



Summer 2020

TAKE CARE

HEALTHY TIPS FOR SUMMER

Summer 2020 is unlike any summer we can remember, but there are still sunny days to enjoy, berries to pick and great books to discover. May your family find both needed respite and fun times together this summer.



Mood-Boosting Tips for Families During the COVID-19 Pandemic

by: Kathi Kemper, MD, FAAP, article originally appeared on [Healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org)

Feeling connected to the people and world around us is a key part of good mental health. After months of social distancing for COVID-19, families are still spending less time with others as the pandemic continues. If cancelled summer plans like festivals, family reunions, and other gatherings have made it challenging to keep your family's spirits up, you're not alone. Here are some simple ways to help boost everyone's mood during the pandemic:

Lighten up

Sunshine can help brighten mood. Try to spend 30 to 60 minutes outdoors daily with your children and other members of your family, whenever possible. Bright lights, especially in the early morning, can also help.

Get plenty of sleep

Try to help your children stick to bedtime routines so they get enough sleep each night. Some ways to help promote relaxation and a good night's sleep:

- A shower or bath before bed
- A story, song, or relaxing music
- A back, hand, or foot rub
- A cool, dark room
- Using the bed just for sleep
(not using your phone, watching TV or doing work or homework)

Talk it out

Talk with your children and teens regularly and be a good listener. Parents can also benefit from finding a friend or family member to discuss worries and disappointments. If conversation cannot be in person because of social distancing, then connect by phone, video calls, or other virtual connection.

The Children's Health Foundation is a non-profit organization that partners with your Pediatrician to develop quality health care programs in our community. We work together to foster the highest quality care for children, to raise awareness on health issues, and to achieve better children's health outcomes. Please ask your provider for more information.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH foundation

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Help your Family Eat Wisely

Include protein-rich foods for breakfast and lunch. Protein helps keep your blood sugar stable and gives your brain the fuel it needs. Also, if possible:

- Eat foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Sources include fish (salmon, sardines, mackerel, herring); plants (flaxseeds, chia seeds, dark leafy vegetables, kidney beans, pinto beans, soybeans, walnuts, tofu); and certain oils (canola, soybean, walnut). Research suggests a diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids may help support mood.
- Choose plenty of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. They contain vitamins, fiber, and minerals your brain needs.
- Limit junk food and fast food. They're often full of fat, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars, which can cause spikes and slumps in energy that may leave us feeling irritable.

Go for gratitude

Focus on the positive. For what do you feel gratitude or appreciation? Research shows that regularly expressing gratitude helps boost overall happiness, leading to lower rates of stress and depression. Help your child write down at least three people, places, events, or things each day that make them feel thankful. Keep your own gratitude journal, too!

Step it up

Help your children to exercise or play so hard they break a sweat every day. When we exercise, our bodies release chemicals that can help boost mood. Remember to choose activities that help them stay at least 6 feet away from people outside your household. Also, try to avoid anything that involves sharing equipment such as balls, bats, and playground equipment.

Lend a hand

Helping other people makes us feel better about ourselves. It can be as simple as calling a neighbor or family member who is home alone or putting up a sign thanking people who deliver the mail. Help your children come up with at least one kind act each day. Keep a journal of all the things you and your family do for others—even the little things.

Manage screen time

Make a family media plan and limit your family's exposure to TV and internet ads suggesting that buying things can make people happy. This will help limit messages about happiness that are false or unrealistic. It will also help you manage your family's exposure to upsetting news. Consider instead: reading, playing cards or board games with family members, working a puzzle as a family, playing music or singing together, making a video to share, cooking together, or taking a family walk or bike ride.

Keep in mind: our electronic devices can also be used to create and maintain healthy social connections during the pandemic. You and your children may consider participating in online educational programs, virtual visits with grandparents and loved ones at higher risk from COVID-19, and participating in virtual online community events. It's also good to become familiar with telehealth options offered by your doctor and your child's pediatrician in case health questions arise.

Address stress

Try meditating as a family or other relaxation techniques such as yoga to help everyone decrease stress and improve mood. There are helpful mobile apps that offer reminders to take deep breaths and other tips to relax. Time in nature may help too.

What if your child's mood doesn't improve?

