

Support for Parents & Caregivers

Please remember

You are parents first and foremost, trying to juggle parenting, teaching and working all at the same time is an impossible expectation. Although your children may not be at school, their learning doesn't stop. They are learning many new skills through cooking with you, playing with you, reading books, engaging in imaginative play and going for family walks. Focus on what is manageable, fun and prioritise what is important for you and your family during this time.



Tips for the coming weeks:

- o Focus on what you can control.
- o Take a break from social media or listening to the news every day, if you feel you need to.
- o Start a new hobby or pick up on an old one – you can even get the family involved.
- o It is important to establish a schedule or daily routine – adds structure and promotes predictability.
- o Practice self-care (e.g. take some time for yourself each day where possible).
- o Exercise and get some fresh air – research shows that exercise is one of the most powerful ways to reduce anxiety and to give your body a boost of endorphins.
- o Connect with friends – e.g. over skype, zoom, phone calls.
- o Focus on gratitude – be thankful for the little things.
- o Keep things simple – try and focus on one thing at a time.
- o Look to engage your children in independent activities – they will learn great new skills and it allows you to have time for yourself.
- o Support children to play an active role in helping themselves, their families and their communities (e.g., having small chores at home, some choice regarding activities). This will help them have a sense of agency and control during this time.

People may not always be their best selves during this time, so be kind to each other, create a safe place at home for people to relax and unwind when they need it.

For more information see:

COVID -19 Tips for Parents from Unicef - <https://www.covid19parenting.com/tips-in-other-languages>

Activities to try:

We have compiled a list of activities that you could try at home to keep your children busy, engaged and learning over the coming weeks. These have been organised into different categories:

Movement:

- o Joe Wicks (aka 'The Body Coach') is holding free physical education sessions for children on his YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLyCLOpd4VxBvQafyve889qVcPxYEjdSTI>
- o Download the Go Noddle Games App (available on Android and Apple) to keep kids moving at home. This app is free. Find out more here: <https://www.gonoodle.com/blog/gonoodle-games-movement-app-for-kids/>

Movement continued:

- o Cosmic Kids! Yoga, mindfulness and relaxation specially designed for children aged 3+ years. It is used in schools and homes all over the world: <https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga> (Best for ages 3-12)
- o Les Mills Born to Move classes are being streamed on TV1 at 3pm on weekdays. These classes are designed to teach children foundation movement skills, improve fitness and build their confidence and self-expression.
- o *Other:* Gardening, stretching outside, scavenger hunts in your house or backyard, sleeping lions or hide and seek.

Creative activities:

- o Colouring in, drawing, painting.
- o Nature art (e.g., finding leaves, flowers, sticks in the garden and making a piece of art by sticking these to paper).
- o Journal - Writing down how they are feeling and what they are doing may be helpful for kids and teenagers. Check out this 'Lock Down Diary' (made by an artist from Christchurch): <https://www.mylockdowndiary.com/>
- o Play board games or cards together – or make your own.
- o Do some cooking and baking - you can get some ideas from Jamie Oliver's website on cooking with children: <https://www.jamieoliver.com/features/category/get-kids-cooking/>
- o Making Lego creations and sending photos of these to friends via WhatsApp or Messenger. Or, you could join 'Lego Kids NZ' on Facebook for daily challenges. Check it out here: https://www.facebook.com/groups/241965403638694/?hc_location=ufi
- o Use old packages and boxes to see who can build the highest tower. You could also use these boxes to set up a pretend shop, or to make robots, pirate ships and rockets etc.
- o Tracks and courses – create racing tracks on the floor for toy cars, or for children to walk through (e.g., using coloured tape and boxes). Could also create indoor activity tracks for them to walk over, jump on, etc.
- o Use pegs, sheets, furniture and string to create dens and huts.
- o Do 'dress-ups' at home using old clothes or set up a 'mud kitchen' outside using old pots and pans (if you have them).
- o Make playdough together – there are lots of different recipes online.
- o With Easter coming up, set up a range of Easter themed activities at home (e.g., making hot cross buns, painting eggs, Easter egg hunt, colouring in Easter bunny pictures).

General learning:

- o Mystery Science have pulled together their most popular science lessons and are offering them free for anyone to use: <https://mysteryscience.com/school-closure-planning> (Best for ages 4-12)
- o Go through the podcasts by the Aotearoa History Show which tells the story of New Zealand from its geological origins to modern history: <https://www.rnz.co.nz/programmes/the-aotearoa-history-show>
- o The Big History Project is an online resource for older students: <https://www.bighistoryproject.com/chapters/1#intro>
- o The Khan Academy is a non-profit organisation offering free learning resources and activities: <https://www.khanacademy.org/>
- o Although based on the American schooling system, Scholastic offers lessons for learning at home (based on age): <https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/learnathome.html> (Best for ages 3–12)
- o Prodigy is a great, free on-line resource for doing maths at home: <https://www.prodigygame.com/>
- o Based out of Washington State University, parents and children can send questions into Dr. Universe, who teams up with professors, researchers and experts in their field: <https://askdruniverse.wsu.edu/explore/>

Interest subjects:

- Use Google Earth to explore parts of the world together. For example, you could find landmarks like the Eiffel Tower or discover new cities <https://www.google.com/earth/>
- The British Museum in London, England has a website where people can learn about some of the artefacts in the museum like the Rosetta Stone: <https://britishmuseum.withgoogle.com/>
- The San Diego Zoo has a website for children with great videos, activities and games: <https://kids.sandiegozoo.org/> *(Best for ages 4–12)*
- National Geographic website for children. Lots of great games to play and interesting things for children to read about – like ‘Extinct Animals’ and ‘Aboriginal Australian Culture’ <https://www.natgeokids.com/nz/>
- Sitting alongside the Netflix animated action-adventure series ‘Carmen Sandiego’ is this website with games, activities and resources for children to explore www.carmensandiego.com/resources
- The Metropolitan Museum of Art (in New York) has a website for children where they can ‘hop in the time machine’ to view artwork from different time periods from across the world: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/online-features/metkids/> *(Best for ages 6-12)*
- Games, colouring in pictures, and puzzles on NASA Kids Club: <https://www.nasa.gov/kidsclub/index.html>

Activities for younger children:

- Website link with 40+ ideas of indoor activities to keep young children busy. Includes ideas like ‘Post-It Name Match Game’ and ‘Make a Creation Station’. Many of these activities require supplies (like staplers, kid-sized scissors, hole punch, glue sticks, tape, string, paper). <https://busytoddler.com/2020/03/indoor-activities/?fbclid=IwAR3tYXAqw7tJRAzLExpPcJo4rApLsKtgLOAwghzxgnhwOajc4au>
- Online games where children can play with favourite characters like Elmo: <https://pbskids.org/>
- Explore ‘Seussville’ and play a few games with Dr Seuss: <https://www.seussville.com/>

Other:

Bucket list/post isolation jar - Every time you wish you could do something, go somewhere, visit someone - write it on a small piece of paper and place it in a jar. Then, when the lockdown is over and all restrictions removed, you can work your way through the jar.