

# COVID-19 PARENTING

## Keeping Children Safe Online

Children and teens are now spending a lot more time online. Being connected helps them reduce the impact of COVID-19 and encourages them to continue with their lives...but it also presents risks and dangers.

### Online Risks



Adults targeting children for sexual purposes on social media, gaming, and messaging platforms



Harmful content – violence, misogyny, xenophobia, inciting suicide and self-harm, misinformation, etc.



Teens sharing personal information and sexual photos or videos of themselves



Cyberbullying from peers and strangers

### Tech fixes to protect your children online

- > Set up **parental controls**
- > Turn on **SafeSearch** on your browser
- > Set up strict **privacy settings** on online apps and games
- > Cover webcams when not in use

### Create healthy and safe online habits

- > Involve your **child or teen** in creating family tech agreements about healthy device use
- > Create device-free spaces and times in your house (eating, playing, schoolwork, and sleeping)
- > Help your child learn how to keep personal information private, especially from strangers – some people are not who they say they are!
- > Remind your children that what goes online stays online (messages, photos, and videos)



### Spend time with your child or teen online

- > Explore websites, social media, games, and apps together
- > Talk to your teen on how to report inappropriate content (see below)
- > **Common Sense Media** has great advice for apps, games and entertainment for different ages

### Keep your child safe with open communication

- > Tell your children that if they experience something online that makes them feel upset, uncomfortable, or scared, they can talk to you and you will not get mad or punish them
- > Be alert to signs of distress. Notice if your child is being withdrawn, upset, secretive, or obsessed with online activities
- > Create trusting relationships and open communication through positive support and encouragement
- > Note that every child is unique and may use different ways to communicate. Take time to adjust your message for your child's needs. For example, children with learning disabilities, may require information in simple format



Share with colleagues, friends and family | Spread the word | Keep children safe online

Report online violence against children:

Other resources:

CHILD HELPLINE

INHOPE HOTLINES

IWF PORTALS

SAFETY BOOKLET

UNICEF

OTHER LANGUAGES

EVIDENCE-BASE



unicef  
for every child



CHILDPOD  
WORLD CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

We PROTECT  
GLOBAL ALLIANCE



eSafety  
Commissioner

End Violence  
Against Children

INTERNET  
GOOD THINGS



USAID  
PROTECTING CHILDREN



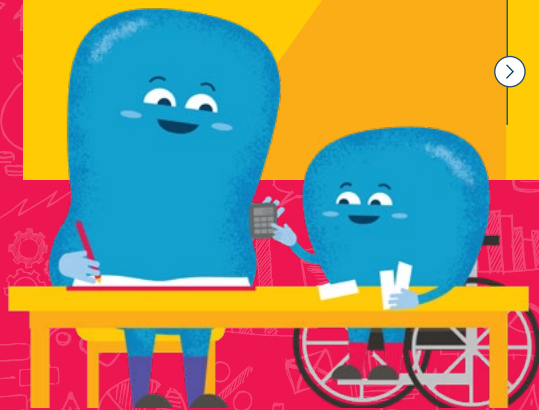
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# COVID-19 PARENTING

## Family Budgeting in Times of Financial Stress

Millions are stressed about money because of COVID-19. It can make us feel exhausted, angry, and distracted. Children or teenagers asking for things can cause arguments. But we can do things that help cope with financial stress.

### Involve children and teens in making a family budget



- ▶ A budget is how we decide what we will spend our money on, even in stressful times
- ▶ Making a budget together helps children understand that we all need to make hard decisions in difficult times
- ▶ It also helps families to have enough at the end of the month, and borrow less



### Find out if there is help you can get

Your government may be giving money, or food parcels to families during COVID-19

Ask about whether places in your community are giving support

### What do we spend now?

- ▶ Get a piece of paper (or old newspaper or a cardboard box) and a pen
- ▶ Draw pictures of all the things that you and your family spend money on each month
- ▶ Write next to each picture how much each thing costs
- ▶ Add up how much money you have each month to spend

### Talk about needs and wants

- ▶ Needs: Which things are important or must have for your family to survive? (like food, soap to wash hands, needs for ill or disabled family members)
- ▶ Wants: Which things are nice to have but not essential?
- ▶ Discuss with your children what things you could try to spend less on as a family

### Build your own budget

- ▶ Find a bag of stones or anything with lots of bits. This is your money for the month
- ▶ As a family, decide what you will spend on what, and put the stones on your picture
- ▶ If you can save even a tiny amount for the future, or for another emergency – it is great

**Well done! Millions of families find that this helps.**

For more information click below links:

[TIPS FROM WHO](#)

[TIPS FROM UNICEF](#)

[OTHER LANGUAGES](#)

[EVIDENCE-BASE](#)

# COVID-19 PARENTING

## Family harmony at home

When we model peaceful and loving relationships, our children feel more secure and loved. Positive language, active listening, and empathy help maintain a peaceful and happy family environment these under stressful times.

