

Resources for Children & Families to Stay Healthy During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Although we are all practicing universal social distancing, we can still laugh, play, learn, and grow closer outside of class and work. As such, it's important to adhere to local government, department of public health, and CDC guidance in order to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus. Refer to the [CDC's main coronavirus website](#) for timely updates regarding this situation.

It's important for children and their families to eat nutritiously and be physically active. The best place to look first for information on keeping you and your family healthy is the [Daily Life & Coping section](#) on CDC.gov, and particularly the section on [Caring for Children](#).

In addition, below are some creative ways to stay healthy from the team at the Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (HPRC).

Eating healthy

Do you suddenly find yourself at home with your children? It's important to make healthy food choices for you and your children. Here are some free resources to help families eat more nutritiously:

- [Food & Fun: Recipe Packet](#)
Fun, inexpensive, and healthy recipes, quick to prepare for both snack & dinner
- [Food & Fun: Meal Planning](#)
Planning ahead can help you save time at night and spend your money wisely at the grocery store
- [Food & Fun: Snack Time](#)
Children need healthy snacks between meals to give them energy and nutrients
- [The Nutrition Source: Food safety, nutrition, and wellness during COVID-19](#)
Guidance for how to safely shop, order, and prepare food to minimize transmission of the novel coronavirus

Being physically active

It can be especially difficult to stay physically active as many are being asked to isolate or quarantine, and time spent outside the home must be limited. As such, it can be hard to limit screen time. A key issue for child health is to focus on limiting children's exposure to advertising on screens. Here are some free resources to help families be more physically active in small spaces:

- [Food & Fun: Take Control of TV](#)
Taking control of your family's screen time is one of the most valuable things you can do for your children's health now and as they grow into adulthood
- [Action for Healthy Kids: COVID-19 & At-Home Resources](#)
Resources on COVID-19 and staying physically and emotionally healthy at home
- [SPARKhome: SPARKacademy activities](#)
Free activities for teachers & parents
- [GoNoodle: Good Energy at Home](#)

Ways for children and families to move and learn together at home

- [Brain Breaks](#)
Educational shorts for children to engage in during a break
- [TAKE10](#)
No gym? No field? No equipment? No problem! Fun activities to reduce sedentary behaviors and instill positive health habits

For families

Stay focused on being healthy together as a family. Here are some free resources for families to guide and inform healthier decisions while at home:

- [Food, Fun & Family](#)
A guide to help busy families develop healthier habits at home
- [Food & Fun: Parent Handouts in English, Spanish, & Chinese](#)
Handouts for parents on eating healthy, staying active, and taking control of screen time available in English, Spanish, & Chinese

For leaders

It can be challenging to coordinate so many shifting priorities at once, and ensuring adequate nutrition and food security for communities in need can be especially difficult at this time. Here are some resources and suggested guidance for helping children be more food secure:

- [Feeding Low-Income Children during the COVID-19 Pandemic \(NEJM\)](#)
Suggested approaches to addressing food insecurity in U.S. children during the COVID-19 pandemic
- [USDA: Food & Nutrition Service Response to COVID-19](#)
Guidance on how USDA will use all available program flexibilities and contingencies to serve program participants across their 15 nutrition programs
- [Food Research & Action Center: COVID-19 Updates](#)
Updates on efforts to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on the health, well-being and food security of low-income people