



## Resources for Parenting & Caregiving During COVID-19



Support your child's learning during extended school closures with these resources:

[At Home Learning Resources](#)

Guidance to Support Working Families

[For Managers](#)

Parents and caregivers of adults are facing many unique challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Below you will find Cornell and community-based resources to assist you.

Cornell Work/Life has created a Facebook page specifically for Cornell parents: [Cornellians Parenting During COVID-19: Family Support & Networking](#). The page is designed for Cornellians with caregiving concerns/needs and Cornellians interested in being hired to babysit, nanny, tutor, teach, etc. It provides a forum for connecting and sharing info and resources related to family life during COVID-19 (particularly child care and schooling).

## Parenting Resources

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### Child Care & Tutoring

### Cornell Resources

#### Cornell COVID-19 Employee Hardship Fund for School-age Child Expenses

Families, especially those with school-aged children, have faced many challenges and unexpected costs due to COVID. To help with increased expenses, Cornell established a COVID-19 Hardship Fund for School-age Child Expenses.

The fund, open to eligible Cornell employees, may be used to obtain reimbursement for higher than normal costs for their

school-age child. Families can apply to receive up to \$300 (non-taxable) per household for allowable expenses (\$500 for homes with children with special needs).

For more information, eligibility, and application, please visit the Cornell COVID-19 Employee Hardship Fund for School-age Child Expenses [web site](#).

### **Math & Science Help for Cornell Families**

For many Cornell parents and caregivers it is difficult to help children learn at home – especially when the subject is math – due to changed teaching approaches and/or the length of time since they, themselves, were students.

Employees in Facilities and Campus Services, Student Campus Life, and the College of Veterinary Medicine\* with children in grades K-12 are invited to participate in a pilot program connecting them with Cornell students majoring in math and science-related subjects. The student volunteers engage with families using the web-based platform, Piazza, to respond to questions posted by the Cornell employee/family. There are no fees or costs.

Questions? Contact [Kathryn Conway Dimiduk](#), College of Engineering Teaching Excellence, or [Diane Bradac](#) in Work/Life. [Sign up now!](#)

\*If the pilot is successful, we hope to expand this program to other subjects and make it available to employees across campus.

### **Tutors and Teachers Available for Hire**

These lists are made available by Cornell Work/Life in Human Resources.

#### ***Cornell NetID required to access.***

The individuals listed are available for hire as tutors. Some families are seeking to team up with other families and hire one individual to tutor. Candidates have indicated whether they are interested in the option of working with more than one family.

Please contact individuals directly to obtain more information and/or conduct interviews. The rate of pay should be negotiated between the hiring family and the tutor/teacher.

**Disclaimer: Cornell does not screen, manage, or endorse individual babysitters, nannies, tutors, teachers, or hiring families. Cornell is not responsible for and will be held harmless against, any liabilities, damages, expenses, causes of action, claims, or demands of any nature whatsoever, including any claims of negligence arising from or related in any manner to the use of this directory or any situation as a result of individuals for hire and hiring families working together.**

- [Tutors/Teachers - WORD](#)

If you or someone you know is interested in being hired to tutor (remotely or in-person), have them complete this [information form](#) to be added.

Adults 18+ interested in providing in-home child care, can create a profile and apply to jobs at [Care.com](#) and/or fill out this [information form](#) (anyone aged 14+ can fill out the form).

Please visit our [Guide to Hiring Informal Child Care Providers](#) for information on interviewing, hiring, and orienting your sitter.

Find Babysitters, Nannies, & Other Caregivers with [Care.com](#)

Cornell provides free, unlimited Care.com membership to help benefits-eligible employees locate and arrange care. Find resources like [sample contracts](#) and [nanny tax guides](#).

[Learn more and start your membership today!](#)

### **Cornell Child Care Grant**

[Cornell University's Child Care Grant](#) helps you pay for your child care expenses by granting awards of up to \$5,000 a year,

tax-free. It has an annual application period each September for the following calendar year.

### **Faculty Dependent Care Travel Fund**

Cornell's Faculty Dependent Care Travel Fund program normally offers eligible faculty reimbursement for indirect, qualified, short-term, dependent-care expenses due to eligible professional travel.

Given current restrictions on travel, the program has been temporarily modified to support faculty on the promotion track who incur back-up childcare expenses as a result of care disruption due to COVID-19. Please see the [website](#) for more details.

