

Engaging School Going Children During Covid-19 Lockdown

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Abstract

Corona virus (Covid-19) is a pandemic disease, it is a crisis situation faced all over the world. The corona virus originated in bats and was transmitted to humans in the month of December 2019 from Wuhan China. Corona virus is the infectious disease and it attacks on respiratory system and causes respiratory illness that can spread from one person to another person by droplets i.e sneezing, coughing. In India, as on date recorded Corona virus cases are 207615, recovered cases are 1, 00303, total deaths 5815 as on 30 August 2020. Indian Government has declared lockdown all over the states to save the life of the citizens. This is a very critical situation mostly for vulnerable population means children. After lockdown children are getting bored, due to separation from friends, peer group and their daily routine of playing is creating lots of anxiety for children. Children's social life and leaving have been affected. Lockdown of pandemic disease, Closure of schools has affected the education of children and younger's also. The school closures are liable to boredom to the students and caused learning gap among the children belonging to lower or higher socioeconomic status families. In this condition we have to understand the children psychology and we need to engage them in creative and interesting activities at home, also need to give them some learning task regarding studies so their cognitive and psychomotor function will be improved. This short communication concludes with the key learning for the parents of children on how to engage school going children during lockdown in Covid 19(Pandemic).

Keywords: Covid-19, Pandemic, Lockdown, Engaging, School kids.

Introduction

Corona viruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, corona viruses causes respiratory illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome [1]. It is an infectious disease and can be spread through droplets from one person to another person those in contact with a person infected with corona virus [1]. The World Health Organization has officially declared COVID-19 to be a pandemic and has called on "all countries to continue efforts that have been successful in reducing the number of cases and halting the spread of corona virus infection." The primary purpose of Lockdown is to stay at home and to prevent spread of corona virus in community and maintain communal space [2]. Lockdown has started in

phase. The 1st phase was from 25th March 2020 to 14th April 2020 for 21 days, 2nd phase from 15th April 2020 to 3th May 2020 for 19th days and 3rd Phase from 4th May 2020 to 31st May 2020. In this crisis, children's are the vulnerable population they are physically and psychologically disturbed due to disturbances in their daily routine and separation from their friends and peer group, closed relatives. Parents are worried how to engage their children during lockdown [3].

EFFECTS OF LOCKDOWN ON SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN

During this Covid 19 pandemic disease children are luckily safe because of early decision of school closure by state government and central government but it has made profound effects on children's well being. Lockdown make more adverse impact on children

belongs to lower socioeconomic status as it is widening learning gap because access to mid-day meals is the primary reason so many Indian students attend school, if the lockdown continues for much longer, there is a chance that India's dropout rate-which is already among the world's highest-might increase further^[4,5].

According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), about 0.32 billion students in India have been affected because of school closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic (UNESCO 2020). Of these, almost 84% reside in rural areas while 70% attend government schools. As of 2015, the average dropout rate across secondary schools in India was 17.06% with higher numbers for rural areas^[6].

Although parents having access to technology are gradually switching to online education for the studies of their children while others are still not able to do so. It is important to provide practical support to parents and caregivers, including how to talk about the pandemic with children, how to manage their own mental health and the mental health of their children and tools to help support their children's learning. Now is the time to step up international solidarity for children and humanity and to lay the foundations for a deeper transformation of the way we nurture and invest in our world's youngest generation^[3,7].

Although children are not the face of this pandemic, they risk being among its biggest victims. From socio-

economic impacts to physical and mental effects due to mitigation efforts, the corona virus pandemic is a universal crisis, that for some children, the impact will be lifelong.

NEEDS OF SCHOOL GOING KIDS DURING LOCKDOWN.

The school going children have different types of needs like emotional and physical needs. The emotional needs are like love, affection, need of comfort. The physical needs of school going children are safety, security, warmth, comfort, trust, food, clothing, safe drinking water, fresh healthy air, a secure surrounding environment, time for indoor and outdoor games, adequate amount of quality sleep and rest. In this period working parents are getting adequate amount of time to care for their children because of work from home due to lockdown. It's a good opportunity for parents to see their children in growing stage closely.

Along with all needs education is also must for children, it's a part of their future and they are future of tomorrow. So we cannot separate them from studies, parents has a greater responsibility belonging to lower or higher socioeconomic status to help their children to impart the knowledge. So their cognitive function will be improved. The school is important for such kids as they not only learn but also get therapy sessions. Plus, there is a dedicated person working with each child^[8].

