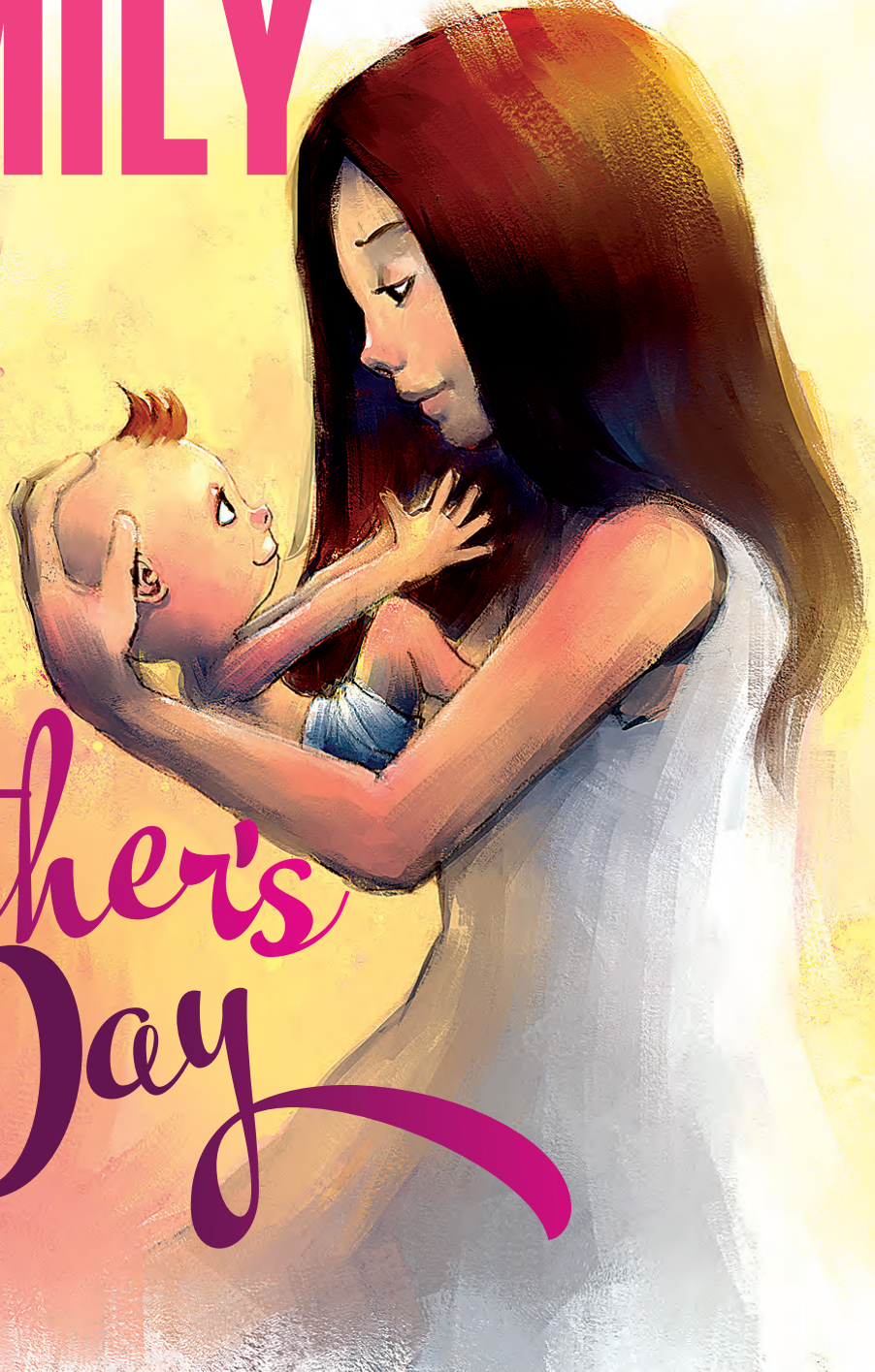


Washington FAMILY

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MAY 2020



HAPPY
*Mother's
Day*

PAMPER YOURSELF
AT HOME



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READERS' RESPONSES

We welcome your feedback on specific articles, overall themes and anything else related to editorial content. Enter your comments on the Feedback tab of our website, WashingtonFAMILY.com, or email us at info@washingtonfamily.com.

Please note we reserve the right to edit or refrain from publishing comments we deem inappropriate.

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WE WANT
YOUR
FEEDBACK

OUR FUTURE LEADERS WILL COME FROM MONTESSORI

If the COVID-19 crisis has taught us anything, it is that we are part of an interdependent, fragile world. It has also taught us the vital importance of scientific thinking. Finally, it has taught us that problems of this magnitude and complexity require adaptive leaders who can work with others to create effective strategies around which all segments of society can coalesce.

Fostering an interdependent mindset, scientific thinking and adaptive leadership skills has been foundational to the Montessori approach to education since Maria Montessori launched her first school in 1907. These outcomes are natural by-products of the way Montessori classrooms function: teachers introduce concepts in a big-picture perspective, allowing students to move about freely and work in small groups, experimenting and engaging in self-directed projects. This structure provides many opportunities for students to practice leading teams and working together to accomplish a goal.



Sometimes parents ask, "How will my child be prepared for the real world?" Our answer is that Montessori principles are the very things our children need to learn to not only be successful in the world, but to improve the world. Montessori principles such as self-motivation, initiative, creative thinking, scientific theory, emotional intelligence, ethics, communication and leadership will be integral if we want to see a world that can better address the next global crisis.

At Oneness-Family Montessori High School, the only Montessori high school in the Washington area, we are building a 21st Century Leadership program founded upon Maria Montessori's vision. We've gathered a team of exceptional thought leaders to create a program that incorporates essential leadership skill sets and will have students joining together for a real-world capstone project in their community each year. The program will launch in September 2020.

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Single Page Design



Calendar of Events



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Managing Editor
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Breaking the Monotony

I have to be honest: I thought this would get easier. I thought the longer we had to stay at home—working, helping our kids with school, social distancing from family and friends—the easier it would be to adjust to our “new normal.” I believed that having the same daily routine might even be comforting, making us feel like we have some control in our lives right now.

But so far, that hasn’t been the case. In fact, doing the same thing day in and day out doesn’t feel comforting or empowering; it just feels monotonous. Boring and tedious. My friends and I joke that we’re stuck in the movie “Groundhog Day.” (Perhaps, like Bill Murray’s character, the only way for us to get out of this loop is by becoming better people. Something worth considering!)

In our pre-coronavirus lives, days of the week were distinguished by various school and extracurricular activities. Monday was art class and soccer, Tuesday was music and karate, and so on. Weekends were for sports and acting lessons, playdates and shopping. We went to restaurants, to the movies and to friends’ houses. Every day was different, and that was exciting.

So when every day is Groundhog’s Day, how do you mark milestones like birthdays and holidays? That was the big question we wanted to tackle in this issue. I hope that our feature stories on creative ways to celebrate your children’s birthdays and to pamper yourself at home on Mother’s Day can help you add a little more joy to those special days.

We know you can’t pick up a copy of this month’s Washington FAMILY at your kid’s school or your local library right now, so we’re bringing the magazine straight to your inbox. For the first time, we’re exclusively digital. Now, that’s exciting! Plus, we’re adding lots of extra content to WashingtonFAMILY.com and our social media channels, so bookmark us and visit often!

Finally, if there’s a topic you’d like us to cover, coronavirus-related or not, you can always email me at PFeinstein@MidAtlanticMedia.com. The days may be boring, but we’ll get through them together.

Stay safe, and be well. ■

PJ Feinstein

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Explore our National Parks

Enjoy the outdoors while social distancing by taking a virtual tour of a National Park. You can soar over an active volcano, kayak through an iceberg or even fly with the bats.

FREE artsandculture.withgoogle.com/en-us/national-parks-service/parks

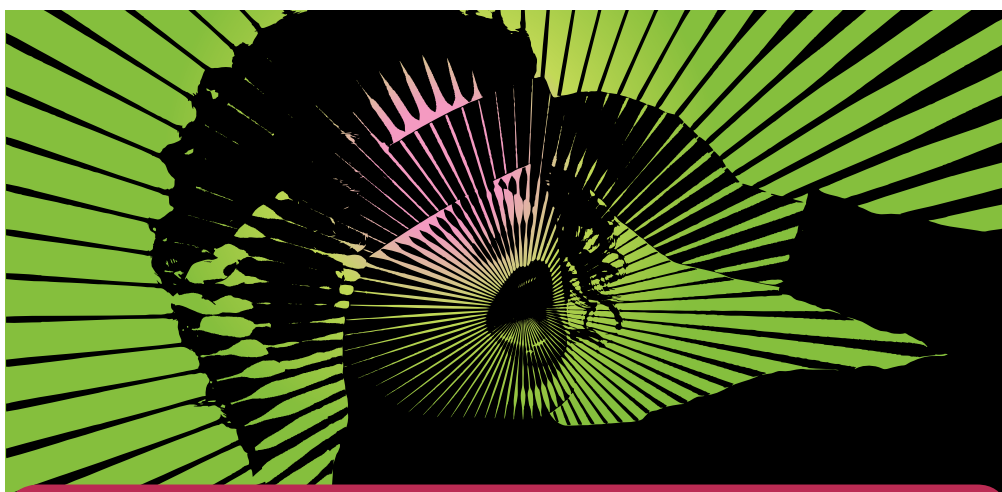
#TogetherAtHome

Enjoy concerts from famous musicians who are also hunkered down at home, such as Chris Martin, Hozier, Jennifer Hudson and Barenaked Ladies, while supporting the World Health Organization's coronavirus response.

FREE globalcitizen.org/en/connect/togetherathome

Visit the YMCA

The doors to the YMCA of



With event venues and restaurants closed during the coronavirus crisis, activities have all moved online. So instead of our typical calendar, we've rounded up some virtual fun for the whole family. However, please keep in mind that, like everything else happening in our lives right now, these events are all subject to change.

Metropolitan Washington may be closed, but virtual Y experiences are open to the public. Take an exercise class, learn how to cook, perfect your tennis and swimming skills or find some fun activities

for the kids.

FREE ymcadc.org/virtualymca

Cook Together

Tune into Delish on Instagram Live for kid-friendly recipes like Mason Jar Ice Cream, Spaghetti Cake and

Eggo S'mores. And check their stories for archived recipes.

