

Ten recommendations **for mothers, fathers and other caregivers** during **COVID-19**

In the context of the **COVID-19** pandemic, mothers, fathers and other caregivers are facing significant challenges in parenting and childcare, as well as with their own well-being.

Here, we would like to share some recommendations that can **help you as a mother, father or caregiver** to make this time slightly less challenging.

1

Trust your ability to raise and care for children and adapt to change.

Parenting requires constantly **adapting to children as they develop**. Since you've already done it before, you can certainly do it in this situation.



2

You don't have to fill the day with activities for or with your children.

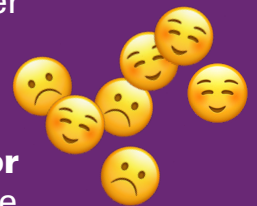
Just because you're together at home all the time, it doesn't mean you have to do everything together or spend the day organizing fun activities. Boys and girls will also need time to play on their own, focus on things they enjoy, or even, to spend time doing nothing in particular. **When you do things together, try to make it something that you can also enjoy.** It is a good sign when both of you enjoy what you're doing.



3

Be flexible.

Exceptional circumstances require exceptional measures. You are not a bad mother, father or caregiver because you change some rules to make living together easier during this period. The rules for living together can be reviewed together; perhaps some of **them may not work very well in this situation, or new ones may arise.** But it's important that everyone knows the rules, and if it helps, don't hesitate to draw pictures of them or put up reminders in places where everyone can see them around the home.





4 Identify what you can give up and what you feel cannot be negotiated.

Make a list of the behaviours that you feel you can accept, and identify two or three that you feel are not acceptable. **Communicate to your children that there are some issues with which you will be more flexible (e.g. untidy rooms, some schedules) but that you will continue to be very firm with other behaviours (e.g. no fighting between siblings).**



5 Everyone can help.

Don't be afraid to involve your children, each according to their age and development. Explain to them the novelty of the situation, and see how chores can be shared. **This is a great opportunity to learn how to help each other and work together as a family.**



6 Plan and schedule routines for a few days only.

Something that will help is to agree on some routines or plans for a few days only; don't plan beyond that. **Remember, this is an exceptional time, and flexibility is important.** If you need to change routines or some plans, don't hesitate to do so.



7 It's okay to improvise.

If you prefer to improvise and your current situation makes it possible, let yourself improvise for awhile. **Take this opportunity to do what you always wanted to do with your children but didn't have enough time to do so.**

8

Don't try to do everything perfectly.

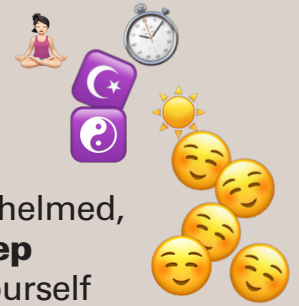
In this situation, don't be so demanding on yourself to do the best at your job while trying to become a perfect teacher for your children and taking care of all of the household problems. It's not possible to do so, and if you try, you will burn you out. **It is important to select achievable goals** and decide on what you can achieve, and to adjust your expectations on what is possible to do.



9

It's okay to feel overwhelmed. Breathe.

When you feel overwhelmed, **stop and take a deep breath.** Be kind to yourself and remember that you are living through an exceptional situation and that you're doing the best you can.



10

Ask for help if you feel you need it.

If you think that a situation is overwhelming you, ask for help within the home, from a family member, a friend, or even a professional in one of the available help lines. It can happen to all of us. **Don't be afraid to ask for help; this is what it means to be brave and honest with yourself.**





My points to remind

1 I believe in myself. I've adapted before.

2 It is not necessary to fill up the day with activities with my children.

3 It's okay to be flexible and change my mind.

4 I choose what I can give up and what I can't.

5 Everyone can help.

6 I plan or schedule for a few days only.

7 It's okay to improvise.

8 No one is perfect.

9 Take a deep breath.

10 I will ask for help if I need.



We also invite you to participate in the **@LearningAtHome** challenges, where we propose a set of fun activities that can be done with young children to encourage learning through play.