



Hello CCAI Families,

We hope you and your family are doing well and staying healthy and safe during this very challenging time! CCAI's post adoption team has been spending a lot of time thinking about how we can best support you, especially given the pause in home visits and potentially decreased social worker support. We want you to know that you are not alone. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if your family is in need of additional support and resources! We understand how stressful it can be for parents and children right now with ever-shifting norms. As daily routines are disrupted, managing the lives of your family and yourselves has required creativity and resilience.

Our post adoption team hoped to offer some helpful reminders and resources as you navigate these unusual times with your family.

- **SCHEDULES/ROUTINES** - Children, especially those who were previously attending school, tend to thrive on schedules and predictable routine. And, let's be honest, so do we. Schedules and routines are hard to stick to these days, but it can be very helpful to have each day planned out as best as possible. For parents, tentatively planning your days (or week) may help take away some of the stress associated with trying to come up with activities in the moment. For children, decreased schedule ambiguity may help give a sense of safety when the world feels generally unsafe. Remember, a schedule can be viewed with flexibility and does not need to be minute-by-minute.
  - Try to add in some fun family nights: art nights, movie nights, themed dinners, read aloud, participate in webinars through libraries and museums, etc.
  - Try to be active together: dance, sing, do yoga, throw a frisbee, take walks or bike rides, plant a garden, collect cool rocks, etc.
  - Have your child assist with picking activities (and even meals) for the week. This may help get them more invested in the plans.
- **TIME TO CONNECT** - Although it may not feel like it at times, this can be a great time to connect with your child. Making a point to focus on your child and how this experience may feel like for them will likely support better adjustment.
  - Spend time doing activities that are meaningful to your child.
  - Use feeling words and be sure to hug each other. Touch matters.
  - Mirror your child's emotions. Reflection helps children experience acceptance and validation which in turn increases their emotional health and self-awareness
- **PRACTICE KINDNESS** - When everything is out of sync, it is easy to let stress build up. This often manifest in anger or frustration towards others, or even yourself.

- Be kind to yourself, we can only nurture others when we are nurturing ourselves as well
  - Try to focus on the positive aspects of this experience, such as the gift of time with your family
  - Practice random acts of kindness in your household and try find ways to extend this to others, your neighbors, family members, friends, etc.
- **RELATIONSHIPS & SCHOOL** - If you were not a homeschool teacher before this pandemic, then you are not homeschool teacher now. It is challenging with children attending school online. Most of us do not have a background in teaching and many are also having to work from home as well. Be patient with yourself and remember that your relationship with your child and everyone's adjustment to this experience is ultimately more important than schoolwork.
    - Instead of being a teacher, try to view yourself as supporting your child's online learning
    - Remember that some days will be better than others and this is not a reflection of you as a parent in general or a reflection of your ability to support your child academically
    - Reach out to teachers and set boundaries. You know your child best. If there is too much work or your child needs extra support, verbalize this.
    - Change *how* your child learns – many schools are relying on technology for learning and not every child will be successful learning this way. Get outside, learn through play, let children work together – whatever makes sense for your child, you, and your family
  - **KEEP CONNECTIONS STRONG** - Isolation can be debilitating. Try to stay in touch with family and friends.
    - Schedule video chats over Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, etc.
    - Bring back the art of letter writing! Ask if your child would like to create art for others and send it snail mail.
    - Schedule social distancing meet-ups with family and friends if you feel this is safe for your family – Have a bring your own pizza party in the yard, do a drive-by parade, or take walks and visit with neighbors in their yards.
  - **SAFETY REMINDERS** - Children may be more anxious, more quiet, more angry, or more attention seeking right now.
    - Abnormal news stories (i.r. empty shelves and long lines at grocery stores) can bring up fears from the past and anxieties about the future. Try to do routine inventory checks with your child. Scavenger hunts are a fun way to remind them where they can find everything! If necessary, make lists.
    - The loss of a school routine, teachers, and friends may cause children to feel a sense of abandonment. Try to build in other ways to stay connected with their peers and maintain celebrations of milestones.
    - Please reach out to an adoption competent therapist or CCAI social worker if you need guidance
  - **GIVE YOURSELF GRACE** – It is ok if this is hard. We have never experienced anything like this before.
    - Remember that you do not have to be perfect and your experience will look

different from that of other people

- Set boundaries for yourself - stay off social media if you find yourself comparing yourself to others, limit communication with non-supportive individuals, take breaks if possible from being 'on'
  - Take time at the end of every day to celebrate any successes, no matter how small – You took a shower? Celebrate! Made lunch? Celebrate! Finished a huge project at work? Celebrate! Made it through the day? Celebrate!
  - You are not expected to do it all, every day. Accomplish what you can and set aside what you can't for another day
  - If your kids are watching more tv or spending more times on screens than usual, it's okay. Again, these are different times.
- **TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF** – It is important that you continue to get your own needs met as you work to meet the needs of your family.
    - Stay hydrated. Dehydration can cause headaches and a lack of focus. Drink lots of water to keep your brain and body in optimal health.
    - Try to find time for physical activity outside of running after your children. Physical activity promotes physical and mental health and helps boost your mood. It's science! Remember that even a small amount of physical activity is great! Take a short walk (or a long one), try an online exercise class, practice stretching, do some morning stretches...whatever works best for you.
    - Eat well as often as possible – try to regularly eat healthy meals and include high protein snacks throughout the day, especially if you feel like your blood sugar is dropping and feel yourself becoming irritable. But, let's be honest, sometimes a bowl of ice cream fixes any bad day!
    - Maintain a healthy sleep schedule – Try to get as much sleep as possible and take naps if needed and you are able.
    - Make sure you have someone to talk to about how you are feeling during this time.
    - Take time for you. Do whatever it is that recharges your battery – reading a book, working in the garden, going for a walk, talking with a friend, etc. Remember that self-care does not have to be time consuming. Even a 5 minute shower can be a good reset.
    - Connect with a therapist online if you feel this would be helpful. CCAI can assist in finding referrals if you need additional support.