Weekdays at 1 p.m. **FREE** instagram.com/delish

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KIDS

Story Time

The D.C. Public Library has moved its story time online! A few times each week, local librarians read books for all ages on Facebook Live.
FREE [facebook.com/dclibrary](https://www.facebook.com/dclibrary)

Lunch Doodle

Missed a midday art class with the Kennedy Center Education Artist-in-Residence, Mo Willems? Don't worry: All 15 episodes of Mo's three-week run, along with downloadable activities, are still available online.
FREE [kennedy-center.org/education/mo-willems](https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/mo-willems)

Jam Sessions

Jam with Jamie, a nationwide

children's entertainment company, livestreams music classes every day of the week and offers on-demand access to all past jams, too. A portion of every donation goes to the nonprofit Baby2Baby.
FREE [jamwithjamie.com](https://www.jamwithjamie.com)

(Anti) Social Club

Ivy City's new family social club, The Lane, is offering a "temporary adaptation on togetherness" with daily virtual programming to keep little ones entertained. There are story times and sing-alongs, science experiments, crafts, yoga and more. *Donations are suggested*
[thelanesocialclub.com](https://www.thelanesocialclub.com)

Mind Games

The Spy Museum's new virtual program for grades 7-12 dives into the world of intelligence analysis. Learn how spies collect and analyze secrets while being careful to avoid their own cognitive biases.
FREE [spymuseum.org](https://www.spymuseum.org)

MOMS

Get Sculp'd

Looking for a high-intensity workout at home? Sculp'd, a fitness studio in Alexandria, Virginia, is operating as a virtual studio during the crisis and offering a variety of livestreaming and on demand classes.
Registration is required, prices vary per plan. [sculpd.co](https://www.sculpd.co)

Yoga Flow

Stretch away your stress with ExtendYoga's livestreaming classes. A variety of online instruction is available daily, including vinyasa flow, power flow, gentle yoga and meditation.
FREE for COVID-19 frontline workers. [extendyoga.com](https://www.extendyoga.com)

Labor Confidence

It's an especially stressful time to be pregnant, so preparing for your baby's birth day can help you feel more in control. Learn evidence-based comfort techniques and

explore other resources in this introductory class from Lamaze International.

FREE [elearn.lamaze.org](https://www.elearn.lamaze.org)

Support Group for Moms

Postpartum Wellness, a local counseling center specializing in maternal mental health, is hosting a weekly online support group for all mothers. Share your thoughts on anything related to the pandemic, from school closures to the uncertainty of our country.

Thursdays at 7 p.m. **FREE**
[postpartumwell.com](https://www.postpartumwell.com)

Guided Painting Class

Pour yourself a glass of wine and enjoy a paint-and-sip experience from the comfort of home. ArtJamz offers a variety of virtual guided art classes every day, plus at-home paint kits available for pick-up or delivery.
\$10+ per class. [artjamz.co](https://www.artjamz.co) ■

Change to Washington Family May Distribution

Due to disruptions caused by Covid-19 the May 2020 issue of Washington Family will not be available on newsstands. Our digital magazine will be available on our website at <http://digital.washingtonfamily.com/issues/May-2020/index.html>. Additional content will be available on [washingtonfamily.com](https://www.washingtonfamily.com).

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By Lindsay Ponta

DIY Clay Handprint in a Frame

Mark This Moment in Time With a Homemade Mother's Day Gift

SUPPLIES:

Air-dry clay
Clay roller or rolling pin
Parchment paper or silicone mat
Bench scraper or kitchen knife and ruler
Alphabet stamps
2 thin paintbrushes
Dark acrylic paint
Metallic wax paste
Lint-free cloth or paper towel
Strong glue, such as E6000 or Power-Tac
Shadow box

Everything may feel different and uncertain right now, but one thing hasn't changed: Parents still want to preserve memories of their little ones. A clay handprint in a frame is an easy keepsake to make for Mother's Day or to mark any milestone moment in your child's life.

Best of all, you don't even need a special handprint kit. It might be hard to track down certain supplies like toilet paper and Clorox wipes right now, but as long as you can get your hands on (pun intended!) a package of air-dry clay, you're pretty much set.

You can even wait to shop for the perfect shadow box until things settle back down. Your child's clay handprint will look adorable propped on a shelf in the meantime. ■

BONUS:

Make a Clay Handprint Bowl

Follow Steps 1 and 2 on the right. Then, instead of cutting a square or rectangle panel, place a bowl over the center of the handprint, and use it as a guide to cut out a circle. Place the slab of clay inside a larger bowl with the handprint facing up, and gently press it into the curves. Leave the clay in the bowl to dry for a day or two. To remove the clay from the bowl, tap around the outside of the bowl and turn it upside down to shake out the clay. You can use a fine-grit sandpaper to smooth the edges, if needed. Finish by following Step 10 to paint the handprint. If you'd like to make and paint a little keepsake banner, you can glue it to an upper inside edge of the bowl.

Lindsay Ponta created the DIY and lifestyle website Shrimp Salad Circus in 2009 to inspire busy women to live perfectly-imperfect creative lives. She lives in Silver Spring, MD. Find easy DIYs and recipes at shrimpsaladcircus.com.

1 Using a clay roller or rolling pin, roll out your air-dry clay to a uniform 1/4-inch thickness. Use parchment paper or a silicone mat underneath to prevent the clay from sticking when you eventually peel it off.

2 Help your child press their hand into the clay using gentle and even pressure, being careful not to press their hand all the way through the clay. Lift slowly to remove.

3 Cut a square or rectangle around the handprint using a bench scraper or kitchen knife and ruler to create a panel.



4 Roll out a small piece of air-dry clay to 1/8-inch thickness and cut out a long rectangle using your bench scraper or knife and ruler. Set aside clay scraps.

5 Gently press alphabet stamps into the rectangle to spell out a name, date or a cute memory. If you don't have alphabet stamps, use something with a fine tip, such as a mechanical pencil without the lead, to carefully write the letters by hand.



6 Slowly bend the rectangle into a banner shape like you see in the picture, cutting a triangle out of each end.

7 Set aside the handprint panel and the banner to dry completely overnight.

8 In the morning, check that the clay is hard and dry all the way through to the back. If not, leave it out for another 12 hours before checking again. You shouldn't see any moisture underneath.

9 Use a thin paintbrush to fill in the letters of the banner with dark acrylic paint. For a watercolor effect, you can dilute the paint. Wipe away mistakes with a damp paper towel or lint-free cloth.



10 With a dry paintbrush, apply metallic wax paste or metallic acrylic paint inside the hand print so that it stands out. Buff away any excess wax or paint with a clean, lint-free cloth.

11 Glue the banner to the handprint panel and the handprint panel to the back of the shadow box. I recommend a strong industrial-strength glue for long-term durability. Let the glue dry overnight before assembling the shadow box frame.

Adjusting to a NEW REALITY:

How Coronavirus is Affecting Local Businesses

Photos courtesy of Westminister School

Just as families have had to make major changes to their daily lives during the COVID-19 crisis, so have our favorite local businesses. Here, we talk to two of them—Encore Stage & Studio and Westminister School, both in Virginia—about the ways they are adjusting to our new reality.

HOW HAS THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AFFECTED YOUR BUSINESS?

Encore Stage & Studio: We canceled our spring production, which typically casts 30-40 children and 15-25 students on crew and enriches the lives of 2,000 audience members. Our annual Benefit Breakfast, our largest in-person event for individual fundraising, was held virtually on April 29. Also, not being able to offer programs and classes in person has heavily impacted our outreach work in the community with low-income children.

Westminister School: In short order, we had to re-invent school, arranging for online delivery of core academics and enrichment classes, with measures in place to maintain high expectations and integrity for students and staff. Social distancing rendered significant portions of our program undeliverable, such as bus service, extended-day care and some after-school enrichment classes, as well as eliminating the need for daily janitorial work. Rather than abandon the hourly wage earners who deliver those programs, Westminister has elected to continue paying them.

WHAT CHANGES HAVE YOU MADE TO YOUR BUSINESS TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE SERVING CUSTOMERS?

Encore: Through the Zoom platform and prerecorded instructional videos, our staff has designed our spring break camps and classes to be virtually accessible. We also premiered a “Live with Encore” series on social media to offer a weekly free Parent & Me virtual class and connect families with our teaching artists.

Westminister: We implemented an education-friendly online platform for exchanging information, assignments and assessments. This included extraordinary creativity by our pre-school and primary grade teachers, who have successfully engaged the attention and cooperation of our youngest students. We are also finding ways to continue celebrating our community through online events, such as a bedtime story for K-2 students, a staff talent show, Shakespeare’s birthday celebration, Earth Day activities, bingo games and more.

WHAT LESSONS HAVE YOU LEARNED SO FAR DURING THIS CRISIS?

Encore: One of the greatest lessons that we have learned is the power of teamwork. Our staff has been teleworking diligently to create a welcoming and nurturing virtual space for our students and families. We are all in this together to make sure we provide the same quality in a virtual experience to allow every child to experience the joy of theater.

Westminister: Although we were proud of them before, we have been amazed by the optimism, flexibility and creativity of our staff and faculty. We have been touched by the eagerness of our students to adjust to the new format of distance learning and grateful to their parents for their support and their positive feedback. These responses have shown us the strength and cohesion of our community, proving its resilience in the face of hardship.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO PARENTS RIGHT NOW?

Encore: Our advice is more of an assurance to parents that they’re not alone! We’re here to help provide the best way for their child to stay connected, creative and growing through the arts.

Westminister: As challenging as it may be to blend work, home and school together, look at this as an opportunity for bonding as never before. As a chance to cook, read, share family stories, play and create together. A time for children to appreciate the work parents do and the charity they show to others, and for parents to recognize how hard their children work at learning. A time to rise above small hardships. A time that your family will always remember. As difficult as it may be, see it for what it truly is—an opportunity for love.

Photos by Cindy Kane Photography and Encore Stage & Studio

Meet Our Bloggers

We recently had the pleasure of publishing on our website four guest posts related to parenting during the COVID-19 crisis. Meet our April bloggers here, then visit WashingtonFAMILY.com to read their stories.

Meridith Jacobs is the mother of two girls and lives in Potomac. Before becoming a stay-at-home mom, Jacobs was a lawyer and career advisor. She enjoys crafting, reading, spending time with family and friends and traveling.

Amy Lyons was the site director for three years of a K-5 curriculum-based after-school program at Piney Branch Elementary School in Gainesville. These days, she writes for a living and loves to read, hike and travel.

Erin Washington is a lifestyle blogger and author of "Squats and Margaritas: A Journey to Finding Balance." She lives

in Leesburg with her two kids and her husband, a former Redskins football player, and is currently getting her master's degree in TikTok.

Monica Stoltzfus lives in Lorton with her husband and three energetic daughters. A former Montgomery County Public School kindergarten teacher, Stoltzfus stays busy baking, crafting and working on her debut picture book about kindness, "The Ripple." Her personal blog is called Just Compose Yourself.

If you're a local parent in the DMV with a story to share, we'd love to hear from you. Please email our editor, PJ Feinstein, at PFeinstein@MidAtlanticMedia.com to learn how you can be published on our website, too. ■

SHOP LOCAL

Buy a Notebook, Support the Community

When schools closed back in March, Suann Song noticed that her 13-year-old son was struggling without structure in his day. So the founder and creative director of Appointed, the DC-based desktop paper goods brand, designed a weekly schedule for him to fill out each day. It proved to be so useful that Song went back to her team at Appointed to create a series of free downloads to help busy parents and their kids stay organized while working from home and homeschooling.

Appointed's new Digital Collection includes daily, weekly and monthly planning pages as well as to-do lists for teens and daily checklists for little kids. There's also a meal planning sheet that's pretty handy now that families are doing more cooking at home these days.

The Digital Collection received more than 10,000 downloads in the first 24 hours, and Song notes that the response has been remarkable. "We're happy to be providing a resource that is helpful during this difficult time," she says.

