

—PARENTING TIPS—

19 IDEAS TO FIGHT COVID-19 AS A FAMILY

We are living in uncharted waters right now. Things change every day and sometimes every hour. The one thing that never changes is God. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He told us that the most important things are to Love God and Love others. “Others” starts with our families. As we are being told to stay in and socially distance ourselves, our homes can begin to feel smaller and smaller as we get more and more irritated with each other. Parents, our kids are not the enemy. We aren’t their enemy. We must fight the real enemy who wants to steal, kill and destroy families. So how do we make the most of this “extra time” together without fighting and yelling and isolating even in our homes? Here are 19 ideas to fight Covid-19. Get creative and share ideas with each other. Let’s spread love, not germs! You are loved!

- 1. TEXT THE LOVE:** For a week, send your child a text each day to remind them of how Jesus sees them. Add a verse at the end that backs this up. You Version app is a great resource to be able to send scripture. Some examples to get you started:
 - You belong to Christ (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
 - You are fearless (2 Timothy 1:7)
 - God loves you more than you can even know (Ephesians 3:18-20)
- 2. DINNER OF LOVE:** One night make one your kids favorite dinner. Let that kid be the “star” of dinner that night. Have everyone go around and share the awesome things about that person. Repeat for each family member.
- 3. FAVORITES:** Have each person in the family make a multiple choice quiz for the family to take about their favorite things. Take each quiz and then talk about why it’s your favorite. Use things like favorite movie, ice cream/dessert, TV show, college or pro football team, app on their phone, Bible verse, actor/actress, athlete, restaurant (sit down or fast food) and more. Get creative and have fun.

4. **CALENDAR O' THANKS:** Make a poster-sized 30-day calendar, and put it up in a common area. Have each family member write one thing they are thankful for each day.

5. **TOGETHER CHORES:** What is a chore around the house that your kid might not know how to do very well? The list may be long. Pick one that you can do together and teach them how to do it well and why it's important to you. How do you balance the checkbook? How do you make a grocery list? What's on it every time and why do other things get skipped? How do iron clothes? Get creative and have fun without being critical.

6. **THE HOTSEAT:** One night, for each parent in the house, put them on the HOTSEAT and interview them. Don't be in a hurry to get through it, but really talk about each question, and add follow up questions as they come to mind. Here are 10 interview questions to get you started:

- Tell me about a time you got in serious trouble when you were a teenager.
- Tell me about your favorite teacher in high school.
- Tell me about your least favorite teacher in high school.
- Who was your first boyfriend/girlfriend? Why did y'all break up?
- What was the strangest/hardest punishment you ever got?
- What was your first car? Share the details around it. How you got it? Who paid for it? How long did you keep it? Look up a picture of it online and show it.
- Have you ever gotten a ticket? If so, how many and what for?
- What was youth group like for you when you were a teenager?
- Who was your favorite band/musician as a teenager? Pull up a YouTube video and watch a song or more together.
- If you could go back in time, what advice would you give teenage you?

This is a great opportunity to have real, open and honest conversations with your kids. I'm not saying you have to share the worst of the worst, we all have skeletons in our closets, but students love to see the adults in their life as real people that God has transformed and used difficult time to shape and mold us into who we are. Change or add your own questions, but the goal is to connect on a deeper level.

7. **POPCORN AND A MOVIE:** Put down all screens and pop some popcorn and give everyone their own bowl and then pick a movie the whole family will enjoy and commit to only one screen together for that time.
8. **THROWBACK:** Pull out a few pictures of your kid when they were a baby or just a toddler. Many teenagers have forgotten what it means to be “little” because they are focused on “growing up”. Laugh at the pics and spend some time telling them your favorite memories and things about them during that time of their life.
9. **PROVERBS CHALLENGE:** For a week, leave a Bible and journal or notepad in a common area like the coffee table or dinner table. Each day read one Proverb on your own and highlight or underline the parts that stand out to you then rewrite that verse or verses in your own words in the journal. Each night read what everyone wrote together. It’s awesome to be in the Word “together” each day. It may be wise to have each person set an alarm on their phone to remind them to do it each day.
10. **MAKE A DESSERT TOGETHER:** Go on a “date” with your kid and make a dessert together. If they have never done much in the kitchen, help them know what to do. The goal is fun not frustration so enjoy the mistakes along the way and laugh with each other.
11. **THE “I LOVE YOU” CHALLENGE:** Once a week stop, look your child in the eyes and tell them that you love them. Then tell them something you love about them that is NOT a physical attribute. For example, “I love the way that you are so encouraging to your friends, it makes a difference in their life.”
12. **BREAKING BOREDOM:** Have an evening committed to playing board games/card games together. These are not screen games, but games to connect and laugh and have fun with each other. Each person gets to pick a game and everyone plays. A great idea is to “game swap” with other families. Contact a friend and see what games they have that you don’t and then one family puts them on their porch and the other drops theirs there and picks up the ones there.

13. **PIZZA PARLOUR:** Make it an “all hands on deck” for dinner prep. Announce that its pizza night, but everyone will make their own pizza. Have different toppings out and be creative. Use the ingredients to make designs, then cook and eat together. Take pics and post online and have people vote on their favorite.

14. **MAKE A VIDEO NIGHT:** Make a funny video together. Some students have TikTok or other video apps and can show you some examples or pick a favorite song and make your own. The goal is fun so dress up or do whatever works for your video theme. Create a memory that your family can look back on years from now and laugh at!

15. **OLDSCHOOL:** Find some pictures of mom and dad when they were your kids age. Tell stories, talk about the fashion of your time. How “cool” were you? What things influenced your choices back then? Ask the kids what things influence them today.

16. **SERVE TOGETHER:** A great way to connect is to go help someone else. Walk your street and pick a house that needs to be mowed or raked and do it for them. Make some cookies and take them to a neighbor. Maybe on trash day you move your neighbors trash cans back up their driveway for them. Get creative and have fun.

17. **PLAN A VIRTUAL VACATION:** Pretend you have \$100,000 to plan a family vacation. Get online and plan one together. Where would you go? What would you do? It’s no fun being stuck in the house so let’s plan a trip somewhere else together. Look at flights and places to stay, pick activities and things to see and experience, even pick your souvenirs. Dream big and have fun. Then explore those areas together online and learn something new about the world! Hint: Check out Google Earth!

18. **THE POWER OF PRAYER:** Take time to pray together as a family. Have a list of things to pray for and learn to be ok praying out loud for others. Pray for the sick, pray for the medical professionals and first responders, pray for leaders (pastors at our church, leaders in our city, in our state, our nation) as they make HUGE decisions, pray for Gods protection and to wipe out this virus, pray for each other. Pick one person from the list you just prayed for and FaceTime them and ask if you can pray for them. If you can’t FaceTime, then just call. It will mean so much to that person to know that they are being

prayed for and even more to hear it. Maybe take time to write a prayer to someone who is in the “high risk” category. Call the church and ask for names and addresses of those in this category and write them a prayer and mail it to them.

19. **CLOSET CLEANOUT:** Go through your closets and clean out the things that don't fit or that you don't wear anymore. Have a fashion show and mix and match all the clothes you are getting rid of. Bag those clothes up and have them ready to give to the youth mission teams when they “Fill the Truck” later this year.