

HEALTHY AT HOME

Navigating COVID-19 with Cooperative Extension

How to get off the summer slide

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 Development

A term you might have heard a lot in the past few years is summer slide. Is that a new toy kids are using during the break from school? No. Summer slide is a term that describes youths getting out of the study and learning habits of the regular school year. Educators and parents are more aware of this because of our current situation. They are concerned about its effects as youths and families begin preparing for the return to school.

Continued page 4



Make it a goal to drink one glass of water with your snack. Not only will it help keep you hydrated, it will also leave you feeling satisfied.

Snack time can be a healthy, and delicious, thing

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Although there is no specific definition for “snack” or “snacking,” we generally think of it as the foods and drinks we eat between meals. Many people may think of snacking as a bad thing. But it is good to listen to our bodies and hear when we are hungry. You don’t need to feel guilty for snacking. Instead, use it to add fruits, vegetables, and other fulfilling choices to your diet.

So many healthy options are quick, grab-and-go type foods that lend themselves perfectly as a snack. Items with little prep include trail mix with a variety of nuts and seeds, raw fruits and vegetables such as a

handful of cherry tomatoes or an apple, dried fruits such as raisins, peanut butter with whole-wheat crackers or a banana, string cheese, Greek yogurt, and even plain popcorn.

Healthful snacking is a great way to curb hunger between larger meals. Choosing foods from various food groups will help you feel satisfied and full longer. Protein and healthy fats will tell your body that you have had enough for now until the next time you eat. A handful of almonds and a serving of grapes will make you feel much more satisfied than grapes alone. Some people also find it difficult to drink enough water throughout the day. Make it a goal to drink one glass of water with your snack, whatever it may be. Not only will it help keep

you hydrated, it will also leave you feeling satisfied.

When at home, it may be helpful to eat meals on a predictable schedule and have snacks at regular times each day. It is okay to look forward to snacks and have them planned rather than constantly wandering into the kitchen to graze throughout the day. Portioning snacks out ahead of time is an easy way to help make smart snack choices while also enjoying the foods you love most.

OTHER RESOURCES

Full article:

<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/snack-time.pdf>

Simple lunch ideas (article):

<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/simple-lunch-ideas.pdf>

Mindful eating: A new experience with food (article):

<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/mindful-eating.pdf>

Involving little ones in the kitchen (video):

<https://youtu.be/swPDThQFr1s>

Managing stress eating (video):

https://youtu.be/_-MSVp95yoe



Finding control in uncertain times

BY DR. AMY F. KOSTELIC
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With COVID-19, so much is happening and changing so quickly that it can be hard to make sense of the world around you. To complicate things, the unknown creates anxiety, uneasiness, stress, and fear. According to psychiatrist Dr. Abigail Brenner (2019), circumstances change, and things do not always stay the same as a result. Being flexible to change makes you more resilient for when things happen.

- **Focus on what you can control.** Rely on the things in your life that you can count on to stay stable and build your life around them. Maintaining or creating a routine can help you navigate your day.
- **Keep expectations at bay.** If you dwell on what you think

should happen, you may become frustrated.

- **Take a mental inventory.** If you catch yourself thinking negatively or in terms of worse-case scenarios, try to turn negative thinking into a positive. For example, what is it that you CAN do?
- **Don't let fear paralyze you.** While fear and the unknown can be protective, it can also negatively affect you if you let it take charge.
- **Manage stress.** There are many ways to manage anxiety and stress including participating in physical activity, healthy eating, proper sleep hygiene, engaging creativity, and meditation.
- **Surround yourself with support.** Family and close friends contribute to emotional support, self-esteem, and self-confidence.



OTHER RESOURCES

Full article:

<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/info-release-finding-control-in-uncertain-times.pdf>

5 Tips to help you live with uncertainty (article):

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/in-flux/201912/5-tips-help-you-live-uncertainty>

Making your mental health a priority (video):

<https://youtu.be/dA6Ue7rD15o>

Your self-care menu (video):

<https://youtu.be/itWF1hxZnSQ>

Stay positive, attitude is everything! (video):

<https://youtu.be/dyZmRWNcjB8>

Managing stress during hard times (article):

<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/managing-stress-during-hard-times.pdf>

Let's talk about the tough stuff: Suicide (article):

<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/suicide-march.pdf>

How to get off the summer slide

Youth development experts suggest developing a family plan now that will allow a smoother transition back into the fall school routine (whatever it may look like). Here are some suggestions for slowing down the summer slide.

- **Keep them reading.** Magazines, graphic novels, online books, whatever captures their interests. Make it a family event and everyone read at the same time, or even keep a log of what everyone has read and discuss it as a family.
- **Find an app.** There are some excellent and purposeful websites and apps that youth can access during the summer. Check out your local library. Many times, they have free subscriptions to online resources.
- **Code it up.** Websites like code.org or commonsense.org are excellent resources for digital resources during the summer. Just make sure

you set the limit on how much screen time you want your child to have per day.

- **Record your history.** These are unprecedented times. What an awesome time to keep a history of what has been happening. You can do this with pictures, online or print journaling, interviewing, or researching.
- **And of course, Kentucky 4-H.** Contact your local 4-H Youth Development Agent for access to what they are offering youths during the summer months.

The important thing is keep kids engaged, while remembering it's also OK to allow the brain some downtime. Being bored sometimes leads to the most creative ideas! We've included some resources for you to check out as you develop your family engagement plan.

OTHER RESOURCES

Code.org (website):
<https://code.org>

CommonSense Media for Parents (website):
<https://www.commonsensemedia.org>

FRED — Fathers or Families Reading Every Day (website):
<https://extension-fine-arts.ca.uky.edu/special%20projects>

Kentucky 4-H Youth Development (website):
<http://4-h.ca.uky.edu>

Kentucky Public Libraries (website):
<https://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/Pages/LibraryDirectory.aspx>

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