Working at Cornell

Resources for Parenting & Caregiving During COVID-19

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. Additional information can be found on our Parenting During COVID-19 sheet.

Parenting Resources

[accordion]

Upcoming Events

Canceled due to the University observance of Juneteenth.

Cornell Parents: Finding & Adapting to Summer 2020 Care Options

Friday, June 19 from 1:00-2:00 pm via Zoom

REGISTER

Presenters: Diane Bradac, Work/Life Consultant & Michelle Artibee, Director of Workforce Wellbeing, Cornell University

The presenters will share what is known thus far about summer 2020 child care and summer camps, existing campus/community resources (and how to best use them), and strategies for managing work and family.

A recording of the session will be sent to registrants afterward. Please complete the registration form even if you only plan to view the recording.

Questions? Email worklife@cornell.edu

Cornell Community Chats: Parent Connections

As we continue to navigate the COVID crisis, parents are faced with ongoing and new challenges, including concerns about health and safety; limited childcare options; the end of the school year; summer camps closed (or with their status in limbo);
and – for some parents – the need to return to full time work on campus. At this stressful time, all of us are searching for reliable information, resources, and ways to plan for an immediate future that remains uncertain.

We are offering the opportunity for parents of children in specific age groups to connect with one another to brainstorm, share ideas, and explore options. Facilitated conversations are happening via Zoom on:

- Wed, June 24 at 2:00 pm, parents with children ages 0-5 (HR3047-VLT-2020.06.24)
- Wed, June 24 at 3:30 pm, parents with children ages 6-12 (HR3047-VLT-2020.06.24.2)
- Thurs, June 25 at 9:00 am, parents with children ages 13-18 (HR3047-VLT-2020.06.25)

Registration required. Log into CULearn and search for the course numbers identified above.

Safety

- Guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
  - Pregnancy & Coronavirus
  - Breastfeeding & 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

Child Care

Cornell Resources

Find Babysitters, Nannies, & Other Caregivers with Care.com

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 finding a caregiver. Read this important guidance about child care during COVID-19 before arranging care.

Start your membership today!

1. First, visit the HR website for details about the service.

2. Then head to http://cornell.care.com/ to create an account with your Cornell ID number (not your NetID, the number found on your ID badge).

3. Post a position and/or search the directory for caregivers.

Summer Care

- Equal Parts Podcast: Care@Work’s Equal Parts podcast is available on Apple podcasts, Spotify, and through the link provided. Recent podcast subjects include ‘Ideas for Summer Camp at Home’ and ‘Parenting During a Pandemic.’
- Summer Care Resource Guide: The Summer Care Resource Guide is frequently updated and available on Care.com for all employees to access more information about caring for their children and households throughout the upcoming and unprecedented Summer.
- Hobby and Online Tutoring Classes for Children: Employees can search by child’s age, date, and category to find online and virtual classes for their children to take from home. Topics include Art, Dance, Sports, Language, and STEM to name a few. There is a cost associated with most of the online classes. The prices vary but are clearly outlined on the website. Any costs associated with taking the online hobby or tutoring classes would be paid for 100% by the employee.

Work/Life Consultation and Support:

If you are looking for assistance with child care arrangements, contact Cornell’s Work/Life Consultant Diane Bradac. She is available to talk with you on topics related to dependent care, such as locating providers, nannies and babysitters, parenting
children with special needs, and more. Diane can help you explore childcare options so that you are fully informed of what the landscape will look like for your family and your child/ren. Call 607-255-1917 or email: sdb39@cornell.edu.

Cornell Child Care Center (CCCC):

The Cornell University Child Care Center, managed by Bright Horizons Family Solutions, provides care to children ages 6 weeks to 5 years for Cornell faculty, staff and students. Visit the website for additional information or arrange to take a tour at https://child-care-preschool.brighthorizons.com/ny/ithaca/cornell. Note: it is unknown at this time whether the CCCC will be able to accept families that are not normally enrolled at the center for summer care. Please contact the CCCC to share information about your needs. 150 Pleasant Grove Rd, Ithaca, 607-255-1010, Email: cornell@brighthorizons.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 needed, and if you cannot locate the form you received in the email to you dated April 28th, please contact the HR Services and Transition Center, hrservices@cornell.edu, 607-255-3936.

You may make a change in future contributions, again, 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.

