

Family Strategies for Mitigating the Long-Term Effects of the Pandemic

Marlene Maron, PhD, ABPP

Chief Psychologist/Manager, Psychological Services, UVMHC

Clinical Associate Professor, Psychiatry & Pediatrics

Larner College of Medicine at UVM

Some questions I get asked

- ▶ I feel fried, what can I offer my kids?
- ▶ Do I need to worry about the amount of screen time my kids are using?
- ▶ Will my kids know how to interact with people in person after this?
- ▶ We're all in our rooms with closed doors. How can this possibly be ok?
- ▶ This is going on and on and we're all losing steam. Will we recover?

Links to recent articles I appreciated

- ▶ <https://www.kidsvt.com/vermont/how-to-encourage-kids-resilience-amid-a-pandemic/Content?oid=5498131>
- ▶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/14/parenting/pandemic-virus-stress-symptoms.html?referringSource=articleShare>
- ▶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/14/parenting/working-moms-job-loss-coronavirus.html?referringSource=articleShare>
- ▶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/09/well/family/fall-covid-mental-health.html?referringSource=articleShare>
- ▶ https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_teens_are_making_meaning_out_of_the_pandemic
- ▶ https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/three_ways_to_help_your_kids_succeed_at_distance_learning

How to Encourage Kids' Resilience Amid a Pandemic

BY JOELLE VAN LENT AND KEN PICARD

Mothers Are the 'Shock Absorbers' of Our Society

When What Parents Are Feeling Is More Than Just Stress

Paying attention to symptoms like headaches, dizziness and fatigue is crucial, now more than ever.

How Will We Cope With the Pandemic Fall?

Mental health experts offer advice on how to handle the return to indoor life the cooler weather will bring.

How Teens Are Making Meaning Out of the Pandemic

Three Ways to Help Your Kids Succeed at Distance Learning

Consistent themes from available literature and articles

- ▶ Resilience can be cultivated
- ▶ Breathe! There is so much evidence for activating the parasympathetic nervous system to help us manage stress and minimize inflammation
- ▶ Purpose, meaning, and living in accordance with our values are key
- ▶ Acceptance is critical, including grief of losses
- ▶ Acknowledge the unknown and unknowable
- ▶ Consider/cultivate gratitude practice: In VT we have green space, fresh air, etc. Finding wonder in nature and adopting the perspective of young children can be healing
- ▶ Cultivate (ACT/mindfulness based) emotional acceptance and focus on the present

More recommendations

- ▶ Finding opportunities : more time with your kids, new initiatives, creative outlets, opportunities for kids to connect and belong
- ▶ Focusing on helpers and positivity: VT response, community engagement, etc.
- ▶ Dedicate space for focus, attention and single tasking for school work for kids and remote work for parents
- ▶ Consistently recommended practices are still important: good nutrition, exercise, self-care, prioritizing sleep, limiting alcohol and sugar, routines, social contact where and how appropriate
- ▶ Developing your own risk mitigation plan can be helpful -choosing whom to see and under what conditions

Your questions?

Thank you.

L