### **Work/Life Consultation and Support:**

Cornell's Work/Life Consultant [Diane Bradac](#) is available to talk with you about dependent care, locating providers, nannies and babysitters, parenting children with special needs, and more. Call 607-255-1917 or email: [sdb39@cornell.edu](mailto:sdb39@cornell.edu).

### **Cornell Child Care Center (CCCC):**

The [Cornell University Child Care Center](#), managed by Bright Horizons Family Solutions, provides care for Cornell faculty, staff, and students with children ages 6 weeks to 5 years. Visit their [website](#) for additional information or arrange to take a tour. 150 Pleasant Grove Rd, Ithaca, 607-255-1010, Email: [cornell@brighthouse.com](mailto:cornell@brighthouse.com)

### **Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account Changes:**

If you are enrolled in a DCFSA for 2020, and your child care needs have changed due to COVID-19 – either due to a change in provider or a change in projected expense – you may make a change in your DCFSA election, on a go-forward basis, within 60 days of that change in need. There is a special enrollment form required. If you cannot locate the form emailed to you on April 28th, please contact the HR Services and Transition Center, [hrrservices@cornell.edu](mailto:hrrservices@cornell.edu), 607-255-3936.

You may make subsequent changes to future contributions once you return to your original child care needs/expenses. PLEASE BE AWARE: 2020 contributions to DCFSA may be used for expenses dated 1/1/2020-3/15/2021.

## **Community Resources**

### **Mentoring Program for Children of Cornell Employees**

COVID-19 has impacted children's experiences with education, relationships, and their community. Having a college-age mentor may help your child(ren) survive and even thrive during this challenging academic year.

*College Mentors for Kids* is a year-long mentorship program that matches elementary school children with Cornell student mentors that are background checked and trained. The organization connects kids to college students through weekly virtual activities that inspire growth, confidence, and brighter futures.

*College Mentors for Kids* prioritizes families with children who may be first-generation when they go to college, those with limited financial resources, or those with children who are having social/emotional difficulties, but all are welcome to apply.

Weekly after school virtual activities occur during the entire school year (late Oct. to early May) through Zoom or phone calls based on child/parent availability (30-60 minute activities). There is no cost to participate in any activities.

Visit the Cornell program [web page](#) for more details. This [video](#) gives an overview of the national program.

### **Get started today!**

1. [Enroll online](#) or email Cornell [College Mentors](#) ([collegementors@cornell.edu](mailto:collegementors@cornell.edu)) to request an application packet.
2. When you complete the application, select "Cornell Work/Life HR" as your child's school.
3. You will be contacted by a member of Cornell College Mentors for Kids regarding next steps.

### **Tutoring for K-12 Children by Cornell Students (Discounted for Cornell Employees)**

Student Agencies Tutoring (SAT) is a student-run tutoring company composed of and managed by Cornell students. They

offer educational support in K-12 learning and standardized test and college application preparation.

Through a partnership with Cornell Human Resources, SAT is extending a 20% discount on any of their packages to Cornell-affiliated families. To learn about available packages, how tutors are hired and vetted, and/or request services, visit the [website](#). Note: Cornell does not vet, screen, hire, or endorse tutors associated with SAT.

### New York Public Library

New York Public Library [card holders](#) (all residents of NY State are eligible) can receive [free virtual one-on-one tutoring](#) in subjects of math, science, reading/writing, social studies, and foreign language.

### NYC Department of Education

[NYC Department of Education](#) offers an extensive list of resources for students in all grades and circumstances (from K-12, English-learning, and special education). Find reading materials, activities, lesson plans, mental health training, physical activity curricula, career preparation, and much more.

### Child Development Council of Central New York, Inc.

#### ***Information about regulated child care -- including centers, school-age child care, family & group child care programs***

The Child Development Council provides child care resource and referral services to help you explore regulated child care options. Tompkins and Cortland County are home to a number of child care centers and home-based programs. Your search criteria (location, size, age of child/ren, cost, etc.) will be used to identify programs that may meet your needs. The Council can also assist families access child care subsidies, and maintains an emergency scholarship fund for child care payment. Request a consultation by calling 607-273-0259.

Not in Tompkins County? A network of organizations called Child Care Resource and Referral can provide more specifics about your location/county. Contact the Child Development Council to locate a program where you live.

### Child Care Idea: “Family Pods” & “Quaranteams”

Some families are considering entering into a “family pod” or “quaranteam” partnership with one or two other families, rotating who provides the care. Work/Life is collecting a list of families interested in this type of care. Please email Diane Bradac at [sdb39@cornell.edu](mailto:sdb39@cornell.edu) to express interest. Check out the [Ithaca Area Podschooling Exploration](#) page for local resources.

