



## WEEKLY PEP TALK FOR OUR SUPERHERO PARENTS

**Q:** This is my child's first-time experiencing loss or a global crisis including the loss of people they know directly. How do I talk to my child about grief and loss during this time?

**A:** Children and teenagers understand death differently and may have different reactions as they grieve. While you may be grieving this loss as well, you can still have a conversation with your child when you feel ready. For a younger child, use simple language and questions to help gauge what your child understands about death. Encouraging your child to talk about their ideas, thoughts, and feelings about death gives you an opportunity to clarify and undo any misconceptions they may have. Children may become upset by these discussions due to the pain of loss and grief. Let them know that it is okay to feel sad and to show their sadness. Demonstrate for your child healthy ways to grieve such as crying, talking with friends, seeking spiritual comfort, or recalling positive memories. Support your child by [giving your child opportunities to talk](#). Some teens may reach out to peers to express their loss and grief and others may avoid those discussions altogether. Maintain your physical and emotional presence even if your teen seems distant. Your presence is important. Children of all ages may express their feelings in ways other than talking such as: writing a letter to say goodbye, drawing their emotion or playing a song that helps them express how they feel. Remember [you and your child are not alone in your grief](#) as access to loss and grief support is available.

**Q:** With the recent announcement that schools will remain closed for the remainder of this academic year, I am concerned that my child will lose their motivation for E-learning. What can I do to prevent this?

**A:** E-learning may be extra challenging for families in the upcoming weeks especially as the state recently announced that students will not return to their physical school building this academic year. This is typically a tough time of year to maintain motivation even in the best of times. The onset of warm weather, senioritis, and seeing the end in sight, coupled with the disappointment of continued e-learning can derail some students. Being with peers and enjoying end of the year activities together are significant motivators that help to sustain student engagement during the last weeks of school. A large part of a student's school experience is the social connections with peers and trusted adults. As parents, you can help by finding creative ways to keep your child connected socially by scheduling virtual hang outs / play dates with friends, virtual game nights after school, or even a friend car visit where they can actually see their friend from an appropriate social distance. Giving your child something to look forward to helps to sustain motivation and maintain a positive outlook. Encourage or help your child and their classmates form a virtual study group to [help motivate each other](#) and increase opportunity to interact during the school day. Try to ensure your child is well rested since proper sleep is directly linked to focus and productivity with school work.

**Q:** What's a quick self-care strategy for me as a parent during this time?

**A:** Being too busy can be counterproductive - we need to give our brains and body rest. Sometimes the best thing we can do for ourselves is to do nothing. "Doing nothing" can revitalize and rejuvenate you while also boosting creativity. This activity trains you to retake control of your attention. Listen to the waves and do not touch your keyboard while you use [www.donothingfor2minutes.com](http://www.donothingfor2minutes.com)

Week of May 11, 2020

Quote of the Week:

"How beautiful it is to do nothing and then rest afterwards."

Words from GYFS:

The Glastonbury Youth & Family Services team of clinicians and school social workers have been fielding questions from our community. Since it is likely you are having similar questions during this unsettling time, we thought we would share these questions and responses with the entire community.

**If you want to submit a question, please e-mail:**

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