Sometimes, steps like these aren't enough to improve your child's mood or reduce their anxiety. Be sure to contact your pediatrician if you are concerned that your child is struggling with stress or anxiety or if you are worried they might hurt themselves or someone else. Your pediatrician can also help determine if underlying health conditions or medications may be causing mood problems. They can also connect you with other health professionals such as a psychologist, psychiatrist, or social worker.

More Information <https://healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Mood-Boosting-Tips-for-Families-COVID-19.aspx>

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Integrative Medicine and Mental Health Leadership Workgroup (Copyright © 2020) & Healthychildren.org

Resources for Families during COVID-19 from Reach Out and Read



Reach Out and Read Online Resource Library

<https://reachoutandread.org/what-we-do/resources-2/>

The online resource library includes links and activities from many of Reach Out and Read's partners. There are resources for both young children and their caregivers.

Read-Aloud

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLP_pdG1A03h1IPXP-VSu5fZYJVO21rB1

Many ROR supporters and pediatric champions have created brief read-aloud videos (#readaloud) to share with families.

KEEP UP WITH YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH DURING COVID-19



PEDIATRICIANS ARE OPEN FOR CHILDREN

Child health providers have made their offices safe to see sick and well patients, and are using telemedicine for many health conditions and checkups. Patients love the convenience of talking to a doctor from their own home! Call your clinic with any questions or concerns.



KEEP WELL VISITS

It is important to stay on schedule with your well-child visits and schedule appointments for adolescents.



DON'T DELAY VACCINES

Routine vaccines protect your child and vulnerable community members. Getting a preventable illness could be much worse for your child than COVID-19.

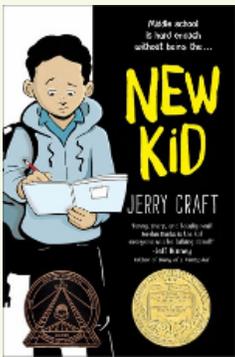


MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Especially during uncertain and anxious times, pediatricians use visits to check in on your child's mental health and ask about stressors in the family.

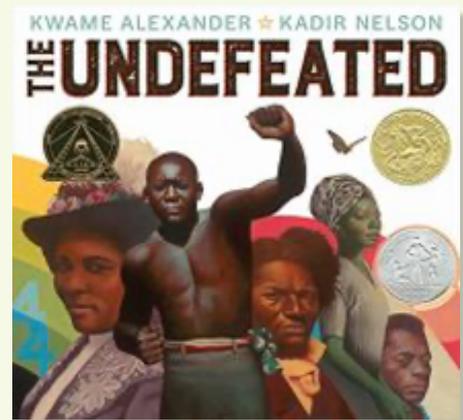
2020 Children's & Young Adult Book Award Winners

"The single most significant factor influencing a child's early educational success is an introduction to books and being read to at home prior to beginning school!" – *National Commission on Reading*



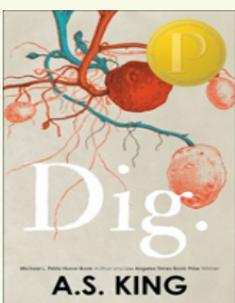
"New Kid by Jerry Craft introduces African-American seventh grader Jordan Banks, an aspiring artist who leaves his home in Washington Heights each morning and takes the bus to his new, private, mostly white school in the Bronx. In his sketchbook, he chronicles what it's like for him to navigate his two different worlds, the ups and downs of middle school, and the various micro-aggressions he faces each day. The book was inspired by Craft's own school experiences, as well as those of his two sons, and has been a hit since its release last February." – *Publisher's Weekly*
This middle grade graphic novel is an excellent choice for tween readers, including for summer reading.

2020 Newbery Award winner



"In The Undeclared by Kwame Alexander & Kadir Nelson, Nelson paints historical figures and contemporary heroes with equal ease and grace; in a final spread, the faces of young black girls and boys look ahead, beaming and determined: "This is for us." Alexander remembers peaceful Civil Rights activists, "the righteous marching ones who sang we shall not be moved because black lives matter," communicating clearly that when black lives matter, America is stronger. Historical notes for each figure conclude this powerful work. Ages 4–7." – *Publisher's Weekly*

2020 Caldecott Award Winner



"In Dig by A.S. King, the novel explores the corrosive, labyrinthine secrets that affect multiple generations of a wealthy family in suburban Pennsylvania, exposing the exacting cost that five far-flung teenage grandchildren must pay to maintain the family name."

– *Publisher's Weekly – Young Adult Readers*

2020 Printz Award Winner