In addition to families, Appointed is also helping the community at large through sales of its new District Notepad. Net proceeds of this special edition notebook,



featuring a cherry blossom foil stamp to symbolize growth, giving and renewal, are being donated to the local nonprofit Martha's Table to support their enhanced COVID-19 efforts to deliver more than 6,000 bags of healthy groceries to DC neighborhoods in need every week.

"We're based in the District, and most of our team lives in the District. We wanted to create something that's a tribute to the city we're so proud to call home but is being impacted so severely by COVID-19," explains Song.

The free planning pages and 50-page spiral bound notepad (\$18) are available at appntd.com. ■

FAMILY



Kindness Matters

With her new book, "Adventures in Kindness," 10-year-old Sophia Fox hopes to inspire kids and parents to make a difference in their family, their school and their community. And the timing of the book's publication couldn't be better.

"We could either be sad all the time about the situation or we could have a positive attitude," says Sophia, a fourth grader from Rockville. "Yes, everything is hard now and there's a lot we can't do. But there's a lot we can do too, and I think it's better to focus on that."

Co-written with her mom, Carrie, "Adventures in Kindness" offers 52 ways for families to actively contribute to a better world, such as starting a family giving jar, making a homemade bird feeder, and sending someone a happiness kit.

In addition to their new book, the mother-daughter duo are also spreading kindness by donating 100 percent of the proceeds from their limited-edition "Adventures in Kindness" notecards (\$20) to Feeding America's COVID-19 relief efforts. The notecards are a perfect way to show a neighbor or faraway friend that you're thinking about them during this period of social distancing.

Find the book and the notecards at adventuresinkindness.com. ■



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Nominations have closed and it's time to vote for the winners! Remember, the winners are voted on and are determined by popular vote, so let your friends know it's time to cast their ballot. As a business, share the link with your audience to help you win the title "Best" in your category!

Voting closes May 15th!

Winners will be contacted in June and the results will be in the July issue of Washington FAMILY magazine.

Go to washingtonfamily.com/bestforfamilies and **VOTE TODAY!**

Contact Jeni Mann for more information at
jmann@midatlanticmedia.com

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washingtonfamily.com

If your family's got puppy fever, you're not alone! Animal shelters have been reporting an increase in puppy adoptions since the start of the coronavirus pandemic in March. And with all of that extra time at home, experts say it's the perfect time for many families to adopt a dog.

"Puppies need a lot of attention, so it's really helpful for them to have all of that one-on-one time with their new family," says Chelsea Jones of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington (AWLA) in Virginia.

It takes an average of 10 weeks to house train a puppy, and you'll need to walk it every one to two hours (yes, really!) in the beginning. You'll also need plenty of time to teach the puppy house rules, to socialize it with family members and other pets, and to teach it not to bark incessantly or chew up your favorite shoes. And, during the coronavirus pandemic, you'll need to create an emergency plan for who will take the puppy if you fall ill.

You should also ask yourself whether you can afford a puppy. You'll need to buy toys, food, a crate, a leash and other necessities. Then there are the adoption fees, shots and other initial medical expenses.

"The first and last year of a pet's life are usually the most expensive," says Jones. "The first year generally costs \$1,500 to \$3,000,

and the average monthly cost is anywhere from \$100 to \$300."

Still want to bring home a pandemic puppy? Here are the steps you should take:

ADOPT, DON'T SHOP

The best (and cheapest) way to adopt a puppy is from a pet rescue or animal shelter. That's because many pet stores and breeders get their dogs from puppy mills, which mistreat the animals. (If you're intent on buying a pup from a breeder, visit the Humane Society's website for information on how to find a responsible one.)

Though some shelters have halted adoptions during the pandemic, many have not—and they've come up with creative ways to help families find the perfect pup. They're setting up Zoom or FaceTime calls between dogs and potential owners. They're offering curbside adoptions and

socially distant backyard meetings. And they're doing more in-depth "matchmaking" by asking families lots of questions and choosing a dog for them based on their personalities and lifestyles.

"There's a good chance that a family will end up with a really good fit during this time because they're getting more guidance, rather than just picking a puppy because it's cute," says Jones.

Puppies need a lot of attention, so it's really helpful for them to have all of that one-on-one time with their new family.

Make Social Distancing More Fun with a

Pandemic



PUPPY-PROOF YOUR HOME

Remember baby proofing your house before bringing home your newborn? You'll need to do the same for your puppy. Store cables and wires out of reach, keep small objects and other items you don't want your pup to chew off the floor, and keep plants away unless you're sure they're not toxic to dogs. You'll also need to create a safe, non-carpeted space for your puppy to stay in the beginning.

"When you first bring a puppy home it should not have full access to your house, or you'll be finding pee and poop in weird places for months," says Jones.

The puppy's space could be a gated off kitchen, a den or any other high traffic area of

the home. Make sure there are plenty of toys, food and water there. Once the puppy starts learning the house rules and getting the hang of house training, you can give it access to larger portions of your home.

PREPARE YOUR CHILDREN

You'll need to teach your kids how to appropriately interact with the new pup. For toddlers, that includes the basics like not hitting or pushing the dog. Older kids should be taught not to kiss or hug the puppy and not to bother it when it's eating or sleeping.

"Any animal, when it's in a vulnerable position, can get scared when someone sneaks up on it or invades its space," warns Jones.

GET HELP WITH TRAINING

Though in-person puppy training classes are canceled for the time being, you don't need to go it alone. The place from which

you adopt your puppy will give you advice and materials on how to train using positive reinforcement and rewards. Your veterinarian will also have resources available. And many places, including the AWLA, are now offering online classes via Zoom and other apps.

PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Don't forget that you and your kids will eventually return to work and school, so you'll need to have a plan for when that happens. Find and hire a dog walker now, and start getting your dog used to being away from you so he won't experience separation anxiety. Put the puppy in its safe space and leave for 15 minutes. Raise the time limit incrementally until the dog can be left alone for a few hours without barking or destroying things.

"Puppies need to learn to be independent and to self soothe," says Jones.

If you do get a new puppy during the coronavirus pandemic, we'd love to see him or her. Share a photo on Instagram using #washingtonfamilymag and we may feature it on our page! ■



By Jennifer Marino Walters

Brow Power

Everything you need to know about microblading

BY ADRANISHA STEPHENS



As we all know, there are a dizzying number of products and services at our disposal to help us achieve lush and thick brows. But one treatment has recently taken the beauty industry by storm: microblading.

Microblading is a semi-permanent tattoo technique used to create the illusion of fuller brows, explains Lucy Murrell, owner of Laveda Lash and Brow Boutique in Hyattsville. “With this method, we create almost any look or shape, from a very natural light finish to a beautifully bold brow,” she says.

Pre-coronavirus, I sat in one of the salon’s cozy chairs for two hours so Murrell could work her magic on me. Here’s what my experience was like.

PREP TIME

Before my appointment, I was given a list of instructions from my technician: Do not pick, tweeze, wax or have electrolysis one week prior. Don’t use sunbeds or leisure in direct sunlight or have a facial or peel two weeks before. And I should stop using retinol and certain vitamins—A and E or fish oil—as these are natural blood thinners.

I was also told to refrain from drinking alcohol or taking aspirin or ibuprofen at least 24 hours before my appointment, again because of the blood thinners. I couldn’t exercise on the day of treatment, as sweat can push the pigment out and cause the microblading strokes not to retain. And I should arrive for my appointment without any makeup, with my skin cleansed but not packed with heavy moisturizers or oil-based products.

GO TIME

At the salon, Murrell recommended the best brow shape for my face and then helped me choose a color that matches my natural hair color and skin undertone. Then she used tools to begin measuring the area around the brows, taking into account my face shape, symmetry and facial features. My brow area was cleaned, shaped and numbed for the treatment—this took approximately 25 minutes.

TREATMENT

Next Murrell began the needling process, gently implanting a medical grade pigment via feather-weight strokes. Rather than using a tattoo machine, she used a little handheld tool to draw my new brows manually. It didn’t actually penetrate the skin but just delicately scratched the surface, much like a paper cut. If you feel any discomfort at this stage, the technician will add another quick layer of numbing cream to the area—or in my case, three. Afterward, an ointment was applied to help with the healing process.

AFTERCARE TIPS

The most important product you’ll need after treatment is sunscreen. Like with other tattoos, sunscreen helps extend the longevity of your brows and prevent fading. While they heal, do not get your brows wet or use any makeup for at least a week. Once the skin is mended, it’s OK to go back to your normal routine. You’ll also need to avoid any picking or scratching, as you can damage your new brows. Throughout the process, they will change color, become flaky and look like they’ve faded, but this is normal. They’ll reveal their final color and shape after a month.

Clients are encouraged to schedule a follow-up appointment four to six weeks later to make sure they are satisfied with the results or see if they need little tweaks. Microbladed brows can last anywhere from one to three years, depending on your skin type (the ink fades quicker on oily skin), products and lifestyle. While the procedure lasts longer than waxing or threading your brows, it costs more, too. Laveda Lash and Brow Boutique charges up to \$450 for each treatment, but prices can vary based on a technician’s experience level and location.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Microblading is a great option if you’re searching for a more permanent solution to improving the appearance of your brows—and are not afraid of a little needle. This has been by far one of my favorite beauty procedures, and when it wears off after a year or two, I will continue with the process. ■

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Go Big!

STYLIST: REBECCA BROWN

Canvas Tote
(\$30, H&M)

Shoes and handbags don't really go with the loungewear look we've been rocking the past two months, but at some point (soon, we hope!) it'll be time to swap our sweats for something a little more fashionable. And when that day comes, this season's trendiest accessories—comfortable flats and practical bags—will make the transition a breeze. Go all out with animal-print espadrilles and a neon carryall or keep it casual in platform sandals and a canvas tote. Not only will you look good, you'll be almost as comfy as you were in your quarantine clothes.



**The Carryall
in Warm Sepia**
(\$168, J. Crew)



**Etienne Aigner
Winona Ankle Strap
Platform Sandal**
(\$111, Nordstrom)



**Weekender Tote Bag
in Neon Pink**
(\$78, Marks & Spencer)

Wedge Sandals
(\$40, H&M)

Pink Straw Bag
(\$33, H&M)



**Emily Sandal
in LA Sunset**
(\$100, UGG)



**Leather Square Toe
Slingback Shoes**
(\$95, Marks & Spencer)



**LA Cloud Low Sneaker
in LA Sunset**
(\$110, UGG)



**Lennox Sandal
in Margarita**
(\$110, UGG)



**Saturday Sneakers with
Leopard Calf Hair**
(\$98, J. Crew)



**Laser Cut
Wedge Sandals**
(\$140, White House
Black Market)



**Think Rolyn
Wingman Tote Bag**
(\$134-\$163, Nordstrom)

**Platform
Universal in
Unicorn
Waterfall**
(\$65, Teva)

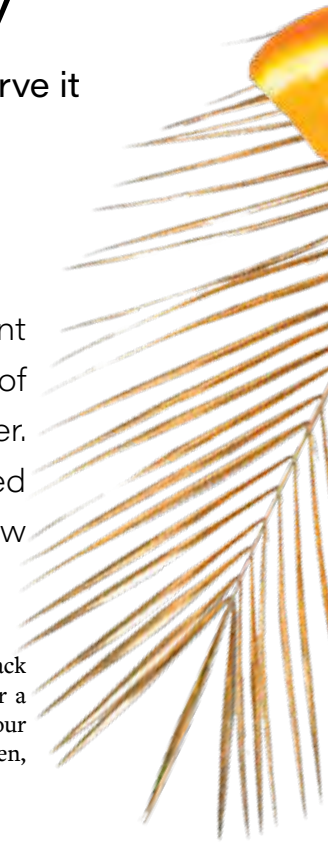





4 Indulgent Ways to Pamper Yourself This Mother's Day

Because after a rough couple of months, you deserve it

By PJ Feinstein



One consequence of staying home to prevent the spread of coronavirus is that the days of the week have all started to blend together.

