

# family time

## Newsletter from Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital

### Free “School” Websites

Keep your kids reading, thinking and growing. Check out many educational Internet sites that offer free access to families during the COVID-19 crisis. Type *free educational websites for kids* into your computer's search engine.

Website projects can keep your children busy learning new facts and skills after they finish their homework. You may need to buy printer paper and other supplies to make suggested projects. Other sites teach by using online games and stories.

The Internet also offers free daily/weekly/hourly planners to track your kid's studies.

Check out some of these free sites.

- [goodhousekeeping.com/life/parenting/g31677468/education-companies-offering-subscriptions/](https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/parenting/g31677468/education-companies-offering-subscriptions/) - Find a listing of Education Companies offering free subscriptions to parents during school closings.
- ScholasticLearnatHome—20 days of 4 learning tasks- K-6+
- [Kids.nationalgeographic.com](https://kids.nationalgeographic.com) – games, videos, animals, explore
- [Abcya.com](https://www.abcya.com) – free game of the week
- [highlightskids.com](https://www.highlightskids.com) – activities, jokes, games, explore, share, listen
- storylineonline through You Tube – stories read by actors
- [PBSLearningMedia.com](https://www.pbsllearningmedia.com) and [pbskids.org](https://www.pbskids.org) provide quality lessons.
- [Studenthandouts.com](https://www.studenthandouts.com)
- [Kpcnotebook.scholastic.com](https://www.kpcnotebook.com)
- The Cincinnati Zoo provides Home Safari Live at 3 PM every day.
- Pinterest offers craft ideas and free printables.
- See world museums by visiting <https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>.

### Keep Your Family Calm in Uncertain Times

Disasters and emergencies cause fear and anxiety. A change in routine tells kids something is wrong. Parents can help prevent panic and keep everyone calm.

1. *Model calm and positive behavior.* Your children watch and listen. Make your words and actions positive.
2. Talk to your children about the COVID-19 pandemic. Answer questions in words *they understand*. Tell them you will keep them safe.
3. Find a credible source of information to help you make informed decisions.
4. Turn off the TV news while your children are awake.
5. Ask your children to help plan your daily family routine. Include study, exercise, playtime, reading and family-together time.
6. Give everyone a chore. Each family member can help at home – cooking, cleaning, laundry, or caring for younger children in the family.
7. Get outside - for walks and play. Stay at least 6 feet from other people during the COVID-19 pandemic.
8. *Be patient.* Kids react to stress with various behaviors. They may cry, misbehave, get angry and have trouble sleeping.

These tips help families deal with stress during a crisis and everyday life. Let the positive behaviors practiced during crisis become normal family routine.

## Common Sense Emergency Plan

The *current COVID-19 pandemic* has forced families into the planning mode.

Health and safety experts tell families to plan ahead for emergencies and disasters. The CDC, Department of Homeland Security, FEMA and Red Cross provide easy-to-read fact sheets to help families plan.

No one can prevent emergencies. However, a simple plan of action helps your family cope and survive with less stress. It prepares your family for the unexpected.

Using the facts you already have, start your emergency plan today. Write down the information you gather. File this plan for possible future disasters - weather, earthquakes, disease, fire, terrorism.

In the event of a crisis, you will need to know:

- How you will receive alerts and where to find local information for advice. *Information from a trusted source is crucial.* Trusted sources include health and weather professionals, law enforcement, hospitals, government officials and government agencies.

- How to keep in touch with family, schools, work and others.
- Phone numbers and emails of people who agree to help your family.
- An evacuation route or an alternate place for shelter.

Include in the written plan a grocery list of supplies for **two weeks**:

- Food, water, prescription medicine, over-the-counter medications and other health supplies.
- Household items like toilet paper, laundry detergent, feminine supplies and disinfectant.
- Supplies for family members with *special needs*. Babies need wipes, diapers, formula, food, and medicine. Pedialyte may be needed in case of illness. Seniors or family with health needs may need special foods or medical supplies.

Experts suggest families keep a 2-week supply on hand at all times.

Finally, your plan must include childcare if schools or daycares close. Equally important is a plan for the care of parents or family members who may get sick or have special needs.

Disasters and emergencies are stressful for *everyone*. Not everyone copes with stress in the same way. Be kind and patient as you care for your family's needs. Look for signs of distress. Know where to seek help if needed.

