

# Three Tips for Helping Weary Kids Through the Pandemic

Is the coronavirus crisis ever going to end? It is the question we are all asking – particularly the youngest members of our society. While the [science](#) shows the virus itself is not very dangerous to children, the emotional damage they are suffering from the shutdowns is potentially enormous. Their lives have been turned upside down. In the United States, 49 percent of children [interviewed](#) for a Save the Children survey said they were worried about the pandemic.

Parents are also worn out by this crisis, but they need to stay strong for the sake of their children. What can loving mothers and fathers do to help their kids weather this storm?

As I work through these daily challenges with three children of my own, here are three methods I've found to help weary kids get through a crisis that seems to never end:

## 1. Keep it Fun

Introducing an element of fun whenever possible can lighten the burdensome government restrictions for kids. Get creative. If your state government forces your kids to wear face masks, buy ones with their favorite cartoon characters. Sing songs together while you wash hands and buy colorful, kid-themed bottles of hand soap. YouTube is now full of songs that teach about things like social distancing. Try learning a few. Anything you can do to make the restrictions a bit more fun and less onerous will help your kid to cope.

## 2. Watch What You Say

Parents need to be very careful what they say about COVID to their children. Of course, some basic explanations are needed,

but keeping them as simple as possible goes a long way in helping the situation.

There are also some things that kids definitely do not need to hear. Take political opinions. We all can spew commentary about the way our elected officials are handling the situation. But kids are not developmentally ready to process those types of issues. “When we let children in on too much information—adult verbal and emotional clutter—it rushes them along, pushing them ahead without a foundation,” write Kim John Payne and Lisa M. Ross in their book [\*Simplicity Parenting: Using the Extraordinary Power of Less to Raise Calmer, Happier, and More Secure Kids\*](#). “It’s a misnomer to think we are ‘sharing’ with our children when we include them in adult conversations about adult concerns. Sharing suggests an equal and mutual exchange, one that is impossible for a child to offer and unfair for an adult to expect.”

### **3. Be There**

The best thing you can do for your kids right now is simply to be there for them. Your time and undivided attention are always the things your child craves the most – and that’s even more true now. Many parents are facing financial and other stresses due to the shutdowns, so it is easy to be distracted. But they should prioritize moments of connection with their child. The best activities are usually the simplest ones: reading a story together, playing a board game or letting the kids help cook dinner.

Parenting during COVID-19 poses unique challenges, but it also offers unique opportunities. What is more important and valuable than helping a child get through difficult times? Wise parents will make the most of it.

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