Beyond these reminders, the most important thing to remember is that you are allowed to ask for help. CCAI is always here and ready to serve you.

Below are some other wonderful online resources worth checking out for your family. There are many great online resources being offered right now!

Take Care and Stay Well!

Sheila King, LCSW

Post Adoption Manager

Domestic Adoption Program Coordinator

## Online Resources



### FREE Online TBRI Classes

TCU's Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development is offering free online classes for parents hoping to build stronger connections with their children. Discover TBRI for the first time or refresh your skills! Take advantage of these classes now, which are **free through June 30!**

[Learn More](#)

### Sesame Street in Communities

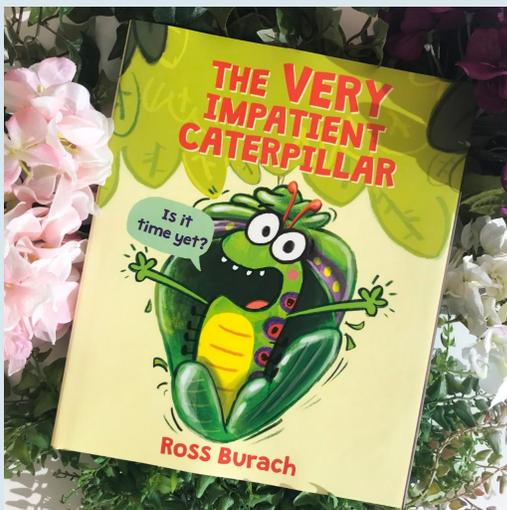
Sesame Street is teaching kids belly breathing and calming strategies on YouTube! This is a great way to teach your young children some effective coping skills.

[Visit our website](#)



### The Very Impatient Caterpillar

A great book for K-3 is called **The Very Impatient Caterpillar Book** by Ross Burach. In the book, the caterpillar can't wait to get out of its chrysalis and doesn't understand why it's taking weeks! This book could lead to some very fun and important conversations in these strange times.



## Virtual Opportunities at The Park

CCAI's new adoption community center, The Park, has been hosting many fun and engaging virtual events for families, teens, and tweens through their instagram and facebook, as well as on Zoom. Below are helpful links to connect and you can email them for more information at [info@theparkcenter.org](mailto:info@theparkcenter.org)!

[AdopTween Virtual Hangouts](#)

[The Park Facebook](#)

[The Park Instagram](#)



**LIVESTREAMS**  
**#StayHome #WithThePark**



## The Adoption Exchange

### Resources from The Adoption Exchange

The Adoption Exchange has many great FREE resources on their website!

Here are some great coronavirus-specific resources for families

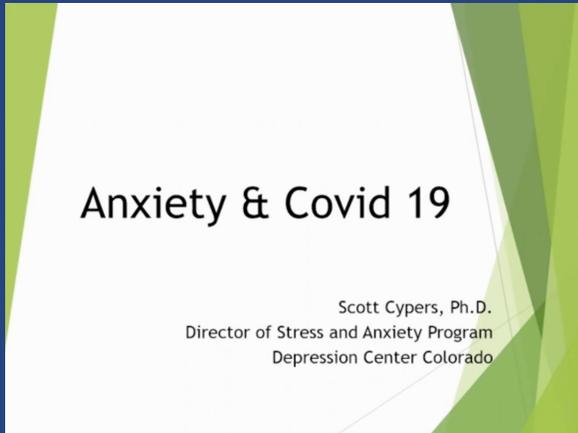
Here are free webinars on a variety of adoption topics

### Trauma-Informed Resources from Attachment & Trauma Network

The Attachment & Trauma Network has many COVID-19 resources available on their website. Includes some great tips for parents during social distancing, including a wonderful, easy to use handout! There are also school resources for parents and links to several blog



posts.



## Colorado Depression Center

The Colorado Depression Center has uploaded several wonderful online classes on YouTube. **This course offers great information on how to manage anxiety during COVID-19.** It is hosted by Dr. Scott Cypers, Director of Stress and Anxiety Programs at the Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Depression Center.

Dr. Cypers also hosts an online Zoom series every Thursday from 8PM - 9:15PM MDT called *I'm Still Standin': Parent Support Through the Coronavirus*. You can register for that series [HERE](#).

## Virtual Calming Rooms for Students

Virtual Calming Rooms are very common in schools right now. Here are some links. Chances are that your child's school may also have something similar on their website!

[Visit Here](#)

or

[Visit Here](#)