How many times since March have you wondered whether it was Tuesday or Friday? Do you even know what today is?

However, there's one date on the family calendar that's circled in bold black marker so nobody forgets it: Sunday, May 10. That's right, Mother's Day. After a rough couple of months, we moms deserve all the pampering we can get on our special holiday, even if it has to be done at home. Here's how to make that happen, according to experts in self-care and celebrations.

GETTY IMAGES
ARTIST: PUJAMA61
ISTOCK - ARTISTS:
XMOCB, SANDRA M

1

Enjoy Brunch with a Cocktail

Mother's Day brunch at your favorite restaurant may not be possible this year, but that doesn't mean you can't make breakfast in your kitchen feel a bit more effervescent.

Ginny Lawhorn, founder of Baltimore Cocktail Week, recommends "low-octane cocktails"—cocktails that are brighter, more refreshing and have a lower alcohol count than what you might drink during happy hour—to pair with homemade pancakes or bagels and eggs.

Take the mimosa, for example. "You have effervescence and you have the alcohol content of a sparkling being diluted by fresh juice," Lawhorn says. The idea, she explains, is that your cocktail should be enjoyed with your meal but not impact the rest of your day.

While you can't go wrong with a mimosa or a Bellini at brunch, Lawhorn says sangria is becoming a popular choice for a morning cocktail. "Sangria is a great at-home treat because it can be as easy or complicated as what you have on hand," she says.

Simple Sangria for Two

- 12 ounces (half bottle) dry red or white wine
- 2 ounces citrus liqueur, such as triple sec, Grand Marnier or Cointreau
- 1 ounce orange juice
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- Sliced apple, orange and peach or any available fruit
- 1 can soda water, if available

Instructions: In a pitcher, combine wine, citrus liqueur, orange juice and sugar. Stir well until sugar is dissolved. Add sliced fruit and stir. Cover and refrigerate for at least four hours. Serve over ice and top with soda water, if available.

If you can't fathom brunch without coffee, why not try an iced coffee cocktail? It's also a delicious way to use up any leftover coffee from the previous day, Lawhorn says. Simply cool to room temperature any coffee that's still in the pot and refrigerate it in an airtight beverage container overnight.

Deja Brew

- 4 ounces cold coffee
- 1.5 ounces dark spirit, such as rum, bourbon or rye
- 1 heaping tablespoon of vanilla ice cream

Instructions: In a large shatterproof cup, add coffee and the spirit of your choice, and stir well. Add ice cream. With an iced tea spoon or long bar spoon, stir until ice cream melts. Top with desired amount of ice and enjoy!

ISTOCK - ARTISTS:
MOU007, MILATOO,
YULIA_MALINOVSKAYA,
PETRENKOD, VASSAIRE,
TETIANA, GUTNYK
E PLUS - ARTIST
HUEPHOTOGRAPHY

2

Whip up a Facial Mask

It's been an emotional few months, and if the stress of the pandemic is starting to show on your face, you're not alone. Although a visit to the spa isn't on the agenda today, you can turn your bathroom into a relaxing retreat and treat yourself to a facial at home.

In her new book, "Glow from Within," Joanna Vargas, celebrity facialist and founder of Joanna Vargas Salons and Skin Care, offers practical tips for achieving beautiful skin, including recipes for DIY masks that you can easily whip up in your kitchen.

Before you begin, make sure your skin is clean. "Spend a good minute or two on washing your face while concentrating on doing mini circles and really penetrating the cleanser into the face," Vargas explains.

If breakouts are a concern, try Vargas's soothing and hydrating Cocoa and Champagne Mask.

Ingredients

- ½ cup plain yogurt
- ¼ cup champagne
- 1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon honey

Tip: Not sure you want to break out the bubbly for a facial? Visit WashingtonFAMILY.com for a bonus recipe from Ginny Lawhorn that includes champagne. You can sip your cocktail at brunch and then use what's left in the bottle for your mask!

Vargas's Matcha Glow Mask strengthens your capillary walls and increases circulation to revive dull, tired skin. Your face will look smooth and supple afterward.

Ingredients

- 1½ teaspoons water
- 1½ teaspoons honey
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon matcha powder

Tip: Vargas recommends adding the water and match powder first, stirring, then mixing in the remaining ingredients.

Apply the mask of your choice with your fingers, then slip into the tub for 15 to 20 minutes while it works its magic. "I love combining a great bath with an at-home mask. Bathe the body in a chamomile and rosemary soak—it's great for calming stressed skin," she says.

The best way to remove a mask, according to Vargas, is with tepid water. "Anything too hot will dry out the skin," she says. Finish your facial with a light hyaluronic acid serum or any serum you have in your medicine cabinet.



GETTY IMAGES PLUS - ARTIST: UNALOZMEN
ISTOCK - ARTISTS: FLOORTJE, SUNDAEMORNING,
IRINABELOKRYLOVA

3

Give Yourself a Manicure

Missing your gel or dip manicures while we're social distancing? The silver lining is that going a few weeks or—gasp!—months without them will allow your nails to get stronger as they grow out, explains Lauren Dunne, co-founder of Varnish Lane, a nail salon with three locations in D.C. Regularly applying cuticle oil and a nail hardener can help, too.

But that doesn't mean you're fated to go polish-free during quarantine. Painting your own nails isn't as hard as you may think, and once you get the hang of it, DIY manicures can actually be relaxing. Plus, with some color on your nails this Mother's Day, it may be easier to imagine the woman you were before you exclusively started wearing pants with elastic waistbands back in March.

Here, Dunne shares the steps to getting a salon-quality manicure at home:

1. Remove any color from your nails with polish remover and a cotton ball.
2. Cut or files nails to your desired length and shape. "Round is our most requested shape right now," says Dunne.
3. Push back your cuticles using a cuticle pusher, orangewood stick or spoon.
4. Use cuticle nippers to gently remove any dead skin or hangnails on the sides of your nails. However, this step is optional. "We prefer to avoid cutting cuticles too much, as it is a protective layer of skin that keeps your nails healthy," Dunne explains.
5. Lightly buff your nails with a buffer or nail file.
6. Remove any excess oils or residue by swiping a cotton ball with polish remover over your nails once more.
7. Apply your base coat, letting it dry for two minutes.
8. Apply your first coat of color polish using three strokes—a stripe down the middle, then one on each side. "It's also important to make sure that you are painting thin coats of polish," says Dunne, who is loving Dolly Mix by Londontown (a subtle lilac) and Kitty by Habit Cosmetics (a bright pink) this spring.
9. Wait two to four minutes, then apply a second coat of color polish.
10. Wait five minutes before applying your top coat.

If you accidentally polished your skin, use a clean-up brush and some polish remover to tidy up around your nails. Finish your mani by massaging cuticle oil or even coconut oil into the skin around your nails to restore moisture.

Another silver lining of this quarantine is that it's OK if your nails don't look like they were professionally painted. "Don't be discouraged if your polish isn't perfect on the first go-round," says Dunne. "Practice makes perfect."

ISTOCK / GETTY IMAGES PLUS -
ARTISTS: MAGONE, GORBACHLENA,
FLOORTJE, ZOONAR RF, GREEN_LEAF

Escape in a Book

Finally, squeeze in some time today to get lost in a book. Absent a family outing or day trip this Mother's Day, reading is the best and easiest way to leave the confines of your home during a public health crisis.

"So many of us right now have this ambient layer of anxiety coursing through us at all times. I think it's really important to try and detach from that, and I do think books are a good way to do that," says Emma Snyder, owner of The Ivy Bookshop in Baltimore.

Snyder says it often takes about 25 pages to really get into a book, so curl up in your comfiest arm chair or grab a seat in the sun and get ready to escape. Here are Snyder's recommendations, in her own words.

"Redhead by the Side of the Road" by Anne Tyler

"To have a new Ann Tyler novel at this moment in time is such a gift. As always, she writes of Baltimore, and this time it's the story of Micah, who fixes computers alone in his basement apartment and lives a rigidly orderly life. When his days are thrown into disorder by the messiness of other humans, Micah wakes up to the possibilities of deeper connection. Generous and hopeful, this book is a comfort right now."

"Wow, No Thank You" by Samantha Irby

"You'll laugh out loud at these essays, which offer a little bit of domesticity, a little bit of raunch and a lot of intelligence. From meetings with L.A. execs to Mason jar cooking, Irby is honest about her days—the prosaic to the spectacular. It's a relief and a delight in a world awash in carefully curated images."

"The Actress" by Anne Enright

"Let Enright's gorgeous story of a complicated mother-daughter relationship envelop you. Katherine O'Dell, a legendary Irish actress, has performed her way through life, and Norah, her daughter, has watched. A crime by Katherine, and their shifting relationship, gives way to a braided narrative that tells both their stories with psychological acuity and lyricism."

"The Girl with the Louding Voice" by Abi Daré

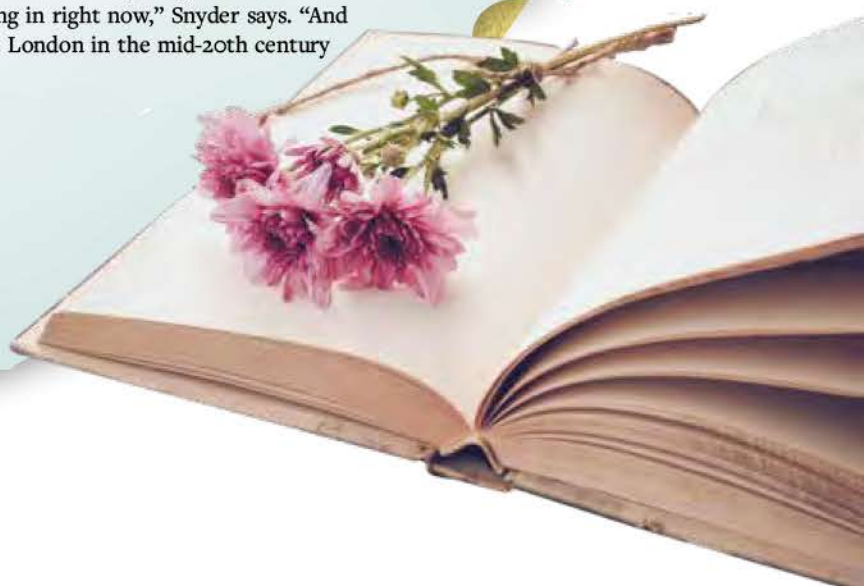
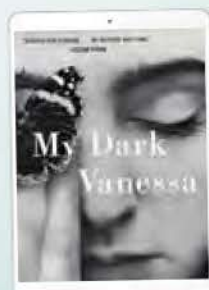
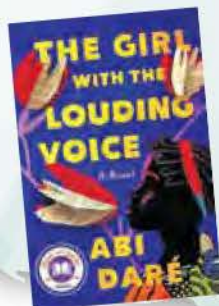
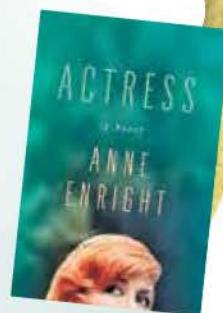
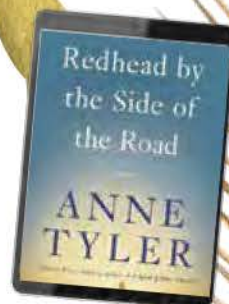
"This is the story of Adunni, a young Nigerian woman, in search of an education and her own path in life. Following her from an unhappy marriage to servitude in Lagos, we're presented with the raw dangers for young female servants there. The story is told in Adunni's voice, and really, that's the heart of this moving, debut novel."

