

Dads project

Support Booklet 2



ParentingNI



COMMUNITY
FUND

We're all in this together

Welcome to booklet 2 in the series of 6 booklets.

This booklet has been put together with the support of Callum Dodsworth, featured on the front cover. Callum is one of the Dads Project dads, who has been self isolating during this difficult and challenging time. With the help of Callum's own personal experience of just what it's like In lockdown, here are some of his ideas, top tips and suggestions that you can use.

- Activities for dads
- Managing your mental health and emotional well-being
- Activities for your children
- Activities for video calls (following on from booklet 1)

Through this difficult time, Parenting NI Support Line remains available to support parents and carers on 0808 810 722. If you need any support, please contact us.

With the help of Zoom, the Dads Project has launched online Dads Education and Dadstalk sessions. For more information or to register, please contact the Support Line or visit Parenting NI/Dads Project website, Facebook or Twitter page.



Healthy Snacks

Many kids get hungry between meals. A healthy snack can provide your kids with energy and help them get the nutrients they need on a daily basis.

Healthy snack options:

Fruit: A piece of fruit is a convenient and healthy snack for kids. Most fruits contain fibre and important nutrients like potassium and vitamins A and C - Bananas, apples, pears, grapes, peaches, and plums are examples of fruits that can be used for grab-and-go snacks.

Fruit smoothies: A fruit smoothie is a good way to pack a lot of nutrients into a small snack.

Yogurt: Yogurt is an excellent snack for children and young people because it's a good source of protein and calcium. Calcium is especially important for developing bones. Try to avoid yogurts with high sugar content.

Cheese: Cheese provides children with high-quality protein, which is needed for proper growth. Protein will also help them feel full between meals

Boiled eggs: Eggs are highly nutritious and an excellent snack for kids. They provide high-quality protein and several vitamins and minerals, including vitamin B12

Simple snacks

A sandwich/roll

Sandwiches don't have to be just for mealtime. Half a sandwich can also make a healthy snack for kids. To build a healthy sandwich, start with whole-wheat bread, pick a source of protein, and include a fruit or veggie, if possible. Here are some examples of healthy sandwich combinations:

- cheddar cheese and thinly sliced apples
- cheese and tomato slices
- peanut butter and banana slices
- Chicken or turkey, cheese, and or pickle
- hard-boiled egg and tomato

Sweet potato fries (for one)

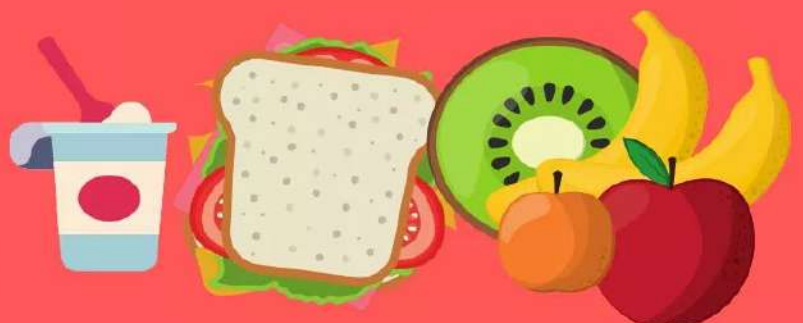
- 1 fresh sweet potato
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of olive oil
- Sea salt

Peel and slice the sweet potato. Toss the potato in olive oil and sprinkle it with sea salt. Bake on a cookie sheet at 220°C for 20 minutes.

Banana oat cookies

- 3 ripe bananas, mashed
- 80 ml of coconut oil
- 160 grams of rolled oats
- 80-90 grams of mini chocolate chips or dried fruit
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of vanilla

Mix all ingredients in a bowl. Place spoonfuls of the cookie mixture onto a grease proof paper and bake for 15-20 minutes at 175°C. Leave to cool





School at home top tips

Parents want their child to be healthy, do well with their education and to live meaningful, successful lives as adults. With schools out many parents may be feeling unsure or worried about how they can support their child's learning at home. There is some good news. Research shows children do better both educationally and in later life when parents are involved in their education. This gives us an opportunity to contribute to our children's learning.

