

Parenting During a Pandemic

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When we begin to know ourselves in an open and self-supportive way, we take the first step to encourage our children to know themselves-

Dr. Daniel Siegel, M.D, "Parenting from the inside out"

Group Norms for today's meeting

- All questions and concerns are valid, but expressed questions and concerns need to relate to topics covered.
- Respect one another's **confidentiality**.
- It is o.k. to disagree, or have a different perspective, but please do so **kindly and respectfully**.
- Hold space for everyone's experience and perspectives.
- This is a time to **empower one another as parents**, please be mindful to use non-judgmental tone and words.
- Remember you **ARE AMAZING**; parenting during a pandemic is one of the most difficult, if not *the* most difficult things you will ever do.

What adolescents may be experiencing

- Loss of “normalcy”
- Feelings of disconnect from peers
- Lonely (especially with each parent working, or only child)
- Strong emotional mood swings; irritable, sad, frustrated
- Sleep/eating disturbances
- Fear/anxiety



What parents may be experiencing



- Struggle with balancing work and homeschooling
- Feelings of overwhelm, fear, grief and loss
- Decrease in frustration tolerance and patience
- Increase in anxiety, sleep and eating disruptions
- Feelings of inadequacy pertaining to parenting
- Strain on your relationship with your child and your adult relationships
- “Infodemic”
- Catastrophizing/fortune telling
- Loss of control

Supporting your child during the pandemic

Your pre-teen/teen needs to feel connected, safe and emotionally supported.

Their **emotional wellbeing** is more important than their academic progress during this time.



1. Hold a safe space for your child to feel; validate justified feelings.

Encourage open conversations, beginning with open-ended questions about what they know, what they are worried about, and how they are feeling:

- What have you heard about the coronavirus?
- Where did you hear about it?
- What are your major concerns or worries?
- Do you have any questions I can help you answer?
- How are you feeling about the Coronavirus?

"SPEAK TO YOUR CHILDREN AS IF THEY ARE THE WISEST, KINDEST, MOST BEAUTIFUL AND MAGICAL HUMANS ON EARTH, FOR WHAT THEY BELIEVE IS WHAT THEY'LL BECOME."

-Brooke Hampton

Once you know what information they have and what they're concerned about, then you can help to fill in any necessary gaps.

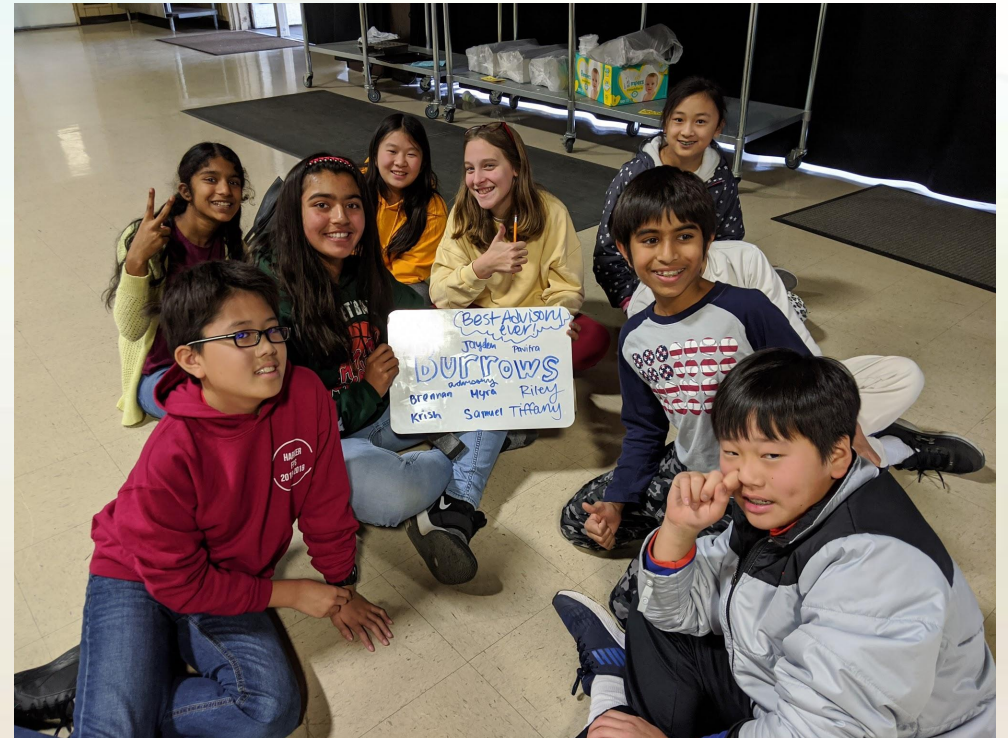
2. Provide routine and structure

- Enlist your adolescent in creating a daily schedule.
 - If they help create it, they are more likely to follow it.
- Try and eat breakfast, lunch and dinner together, and around same time each day.
 - Use this as a time to connect, set daily goals and express gratitude.



3. Make sure to build in times to laugh.

Watch a comedy together, exchange jokes during meal times.



