

Day to day...

Spring is slowly making its grand entrance. Days are slightly warmer, with sunset now at 7:30 pm. The air seems fresher. Daffodils have bloomed, and tree buds are plumping! Are there more and louder birds out there, or is it just me? So much HAS stayed the same, in nature. But we see changes around us, and they are dramatic. Our individual experiences may differ...

Is your family able to hunker down (there's that expression again) amicably? Are you working along side your spouse / remote learning kids? Or do you go out the door as an essential worker (thank you!) each day? Perhaps you and your family have figured out some things that are working, settled into a routine, found a balance of work and play, a flow, day to day.

I think it's worth noting once again - if you haven't already read [*Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)*](#) found on [my webpage](#), please do so. As it notes, *"You know your child best. Let their questions be your guide as to how much information to provide. However, don't avoid giving them information that health experts identify as critical to ensuring your children's health. Be patient; children and youth do not always talk about their concerns readily. Watch for clues that they may want to talk, such as hovering around while you do the dishes or yard work. It is typical for younger children to ask a few questions, return to playing, then come back to ask more questions. When sharing information, it is important to provide facts without promoting a high level of stress. Remind children that adults are working hard to address these concerns and keep them safe."*

How can you make your day to day less stressful for your kids, for yourself?

- **Design the day.** Get into a routine. Get dressed. Staying in pajamas feels too much like the weekend. Use big colored sticky notes or whiteboard where everyone can see, and map out the order of the day. If you need to move things around it's easily done. Don't try to mimic school, but stay within remote learning guidelines.
- **Turn off the TV.** Virus coverage can be stressful for all ages. Monitor what your student is looking at online, and what they talk about on social media. Screen time limits are needed now more than ever, as the "School Day" devotes major time to screens.
- **Anxiety is normal.** Remind kids we all get anxious at times. It's part of our "survival toolbox." When anxiety is too high, wind down with meditation. Lots of apps. out there, such as Dreamykid.com
- **Read. Journal. Create art. Listen to music.**
- **Go outside. Exercise. Move!**
- **OK, HUNKER DOWN---** Board games, puzzles, TED Talks for Middle School, Netflix, binge watch...

- **Check-in often w all family members.** Staying in touch remotely with older relatives is good for both grandparents and grandkids.
- **Kids are learning more than schoolwork.** They are learning how to BE in a challenging and disorienting time. Keep in mind this is not going to last forever.
- **Look to others, and how they cope.**
Lots of ingenuity and creative energy out there! I saw recently on the news a guy who takes photos of families on their porches and has created a business called Porch Portraits. Music concerts are randomly happening on the balconies in Italy. Birthday's on wheels!--People decorate cars with balloons, streamers, drive by parade-like and sing happy birthday! Woohoo! Whiskey makers are now making barrels of hand sanitizer. Well ok then...

We have a ways to go with all this. But as someone said to me recently, "I guess we'll all remember where we were when the world stopped." A second later they added, "When it's the darkest, we see the stars."

Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us!

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<https://www.guadalupe-school.org/programs/counseling-services/>