In this time of uncertainty, it is understandable that parents will feel concerned about schooling at home. Below are some tips to keep in mind over the coming weeks.

- Children need to feel safe to learn. Provide a safe haven amongst the current uncertainty.
- Be easy on yourself. None of us expected to have the role of teacher.
- This is new to you and your child so take each day at a time.
- Break the day into chunks and alternate learning with a fun activity.
- Allow both you and your child time to adjust.
- Be realistic especially if you have more than one child or are also working from home.
- Have a plan for each day. Include other forms of learning, time outside, play and down time.
- Involve your child in making a plan for the next days learning. You will find they engage better when they have had a say.
- Learning can take place anywhere not just the kitchen table.
- Be flexible with time. Sleep builds your child's immune system so you may want to let them have a lie in.
- Recent studies have shown that due to shifts in teenagers biological clock they actually engage better with learning when lessons start later.
- If you find yourself getting frustrated or if your child gets upset step away and give both of you a break.
- Try to embrace the experience, be kind to yourself and your children. Remember this is temporary.



Activities for Dads

Some restrictions are lifting, however, you may still have time to try some other activities. Here are some suggestions.

Work through unread books

Some dads buy more books than they read. Now is the perfect time to work through them. There's plenty of good self-help and parenting books available to order through Amazon.



Sign up to Audible

The first month is free so you get a free audio-book. Just remember to set a reminder on your phone to cancel the subscription.



Free trials

Some companies/services offer free trials. Disney+ are doing a 7 day free trial and Amazon Prime does a 30 day free trial. If any dad's have a PS4, Play Station now has a 7 day free trial (it's a service that lets you play any game in their library, lots of older PS3 games and some newer ones too). You get 2 free games a month with the Play Station Plus subscription but that costs money. (you make the money back with the free games you get as they're all top rated games).

FREE TRIAL



Learn a new language

Try an app, such as Duolingo, to learn a new language. This is also a great learning opportunity that can be shared with your children.



Make a quarantine bucketlist

Things I always wanted to do but never had the time or just haven't done for whatever reason. For example, "Finish the Harry Potter series" and "Watch the Godfather Trilogy" amongst other things. I've reserved this list for fun things



"Jobs I never have time to finish" list

This will give you great satisfaction ticking them off. For example, organise messy drawers, organise piles of documents you might have lying around, deep clean/fix up the bike, organise your mobile phone (it's cluttered with apps), organise my laptop, sort through emails.

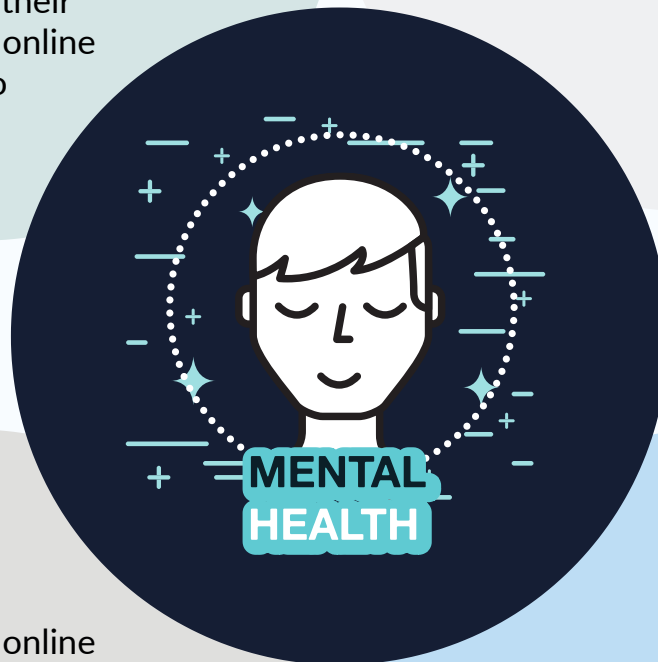
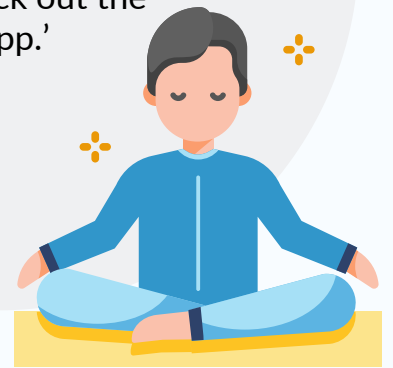


