

Parenting during COVID-19



COVID-19 has challenged families all around the world in ways no one could imagine. None of this has been easy! Parents are trying to juggle everything from filing for unemployment to working from home while trying to homeschool. Throw in a little fear, anxiety, and unrealistic expectations – this could be a recipe for disaster!

But it doesn't have to be. Most people think that positive parenting is just about looking after the safety and well-being of children. And it is, but a large part of effective parenting is that parents need to also look after themselves!

Top Parenting Tips For Parents and Caregivers During The Pandemic from Triple P©

1. Reassure your children that your family is your top priority

Say something like "I'm your parent, it's my job to keep you safe and we are doing everything we can."

2. Take care of yourself the best you can

Deal with your own distress by taking actions that give you a better sense of personal control. Stress management skills such as mindfulness and/or deep breathing can help reduce stress. Keep healthy and safe (good personal hygiene, exercise daily, eat well, get enough sleep, avoid using alcohol or drugs to lessen stress). Avoid behavior that might increase stress. For example, while it is helpful to keep informed about COVID-19, constant checking on your screens can increase stress.

3. Make sure your children know you are ready to talk

Children need to be able to talk to parents about their concerns and have their questions answered. When a child wants to talk about their feelings, stop what you are doing and listen carefully. Avoid telling your child how they should feel ("That's silly. You shouldn't be scared about that.") Let children know it is OK to be worried. Talking or drawing can help children get in touch with their feelings and figure out what they are anxious about.

4. Be truthful in answering children's questions

Find out what they know about the issue before answering. Keep answers simple. Get information from trusted sources (e.g. official government websites) rather than social media.

5. Maintain everyday family routines

Keep to usual rising times, mealtimes, and bedtimes. Every family is different. Involve children in working out any new routine (e.g. have a daily plan of activities for school-aged children who are at home).



Family First Counselors are available to offer families information on over 150 community resources, including places to play throughout Nash and Edgecombe counties. Counselors can help meet the needs of your family whether it's quality child care referrals or local parenting programs. Family First also has resources such as DVDs and books on just about any child related concern. If you need child care options, parenting information, or any of the services offered below, please call Family First at 252.985.4300, or visit us at 215 Lexington St., Rocky Mount. Counselors are available Monday through Thursday, 9 am to 5 pm.

Circle of Parents is a support group for parents of children, ages birth to 18, with special needs (any physical or developmental disability). Parents are able to spend time connecting with each other, offering encouragement, support and suggestions for managing the care of their special needs child. Circle will resume the week of September 14 and meet most Monday nights at 6:30 pm, either by conference call or a ZOOM format. Families will be able to pick up a meal to enjoy each meeting night, and there will be weekly Walmart and gas card drawings as well.

Registration required. Contact Iris Ray at iray@depc.org

*When the group resumes in-person meetings, the school-age children participate in developmentally age appropriate activities within their own Circle of Kids group. Dinner and childcare (for younger children) are provided. This program meets (when in-person) most Monday nights from 6 – 8 pm during the school year, as well as other specified times for field trips and family activities.

DEPC Scholarship Program offers families opportunities for assistance with child care if they are working a minimum of 30 hours per week or in school full time. This program serves children birth to age 3 and it follows the same financial guidelines for income eligibility as the Department of Social Services. Families are required to pay parent fees on average of 10% of their gross income.

How to apply: Applications may be printed from the DEPC web page or picked up from 215 Lexington Street in Rocky Mount.

Kaleidoscope® Play and Learn Groups *The 16 week virtual series starts the week of August 24.

DEPC is offering five virtual Kaleidoscope Play and Learn groups each week starting the week of 8/24/2020, with plans to transition to in person meetings as soon as pandemic restrictions allow us to do so safely. The groups are based on where people live in our 2 counties, with offerings for the Spring Hope, Nashville, Tarboro, and Rocky Mount communities. Caregivers will receive weekly packets with play and craft ideas they can do at home with their child, along with ideas for healthy eating and staying active. DEPC will provide each registered caregiver with a container filled with all necessary craft items at the beginning of this 16 week series. Caregivers who attend 13 out of the 16 ZOOM meetings, complete a developmental questionnaire for their child, and participate in a Triple P Positive Parenting Program activity will receive a \$25 Walmart gift card in December. Contact Debra Boudreau at playgroups@depc.org to register or for questions.

North Carolina Pre-K (NC Pre-K) serves children that live in Edgecombe and Nash counties who are 4 by August 31st of each school year. Children who are at-risk are served in this state-wide program on the school calendar year. NC Pre-K also has financial guidelines, but parents do not have to meet working hour requirements or school guidelines. There are no fees to families using this program. Slots may still be available for classes starting in September.

How to apply: Applications may be picked up at 215 Lexington Street in Rocky Mount. For more information call Family First.

The Incredible Years® is an evidence-based 16 week parenting curriculum that has proven positive results for families. During the FREE series, parents learn the importance of spending quality time with their child and engage in child-directed activities with a focus on praise, parental coaching techniques, and positive behavior management practices. Many fun participation incentives are offered weekly (ie: gas cards, toys, books, etc.).