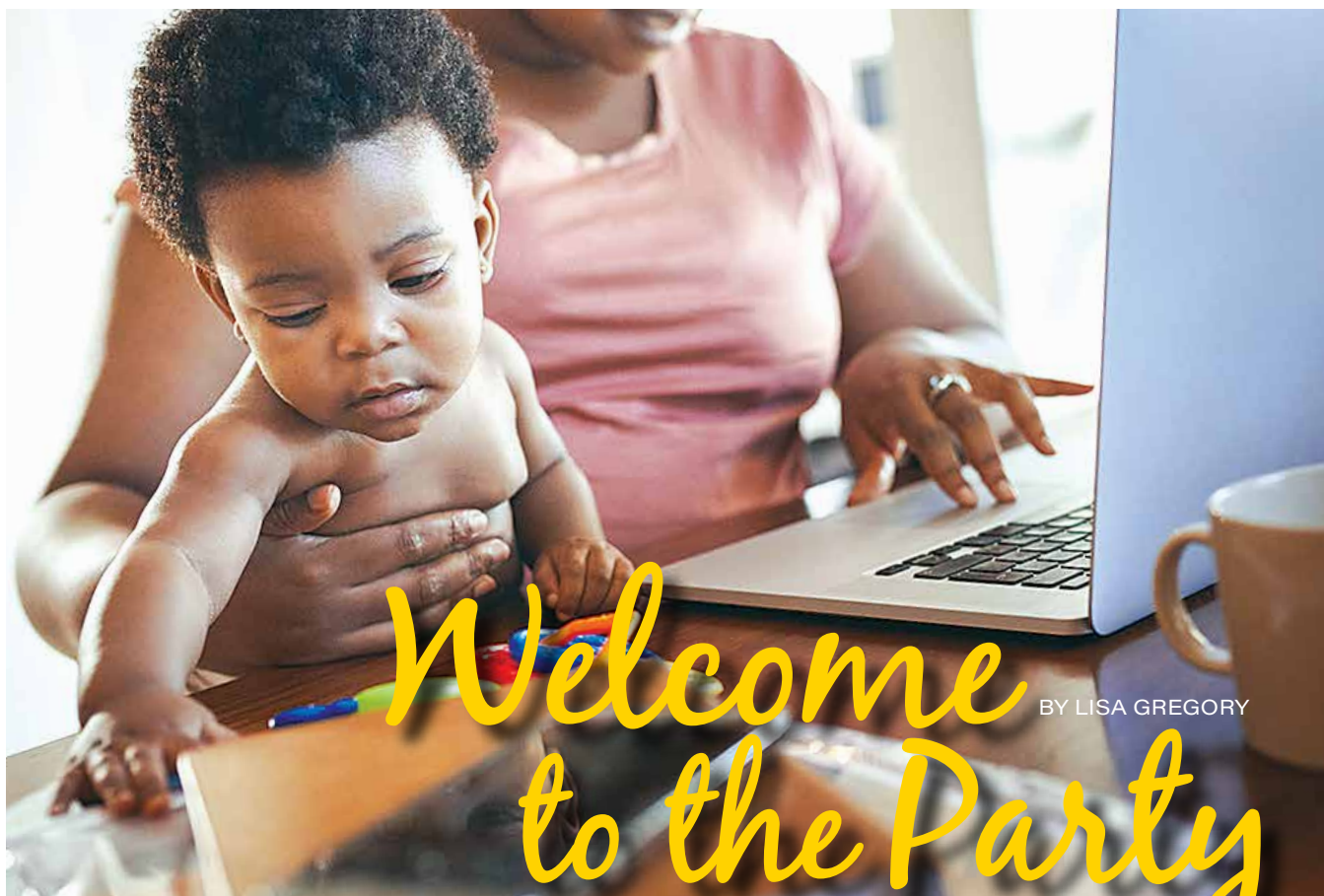
"My Dark Vanessa" by Kate Elizabeth Russell

"This intense debut novel charts the reverberations, years later, of a love-affair between a high school student and her 40-something English teacher. A compulsively readable exploration of power, agency and the very nature of intimate relationships."

"When you fall into a really good book, you don't want to do anything else. It's a tool for getting ourselves out of the surreal world we're living in right now," Snyder says. "And having a chance to feel instead that you're an actress in London in the mid-20th century sounds pretty nice."

4





One longtime work-from-home writer shares a tale

I have worked from home as a freelance writer since my son was born 26 years ago. So, I am finding the postings on Facebook and Instagram especially interesting these days as more and more parents are required to work from home.

Welcome to the party. It can be challenging, exhausting, hilarious and rewarding.

As my son was growing up, I had people frequently comment about how lucky I was that I could work from home. And, I agree, I was fortunate. But also busy and challenged and often exhausted. There is something about having to be creative on demand that can stretch one's capabilities to the breaking point.

I remember getting into a groove with an article and then hearing my just-laid-down baby boy stir and need my attention. I had to step away and hope that the train of thought I was embracing would return to me. Sometimes it did. Sometimes it didn't.

My son was such a good sport and so adaptable. I parceled out my work around his schedule. And I don't regret it.

But, as I said, it was not without its challenges.

There was the incident with a world-renown physicist, for example. I was interviewing this individual for an article by phone when I looked up to see my toddler, who was just outside the door seconds earlier playing with his toys, now making a mad dash to the bathroom. I saw a streak of red hair barreling down the hall. I knew what that meant. At a certain age, toddlers become fascinated by toilets and their ability to flush them. And not just flushing bodily wastes as it were, but all kinds of interesting things. My baby brother once flushed a \$20 bill as my grandfather frantically reached into the toilet bowl to retrieve it to no avail.

So, I was well versed in the hazards of little kids and toilets.

I never missed a beat with the interview as I scrambled behind my wayward boy and his toilet task. I kept the conversation going (I am a professional after all) while attempting to grab the toy from my son's hand. I was poised right above the toilet, bent down just over it as close as one could get, when it happened. My son had beaten me to it.

The flush.

The physicist paused his talking. I knew at that very moment what he was thinking. This man who had won a Nobel Prize thought I was sitting on the toilet interviewing him. Of course, I was not. But ...

I apologized as I guided my son back to his toys just outside of my office.

I explained the situation and waited for the physicist's response. Up until that point he had spoken with a droll Alec Guinness-type of voice. All formal and professional. Would I be reprimanded? Would he choose not to finish the interview? Was my career over?

No. He laughed. A deep, genuine laugh. And at that moment his whole personality changed. From Alec Guinness to a warmer grandfatherly type. Perhaps he had rascals of his own.

I apologized again. His response to that still warms my heart more than 20 years later. "Well, I have a great story for my next cocktail party," he said with a chuckle.

We both did, cocktail parties or not. And I have told that story over and over as an example of the craziness and joy of working from home.

Again, to all you newbies, welcome to the party. And remember, as you adjust to working from home, you may be creating your own "cocktail stories." Stories that you will hold dear long after this uncertain time passes. ■



Party-in

Here's how families are celebr

As we all adjust to life in lockdown, one big change many families have had to make is how they celebrate birthdays. It's disappointing that in-person parties can't happen right now, but birthdays during coronavirus have the opportunity to be even more memorable. All it takes is a little bit of creativity and planning.

Kimberly Neal of Catonsville was supposed to celebrate her 40th birthday on March 25 by flying to Italy with her husband. Instead of waking up early to catch a flight, however, she woke to a front yard decorated by neighbors with wine bottles, balloons and a huge "40 and Fine as Wine" sign.

Neal's family planned a fun-filled day that included yoga at home and take out from her favorite restaurants. She even dressed up for dinner in a black cocktail dress with a tulle skirt, did her hair and makeup and wore a 40th tiara bedazzled in rhinestones.

"My husband grilled steaks, and he, my son, and I ate dinner using fine china and crystal. The entire day was amazing," says Neal.

When Neal's son turned eight a few weeks later, he chatted with friends and family on Zoom and happily rode his bike all day. "In these situations, you have to make lemonade from lemons," she says.

Turning something disappointing into something amazing is what Colleen Watson did for her six-year-old son, Mason, who was going to have his birthday party in March at a local Ninja Warrior course.

Instead, the Potomac mom coordinated a birthday parade with more than 30 friends wishing him a happy birthday from bikes and cars decked out with balloons and streamers.

"At first, he was really sad because we couldn't have his party, but then he was so happy with the amount of people that came by. All his classmates, family and friends. It was really special," says Watson. "He especially loved when people threw out candy to him. He said it was the best birthday party ever."

When Mason's friend Ryan turned six on April 1, his mom,



Place

by Adranisha Stephens

ating birthdays in quarantine

Erika Schor, came up with another inventive way to make her son's birthday feel more personal.

"We asked all his classmates and teachers and family to send us a short video wishing him a happy birthday or singing a song," explains Schor. "Then we made one long video of all the videos together and showed it to him the night of his birthday. He loved it."

In Bel Air, a group of friends did something similar to celebrate Mia Salvatierra's Sweet 16. They collected happy birthday messages and compiled them into one video for Mia to watch when she woke up. They also drove to her house, honking their horns and holding up signs.

"She was thrilled," says her father, Ed. "I'm sure she will remember those gestures for a lifetime."

But birthday drive-bys and video messages aren't the only way to celebrate birthdays during quarantine. Now that we're all proficient on Zoom, virtual parties are becoming a popular alternative.

A Zoom party is what Tiana Petersen of Chantilly is now planning instead of the pool party her son Matt originally wanted for his sixth birthday in May. Petersen says she plans to bake cupcakes, package them with sprinkles and frosting and deliver them in boxes on his friends' doorsteps.

"Then we can have a Zoom meeting, and everyone can decorate their cupcakes together," she says.

Even though parties have been downgraded to home celebrations, the main takeaway is that there are still so many ways to connect, says Martha Edwards, a mom from Towson. Edwards and her daughter, Maggie, recently put together a little gift for Maggie's friend's 15th birthday that included a roll of toilet paper.