TO LEARN MORE VISIT

- [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)
- [redcross.gov](http://redcross.gov)
- [fema.gov](http://fema.gov)
- [ready.gov/pandemic](http://ready.gov/pandemic)



## Time-Outs Help

Parents can help their child when they misbehave or lose control of their emotions. Experts suggest many tools to assist parents as they deal with a child's negative behavior. Time-out is one approach.

This 3-step time-out tool benefits both parent and child. It includes a warning, quiet time and a skill-building lesson.

When parents use a time-out calmly and with love, it helps a child:

- Cool down,
- Re-group,
- Discover a consequence for breaking rules, and
- Learn a positive behavior to replace a negative one.

During this time-out, parents can take some deep breaths and prepare to teach a skill or positive behavior at the end of time-out.



Time-outs work best when you:

1. Give your child a warning. *“Stop the behavior or have a time-out.”*
2. Follow through with the warning.
3. Calmly and swiftly take your child to a quiet place. Your child can help prepare this place in advance.
4. Avoid lectures or arguing during time-out.
5. Prevent playtime during the time-out.

After your child calms and the time-out ends, the parent should *gently* discuss the specific need for the time-out. Calmly state the behavior *you expect* in the future.

According to experts, time-outs should last about one minute per year of age of the child, or until the child calms. In between time-outs, praise for good behavior benefits children. For young children, distraction and redirection are also good tools to support positive behavior.

## Cleaning Tips

When a family member is sick, it is important to help prevent the spread of illness. Frequently clean the surfaces in your home. Wipe down door knobs, handles, counters, light switches and tabletops that you touch often. The medical website WebMD.com suggests you also clean your phone, the remote control, the bathroom, tables and computers. *Use a cleaner that has disinfectant and an EPA number on the label.*

Wash and clean stuffed animals, sheets, blankets, towels.

***Do not forget the importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water.*** Keep hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol for quick use in between hand washings.



## classes & events

Due to the COVID-19 virus, most classes and events are **suspended** until further notice. When the governor lifts current restrictions, call the numbers below for more information and about when classes may resume.

Carol Jo Vecchie Women & Children's Center at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital

For information on upcoming classes and support groups, log onto [www.st-johns.org](http://www.st-johns.org).

Pre-registration required for all classes. Unless otherwise noted, call 217-744-2229.

Memorial Medical Center

For information on upcoming classes and other support groups, log onto [www.memorialmedical.com](http://www.memorialmedical.com).

Pre-registration required. Unless otherwise noted, call 217-788-3333.

### Dealing with Feeling Support Group for Pregnancy, Baby Blues & Postpartum Depression

In compliance with HSHS St. John's Hospital policy of "no visitors that are not essential," the support group *New Moms: Dealing with Feelings* is suspending its meetings until further notice. **However group facilitator Beth LaFata is available through email at [bhlfata@gmail.com](mailto:bhlfata@gmail.com) or phone 217-415-5690. If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to reach out!**

The following is a short list of resources on social media;

- New Moms: a virtual support group. (Facebook) located in Chicago IL.
- Mom life -support group (Facebook)
- #postpartum depression. (Instagram)

COVID-19 has closed libraries, museums, play areas and fitness clubs. However, your local library can still help you. Log onto your library's webpage, enter your library card number and password. You will find many resources to help teach and entertain your family.

For example, Lincoln Library in Springfield, Illinois offers:

eDownloads:

- **Books** - eBooks, eReadIllinois, hoopla
- **Movies** - Kanopy for parents and KanopyKids

*It is best to log- on early in the day.  
They have limited check outs.*

eResources:

- BookFlix
- Brainfuse (chat for homework help)
- Scholastic Teachables (lesson plans, games, puzzles, skill sheets)
- Tumble Book Library (talking picture books)
- Homework Spot - which even offers SAT prep and practice test and tips on applying to college.



## Parent Help Line

Parenting tips

New ideas

Referrals

We welcome all parenting concerns - big or small.

Call **(217) 544-5808** or **(888) 727-5889**.

10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

7 days a week

365 days a year



Log onto

[www.parenthelpline.org](http://www.parenthelpline.org).

We continue to add new tips to help parents.

**Find information on topics below, and much more!**

**RSV**

**Resiliency:**

**A Needed Family Trait**

**Discussing Current Events With Young Children**

**Keep Kids Safe from Medical Marijuana**

**Raising Kids with a Global Mindset**

**A Healthy Lifestyle Increases Resiliency**

**Good Stress and Bad Stress - Know the Difference**



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*Parent Help Line at St. John's Children's Hospital.*

Share your tips with other parents.