### We are models for our kids

- How we talk and behave in front of others is a big influence on how they behave too!
- Try to talk kindly to everyone in the family, adults and children
- Bad communication between adults in the household can have a negative impact on our children
- The more we practice modelling peaceful, loving relationships for our children the more secure and loved they will feel

### Use positive language. It works!

- Tell others what you want them to do instead of what you don't want them to do: Instead of "Stop shouting," try "Please speak more quietly"
- Praise makes others feel appreciated and good about themselves. Simple words like, "Thank you for clearing the dinner," or "Thank you for watching the baby" can make a big difference

### Nice things to do together as a family

- Let each family member take turns to choose a whole-family activity each day
- Find ways to spend quality time with your partner and other adults in your home, too!

### Be an empathetic active listener

- Listen to others when they are talking with you
- Be open and show them that you hear what they are saying
- It can help to even summarise what you have heard before responding: "What I hear you saying is..."

### Share the load

- Looking after children and other family members is difficult, but it's much easier when responsibilities are shared
- Try to share household chores, childcare, and other tasks equally amongst family members
- Create a schedule for time "on" and time "off" with other adults in your household
- It is okay to ask for help when you are feeling tired or stressed so that you can take a break

### Feeling stressed or angry?

- Give yourself a 10-second pause. Breathe in and out slowly five times. Then try to respond in a calmer way. Millions of parents say this helps - A LOT
- Call a truce when you can see arguments building up, and go into another room or outside if you can
- See Tip Sheets on "When We Get Angry" and "Keep Calm and Manage Stress"



Click [HERE](#) for useful resources and support if you are experiencing violence at home

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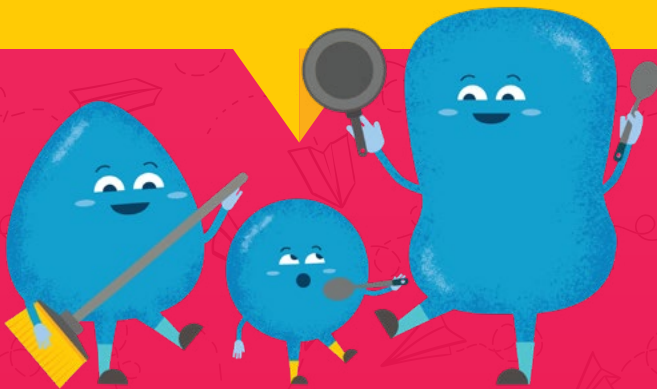
# COVID-19 PARENTING

## Learning through play

Millions of children face school closure and isolation in their own home. This tip is about learning through play – something that can be fun for all ages!

### Types of play

- There are so many different types of play that can be both fun AND educational
- Language, numbers, objects, drama, and music games give children opportunities to explore and express themselves in a safe and fun way



### Telling stories

- Tell your children a story from your own childhood
- Ask your children to tell you a story
- Make up a new story together starting with "Once upon a time..." Each person adds a new sentence to the story
- Act out a favorite story or movie – older children can even direct younger ones while learning responsibility

### Change the object!

- Every day household items like brooms, mops, or scarfs can become fun props for games
- Place an object in the center of the room and whenever someone has an idea, they jump in and show the rest what the object can be
- For example, a broom might become a horse or a microphone or even a guitar!

### Movement games

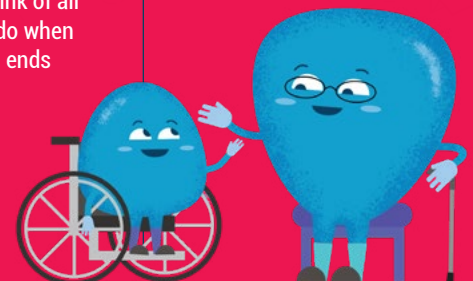
- Create a dance choreography to your children's favorite songs. First person does a dance move and everyone else copies. Everyone takes turns being the leader
- "Challenge" who can do the most toe touches – jumping jacks, windmill toe touches in a minute
- "Mirror" each other – facial expressions, movements, sounds. One person can start as the leader and then switch. Try it with no leaders!
- Freeze dance: Play music or someone sings a song, and everyone dances. When the music stops, everyone must freeze. Last person still dancing becomes the judge for the next round
- Animal dance: Same as above but when the music stops, call out a name of an animal, and everyone has to become that animal

### Memory game

- First person says, "When COVID-19 lockdown ends, I am going to... (e.g., go to the park)"
- Second person adds to first person, "When COVID-19 lockdown ends, I am going to the park and... (e.g., visit my best friend)"
- Each person adds to the previous trying to think of all of the fun things to do when COVID-19 lockdown ends

### Singing

- Singing songs to your baby help develop language
- Play or sing a song, and the first one to guess it right becomes the next leader
- Make up a song about handwashing or physical distancing. Add dance movements!