Managing Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing



Exercise outdoors now that you can go out. There are some good videos on YouTube with aerobic exercise workouts they can follow, There are also fitness/yoga instructors offering their services online via video calls.

Learn to meditate with plenty of time for dads to get into meditation. Online videos show you how to meditate and many dads should have plenty of time to start a meditation practice. Check out the 'Headspace app.'



Dadstalk sessions are online via Zoom during the summer 2020. Check out Parenting NI webpage/dadsproject.

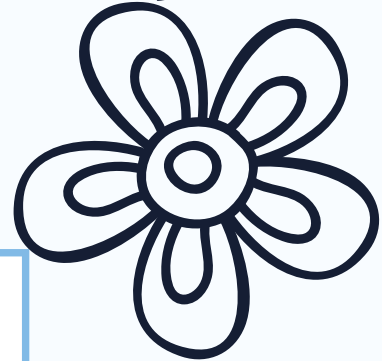
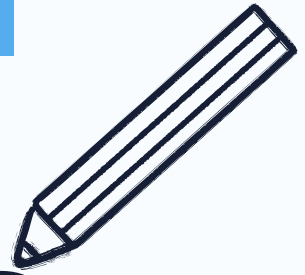


A random act of kindness
Be a listening ear to others.

Activities with kids



Callum suggests.....



Drawing with chalk

Callum did this with his son. He sketched a face beneath some weeds so that the weeds resembled hair.

Or try lying on the ground and outlining your bodies, then filling in the details. Chalk is cheap and available on Amazon.



Movie Marathon!

Choose a theme and get a bunch of snacks, push the sofas together and make a cosy movie area



Have a water fight!

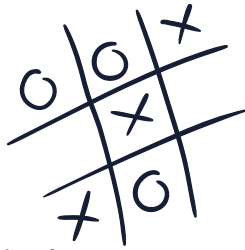
When the weather is sunny have a water fight with water guns or water balloons. Children love to get soaking wet and they can dry off in the sunshine!



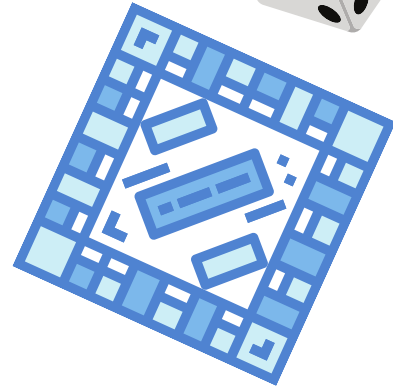
What to do on video calls with kids



Using board games



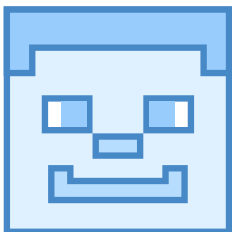
You can play together without being in the same room. Monopoly and Cluedo can be played over a video call. All you need to do is move the pieces or deal the cards allowing the children to still make decisions throughout the game and video call. Play tic-tac-toe or chess via video call



