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COVID-19: Strategies for Coping and Building Structure at Home

While children are at home due to COVID-19, it is helpful to consider your and your child's needs for structure, learning/education, physical activity, social contact, leisure time and stress management. It is also important to address children's fears and worries and provide age appropriate explanations about the situation.

Establish a reasonable schedule

- Set a schedule that works for your family!
- Children benefit when they have consistent wake-up, meal/snack, and bedtime routines each day.
- Try to schedule similar activities in both of your schedules together (eat lunch together; plan for quiet time for your work and your kids' reading; work calls during "recess"/breaks).
- Long days at home without a set schedule can lead to boredom and conflict.
- Find out how your child's school plans to keep students engaged and try to follow the suggested schedule. Many schools are providing virtual instruction and/or assignments.
- Start each morning reviewing the schedule, including subjects and activities planned for the day. The schedule can include activities included as part of your child's school schedule, art, recess/gym, music/dance, homework, and social interactions with peers and family members via phone or video. It can be helpful for your family to have this schedule visually displayed (printed or written out) in a place where all family members can see it (on the fridge, in your child's work area).
- Keep blocks of time reasonable for your child (20-30 minute blocks of academic work may be sufficient for young children; 1-2 hours for older kids).
- Use freely available educational resources (see next page).
- Remind yourself that everyone in your family is adjusting to a new routine. Schedules do not need to be followed perfectly – be flexible!

Move

- Everyone – children and adults – will benefit by keeping active each day.
- Play active games with children (such as tag, hide-and-seek, Simon Says, and relay races).
- Consider bike rides, walks/hikes, dancing or online exercise videos for children.



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Stay connected

- Children and adults are happier and less anxious when socially connected with others.
- Use technology when able/reasonable – Facetime, email or text family and friends, make videos to share, write letters/cards or create art for your neighbor!
- Stay connected to your faith. Many faith groups are offering virtual services and activities.

Provide rational, calm explanations about COVID-19

- Children recognize when adults are stressed. They are also coping with and adjusting to new schedules and less social contact.
- Be sure to ask your child if they have questions or concerns about the situation.
- Work hard to clarify their understandings (or misunderstandings).
- Let children know what they have control over and how they can protect themselves and others.
- Provide developmentally appropriate information about how COVID-19 can be passed on to others, that most people get better and that health professionals are working hard to take care of those who are sick in isolated settings.
- Use vetted resources for talking with children about COVID-19 (see next page).

Resources for type 1 diabetes

- In general, children should be taught to wash hands frequently, avoid touching their face, and stay away from others at this time.
- For children with type 1 diabetes (T1D), families should work together to carefully monitor blood glucose levels, insulin administration and ketones.
- Ensure you have all needed supplies (insulin, fast acting carbohydrates, glucagon, CGM/pump supplies).
- Make sure you know how to get in touch with your medical team (weekdays and weekends) and have a plan for sick day diabetes management.
- Stay well-hydrated and be sure to stock some drinks with carbohydrates.
- JDRF: [Coronavirus and Type 1 Diabetes](#)
- BeyondType1: [Coronavirus and Diabetes – What You Should Know](#)

Resources for talking with children about COVID-19

- [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Talking with Children about Coronavirus Disease](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)
- [Rise and Shine from Children's National – Coronavirus Resources](#)



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Activities and educational resources

- [Indoor Dancing](#) | [Indoor Yoga](#) | [Stop Breathe Think](#) | [Headspace](#)
- [Free Virtual Field Trips](#)
- [Scholastic – Free Teaching Tools](#)
- Instead of screen time, try podcasts for kids ([The 25 Best Podcasts for Kids](#)) and teens ([10 Must-Listen Podcasts for Tweens and Teens](#))
- [Simple Activities for Children and Adolescents](#)

Example Weekday Schedule (Young Child)

7:00-9:00am: Breakfast, get dressed, brush teeth
9:00-10:00am: Learning Block 1
10:00-10:30am: Snack/social time (Facetime)
10:45-11:30am: Outside/Inside play
11:30-12:00pm: Reading
12:00-12:45pm: Lunch
1:00-2:00pm: Quiet time/nap
2:00-3:00pm: Learning Block 2
3:00-4:00pm: Free Play; Snack
4:00-4:30pm: Reading/writing
4:30-5:15pm: Art project or play (or screens!)
5:30-7:30pm: Dinner, clean up, bath, books, bedtime

Example Weekday Schedule (Tween/Teen)

7:00-9:00am: Breakfast, get dressed, shower
9:00-10:30am: Schoolwork or projects
10:30-11:30am: Social time (Facetime)
11:30-12:00pm: Independent free time/reading
12:00-1:00pm: Lunch
1:00-1:45pm: Help with chores
2:00-4:30pm: Schoolwork/projects with breaks
4:30-5:15pm: Exercise/Outside time
5:30-7:30pm: Dinner, clean-up, TV
7:30-bedtime: Relax, social time, bedtime routine



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_____ 's Daily Schedule

TIME	ACTIVITY	COMPLETE
	Get Dressed Brush Teeth	
	Wash Hands Eat Breakfast	
	Learning School Work	
	Social Time (facetime)	
	Wash Hands Eat Lunch	
	Learning School Work	
	Free time Play	
	Wash Hands Eat Dinner	
	TV show	
	Take a shower Brush Teeth	
	Pajamas	
	Read Bed	

*Be sure to add in diabetes tasks throughout your day