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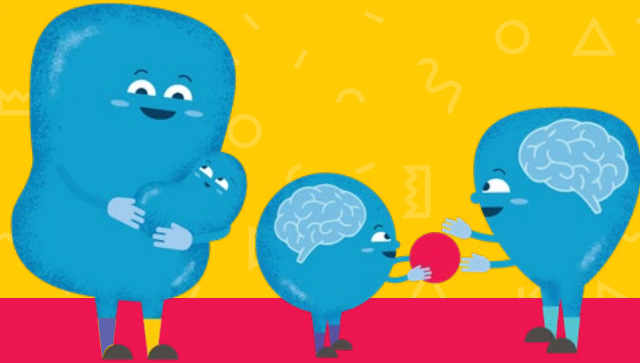
EVIDENCE-BASE

# COVID-19 PARENTING When We Get Angry

We love our children and teenagers, but the stresses of COVID-19, money and lockdown can make us angry. Here is how we can maintain control and manage our anger so we do not hurt others.

## Stop the river at the source

- > The same things usually make us get stressed and angry every time
- > What makes you angry? When does it happen? How do you normally react?
- > Prevent it from starting. If it happens when you are tired, get some sleep or rest. If it's hunger, try to be sure you can eat. If it's feeling alone, ask someone for support
- > Look after yourself. Try the 'take a pause' and 'managing stress' resource sheets for ideas



Brain science shows if you control your anger or do something positive you increase your child's brain development.

**That's real success!**

## Take a break

- > When you start feeling angry, take a 20-second cool down. Breathe in and out slowly 5 times before you speak or move
- > Go somewhere else for ten minutes to regain control of your emotions. If you have safe outdoor space, go outside
- > If it's a baby that won't stop crying, it's OK to leave them safely on their back and walk away for a bit. Call someone to calm you down. Check on them every 5-10 minutes

## Take care of yourself

- > We all need to connect. Talk to friends, family, and other support networks every day
- > Cut back on drinking or don't drink, especially when the kids are awake
- > Do you have weapons or things that can be used to hit others? Lock them up, hide them or take them out of the home
- > If it's not safe for them at home it is OK for children to go out to get help or stay somewhere else for a while

**The COVID-19 crisis isn't forever – we just have to get through it now...one day at a time.**

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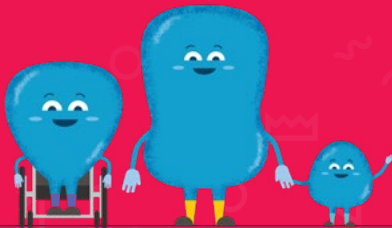
# COVID-19 PARENTING

## Parenting in crowded homes and communities

Keeping your family healthy and safe from COVID-19 can feel even harder when you live in crowded conditions. There are things you can do to make this easier for your family.

### Stay where you are

- Limit those leaving and returning to your immediate living space to as few and as infrequent as possible
- Only leave your household or area for essential reasons like getting food or medical attention



### Help your children with physical distancing

- Explain to your children that they have an important job of keeping themselves and their community healthy by temporarily physically distancing from others
- Show them extra positive attention when they make an effort to practice safe physical distancing from others

### Make handwashing and hygiene fun!

- It might be hard to find soap and water, but practicing good hygiene is more important now than ever
- Try to wash all family members' hands as often as possible
- Let children teach each other how to wash their hands
- Encourage children to avoid touching their face

### Share the load

- Looking after children and other family members is difficult in cramped spaces, but it's much easier when responsibilities are shared
- Try to share household chores, childcare, and other tasks equally amongst family members
- Create a schedule for time "on" and time "off" with other adults in your household
- It is okay to ask for help when you are feeling tired or stressed so that you can take a break

### Exercise daily

- Encourage children to think of activities they can do to exercise while avoiding contact with who do not live already in your immediate space
- Jumping activities, dancing or running in circles can be fun!

### Take a Pause

- You might not have space to yourself to deal with all the stress and emotions you are feeling
- Notice when you are feeling stressed or upset and take a pause...even three deep breaths can make a difference!

Well done! Millions of families finds that this helps



### Keep using Tips 1-6

Keeping positive, having a routine and trying to get some one-to-one time with each child when you can will help you manage your child behaviours and your feelings.

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