



The Wellness Wire

Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine

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An initiative of the Faculty Assembly Steering Committee, the Office of Medical Student Support Services, the Fit & Well Committee, the Assistant Dean of Faculty Development, and the Division of Education and Faculty Development in the Department of Humanities, Health, and Society.

Greetings as we all learn to reframe our lives during these unprecedented times.

At-Home Parenting: Routines, Recess, and Breaking Routines

Staying safer at home has carried an unexpected challenge for those of us with school-aged kids: What the heck will I do with the kids all day? Sure, the school sent instructions for online classes, and sure, those lessons can keep them occupied for a while. But how do we keep them interested, day after day? How can I possibly get my own work done in the meantime?

The talented parents among us have come up with all kinds of solutions, and we thought we would share some of their ideas.

Routines

As long as we are flexible, we all thrive on routines, and that principle is especially true for kids. To the extent we can, reproducing something akin to the routines kids would experience at school can help create more of a school-at-home atmosphere. Ask your kids what the routines are at school and take stabs at replicating them. When are they used to having breakfast, lunch, snacks, or recess?

Recess

Speaking of recess, it can help to have dedicated time for play during the day, usually in 15-30-minute blocks. Maybe now is the time to weed out those

unused toys and instead highlight the simple toys that the kids can reinvent over and over again. Depending on the age of the kids, blocks, trucks and cars, Legos, dolls, make-believe kitchens and restaurants can offer endless variations. Having a dedicated space in the home for “recess” can make a difference as well.

Breaking Routines

It can also help to mix it up a little, with some “spontaneous” games that you can throw in for surprises. Flatten out one of those extra Amazon boxes you now have around and make a road with markers, ready for cars and a whole new invented city to emerge. Color, color, color. Take those recyclables and use them as the building blocks for a myriad of art projects. Take out the paint and let the kids pour out some of their creative spirit on cereal boxes, egg cartons, and better yet, bubble wrap. Need some cleaning done? Get out that big plastic box and some bubbly soap, and let the kids take a hand at washing. Allow the occasional screen time, but put rules around it. Consider making the kids read for 20 minutes first, and stick to your agreed-upon time limits.

Now might also be a time to resurrect those card or board games you’ve always liked or to try a new one. Find a Clue; build a Monopoly; settle in Catan; or yell Uno! Try to pick a game all can enjoy.

With your own ingenuity, these days might turn out to be great ways to get to know your kids in whole new ways. Good luck!

Check out our interactive Wellness Wall as well:

<https://teams.microsoft.com/#/school/conversations/General?threadId=19:5ff287f7a6744a96a18e22896ebd3b3a@thread.tacv2&ctx=channel>