Cornell Work & Family Life Panel Discussion: Parenting and Child Care During COVID-19 (Video) - an hour-long panel discussion about what Cornell families are navigating, child development during this time, and what is known thus far about the future of child care and summer camps.

Guide to Hiring Informal Child Care Providers (babysitters)

Community Resources

Child Development Council of Tompkins & Cortland County - Information about Family & Group Family Child Care Programs

The Council has child care referral specialists that can help you explore options. There are many smaller family programs that can provide care for up to 6 children and group family programs that can provide care up to 12 children. Your search criteria (location, size, age of child/ren, cost, etc) will be used in order to conduct a search. Request a consultation by calling 607-273-0259.

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

Child Care Grants for Essential Employees

New York State is using a portion of CARES Act funding to provide free child care for income-eligible essential workers. Essential workers using a regulated child care provider will receive a scholarship for the cost of care as long as the funds to support it are available. If you are a parent who meets the definition of an essential employee and have child care needs, register here.

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

A strategy some families are considering is 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 to express interest. We will notify you when a form is available for collecting additional details.

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 creates 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.

Remote Work & Caregiving

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 if requested, employees may need to use Health and Personal (HAP) time away from work, as needed. 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 if the care of children with disabilities. Please visit https://hr.cornell.edu/new-york-state-paid-family-leave 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.

Parenting Resources

Cornell Resources

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 several specific lists for parents with children under age six, parents with school-age children, and for 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 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 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 with “Join” in the subject

Top Ten Things You Should Know If You Are Having A Baby at Cornell

Remote Work Tips for Families (Cornell)

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
Time & Scheduling

Strategies for Managing Time/Schedules

• Adjust your start/stop time (when you work) – use chunks of time that better align to your availability if possible

• Staff may use paid time off in small increments each day (possible for exempt employees as well) or half/full days as needed

• Staff may use New York State Paid Family Leave (NYSPFL) for care of children with disabilities, or to provide care to children with a serious health condition. NYSPFL can also be used to provide care to parents and spouses/domestic partners.

• Reduce your hours temporarily (subsequent reduction in pay)

• Discuss your work goals and priorities with your supervisor – some work projects/tasks may be better aligned to your current situation than others

Fun & Education

Cornell Resources

• Cornell Kids@Home - Cornell’s virtual “Bring a Child to Work” events
• Cornell Botanic Gardens’ Wildflower Exploration at Home program includes instructional videos on wildflower anatomy, life cycle, and more, along with downloadable activities, and a virtual collection of wildflowers, including gorgeous photos and detailed biological and cultural information.
• Science and Nature Activities: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s K-12 Education team is producing free resources tailored to home learning. Every Friday, K-12 releases fun activities to engage your children’s bodies and minds.
• Cornell Outdoor Education Place-Based Adventures
• Cornell 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.

Community Resources

• Educational Resources – offered by education companies for parents and teachers
• Resources for families during COVID-19 (Care.com)
• Working From Home with an Infant (Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology)
• Talking to Children about Coronavirus (Bright Horizons)
• Resources for Supporting Children’s Emotional Wellbeing during the COVID-19 Pandemic
• Hearts over Hands - Pairing currently-enrolled university students with children from families who are adversely impacted. Volunteers (also called “Big Sibs”) meet with kids via virtual video sessions.
• The Kids May Not Be Alright – And That’s Ok
• 75 Ways for Kids to Connect & Contribute (Conscious Discipline)
• About Child Regression & What to Do (Lerner Child Development)

Caregiving Resources

Caregiving for Adults

Cornell Resources

• Cornell Caregiver Support & Education Network Meetings - May 28 and June 18, 12:00-1:00 pm. Registration is required. Email worklife@cornell.edu and a Zoom link will be sent prior to the meeting.
• Cornell Work/Life Consultant – may advise you on work/life issues, especially related to caregiving. Phone, virtual, or email consultations available worklife@cornell.edu or 607-255-1917.
- Staff may use **New York State Paid Family Leave** (NYSPFL) can be used to provide care to parents and spouses/domestic partners as well as children with serious health conditions or special needs.

**Community Resources**

- **Tompkins County Office for the Aging (other Counties)** – 607-274-5482 - assists older persons and adults with long-term care needs.
- **Assured Allies** - Free hotline for older adults and their caregivers. 888- 478-1478, Monday-Friday between 9-5 pm EST.

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**Questions or Suggestions**

wellbeing@cornell.edu