

Resources for Parents Coping with COVID-19 Restrictions

We realize that the COVID-19 pandemic is causing distress for many of our families. The restrictions that have been put into place are recommended to help control the spread of COVID-19. However, these changes in school and work environments may be especially stressful for parents taking care of young children at home. Feelings of anxiety are understandable. The stress can feel overwhelming at times. It is important to keep in mind that the current challenges are temporary and there are things you can do now to help you and your family cope effectively with the rapidly changing situation. We are including some suggestions here, and we will continue to add to this list as new information becomes available:

- **Stay Informed.** The [latest information](#) regarding COVID-19 is being updated regularly.
- **Make use of parenting support resources available online.** Some good resources are listed here:
 - [AAP: Positive Parenting during COVID-19](#)
 - [AAP Guidance to Families of Children with Special Healthcare Needs during COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
 - [Domestic Violence Emergency Resources](#)
- **Help your children understand the necessary changes in their routine are helping to keep the entire family safe.** There are numerous websites with information on talking to children about COVID-19. Here are a few that we recommend:
 - [How to Talk to Your Kids About Coronavirus, PBS Kids for Parents](#)
 - [Talking to Children About Coronavirus \(COVID19\), American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry](#)
 - [Talking with Children About Coronavirus Disease 2019, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- **Take advantage of this time more fully participate in your child's education.** In an effort to limit the spread of COVID-19, most schools have been closed and children are now involved in remote learning. We understand that this may be stressful to many parents because you may not feel prepared to be both the parent and the teacher. Hopefully, your school and your child's therapists are providing assignments for your child to complete at home. Here are some additional educational resources:
 - [Georgia's Pre-K at Home](#)
 - [Atlanta Speech School Free Online Preschool](#)
 - [Georgia Public Broadcast](#) has links to programs available to students in Georgia: Contact your local school for additional resources. Some schools are providing laptops and other equipment. If your child has an IEP in place, you can ask your school for help in implementing the plan at home.

- For children with vision impairment, Christine Roman-Lantzy, Ph.D., has posted some activities that are both fun and educational on her [blog](#) and also on the [Paths to Literacy Website](#).
- [Scholastic](#) has good resources for learning at home.
- Continue developmental support at home when therapy appointments are limited. Monitor and encourage your child's developmental skills. The need for social distancing has resulted in cancellation of developmental therapies for many children with special needs. Ask your child's therapist for ways to incorporate therapeutic techniques into your child's daily routine. Remember that you are your child's favorite and best therapist!
- Contact your therapist to see if virtual telehealth visits are an option.
- Keep a journal to document when your child masters a new skill.
- Use the [CDC's Free Milestone Tracker App](#) to document new skills.

• **Resources for Emergency Food Assistance.** There have been temporary difficulties keeping some essential items, including food and infant formula, in stock in stores. Try to anticipate food needs in advance, planning at least a week ahead, if possible. Emergency Food resources:

- Anticipate potential shortages of any special formula your child needs and purchase enough for a week in advance. If you have difficulty finding formula on grocery shelves, you may be able to purchase the formula directly online. Check the website provided on the product. Some formula companies will also provide directories for where to find the product. See AAP Guidance Regarding Formula Shortages during COVID-19 Pandemic.
- If you have WIC and are having trouble locating retailers with your baby's formula, contact the State's WIC hotline at 1-800-228-9173.
- Food banks across Georgia are providing meals to those who need them, with precautions to protect health and safety. [Find a food bank in your area here.](#)
- Many Georgia families will be able to pick up school meals for their children during state-mandated closures. [Student Meal pick-up by school district](#)
- [Foodfinder US](#) is a resource for families to quickly find food assistance programs.

• **Find some new ways to enjoy time together with your child and have fun!** [Virtual National Parks, museums, and other activities.](#)