOCIAL DISTANCING, CONTAINMENT AND FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH

Two therapists share tips for parents

Yes, the next few weeks will bring many challenges. Be kind to yourself and others - we don't yet have a script for this. Here are some tips to promote structure, security and mental health during this confusing time.

1. **Hydrate.** Remind family members to take frequent water breaks - flush out cortisol and adrenaline (aka "stress hormones").
2. **Routine.** Establish a new normal, for now. This means regular sleep/awake schedules and a similar routine from day to day. Kids often do best if this is written or visual.
3. **Play.** This is nature's neurological super power and is guaranteed to reduce anxiety. Play with your kids, encourage them to play with siblings.
4. **Nature.** Get outdoors at least twice per day. Take a walk, collect sticks in your yard. Build a fort. Fresh air and sunshine promote resilience.
5. **Purpose.** After a few days of restlessness your brain (and your children's brains) will need a sense of purpose and accomplishment. Clean out a drawer, reorganize a closet, make a photo album or order prints.
6. **Exercise.** This is one of the quickest ways to boost your mood. Find a live stream Zumba or Yoga class, go for a run or hike in a local park.
7. **Meditation.** Regular meditation is proven to reduce anxiety and some studies suggest it actually increases our stress tolerance and immune systems. Several apps are offering free content during this crisis.
8. **Check In.** Check in regularly with your children - kids are wonderful observers and often poor interpreters. Talk openly and honestly with them. You can find resources online to help with age appropriate explanations.
9. **Limit Media.** Checking media 3-5 times per day will be more than enough. Checking all day will only increase anxiety and take you away from self-care and being present.
10. **Sleep.** Keep a regular bedtime routine including good sleep hygiene. Sleep boosts our immunity and emotional well being. Let teens sleep in later (most are severely sleep deprived) while sticking to an adjusted schedule.
11. **Get Dressed.** Don't depart from your normal "getting ready" routine. Lounging in PJs all day can be comfy but also depressing.

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