

- “How our children might be feeling during these testing times”

We can imagine that in our efforts to keep things normal for our children, we might be inclined to create a minute by minute schedule for our kids. We all are probably trying to explore the net frantically every day for some exciting activities and ideas. We are probably now facing the challenge of implementing these activities that are being thrown our way from variety of sources. We'll be trying to limit technology until everything is done! Some of us might also be looking for reassurance that we are on the right track. Firstly, you are not alone. Secondly, here's the thing...

Our kids are just as scared as we are right now. Our kids not only can hear everything that is going on around them, but they feel our constant tension and anxiety. They have never experienced anything like this before. Although the idea of being off of school / nursery for weeks sounds awesome, they are probably picturing a fun time like summer break, not the reality of being trapped at home and not seeing their friends.

Over the coming weeks, you might see an increase in behaviour issues with your children. Whether it's anxiety, or anger, or protest that they can't do things normally - it will happen. You'll see more meltdowns, tantrums, and oppositional behaviour in the coming weeks. This is normal and expected under these circumstances.

What kids need right now is to feel comforted and loved. To feel like it's all going to be ok. And that might mean that you tear up your perfect schedule and love on your kids a bit more. Bake cookies and paint pictures. Play board games and watch movies. Do a science experiment together or find virtual field trips of the zoo. Start a book and read together as a family. Snuggle under warm blankets and do nothing.

Don't worry about them regressing in school. Every single kid is in this boat and they all will be ok. When we are back in the classroom, we will all support and meet them where they are. Teachers are experts at this! Don't pick fights with your kids because they don't want to do numbers/phonics. Don't get upset that your daily schedule is no longer working. Don't mandate 2 hours of learning time if they are resisting it.

If we can leave you with one thing, it's this: at the end of all of this, your kids' mental health will be more important than their academic skills. And how they felt during this time will stay with them long after the memory of what they did during those weeks is long gone. So, keep that in mind, every single day.

**“Enjoy this time
with your children”.**