### Hand in Hand Domestic Employers Network

[Hand in Hand](#) offers resources for best practices when hiring a nanny, caregiver, or house attendant. View [sample contracts](#), [checklists](#), and more.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **My children's school or child care is closed. Can I bring my children on-site to be with me while I work?**

The presence and care of children at a university worksite create significant safety and liability considerations for the university. While the care of infants and children at the worksite is not permitted ([Visitors at the Worksite policy](#)), supervisors are encouraged to be flexible in arranging work schedules, granting time off, and/or permitting remote work.

### **Can child care centers refuse to serve children of quarantined or isolated employees?**

Yes. Child care providers are required to follow New York State Licensing Guidelines, Health Department Guidelines, and may choose to impose additional regulations to support the health and safety of families and staff.

## Managing Work Hours / Work Load

## Strategies for Managing Time/Schedules

- Staff (including exempt employees) may use paid time off in small increments each day or half/full days as needed.
- Nonacademic employees may use [New York State Paid Family Leave](#) (NYS PFL) for the care of children with disabilities, or to provide care to children with a serious health condition. NYS PFL can also be used to provide care to parents and spouses/domestic partners.
- Adjust your start/stop time (when and which days you work) – use chunks of time that better align to your availability if possible. Consider leveraging the entire week, not just Monday through Friday.
- Formally reduce your hours temporarily (subsequent reduction in pay) – hours must be at least 20 per week to sustain health benefits.
- If you are hourly, you may informally and occasionally report fewer hours worked than normal without using HAP/Vacation time to offset. You will not be paid for these hours. Discuss this with your supervisor and/or HR representative in advance.
- Discuss your work goals and priorities with your supervisor – some work projects/tasks may be better aligned with your current situation than others.
- Take an unpaid leave of absence for up to three months.

The Cornell Flexibility in the Workplace Policy states that remote work cannot be a substitute for ongoing child care needs. In light of COVID-19, remote work may occur while dependents are present if their school or child care is closed and alternative care is unavailable, under the following guidelines:

- Cornell is not responsible or liable for the health and safety of your dependents while you are working remotely, or for your health and safety while you are delivering care to your dependents. It is up to the employee to determine whether work can be conducted safely.
- If a dependent is ill and requires ongoing attention, and you are not able to perform work, employees may need to use Health and Personal (HAP) time away from work. HAP guidelines are being relaxed during this period to also accommodate well children who are home due to school and childcare closures. Nonacademic employees may also be covered by New York State Paid Family leave, which provides paid leave to care for a covered family member's serious health condition for the care of children with disabilities. Please visit the [website](#) for more information.
- Employees are expected to determine what they can reasonably accomplish while dependents are under their care (whether healthy or ill), and the amount of time they expect to be able to work.

## Communications & Networking

Cornell Work/Life has created a Facebook page specifically for Cornell parents: [Cornellians Parenting During COVID-19: Family Support & Networking](#). The page is designed for Cornellians with caregiving concerns/needs and Cornellians interested in being hired to babysit, nanny, tutor, teach, etc. It provides a forum for connecting and sharing info and resources (particularly child care and schooling) related to family life during COVID-19.

## Cornell Resources

### Big Red Writes:

[Big Red Writes](#) (BRW) is a Cornell pen pal program for employees, retirees, students, alumni, and K-12th grade children of employees. Cornellians can request a pen pal from a specific constituency or will be assigned a pen pal at random, and can choose email or USPS mail. Participants are expected to write to their pen pal a minimum of once per month.

### Cornell Parent Newsletter:

The Parent Newsletter provides helpful tips, events, activities, and services of interest to Cornell faculty, staff, students, and retirees who are parents and/or grandparents. Click [here](#) to add your email to the newsletter distribution list.

### Cornell Parent E-Lists:

Consider joining a Cornell Parent e-list to connect with other parents. There are specific lists for parents with children under age six and parents with school-age children, as well as a list dedicated to selling/buying child-related items.

- parents-k12-L – information related to parenting school-aged children (no classifieds permitted). To join, email: [parents-k12-L-request@cornell.edu](mailto:parents-k12-L-request@cornell.edu) with “Join” in the subject
- parents-undersix-L – information related to parenting children under the age of six (no classifieds permitted). To join, email: [parents-undersix-L-request@cornell.edu](mailto:parents-undersix-L-request@cornell.edu) with “Join” in the subject
- parents-classifieds-L – buy, sell, or exchange child-related items (restrictions apply, see guidelines). To join, email: [parents-classifieds-L-request@cornell.edu](mailto:parents-classifieds-L-request@cornell.edu) with “Join” in the subject

#### **Additional Resources:**

- [Top Ten Things You Should Know If You Are Having A Baby at Cornell](#)
- [Equal Parts Podcast: Care@Work's](#) Equal Parts podcast is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and through the link provided. Recent podcast subjects include ‘Talking to kids about politics and the election’ and ‘Staying sane and compassionate during a stressful year.’