HERE ARE A FEW CREATIVE AND INTERESTING ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE TO KEEP KIDS BUSY DURING LOCKDOWN^[3].

Time	Activity	Reason
6-7am	Wake up early in the morning. Do Activities of daily leaving (ADL) and Do exercise, meditation and pranayama with all family members.	It will help to maintain the health and boost the immunity of all family members and can fight with corona virus infection.
7-7.30am	Healthy breakfast	Healthy living and boost the immunity
7.30-8am	Do the bath	Maintain personal hygiene

Cont... HERE ARE A FEW CREATIVE AND INTERESTING ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE TO KEEP KIDS BUSY DURING LOCKDOWN [3].

8-10am	Participate in family chores	To know the sense of responsibility
10-10.15am	Do worship and prayer as per religion	Maintain the spiritual need of the family members and create positivity.
10.15am-11am	Playing indoor game	To engage the children and for their entertainment during lockdown.
11-12noon	Make creative and constructive things.	To engage the children during lockdown and increase the critical thinking.
12-1pm	Have healthy lunch	To maintain good health
1-2pm	Playing cards, chess, carom, ludo game with all family members.	To maintain good interpersonal relationship.
2-3pm	Rest and sleep	To maintain good health
3-4pm	Do school assignment which has been sent by teachers on Whatsapp group or mail.	To keep in touch with academic curriculum and studies.
4-5pm	Snacks and milk or tea	To preserve good health
5-6pm	Playing physical activity game like badminton, table tennis.	To maintain the health and entertainment also.
6-7pm	Watching TV	For fun and entertainment
7-8pm	Dinner	To maintain the health
8-10pm	Playing with family members like antakshari making dance videos etc.	For fun and entertainment
10pm-6am	Drink one glass of lukewarm milk, rest and sleep.	To maintain good health

PLAN DAILY ACTIVITIES DURING LOCKDOWN

1. Practice and teach yoga:-

It's a good chance for the parents to teach Yoga to their kids during this lockdown at home. Otherwise busy parents are free during lockdown hence this time can be utilized for teaching yoga to their kids. Yoga helps in improving health and can also increase their immunity power and make them stronger. This lockdown can also be used to make kids understand the importance of good health and to teach them some healthy habits. Things learned during this young age of their life will remain with them forever and will help them to become fit throughout their life [9].

2. Arrange cooking class at Home

Lockdown is very good opportunity to teach your kids some easy to make recipes at home, by this they will come to know how food is made and what are the ingredients required to prepare food. This habit will help them in future too, like if they are going out for some higher studies or so all alone, then in such case they can cook for themselves and for others too and can become self dependant [9].

3. Try to teach them new languages

Many scholars in the history were well versed with more than one language; it helped them to understand literature of different countries and helped them to gain more knowledge. In today's generation also knowing multiple languages is an additional benefit. In fact for taking admissions in various foreign universities you

should be aware of their local language by considering all these things this lockdown period can be utilized for teaching or ask them for teaching new languages. You can use online available sources for the same or can also use various You Tube channels for teaching your kids. As whole family is at home kids can learn and practice new things with family members also [9].

4. Teach your kids art and craft

You can involve your kids in art and craft, this will help them to learn new things and they will remain busy during lockdown, it will also increase their creative level. You can teach them to make easy, simple craft projects which will help them to grow and show their artistic talent. This activity will help them in free from stress, tension and irritability due to lockdown period. You can also teach your kids how to prepare wooden or cloths puppets toys in a very easy manner at home, how to make simple ornaments by using various things at home [9, 10].

Following is the online arts activity taken by a private school during lockdown [10].

5. You can teach kids - art of writing letters

Writing letters in various formats is also an art you can teach your kids during this lockdown at home. Writing on wooden things, or mixing letters in an artistic manner can be taught during this period of lockdown. By this kids can learn how letters can be written in different formats; they may create some new formats of letter writing and most importantly it will help them to improve their handwriting [9, 10].

Following is an example:



6. Engage with Lego and puzzles games

Lego toys are so popular among children, in this game they can pass time and at the same time they can learn some basic things of physics. You can start with simple structures and can slowly move towards more critical steps with respect to your kids understanding^[9].

7. Make Plan a scavenger hunt

In simple words it is called ‘Luka Chhippi’ hide some things in your house at different places without knowledge of your kids and ask them to find it out, to make this game more interesting you can give them some clues. This will help kids in using their brain and will help them in developing their brain. They will also improve their thinking capacity^[9].

