

# 5 Tips for Coping When Cooped Up

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You and your family may be staying at home, possibly for an extended period, due to the Coronavirus. Employees are teleworking, schools are closed and individuals may be in quarantine or on lockdown.

Here are 5 strategies to help you and your family cope with extended togetherness within the four walls of home.

## 1. Maintain Your Normal Weekly Schedule

This is not a vacation; treat it like a normal week. To the extent possible, everyone should stick to normal work or school schedules: wake, bed, meals, exercise times, etc. Some suggestions include:



- School-aged kids should follow a schedule similar to their school schedule. For example:
  - Science and Math: Early morning
  - History and Reading: Late morning
  - Lunch/Recess: Mid-day
  - Art/Music/Gym: Early afternoon
- Working adults should follow their normal workday routine. For example:
  - Schedule and hold meetings the same as you would in office
  - Proactively make contact with co-workers and clients
  - Take your lunch, breaks, etc. at the same times as you would if you were in the office
  - Shut down at the end of the day
  - On the weekends, sleep in, do normal chores, plan some fun activities, watch a movie, etc.

## 2. Be Creative

Find interesting ways to take advantage of your time together. Some ideas include:

- Have kids do their work alongside you (i.e., Bring Your Kid to Work Day)
- Have kids teach you what they are learning (i.e., Bring Your Parent to School Day)
- Work outside
- Do fun projects related to school subjects and/or topics

### **3. Set Clear Guidelines on Electronics Use for Kids and Adults**

- Set a schedule or allot a total amount of daily screen time
- Establish consequences for exceeding the time
- Don't just use tech as solo users; do something together
- Keep track of usage on a chart and reward lower usage days/trends

### **4. Avoid Overloading on News/Constant COVID-19 Updates**

- Don't get caught up in the 24/7 news cycle; it will only make everyone more anxious
- Do not have the TV tuned to the news all day
- Do not incessantly check news web sites or social media for updates
- Limit text alerts or push notifications to one or two daily updates
- Avoid constant discussion of COVID-19; make an effort to find other topics of conversation

### **5. Take Advantage of the Opportunity**

Treat your time at home as an opportunity to achieve a goal. Here are some ideas to consider:

- Begin a new exercise routine
- Take a virtual continuing education course
- Complete a home improvement project
- Bake or cook something new (and healthy)
- Challenge yourself or the family to do a big jigsaw puzzles and/or play board games, especially ones that may last multiple days

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