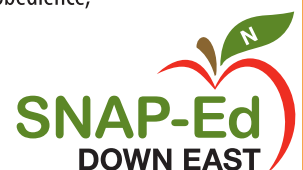
The 16 week Incredible Years series will begin on August 6 from 6:00 to 7:30 via the ZOOM platform. Participants will receive a weekly meal, gas card and play incentive to practice their new skills with their child. Caregivers who attend 13 out of the 16 ZOOM meetings will receive a \$50 Walmart gift card.

Registration required. For more information or to register contact Jennifer Cobb at jcobb@depc.org.

Triple P® When you become a parent you're expected to be an instant expert. But all parents struggle from time to time— and that's where the Triple P— Positive Parenting Program can help. Triple P is a world-acclaimed program that gives you the skills you need to manage misbehavior and prevent problems from happening in the first place. From toddler tantrums to a teenager's defiance, from bedtime dramas to outright disobedience, Triple P helps you sort through the issues that affect families everywhere. And you can be confident that Triple P works. It has more than 30 years' ongoing scientific research to back it up and is now used in 25 countries around the world. You can choose anything from attending one workshop on a broad topic that affects your family, to scheduling a one-on-one consultation sessions around a specific parenting issue and even do Triple P online in the convenience of your own home. Triple P is available at all times for every family in Edgecombe and Nash counties. For more information on Triple P contact Sonja

Person at ext. 241 or sperson@depc.org, or visit the Triple P website at <http://www.triplep-parenting.com/nc>

We are offering one on one parenting support either through phone consultations or via a virtual platform such as ZOOM, Facetime, etc.



Learn more about DEPC's SNAP-Ed initiative for healthier living!

Visit <http://depc.org/snap-ed-health-and-nutrition/>

6. Have a family plan of action

Involve children in preparing the plan. As situations can change quickly (e.g. new travel restrictions, school closures), update the plan as needed.

7. Have plenty of interesting things to do at home

Busy children are less likely to be bored and misbehave. With your child, help create a list of 20 activities that will keep them busy (not just screen time).

8. Take notice of behavior you like

Think about the values, skills, and behaviors you wish to encourage in your children at this very difficult time. There are many opportunities to teach your children important life skills (e.g. being caring, helpful, cooperative, getting on well with siblings, taking turns). Use plenty of praise and positive attention letting them know you are pleased by telling them what they have just done ("That's a lovely card you have written to your grandmother. That's so kind. She will really appreciate that.")

9. Help children learn to tolerate more uncertainty

The COVID-19 crisis creates uncertainty for everyone. Parents need to find a way to accept uncertainty and, through your actions and words show this acceptance to your children. It's OK to say, "I don't know; let's find out what we can." Big changes to children's lives can be hard and are often scary. They can also create opportunities for learning new skills.

10. Reach out and connect with loved ones

Make greater use of phones, online communication tools (video conferencing) and social media to keep in touch with family, friends, and neighbors. Help others in need who are going through a tough time and are more vulnerable (e.g. parents/caregivers with disabilities, older people).



In North Carolina, 73,000 children are at risk of being missed in the 2020 census.

More than \$5 billion for programs serving children and families is at risk if we undercount young children.

Young children are overrepresented in the "hard-to-count" populations, including these populations:

- **Low-income households**
- **Families who rent their homes**
- **Racial and ethnic minorities.**

Census population estimates have a big impact on North Carolina's federal funding for family supports as well as the fairness of our local resource allocation. Young children have been largely undercounted in the past. It's critical that we reach all families to ensure an accurate Census in 2020.

#ThinkBabiesNC



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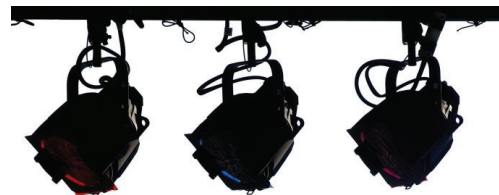
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The Down East Partnership for Children is a nonprofit organization founded in 1993 by citizens concerned about education and economic development of Nash and Edgecombe Counties. It provides a model of services focused on prevention and intervention targeting young children ages 0-8. It leverages investments from local, state and national partners to launch every child as a healthy, lifelong learner by the end of the 3rd grade. For more information about DEPC, visit www.depc.org.

*This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-SNAP.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

Did You Know?

Children and adolescents aged 6 to 17 years should have at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day!



Community Spotlight

Thank you to Westside Church of Christ! It opened as an Emergency Food Distribution Site, in partnership with the Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC.

Discover The Incredible Years!

Right after The Incredible Years (IY) started this semester, COVID-19 restrictions had DEPC taking its programs virtual! Parents faithfully continued this 16-week class participating by Zoom. DEPC loves sharing our families, so here are some participants enjoying time together as they wait for IY to begin! IY will begin virtually on August 6.