8. Tree Plantation and Surrounding Cleaning

You also can teach your children importance of trees and plants in our lives, how they provide oxygen and their importance for Rain in the country. A small tree plantation drive at home will work for this; children will get connected with the soil also. During this break we can also teach children’s the importance of cleaning in life, how it is important with respect to stop spreading diseases. A daily morning cleaning drive around and inside the house will help them to understand the meaning and importance of cleaning; collecting garbage and dumping it into the dust bin will also help them in becoming a good citizen. We can also teach them how some specific in-house garbage can be converted into compost, we can teach them practically how compost can be made in-house and how it is better than readymade compost available in the market and how it is beneficial for the development of the soil.

9. Have an indoor picnic:

In covid19 nobody will allow children to go outside and play outdoor games according to their choice, as a result again they will become bored, we can handle this situation by arranging small picnic at home for children. Grab a sheet and whatever food children have, let them enjoy a living room picnic. Identify some indoor innovative games, which they will enjoy along with other family members during this in-house picnic, it will become helpful in engaging children and will also keep them refreshing time by time.

10. Story telling

In this period of lockdown telling inspirational, motivational stories can also help parents for engaging their children. It has both benefits as it will keep them engaged and also they will learn new things. Grandparents in this regard are the best story tellers, they should take interest for telling various stories to their grandkids. Story reading can also be useful as it will help in continuing their reading habits and will also learn new things. If stories having various characters they voice over can also be used for each character, which will keep children more engaged in stories. We can also provide them with different story books like pictorial story books etc, we can also engage them by playing stories on you tube or by playing audio CDs on our players and can ask them to listen carefully, this will make them a good listener too.

11. Play with the cat or other domestic animals

Some families are very much fond of cats or other domestic animals like dogs, parrots etc. We can teach children about importance of these animals in lifecycle, we can also teach them as how to take care of these animals, how to feed them. As a result children will also start loving and caring these animals. This will help them grow in a better loving and caring person.

12. Wash your car and two wheelers

Almost every family these days is having four wheelers at their place. This generation kids are very much interested in these machines. This interested of kids can be utilized to overcome boredom during this period of lockdown. We can teach them how to clean the car from inside, how to wash it with solutions, we can also introduce them to the small parts of the vehicle, also we can teach them how can particularly runs or about important documents required for having a car at home. This will help them to find out their own solutions during the times of emergency and will also help in engaging them during lockdown.

13. Singing and Making a song and dance

Singing and dancing are very important with respect to relaxing our body and mind. Making or writing new songs and converting them into the tunes can become a great engagement activity for

kids during this period of lockdown. Encourage your kids to write songs in their own words, later ask them to mold the same in beautiful tune, this will improve their writing skill, will also force their brain to think in different manner. We can simply engage them by playing dance songs at home and ask them to dance as per their wish, if you are good at dance you can teach them different steps.

Quarantine means isolation it does not mean just getting bored at home. There are various activities that can be arranged for killing boredom of your child, for keeping them engaged and to feed them physically as well as mentally. Stay home, stay positive and enjoy much needed rest with your family!

As a parent, you can utilize this time to DEVELOP GOOD HABITS in children at home during Covid 19 pandemic.

How to deal with a defiant child as a parent?

Understand what really going on

Decision fatigue: Giving them as many choices as you can

Treat them like an adult

Instead of giving them chorus, give them problems to solve

Ask their opinions and give them some control over their lives

Discussion

The present article is related to Covid 19 pandemic for short communication, it's very difficult period for all. But in this period most vulnerable population in society are kids. They are getting bored so as parents it is our responsibility to engage them with various enjoyable activities like indoor games. We can plan various activities to keep them physically and mentally engaged. It will help them grow normally and free from stress and tension. It's a good chance to explore their hidden talent. They can spend their whole day very nicely with creational activities. In this period we have to treat them like matured kids to encourage them so that they will do all activities whatever told to them and we will get the required output out of these activities.

Conclusion

Schools are closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak for an uncertain period of time, parents face the daunting task of figuring out how to help their kids learning and more likely how to keep them enjoyable and free from psychological health issues and physical health issues, while social distancing is either required or encouraged. It has become important than ever to make time to sit with their kids and plan their day. We all know that keeping positive feelings and thinking promotes well-being and community and parents may plan to schedule game nights, face time calls with relatives, friends for their children and include them in activities they find fascinating.

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