For older/gamer kids

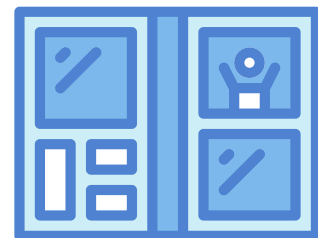


There are a couple of games that anyone with a fairly decent/high-end phone or tablet can download and play with their older kids. Two of the most popular games with older kids, at the moment, are Fortnite and Minecraft, which are both cross-platform. This means that even if your child is playing on a games console, you can still join their game and play with them even if you only have a phone or tablet. Fortnite has creative/pacifist modes where you can use it as a way to hang-out with your kids virtually. Fortnite is free to download and Minecraft for mobile is only £5. Roblox is another one that's very popular and also free to play and cross-platform (also available on mobile). Maybe you aren't into gaming, but kids are and it's my recommendation for parents to experience some of the activities that children enjoy. It's the modern day equivalent of getting down on the floor with your kids and entering their "play world".



Look at old photographs together

Flick through a photo album and show them via video call, chat about memories.



Talk to older children about the future and make plans for things to do together

ZOOM has a cool screen sharing feature, where you can both draw on a whiteboard



MEXICAN CHICKEN BURGER AND NACHOS

Serves 1

FOR THE BURGER

- 1 chicken breast
- 1 teaspoon of salsa (see below)
- 1 teaspoon of guacamole (see below)
- 1 slice of cheese
- 1 burger bun

FOR THE SALSA

- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 red onion (finely chopped)
- 1/2 lime juice
- 1/2 bunch coriander (roughly chopped)
- 2 red chilli's (chopped and de-seeded)

FOR THE GUACAMOLE

- 1/2 avocado
- 1/2 lime
- 4 spring onions (chopped)
- salt and pepper to taste

NACHOS

- tortilla chips
- salsa
- guacamole
- cheese (grated)

METHOD

SALSA

Pour chopped tomatoes into a bowl, add the finely chopped red onion, red chilli's and coriander. Mix together, then add the juice of 1/2 lime.

GUACAMOLE

Peel and remove the stone from the avocado. Mix it to a paste. Chop spring onions and add to avocado with the juice of 1/2 lime. Use salt and pepper to flavour to taste

CHICKEN BURGER

Heat a pan on a medium heat. Add the chicken breast, turning halfway through cooking. (Check it is cooked by cutting into the middle)

Toast the burger bun.

When ready layer guacamole, chicken, cheese and salsa

NACHOS

Get some tortillas and layer them with salsa, guacamole or cheese and warm in oven until cheese melted



Useful Contacts



- NI Direct have a scheme for people to apply for money if they have been adversely affected by the COVID 19 pandemic. Check their website: www.nidirect.gov.uk
- Citizens Advice: check for regional office numbers
- AdviceNI: 02890 645919
email: info@adviceni.net
- Housing Rights: 02890 245640
- Housing Executive: 0344 892 0900
- Lifeline: 0808 808 8000
- Samaritans: 116 123
- Parenting NI: 0808 8010 722
- Aware: 07548 530931 or 07340 488254
- Law Society (re Universal Credit):
02890 244401





About the Dads Project

The Dads Project supports dads in Northern Ireland who are separating, separated or currently involved within the courts service.

The Dads Project promotes dads being engaged and involved in their children's lives. This project will help you to develop more confidence in your parenting ability and to build positive connections with other dads in a similar position in your community.

The Dads Project aims to

- Provide services to empower and support separated dads
- Provide dads with knowledge, information and choices
- Promote children's rights to having access to both parents
- Promote the importance of children having an ongoing relationship with their dad
- Influence policy change to ensure dads are considered on an equal basis to mothers
- Educate professionals about the importance of ongoing engagement with dads

The Dads Project is a Parenting NI initiative. Parenting NI provide a range of supports to parents throughout Northern Ireland. For more information and further support visit parentingni.org or call for free on 0808 8010 722.



Parenting NI . 42 Dublin Road . Belfast . BT2 7HN
FREE Support Line: 0808 8010 722 . Email: help@parentingni.org
Visit: www.parentingni.org

Follow us on social media



[/ParentingNI](#)

The Dads Project is supported by The National Lottery Community Fund NI