### **Community Resources**

- Tompkins Families: Local [resource](#) for all families based within Tompkins County. [Facebook page](#) & [Newsletter](#)
- [IthacaMama Facebook Group](#) – engage with local families on child care and parenting.

### **Safety**

- **Guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)**
  - [Pregnancy & Coronavirus](#)
  - [Handwashing: A Family Activity](#)
  - [Older Adults & Coronavirus](#)
  - [Preventing the Spread of Coronavirus in Homes and Communities](#)
- [Household Child Safety Products](#) – from the Healthy Neighborhood Program

### **Upcoming Events**

**Check back for more upcoming events!**

#### **How to Help the Pandemic Generation Thrive**

Wednesday, March 17, 2021, 01:00 pm

[Register](#)

How can we best support our children during this time? Dr. Borba explains why empathy and resilience are key and offers practical, evidence-based, and proven ways to reach kids and help them overcome adversity, be more resilient, and learn skills they will need both now – and in the future – to thrive.

Dr. Michele Borba is an educational psychologist, best-selling author, and TODAY show contributor who has spoken to over one million participants around the world and to countless media about child development issues. She blends 40 years of teaching and consulting experience with the latest science to offer sound, realistic advice to parents, teachers, and child advocates about helping children thrive. Dr. Borba has just released her new book, *THRIVERS: The Surprise Reasons Why Some Kids Struggle and Others Shine*.

Find additional local and campus events and activities in the [Cornell Parenting Newsletter](#) and the [Cornellians Parenting During COVID-19: Family Support & Networking](#) Facebook page.

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# Caregiving for Adults

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## Cornell Resources

- [Cornell Adult, Senior, and Caregiver Connections Facebook Group](#) - a place for adults, seniors, and caregivers who are caring for a parent, spouse, or loved one, to find support, information, and inspiration.
- [Cornell Caregiver Support & Education Network Meetings](#) - Caregivers come together monthly to share the challenges, joys, and resources of caregiving. Registration is required. Email [worklife@cornell.edu](mailto:worklife@cornell.edu) and a Zoom link will be sent prior to the meeting.
- Cornell Work/Life Consultant – can advise you on work/life issues, especially related to caregiving. Phone, virtual, or email consultations available [worklife@cornell.edu](mailto:worklife@cornell.edu) or 607-255-1917.
- Staff may use [New York State Paid Family Leave](#) (NYSPFL) to provide care to parents and spouses/domestic partners as well as children with serious health conditions or special needs.
- Cornell provides free, unlimited Care.com membership to help benefits-eligible employees locate and arrange care. Members are expected to screen care providers, conduct background checks, and follow other safety best practices. Those who post job ads tend to have better success in finding a caregiver.
- Video: [Palliative Care and Hospice Services with Deb Traunstein](#)

## Community Resources

- [Tompkins County Office for the Aging \(other Counties\)](#) – 607-274-5482 - assists older persons and adults with long-term care needs.
  - [Project CARE](#) - a friendly visiting program that provides in-home support to family caregivers as well as direct help to frail, homebound older adults.
  - [Instructional Videos For Family Caregivers In The Home](#)
- [Caregiver Action Network](#) - caregiving experts are available 8:00 AM – 7:00 PM ET, 855-227-3640
- [Love Living at Home](#) - resources for older adults who desire to live in the homes and neighborhoods they love.
- [FoodNet Meals on Wheels](#) - Meals on Wheels ensures that seniors have access to adequate nutrition even when family support, mobility, and resources are lacking.
- [Finger Lakes Independence Center \(FLIC\)](#) - promotes independence through a variety of programs and services.
- [Cancer Resource Center](#) - resources and groups for caregivers of those with cancer.
- [Caregiver Support - USAGov](#) - information to help you care for your loved one with special medical needs, including programs for family members of veterans and people with disabilities.
- [Brain Injury Association of New York State](#) - provides advocacy and support to people and families living with brain injuries.

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## Questions or Suggestions

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[wellbeing@cornell.edu](mailto:wellbeing@cornell.edu)