4. Experience adventures together

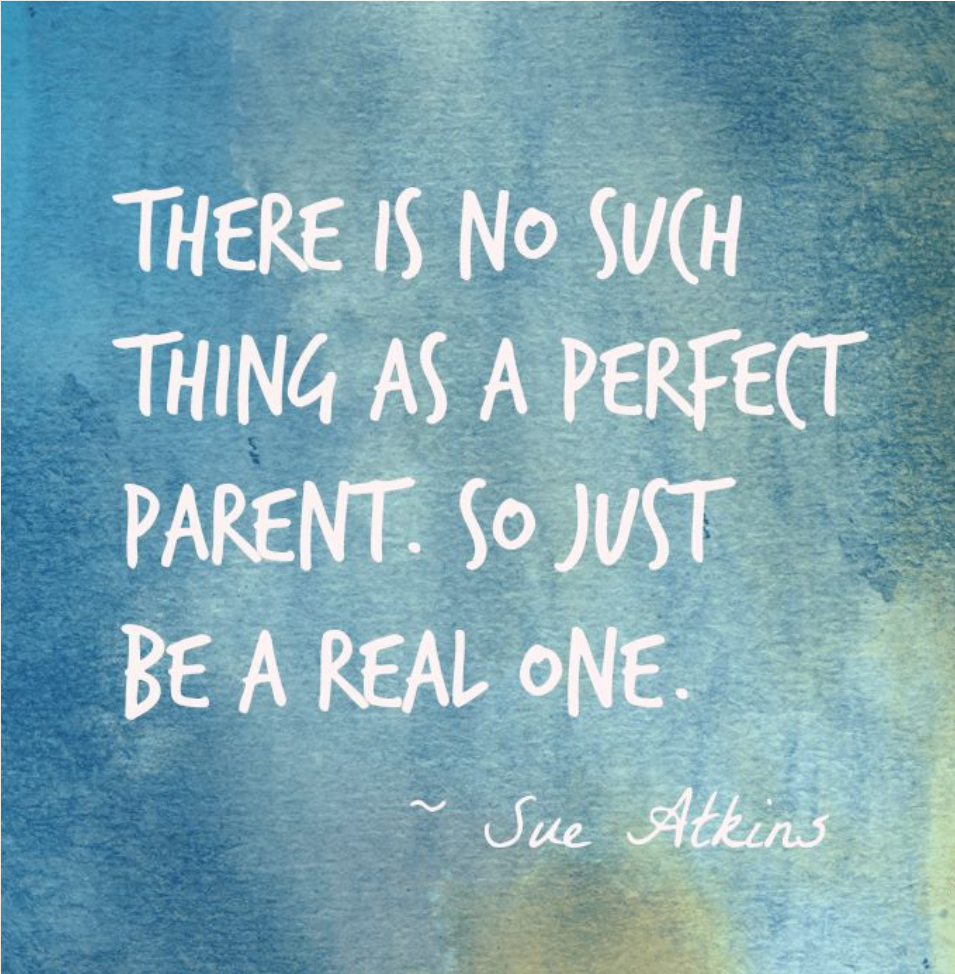
- relay races
- outdoor art
- craft activities
- gardening
- walks or bike rides in the neighborhood

Adolescents will open up as they experience moments with you.



5. Provide reassurance

- Your adolescent may worry about how you're going to get through this.
- Remind them of other situations in which they felt helpless and scared.
- All ages of children love family stories, and these narratives carry a lot of emotional weight.
- Remind them that you have been through challenging times before and got through it.
- Reliving these kinds of narratives helps the whole family to build resilience and hope.



THERE IS NO SUCH
THING AS A PERFECT
PARENT. SO JUST
BE A REAL ONE.

~ Sue Atkins

6. Practice the G.L.A.D Technique with your pre-teen/adolescent

- **G** -- One **gratitude** that you are thankful for today.
- **L** -- One new thing you **learned** today.
- **A** -- One small **accomplishment**.
- **D** -- One thing of **delight** that touched you today.

Positive Mind.
Positive Vibes.
Positive Life.

Taking care
of your mind &
thoughts

Taking care of
your physical
health & body

Self-Care

Increasing your
own well-being through self-
care behaviors

Taking care
of your spiritual
health

Taking care of
your emotions

How to care for yourself and model healthy behavior

- **Be kind to yourself.** Create realistic goals and expectations for yourself
- Let yourself experience **strong emotions**, and realize when you may need to avoid experiencing them to continue functioning
- Step forward and take action to deal with your problems and meet the demands of daily living
- Step back to **rest and re-energize yourself.**
- **Remain focused on the here and now**

Modeling self care and healthy habits continued...

- Limit the amount of information you take in related to COVID-19
- Do what makes you feel a **sense of safety**: trust your instincts and ability to problem solve
- Structure a daily schedule: wake up at same time, shower and get dressed for the day
- Practice mindful/healthy eating
- Focus on what **you can control**

BE KIND
to yourself



Parenting During Pandemic Resources

- Dr. Daniel Siegel “Parenting from the Inside Out”: <https://www.drdansiegel.com/>
- [Coronavirus Sanity Guide](#)
- [That Discomfort You're Feeling Is Grief](#)
- [Helping Kids Manage Anxiety During a Pandemic](#)
- [COVID-19 social distancing: Together apart, screen time connects isolated kids with family, friends](#)
- Caring for your well-being during coronavirus:
https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/greater_good_guide_to_well_being_during_coronavirus?_ga=2.26827069.1017256153.1586567594-293587699.1584982920
- [Opinion | How to Protect Your Mental Health During the Coronavirus](#)
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