



Parenting during COVID-19 – Feeling Good about Yourself

Parenting is one of the most rewarding and challenging roles anyone can have, whether you're a full-time stay at home parent, working outside the home, step-parenting, or parenting your grandchildren.

Parenting during a pandemic such as the COVID-19 situation we are all experiencing is uncharted territory. There is little parenting information on parenting during these uncertain times where access to play groups, face-to-face social support, and self-care at a local salon or favourite coffee shop is no longer an option.

Many of us have been tossed into the deep end of 24/7 parenting almost overnight. As the days, and now weeks, continue to go by and the "new normal" routine has occurred, it is now time to take a moment and catch our breath.

During these past few weeks, you have taken on the role of teacher, playmate, and at-home activities coordinator, on top of the dozen or more usual roles that as Mom or Dad you already do. We have all heard the expression "you need to put your own oxygen mask on first before you can help others". This also applies to parenting. Even though parenting looks a little different these days there are still ways you can take time for yourself and, most importantly, celebrate the amazing job you are doing during the days of social isolation and restrictions.

Taking care of yourself may require a little creativity during these days at home; however, taking time to do even just one thing for yourself is a step in the right direction. Simple ways you can do this are:

- Accept that you are not perfect – you are the first generation of parents to do this job during a pandemic!
- Avoid overloading yourself (accept your new at-home routine and enjoy staying in your pj's a little longer with the kids).
- Take time for yourself – leave your child with your partner/spouse and treat yourself to a long bath or watch your favourite TV show alone in your bedroom.

- Avoid isolation - video chat with a friend or start an online game with a family member who you can't visit right now such as scrabble or checkers - there are lots available online to choose from.
- Accept support of family and friends whenever you can.
- Sleep – get as much of it as you can when your child is napping or in bed early for the night.
- Expectations – read about, or talk to someone such as the GMFRC Child Youth Coordinator about, child development. Know what you can expect from your child at their age/stage.
- Seek professional support if you are finding yourself overwhelmed or unable to cope with the demanding job of parenting. Your GMFRC has mental health professionals on staff who are here to support you.

If you would like more simple tips, or parenting resources, please contact the GMFRC Child and Youth Services Coordinator, Kim Dixon at GMFRCchildyouth@gmail.com