"What do we all miss the most on our birthdays? We miss hanging out with our friends and family. I've seen so many people using Zoom and FaceTime for virtual happy hours, and now, virtual birthday parties," Edwards says. "Everyone can still sing, talk and share well wishes. There are so many ways we can all be creative and make it work." ■



2020 Summer Camp Directory

With each new milestone that our children reach comes the need for information to guide them (and us) through this stage. This is particularly true when our children are old enough to attend summer camp. How do we know which camp is right for them? In an education-centered community like ours, there can be a lot of options—where do we even get started? Right here, actually, with these listings. Read about these camps, what they offer and the ages they serve. Then visit their websites to learn more. On our website, WashingtonFAMILY.com, you can find even more listings to help you in your search. Be sure to check back on our website and in our magazine in upcoming months for more stories and helpful tips.

Note: The camps on the following pages were still planning to be open as we went to press; however, that may change as we get closer to summer. Please be sure to contact the camps directly for up-to-date information about their operating status.

Good luck! Here's to a great summer.



DAY CAMPS

WASHINGTON, D.C.

GAME GYM CAMP FROM HOME

Ages: 10-18
gamegym.com/campfromhome/
admin@gamegym.com
Full-day structured online summer esports camp with physical exercise, presentations on the business of esports, game design, the competitive mindset, etc., and "training and gaming" sessions with our certified coaches.
\$30.00 off with coupon code: FAMILY

THE THEATRE LAB

Grades: 1-8
theatrelab.org/camp
contact@theatrelab.org
202-824-0449
733 8th St. NW, Washington, DC
Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Teens, Extended Day, Drama/Theatre

DAY CAMPS

MARYLAND

BERRIE CAMP

Ages: 4-14
barrie.org/camp
camp@barrie.org
301-576-2818
13500 Layhill Road, Silver Spring, MD
Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Transportation, Arts and Crafts, Boating, CIT Program, Computers, Cooking, Dance, Drama/Theatre, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Hiking, Horseback Riding, Martial Arts, Swimming

BETHESDA BIG TRAIN BASEBALL SUMMER CAMP

Ages: 5-12
bigtrain.org/summercamp
davids@bigtrain.org
301-365-1076
10600 Westlake Drive, Bethesda, MD
Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Extended Day, Sports

FLYING KICK SUMMER CAMP

Ages: 4-16
flyingkicktkd.com

mail@flyingkicktkd.com
301-951-0543
6050 Wisconsin Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD
4711 Chase Ave.
Bethesda, MD
Our summer camp is a fun and safe way for children to learn Tae Kwon Do and spend their time in a productive atmosphere. Our campers will have a great time! We offer Tae Kwon Do every day! We will have fun tournaments, dodgeball, board games, swimming, team sports, playground time, arts & crafts, weekly field trip to Shadowland and other fun activities.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Ages: 3-12
ismw.org
info@ismw.org
301-365-5888
11325 Seven Locks Road, Suite 255
Potomac, MD
Categories: Drama, Music

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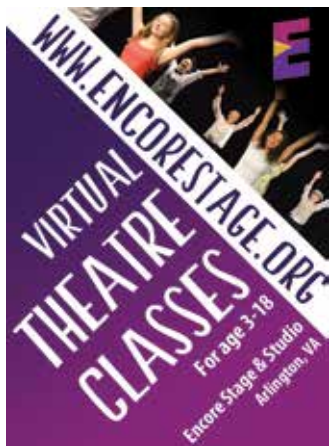
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Empowering a New Generation of

Environmental Champions

By Philippe Cousteau Jr.

As headlines about plastic waste, devastating wildfires and species decline mount, youth around the world are stepping up to the challenge of protecting our critical natural resources. From 17-year-old climate activist Greta Thunberg to student-led beach cleanups, young people are providing a beacon of hope for a sustainable future.

As the founder of EarthEcho International—a leading nonprofit dedicated to engaging youth in environmental action—and recent first-time father, I’m convinced that kids have the power to change our world for the better.

At EarthEcho, we’ve identified three basic approaches that can help engage young people to make a positive impact on the planet and their communities.

Engage young people authentically and on their terms.

Acknowledge that the opinions and voices of our younger citizens matter, no matter their age, and engage them in ways that meet them where they are. Naturalists and nature lovers often eschew technology, asserting that nature and technology are mutually exclusive, when in fact they must coexist if we are to engage young people in a relevant way.

Like it or not, children live in a hyper-connected world. Our budding environmental leaders can explore the bigger picture with their devices through simple acts like identifying new critters or plants on a nature walk or recording a natural weather phenomenon for citizen-science projects using apps like iNaturalist.

Helping our kids see the power of technology as a tool and not as the experience itself positions them to develop strategies to solve problems in ways we may have never

winyu / Stock / Getty Images Plus



Courtesy of Philippe Cousteau Jr.

considered. It also engages them in a language they already understand! Technology is often demonized but it can also empower kids in a positive way by sharing their experiences and discoveries and connecting them to the bigger picture with a bigger purpose.

Help children understand the bigger picture.

Start with basic resources and practices that touch our lives every day. Connect the dots for a child about how local bodies of water make much of our daily lives possible, from cooking food to brushing our teeth. Or how reusable shopping bags can help save their favorite marine animal.

Even the smallest journey can spark exploration and discovery that's transformative. A great example of this is plastic drinking straws, representative of the plastic trash problem. While a child may not have much control over their daily lives, they can say, "No, thank you," to a single-use plastic straw. This empowers them

to make a difference and influence those around them to do the same.

Simple actions and a sense of purpose can help form a young person's view of how they can change the world for the better. When young people believe that everything they do makes a difference in the world, they can become a tremendous force for change.

Encourage action.

I have a simple mantra that guides our work: Awareness does not lead to action, action leads to awareness.

Whether it's a small step in your household or participation in global programs like EarthEcho's Youth Leadership Council, empowering kids to take part in solutions fuels a sense of pride that can inspire a child for a lifetime. Tapping into your child's inherent curiosity with activities that are accessible and that deliver tangible results are excellent starting points.

Through programs like the EarthEcho Water Challenge, we've seen simple actions

create a sense of accomplishment and connection. Each year, young people get outside on local waterways to test and record simple data on their community water quality. It's common to see a group of young people's faces light up as they huddle at the side of a creek reading the real-time results of a simple water monitoring test. They are doing science. They are connected. They are making a difference.

Action doesn't have to be complicated, it just needs to be part of the equation. That's how we tap into the inner problem solver in every child.

Today's youth understand far more about the state of our planet than we might think. They are determined to create a different relationship with the natural world that focuses on solutions, not excuses. As parents, mentors, educators and community leaders, we can help them on their journey. ■

Philippe Cousteau Jr. is co-founder of the youth leadership nonprofit EarthEcho International.



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How some parents are coping:

"I've been dressing up in costume every day and challenging my friend's 5-year-old to a daily costume contest. My husband thinks I'm nuts."

—Julie Klinger-Luht

"We're planting vegetables, delving deeper into learning more about living a minimalist lifestyle, baking, having old-school DJ dance parties and reading!"

—Dorothy Freas

"Time to teach 'real life' skills: checking the oil in the car, running the lawnmower, using basic tools, cooking. My girls are 12 and 15, and the overwhelming issue is boredom (versus stress), so I think they will welcome something different to do."

—David Coyne

"We utilize different parts of the house and yard for different parts of the day with my 5-year-old. Getting up and getting ready for the day and setting up work and play times helps."

—Amy Metzger

Keep On Keeping On

Continued coping with coronavirus and what families can do

by Courtney McGee

In a full-blown global pandemic, I find myself wistful for this time last year, when a measles outbreak was the biggest health story around.

The COVID-19 crisis is tough to write about because ... well, because everything just seems harder right now. Things aren't just changing week to week but minute by minute. The only certain thing is uncertainty. That's unnerving for anyone, especially children, who rely on predictability and structure for comfort. Schools are closed, trips have stopped, people are fearful for the lives of their loved ones. Then add in isolation from friends and extended family, loss of income and the cancellation of events of all kinds.

Oh, and throw on heaps of pressure to maintain a child's schooling at home. It's overwhelming. Tensions are high, patience is thin, emotions are raw and, more often than not, concentration on even routine tasks is ... wait, what was I saying?

Let's consider some ways that families can overcome the stress and fear of this unprecedented time. Here, Lauren Pantoulis, a licensed professional counselor who sees children, adolescents and adults, shares the mental health advice she is giving to her clients during this challenging time.

Stay on schedule

Pantoulis says it is important to maintain routines as much as possible. Keep sleep and wake times consistent, and get showered and dressed. "Dress for the social life you want, not the social life you have," she says. Even in isolation, wash up, brush your teeth and put on some bright colors. How you dress will impact how you feel.

Make self-care a priority. When we're stressed out, healthy habits fall by the wayside. "Stress and eating don't mix well, and we find ourselves overindulging, forgetting to eat and avoiding food," Pantoulis says. Stay hydrated and eat sensibly, recognizing that good nutrition will help give you the strength to weather a crisis. Create a toolkit of items that may soothe you when you're feeling anxious and overwhelmed: a cozy blanket, a journal, a coloring book, bubbles, favorite photos or small treats, and help children do the same with items that bring them joy and relaxation.

Get your three 30s

Throughout the course of your day, make sure to fit in three critical half-hour activities: getting outside, moving your body with purpose and connecting with other people.

Pantoulis suggests that if you are concerned about the risk of contact with others, you may opt to go outside in the early morning or late evening or just make a point of opening windows and experiencing the satisfaction of fresh outdoor air. Purposeful body movement could be following an exercise video or simply cutting loose and dancing to your favorite music like nobody's watching (because they're not).

The other 30-minute slot of your day should include reaching out to other people to find or offer support. FaceTime or Zoom conferencing are great ways to connect for virtual "play dates" at any age. Help the kids check in with their friends this way, too.

Be a good playmate

Play with your kids. "Children rarely

communicate how they are feeling but will often make a bid for attention and communication through play,” Pantoulis says. “Don’t be surprised to see themes of illness, doctor visits and isolation. Understand that play is cathartic and helpful for children—it is how they process their world and problem solve.” Playing with children is not only a good way to see things through their eyes and better understand how they are coping, it’s also just a fun way to spend quality time. When this is all done, kids will remember the time you spent making them feel like your attention was all theirs.

Be gentle and forgiving

Know that isolation can bring out the worst in people, and don’t take it personally if someone starts an argument. “Each person will have moments when they will not be at their best,” Pantoulis notes. Especially with children, you can expect behavioral issues when routines are disrupted, and you should respond gently. “Expect increased anxiety, worries and fears, nightmares, difficulty separating or sleeping, testing limits and meltdowns. Do not introduce major behavioral plans or consequences at this time—hold stable and focus on emotional connection,” she says.

Have a safe space for privacy

When people are sheltering in place, space is at a premium. Pantoulis suggests that everyone finds their own retreat space to get away from the stresses of work or when they just need to be alone for a while. “Help children identify a place where they can go to retreat when stressed. You can make this place cozy by using blankets, pillows, cushions, scarves, beanbags, tents and forts. It’s good to know that even when we are on top of each other, we have our own place to go to be alone,” she says. Empower children to take time out to seek solace in that special spot when they feel overwhelmed.

Lower your expectations

Let’s face it, there’s a lot being asked of parents right now: working from home, schooling at home, caring for everyone at

home, not leaving home. “These are scary and unpredictable times for children. Focus on strengthening the connection through time spent following their lead, through physical touch, through play, through therapeutic books and via verbal reassurances that you will be there for them in this time,” Pantoulis advises. “We are doing too many things in this moment under fear and stress. Be accepting of everything about yourself, your current situation and your life without question, blame or pushback. We are all truly doing the best we can.”

