



Post Adoption Resource Center Newsletter Oakland & Macomb County

Incorporating Normalcy in a Confusing Time

Set Up More Social Learning Opportunities

The pandemic has made it clear to many parents that it really does take a village to raise a child. Don't shy away from asking for help!

This might look like working with the school to match your child with an older student who can help virtually tutor them in a particular subject they struggle with, or encouraging your child to do their schoolwork with friends over FaceTime or Zoom. You can reach out to other parents and students to schedule weekly homework dates or study dates. Social opportunities are one of the main losses students will suffer from continuing remote learning. Even hybrid learning, which has some classroom time, deprives students of important social interactions.

Keep the Lines of Communication Open

Holding a safe space for kids to talk openly about their emotions, can help them feel more calm and confident. Engage them in conversation by asking open-ended questions about how they are feeling, what are they excited about, what are they concerned about, etc.

We assume children know we as adults are there for them, but open conversations are simple and natural reminders of the security we as adults can offer in difficult times.

(Continued on Pg. 2)

PARC UPDATE: COVID-19

Orchards Children's Services and the Post Adoption Resource Center Program hopes your family continues to be safe and healthy during the Covid-19 pandemic. Orchards continues to keep family safety at the forefront of our services. We continue to practice safety precautions, such as wearing a mask for any face to face contact and social distancing when around others. Our PARC staff have enjoyed seeing families during our past monthly support activities. We feel so connected to you and thank you for allowing PARC the opportunity to get to know your family. While we miss seeing everyone in person, as we move forward in our planning for upcoming training and groups please reach out and let us know what type of support would be most helpful during this time. We know it is not ideal, but we hope you are able to join us in our virtual setting until we can all be together again. PARC will continue to update families via our website, email communications and our facebook page.

Connect with PARC at:

Website: parc-orchards.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/OCSPostAdoptionResourceCenter

Email: parcocs@orchards.org

Orchards
Children's
Services

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For more information on the Post Adoption Resource Center please contact us at
313-530-9746

Or visit our website at
PARC-orchards.org



Incorporating Normalcy in a Confusing Time (continued)

Help Kids Create a Designated Workspace

As schools quickly transitioned to distance learning last year, parents and kids likely had to throw together a makeshift space for schoolwork. Now's the time to help kids set up an area that is devoted and conducive to focused, effective learning.

Focus on Physical Activity as Much as Possible – Get Moving

Ironically, running around is what allows us to sit down and pay attention. It burns off excess energy, bolsters our endorphins, and gets our blood pumping.

Activities can be as simple as a run around the house, having a 10-minute dance party, a hula hoop near your workspace, a daily walk or doing yoga as a family.

Make Time for Reading

There are multiple benefits to reading daily, whether you read aloud or take time to dive into books individually.

Reading and discussing a news article a day as a family is another great way to practice respectful dialogue, open conversations about current events, and build critical reading skills in older children.

Make Eating Easy

It seems like people want to eat all the time when they're home. Treat your day like you are leaving the house. Pack lunches and snacks the night before. When everything is all set up, the learning day runs smoother and the all access kitchen pass is revoked.

Set an End Time

It's all too easy to keep working (or schooling) longer than necessary. Having set times for "start" and "finish" can make a big difference for kids to structure time for learning and for fun at home.

When you have an end time, kids should close the computers, put schoolwork aside, and do something else such as a family walk around the block, a quick drive, or even playing with a toy picked early in the day to shift from school brain to home.

Prioritize Friend Time

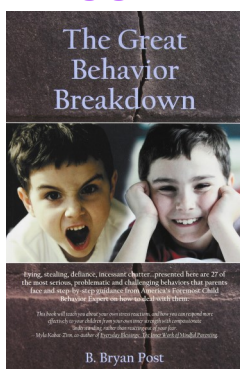
One of the biggest things kids miss with distance learning is regular times to be with friends. Set a day each week that each child has a "playdate" (which might take some creativity). Knowing that he or she can look forward to a "visit" with their besties every Wednesday can make the whole week go smoother.

Remember That Alone Time Matters, Too

While distance learning can feel isolating, it also can create a scenario that never offers alone time. With siblings and caretakers always home, plus the unusual dynamic of virtually inviting teachers and classmates into your home, children can miss out on the important things that come with alone times such as relaxing, decompressing and processing the day. Set aside a time each day that your child can read, nap, color, shoot hoops, swing on the swings, play with Play-Doh, etc.

**Information expanded from: Rebecca Hastings - Distance Learning*

Suggested Read



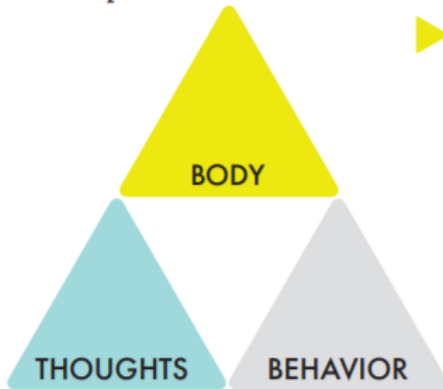
The Great Behavior Breakdown

Author: B. Bryan Post

This book identifies 27 of the most problematic, serious, and challenging behaviors that parents face, breaking them down, and provided step-by-step guidance and insight for transforming your family conflict immediately. Bryan Post is adopted himself and was a troubled teen, so he speaks from a place of personal knowledge. His experience and empathy for adoptive parents are what make this book work. Much of this book covers the usual difficult behaviors that are discussed in other adoption literature, but you know he's been there and knows what it's like.

