

## Isolation in the Eyes of a Child

Most of us aren't supposed to work outside the home during this coronavirus. We are asked to stay home as much as possible. School is cancelled until at least May 15 in our state. Gyms are closed, as are movie theaters, roller skating rinks and dine-in restaurants. Televised sports only show highlights of year's pasts, so we are not obsessed with watching sports. The bottom line is many of us are confined to our homes without the usual distractions that compete for our time. If we still have children in the home they are with us 24/7.

For some of us we are midway through our second week of isolation. So, what does this situation look like through the eyes of a child?

It means that the family is spending more time together. Two and perhaps all three meals of the day are spent together as a family. In a pre-coronavirus world of evening meetings for the adults and youth sports practices that may not happen often. Isolated as a family during the current crisis, the daily routine now allows time for playing board and card games and watching Netflix movies as a family. Prior to the coronavirus these happened much less frequently – we were just too busy. Maybe you have made the effort to make telephone calls to distant family members and friends or perhaps are sending personal notes to let others know you are thinking about them. These are all good things.



Our family has discovered a web based program called Marco Polo. We set up a “group” for the cousins and record videos on our cell phones, posting them for all in our group to watch. As a result, everyday our grandchildren send greetings to their cousins. It gives me a warm feeling as each video concludes with the comment “I love you \_\_\_\_\_,” specifically naming each cousin and grandparent. This is a priceless bonding experience. And Grandma, an excellent reader, records herself reading children’s stories to her grandkids. It is story time with grandma, every day.

As busy adults the period of isolation has its challenges. We know what needs to get done and perhaps we are concerned with our jobs, the economy or our nation’s health. But for the children, this may be one of the highlight times of their lives. When they are young adults with their own children they may think back fondly to the time spent with their families and both quality and quantity time with Mom and Dad. It just might be one of the best times of their lives.



The Bible tells us to *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6)*. We have the opportunity to influence the values of our children in an even bigger way because we are with them for an extended period of time. During this time of isolation there are fewer distractions. We don't have to use the excuse of “quality time” being the best we can do. We have been given the gift of time. What children treasure the most is your time.

Make the best of your opportunity to strengthen your relationship with the family. Strengthening the family is one of the positive outcomes of this pandemic experience.

**Question:** What are you doing differently to strengthen your family at this time?

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father. These are difficult times. Many of us are not able to work or interact outside of the home. Many of our favorite activities have been cancelled. But this is a time when we can concentrate on enhancing relationships with our spouse, children, extended family and friends. Let us find the silver lining in this time of isolation, so that when God brings us out on the other side of this pandemic we will be stronger as children of God. Amen.