Turn off the bad, see the good

“Find a few trusted news sources that you can check in with consistently, limit it to a few times a day and set a time limit for yourself on how much you consume. Keep news and alarming conversations out of earshot from children—they see and hear everything and can become very frightened by what they hear,” Pantoulis says. Instead, try to focus on the good in the world. Balance the negative with stories of hope and kindness. And find your own ways to be a source of good in the community. Giving back and helping others makes us feel more positive overall.

Control what you can

You can’t control what is going on in the outside world, but you can find ways to exercise control within your own world. “Organize your bookshelf, purge your closet, put together furniture, group toys. It helps to anchor and ground us when the bigger things are chaotic,” advises Pantoulis.

Find your feel-good outlets, and get busy with enjoyable distractions. Appreciate that you may not have a long-term attention span right now, but you have long-term timeframes to engage yourself with novel ways to take a break from what’s going on.

Pantoulis tells clients that repetitive movement (knitting, coloring, painting, jumping rope, running, drumming) and expressive arts (sculpting, drawing, dancing, music, singing, playing) can be effective means of self-soothing. Creative outlets

also offer kids a way of communicating difficult emotions.

Don’t forget the best medicines

Laughter is good therapy. In troubled times, balance the somber climate with lightheartedness whenever you can. “We all need a little comedic relief in our day, every day,” says Pantoulis, whether it comes from YouTube videos, a funny movie or (one of my personal favorites) silly viral memes on Facebook. There is no denying the gravity of the situation, and nobody is minimizing the seriousness of what has unfolded in recent days and weeks and months. But sometimes you simply need to find a glimpse of humor somewhere to pull you through. Getting a reminder that there are still unexpected reasons to smile in the world is a priceless thing.

Actual therapy is also very good therapy. “If you are having difficulty coping, seek out help,” Pantoulis urges. Even in these distanced situations, therapists can help, with many able to connect via telehealth. Keep up your medications and sessions if you already have a therapist. Seek out support groups for specific issues, and know that even if you feel isolated, you are not alone.

Take it one day at a time

Each day is one day closer to the day this is behind us. But nobody can predict just what we’re in for next, and that creates anxiety. “When I work with patients who have anxiety around overwhelming issues, I suggest that they engage in a strategy called ‘chunking’—focusing on whatever bite-sized piece of a challenge that feels manageable,” Pantoulis says. Remind yourself that this will pass, though it may feel as if the path we’re on is never ending. Life will carry on, and one day we will have the ability to reflect on this time with the perspective of survivors. Think of potential positive outcomes. What will we have learned? How will we have grown?

Deep breaths, parents. It’s going to be OK. This is not our “new normal” it’s just our “new right now.” Trust that normal will be back. ■



Your kids, in fact, will not be ruined by these days of unplanned homeschooling and quarantine. They suck, these days most definitely suck, but the kids will be all right.

Don't Worry, The Kids Will Be All Right

A single mother weighs in on endless parenting during coronavirus

BY JESSICA GREGG

The shift started the third week our children were home from school, in our care and minus the daily markings of their lives: swim team or lacrosse practice, play groups or church groups. It was us, them, our computers, our Netflix accounts and an unsteady stream of groceries.

The first two weeks of quarantine were aspirational. Parents posted home schooling schedules and tips. People baked bread. There were rumors of closet clean-outs and craft projects. Chalk mosaics. Taped stain glass murals on front doors and teddy bear scavenger hunts.

Then the opposition spoke up. Their closets were still full of crap and were going to stay that way. Who even knew if there was a teddy bear in their house and where that fluffy thing was anyway? This was getting hard, they said.

Now, this week: Doubt. I saw a meme that said, "You think it's bad now? In 20 years, our country will be run by people home schooled by day drinkers." It was meant to be funny, of course, but many more parents on social media are starting to comment on how tired they are, how much harder this is getting, and finally, that they're pretty sure they are screwing up their kids.

Hold up. There are a great many things I don't know in this world: Physics, Spanish verbs, how we can move from a consumer-driven economy to producing more goods after this crisis. But I can tell you this right now with all of my assurance: You're not screwing up your kids.

Your kids, in fact, will not be ruined by these days of unplanned home schooling

and quarantine. They suck, these days most definitely suck, but the kids will be all right.

How do I know this? I am a single mother. About 12 years ago, my ex-husband moved back to Montana, where we had lived for many years, and gave up custody of our two children. He sends child support, and for the first few years, he visited as often as once a month. But back-to-school nights, sports physicals, Confirmation classes, Sunday double headers with the travel team: all me.

The stats and stereotypes on single mothers are not good. Indeed, when I got divorced, the first in my mostly Catholic family to do so, there were a lot of people ready to tell me that I was going to screw up my kids. An equal number frequently offered, "I don't know how you do it," which is about the most unhelpful thing you can say to a single parent. Just come out and tell us, "I think your life sucks."

In truth, there were times in my life when things did suck, when I couldn't get it all done, when I worried about money (OK, that's all the time) or when I didn't know how to help my kids.

But my kids? They are all right. At 20 and 17, neither one of them has a criminal record. They have good friends, things they are passionate about and people who like to be around them. And they are successful at the things they love.

They are also wildly imperfect and have much to learn. So do I. But here are three things I know to be true:

Routines are helpful (even when you have older kids)

My daughter was sent home from her study

abroad program in Dublin, Ireland, when the coronavirus started making its way toward Europe, and here she is now chewing and slurping while I am trying to edit. And she will be here all summer, too, taking online classes and continuing to eat very near me.

She likes to have deep conversations at 10:30 p.m. I do not.

I'll admit it: This is the kind of day-to-day crap that could sink us. Don't let it. Get a schedule, but not one of those Pinterest-worthy, color-coded numbers that were all the rage in Week 1. Establish a few key times for things throughout the day and then stick to them. Kids need routines, they need to know what to expect. If you are not a teacher, don't attempt a middle school A-B module. Even if you are, I would say don't do it. Pick a few things that need to happen every day and make sure they do them.

For me, it means allowing my super creative, extroverted oldest child to have time to vent, but also to make sure she has projects to challenge her during this time.

Connecting with other adults is important

When my kids were small, I hated all the "Brush your teeth" and "Do your homework" things I had to say all the time because I was the only adult there to say them. It was so great when teachers or their doctors gave them marching orders. My heroes!

Which brings me to this: You and your children are devoid of other adults right now, and you both need to find them. Call grandparents every day. Write to your neighbors and leave notes in their mailboxes. Send your veterinarian a photo of your dog. Email your pediatrician and ask how he or she is doing. All those Facebook Live experiences with children's authors? Have your kids watch one.

Our day-to-day worlds are full of adults, and your kids should reconnect with some of them. It will bring back some of the normal, and it will help you feel less alone.

It's OK to be emotional

My ex-husband and I lost friends on 9/11, and I spent the first part of my pregnancy with

our son crying. I remember telling my doctor that it was crazy to bring a child into this sad world. Surely this was destined to make him a sad and angry kid.

Flash forward: My son is the most laid-back member of our family—and also the tallest, by far, which has earned him the nickname "Gentle Giant." He is introverted and compassionate, and his EQ is high. For all the sadness of during my pregnancy, he has turned out fine.

So, go ahead and cry if you need to. Feel in control one day and out of sorts the next. Ride the ride. We're all going to be sad and mad and all the things. It doesn't do any good to pretend to our children that we are not human, and there is no need to worry because you are.

And it will get better. Like all stages of parenting, this will not last. In that way, we may have a greater understanding of this moment than folks without kids right now: We absolutely know how fleeting time is.

You are not alone. You will get through this. And the kids will be all right. I promise. ■

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Kennedy Krieger's
Daniel Hoover
recommends parents
keep a "regular
schedule
with bedtime,
wake-up time,
meals, schoolwork
and play—yes, even
screen time built in."

A Summer of Transition

for Your Child With Disabilities

by Erica Rimlinger

I never thought I'd use the 'F' word in front of my daughter. I did on Monday," says a mother of a child with ADHD, who (not surprisingly) asked not to be named in this article. "That was my worst day."

The loss of normalcy and routine impacts everyone, but children with disabilities face additional hurdles coping with the changes that have upended their lives and interrupted their education. For parents of kids with disabilities, the burden is even greater. Parents must reassemble their child's disrupted life: homeschooling, navigating virtual doctors' appointments or therapies, creating new schedules and routines that address their child's emotional, physical and educational needs.

"I spend four to five hours a day homeschooling," the mother says. She describes the experience as overwhelming. "It's horrible. I'm just not good at this. At school, her teachers help her. That's why they're teachers. They know how to help her."

Meanwhile, job situations are in flux, there's no time to work from home and the sudden "new normal" that descended on the country in mid-March has no defined end date. The mother says she misses her old life. She misses her daughter's teachers. Her daughter does, too.

How can parents who have children with disabilities cope and help their kids cope as well during this stressful time?

Be honest, but keep it simple

Daniel Hoover, a clinical child and adolescent psychologist at Kennedy Krieger Institute's Center for Child and Family Traumatic Stress, advises parents to be honest about the situation without sugarcoating its seriousness. "Give simple, factual information about the virus, including the fact

that a lot of people are sick and it is a serious illness," Hoover says.

In addition to telling children the truth about the underlying cause of their changed routines, parents should pair this information with a sense of urgency in the solution. For example, parents can say, "We are all doing everything we can to stay safe. Handwashing and social distancing do really help," offers Hoover. Parents know best what their children are able to handle but should consider the child's level of vocabulary and comprehension, emotional reactivity and anxieties.

Address their stress

Children may react to the situation in several different ways. Some will "immediately jump to the conclusion that their family members will get sick and die," says Hoover. "Some may be oblivious and more concerned with immediate activities and routine. Some may stay up nights worrying about a vague, threatening sickness that they don't understand and have bad dreams. What we are seeing most in clinical practice at the Center for Traumatic Stress at Kennedy Krieger right now with our young clients and their families are fears and anxieties about the virus."

No matter how a child is behaving in response to the situation, active communication will help reduce stress. Children can read silence as scary, says Hoover. "They may not say anything out loud if they think it's not a topic that is being readily discussed." Or, children "may falsely sense that it is a subject that should not be discussed."

Because children "lack experience mediating what information they receive, they are more likely to have big emotional responses that are beyond their logical capacities to cope," Hoover says. "They are

often more likely to ‘read the room’ based on less reasoned, more gut-level emotional responses than adults do. Due to inexperience and less developed logical systems, they may catastrophize or internalize concerns based on very little information.”

Because it can be harder to children to make sense of what’s being explained, it is good to talk in basic terms and to “refrain from discussing details,” says Hoover. “Neurologically, children’s emotional centers are often sensitized and stimulated by fears, anger or sadness before their higher cortical areas—reasoning, perspective taking or planning—are fully mature. A good middle ground is best based on the needs of the child.”

Then parents then offer follow-up support. “Perhaps a check-in at the end of the day in which the child is prompted to review thoughts and feelings and process with help anything that is concerning,” he says.