Managing Anxiety and Worry

In a pandemic, it is normal to worry and feel anxious. On top of all the stress and changes, you may worry about you or someone you care about getting coronavirus. You may have struggled with anxiety and worrying a lot before the pandemic (anxiety disorders are the most common psychological problem). Regardless, anxiety can be helped by addressing its three parts:



▶ **For the body:** find an app, like Calm or Insight Timer, to learn relaxation and calm breathing. There are many amazing apps that can help. Being in the present moment, and being mindful of your body and the space around you can help you feel grounded in the moment you are in. Also, doing restorative activities like taking a relaxing bath or getting comfortable with a soft blanket and reading a good book can really help.

▶ **For the thoughts:** write down all of your worries. Make a recording of them to “externalize” them and play it back, offering a different perspective on how they sound. If you are struggling with worries every day and it’s interfering with your life, make a “worry recording” where you list out all of your “What if...” thoughts and play it back for ten minutes a day until you become bored by the thoughts. It sounds counterintuitive to do this, but the brain becomes bored by information that is repeated over and over. Think of a commercial you’ve seen a hundred times: it’s hard to pay attention to it. For the first few days, your anxiety may go up, but at about day four or five of listening, you will start to find these thoughts unalarming and boring.

▶ **For the behavior:** anxiety can make you want to avoid things. For example, if you are afraid of showing your face on video-conferencing, try to challenge yourself and start the video. Or if you are nervous to say hello to your neighbor, challenge yourself to face your fears and say hello (while keeping physical distance of course). Anxiety can also make you feel like you have to ask a lot of questions or ask for reassurance from your parents. When you do this, it can make the anxiety worse, so try to challenge yourself by writing the questions down instead and delay asking them.

List three things you will do to reduce your anxiety:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

**Information expanded from: Unstuck! 10 Things to Do to Stay Safe and Sane During the Pandemic*

Please join us for a 2-day virtual conference with
Facilitator: Tana Bridge, PH.D, LMSW
Title: Trauma Informed Parenting

Day 1: November 7, 2020

Day 2: November 14, 2020

Summary: This 2-day conference will focus on parenting children who have experienced trauma, discussion about trauma related behaviors, normalizing behaviors, and will provide families with evidence based intervention techniques that can be used to support children and families in their home environment.



Dr. Bridge is a full professor and has been teaching at EMU for 26 years. Dr. Bridge's expertise in trauma, ethical practice and collaboration are common threads in all areas of engagement. Her excellence in teaching has served to empower students in the classroom and agency practitioners locally and nationally. Believing that process with integrity is hallmark, her service leads to collaborative, successful outcomes. Dr. Bridge currently serves on many department committees and as a University Title IX reviewer, member of the Department of Health and Human Services Secondary Traumatic Stress Steering Committee and as the Governor's appointed chair to the State of Michigan Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, to name a few.

Tana will be attending the following PARC Virtual Parent Support Groups to follow up with parents on the techniques they explored throughout the conference:
 November 17, 2020 December 8, 2020 December 15, 2020

★ **PLEASE NOTE THAT STARTING IN NOVEMBER WE WILL BE RETURNING BACK TO USING ZOOM!** ★

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| Trauma Informed Parenting Conference (Day 1): (1 st Saturday of the month) | Saturday, 11-17-2020 10:00am – 1:00pm | RSVP to: 248-530-5381 Please include Name, Phone Number & Email Address | Zoom Meeting ID: 896 9730 9166 Zoom Meeting Password: 31G5f1 |
| PARC Virtual Book Club: (2 nd Tuesday of the month) | Tuesday, 11-10-2020 6:00pm – 7:30pm | RSVP to: 248-530-5381 Please include Name, Phone Number, Email Address & Home Address | Zoom Meeting ID: 823 6201 3535 Zoom Meeting Password: i720bL |
| Trauma Informed Parenting Conference (Day 2): (2 nd Saturday of the month) | Saturday, 11-14-2020 10:00am – 1:00pm | RSVP to: 248-530-5381 Please include Name, Phone Number & Email Address | Zoom Meeting ID: 878 7140 6398 Zoom Meeting Password: 1Ya4pw |
| ★ Parent Support Group: (3 rd Tuesday of the month) | Tuesday, 11-17-2020 6:00pm – 7:30pm | RSVP to: 248-530-5381 Please include Name, Phone Number & Email Address | Zoom Meeting ID: 859 7551 7186 Zoom Meeting Password: ExwA5z |

★ Tana Bridge will be attending the **PARC Virtual Parent Support Group** on **November 17th** to follow up with parents on the techniques they explored throughout the **Trauma Informed Parenting Conference** held on **November 7th** and **November 14th**