

— FOR PARENTS

6 Parent Tips to Develop Healthy Balance During a Pandemic



Parents are pushed to the breaking point between parenting, school, work and everything else. Nothing about growing up in a pandemic is normal for children. These tips help you find a balance during a hard time.

1 Invest in future growth

This difficult time is also a chance to build social and emotional skills kids would not normally practice. Value is often placed on grades, but healthy life skills are what help children become resilient adults. Teaching children to manage expectations and think flexibly prepares them for challenges later in life.

2 Define what success is

Every family gets to decide. For children it might be good grades, best effort, making good choices or coping with virtual learning. For parents it might be surviving the day, managing emotions, finding time for self-care or building community. A definition gives you something to work toward, instead of feeling like you are failing at everything.

3 Manage expectations

Help your children understand that reality may change from week to week, and that there are ways to cope with unpredictability. This skill will help them manage stress for the rest of their lives. For parents: no one has parented through this before, and its impact on families is still unfolding.

4 Lean on your community

Do not reinvent the wheel. Ask friends, family and coworkers what is working for them that you could try at home.

5 Know when to log off

Giving yourself a break is hard in a connected world, and it is okay to stop for your own mental health. Taking a break also models a healthy way to manage stress for your children. Skip the comment threads on current events; they add distress.

6 Take time for self-care

You do not have to be the perfect parent all the time. Many children can handle challenges when given the chance. Commit to a routine that includes movement, good food and activities that recharge you.