Address your own stress

In his clinical practice, Hoover is also noticing “parents feeling high internal expectations to carry out education and socialization when they are stressed themselves,” he says.

To children, “uncensored emotional reactions by parents can be taken as particularly meaningful and scary,” says Hoover. He advises parents to keep their own anxieties manageable when discussing serious topics with their children but acknowledges that this can be tough or, in many cases, impossible. “A parent’s own fears can’t be totally hidden,” he says.

Children can pick up on their parents’ moods, so “it’s best to speak to the child’s fears after the parent has done the steps to manage his or her own emotions, perhaps through meditation, exercise” or other self-care activities, Hoover advises.

And if a parent is furloughed? “For the most part, it ought to be discussed,” he says. The conversation could be as simple as saying that Mommy will be at home for a while until her job starts again. “Offer concrete, factual information consistent with the child’s level of comprehension and emotional regulation,” says Hoover.

Another potential source of anxiety is the 24/7 news cycle on television,



“It’s best to speak to the child’s fears after the parent has done the steps to manage his or her own emotions, perhaps through meditation, exercise [or other self-care activities].”

according to Hoover. Children, especially if they have autism, can “take information in an overly literal manner with a susceptibility to magnifying fears and anxieties. Too much exposure is unhealthy for children and parents,” he says.

Set and keep routines

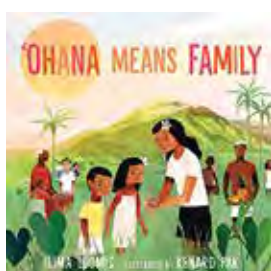
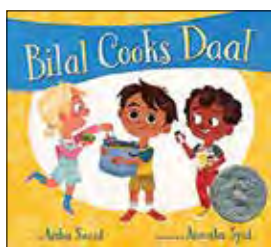
For kids with disabilities, “a lot of unstructured time ... leads to boredom, emotional ups and downs, sleep-regulation problems and behavior and emotion regulation problems,” says Hoover.

“Develop a visual schedule of weekly

activities that involve experiences of mastery,” he says, meaning things the child is good at or can feel a sense of accomplishment doing. The activity should build in “enjoyment to each day.”

You’re doing fine

Finally, Hoover advises parents to keep expectations for themselves and their children “reasonable.” In most cases, parents are “not going to be able to provide the level of these learning opportunities consistent with what a child would get in ‘normal’ circumstances. And that is fine for a temporary period,” he says. ■



Celebrating Asian/ Pacific American Heritage Month

Whether they're about favorite foods, problems at school, family relations or finding love, these 12 children's books explore the wide range of cultures, traditions and history of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States.

BY JENNIFER ROTHSCILD, COLLECTION ENGAGEMENT
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PRESCHOOL

'Bilal Cooks Daal'

By Aisha Saeed

Illustrated by Anoosha Syed

Bilal invites his friends over to make his favorite food, daal, a slow-cooked lentil dish from South Asia. After waiting and waiting for it to finish, Bilal worries his friends won't like it as much as he does.

'Alvin Ho: Allergic to Girls, School, and Other Scary Things'

By Lenore Look

Illustrated by Leuyen Pham

The first book in a series for fans of "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" introduces Alvin Ho, an Asian-American second-grader who is so afraid of school that he can't he can't speak. At home, however, Alvin is a very loud superhero named Firecracker Man.

'Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao'

By Kat Zhang

Illustrated by Charlene Chua

Amy loves eating steamed bao buns but struggles to make them as well as the other members in her family. Her determination to master the skill will inspire readers to try the bao recipe in the back of the book.

'Jasmine Toguchi: Mochi Queen'

By Debbi Michiko Florence

Illustrated by Elizabet Vukovic

Everyone over the age of 10 in Jasmine's Japanese-American family makes mochi by hand for New Year's. Although she's only eight—and a girl—Jasmine hatches a plan to help pound the mochi rice.

'Ohana Means Family'

By Illima Loomis

Illustrated by Kenard Pak

In this gently rhyming cumulative poem, a Native Hawaiian family goes through all the necessary steps to make poi for their lu'au. Includes a glossary of Hawaiian terms.

MIDDLE GRADE

'Front Desk'

By Kelly Yang

Ten-year-old Mia must balance school with helping her parents manage a motel, where they secretly shelter recent immigrants. Despite not being a native English speaker (her family moved to America from China when she was eight), Mia is determined to win a writing contest to give her family more financial security.

EARLY ELEMENTARY

'Meet Yasmin!'

By Saadia Faruqi

Illustrated by Hatem Aly

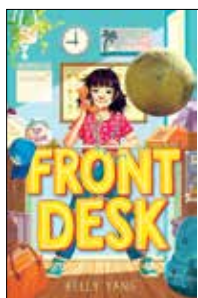
In four different stories, second-grader Yasmin, a Pakistani-American, navigates school projects, boredom, and family outings with her own creativity and imagination.

'This is Just a Test'

By Wendy Wan-Long Shang and

Madelyn Rosenberg

In the early 1980s, David Da-Wei Horowitz



struggles to balance the competing expectations of his Chinese and Jewish grandparents as he prepares for his Bar Mitzvah. He's also worried about the Cold War and digging a fallout shelter with a friend—but who does David like enough to share it with?

'The Best At It'

By Maulik Pancholy

Rahul's grandfather tells him the way to survive middle school is to pick one thing and be the best at it. But Rahul, an Indian-American in a mostly white town who is also struggling with his sexuality and possibly OCD, just can't figure out what that special thing is.



YOUNG ADULT

'There's Something About Sweetie'

By Sandhya Menon

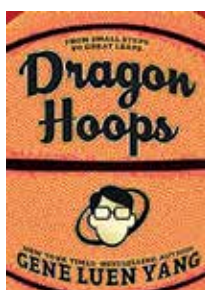
After being dumped by his girlfriend, 17-year-old Ashish Patel gives into his parents' attempts at matchmaking. They choose Sweetie, a smart but overweight high school track star, but Sweetie's mother doesn't think she's worthy of Ashish and rebuffs their advances. Tired her mother's criticism, Sweetie accepts anyway in this delightful rom-com.



'Dragon Hoops'

By Gene Luen Yang

Rumor has it, this is the year the Dragons are going to take the state championship. In this nonfiction documentary-style graphic novel, Yang, a teacher at the school, follows the men's varsity basketball team and its players for an unforgettable season.



'The Epic Crush of Genie Lo'

By FC Yee

Genie's not pleased when she learns the weird new boy at her high school is really the Monkey King and needs her help to round up 108 demons that have escaped from hell. Now Genie must divert her attention from acing the SATs and getting into Harvard to saving the world, but first she needs a crash course in Chinese mythology. ■

Happy Birthday, Arnold Lobel!

Each month we celebrate a birthday of literary significance.

Arnold Lobel was born on May 22, 1933. Growing up in Schenectady, New York, Lobel was often bullied at school, but he used his drawings and stories to connect with his classmates.



Lobel's hobby blossomed into a successful career as a children's book author and illustrator. In 1961, six years after graduating from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn with a degree in fine arts, Lobel illustrated his first book, "Red Tag Comes Back." The following year he wrote and illustrated "A Zoo for Mister Muster" about the Prospect Park Zoo in Brooklyn near the apartment he shared with his wife, Anita, who also wrote and illustrated children's books, and their two children.

During his lifetime, Lobel illustrated almost 100 children's books, many of which he also wrote. An animal lover, he liked to use them as characters to teach important lessons. "Frog and Toad Are Friends," which was published in 1970 and catapulted Lobel into the spotlight, was reportedly inspired by the amphibians he used to keep as pets during his childhood summers in Vermont.

The four-book "Frog and Toad" series about friendship earned Lobel a Caldecott Honor and a Newbery Honor in the 1970s. He was awarded a Caldecott Medal in 1981 for his book of 20 original animal tales, "Fables."

Lobel died in 1987. "He was only 54," his daughter, Adrienne, told the New Yorker. "Think of all the stories we missed."

Meet Jess Smith

BY PJ FEINSTEIN



OCCUPATION: Pediatric physical therapist at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital

LIVES: Arlington, VA

WORKS: Washington, DC

HUSBAND: Chris

CHILDREN: Addison, 13; Mackenzie, 11; and Sebastian, 7

We're looking for local moms and dads who are juggling multiple priorities and making a positive impact in their community to feature in our new Mom/Dad Life column. Send your nominations to editor@washingtonFAMILY.com.

What do you love about the work you do?

I have worked at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital for 18 years. A few years ago, I became one of the first board-certified neonatal therapists in the world. It is an honor to work with the tiniest, most-fragile patients in the hospital. My role in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) is to protect the neurobehavioral development of these infants by helping to recreate the protective environment of the womb so the development that is supposed to be happening in utero can happen in a supportive and less stressful way.

Helping a mom hold her baby for the first time, despite her fears and the many tubes and wires, is one of my favorite things. Of course, seeing my patients leave the NICU for home is my absolute favorite thing.

What is the Juliet Grace Smith Foundation?

My husband, Chris, and I started the Juliet Grace Smith Foundation in 2012 in memory of our third daughter, Juliet Grace, who passed away in 2011 from complications of prematurity. She was born four months early, weighing less than two pounds, and fought for six months in the hospital before losing her battle. So not only do I work in the NICU, I am also a NICU parent.

This valuable perspective helps us choose projects for the foundation that will improve the experience of other NICU families while remembering Juliet Grace. For example, we host pampering parties every couple of months for NICU families and have purchased comfortable recliners for parents and hundreds of books for them to read to their baby while they visit. We have also gifted \$150,000 to fund support staff dedicated to the NICU at MedStar Georgetown, such as a clinical psychologist and a family support specialist.

What do you love about being a mom?

Watching my children grow into their own personalities—struggling through challenges and overcoming fears—and being proud of their accomplishments is what makes my heart burst. We took a family trip to four national parks last

summer, covering over 2,000 miles by car and more than 50 miles by foot. Through it all, our three kids stuck together. They encouraged each other when one was struggling on a trail or bored in the car, and they kept us all entertained with jokes, pranks and playlists. Experiencing that adventure together and seeing our kids find so much enjoyment in our world made me so proud to be their mom.

What do you find challenging about raising kids?

One of my biggest challenges in raising my three kids is that they are each so different and can't be parented in the same way. What works for one child doesn't necessarily work for the others. I have to frequently remind myself who I'm dealing with before responding, although sometimes I fail at that and my words backfire. The humbling apology that comes from me next is sometimes the bigger lesson.

What's something that makes juggling motherhood and your career a little bit easier?

Having a supportive husband who works from home and has a fairly flexible schedule is huge. Having a great group of friends to help carpool everyone to and from sporting events is invaluable. I absolutely could not do it without my village. And teaching my kids at an early age how to make dinner so that it's done before I get home from my long shift at work is helpful, too!

What would you do if you had one hour without any responsibilities?

Having the whole crew under the same roof all of the time while social distancing leaves me wanting some solitude. Right now I would love one hour to lie in a hammock with a delicious drink (maybe a bourbon barrel stout) and doze off with a good book without a single interruption. Prior to COVID-19, I would choose coffee with a friend to catch up, share a laugh, maybe a few tears and a hug. That's actually what I miss most: the hugs. ■

Read our extended interview with Jess Smith at WashingtonFAMILY.com.