

THE LONG TERM PHYSICAL, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, & SOCIAL IMPACT

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CAN HAVE ON YOUR CHILDREN,
Unless....



The Physical, Mental, Emotional, and Social Impact the COVID-19 Pandemic Is Having on Your Children, And What to Do About It!

The Resource Not Being Talked About on the News:

Currently, politicians, news media, and adult citizens are publicly debating how to balance saving the economy and the lives of people. The intensity from these arguments has raged along a continuum from a slow simmering fire to the white-hot emission of a rocket's flame. Of course, the additional fuel that leads to distrust and misinformation is the fact that this is all occurring during an election year, so skepticism is running rampant.

Nationally the stock market fluctuates wildly from day to day, while at the same time reports of climbing numbers in COVID-19 virus cases increase. On the one hand, businesses are failing and unemployment has reached levels beyond those of the Great Depression. On the other hand, millions of people have been infected and dying with the unpredictability of a virus that seems to mutate daily. Naturally, there is a lot of distrust, discouragement, and dread.

The Deafening Cry for Attention being Ignored:

Ironically, our most precious resource, as well as our future, is rarely spoken of with the kind of passion and intensity that it deserves! Almost forgotten in all of the rhetoric are the ones who will inherit a future based upon how we react and respond to a present ever changing and daunting crisis. Of course, this resource and future is our children, and they are innocent with no choice in the kind of the world inheritance we leave for them.

Since politics, economy, news, pandemics, etc. are unpredictable, and frankly, unreliable, **it's up to us as parents to protect** our prized possession and heritage: our kids.

As a parent, you have seen up close some of the effects the coronavirus pandemic has had on your children, as everyone in the country has at some point been under lockdowns and stay-at-home orders. Still, history and present experts can give you further insight on the impact social distancing, quarantines, and other practices can have on children and will have in the future, unless...

What We Should Learn From History:

Although, we might consider the current to be “an unprecedented historical event,” that's not entirely true. Unfortunately, there have been plenty of life-altering pandemics throughout history that took millions of lives **and greatly impacted the lives of those who survived.**

Consider for example, the Antonine Plague (165 –180) – 5 Million Deaths, Plague of Justinian (541 – 42) – 30 to 50 Million Deaths, The Black Death, aka Bubonic Plague (1347–1351) – 200 Million Deaths, Smallpox (1520) – 56 Million Deaths, The Third Plague (1855) – 12 Million Deaths, and the Spanish Flu (1918–19) – 40 to 50 Million Deaths

Even more modern examples can serve to teach us a few lessons, like the spread of HIV, SARS, MERS, Swine Flu, and Ebola.

You might be asking, “*What's the point of mentioning these previous outbreaks?*”

Simply put, the adage “those who don't learn from mistakes of the past are condemned to repeat them.”

Psychological Anthropologists who research the effects of similar crises reveal how PROFOUNDLY these types of disruptions can influence young people and **frankly, can ‘scar’ them for life**. Children are especially susceptible to these negative psychological and physical influences, and their mental health, sense of ‘security’, and emotional stability can be permanently damaged.

6 Ways Your Children Are at Risk, Even If They Don’t Get Sick:

Consider the following excerpt from an article written by the organization Save the Children entitled *6 Ways Children Are at Risk in a Health Crisis, Even If They Don’t Get Sick*. (Please note the historical circumstances as a basis for the risks. In addition, some risks may seem less relevant under your personal circumstances, but others will certainly resonate.):

Here are 6 things to consider, based on Save the Children’s history of responding to global pandemic threats, about the ways in which children around the world can be affected by coronavirus, even if they don’t get sick.

1. Children’s dependency on adults put them at risk

Children, especially younger ones, are dependent upon their caregivers for meeting their basic needs like food and shelter. If an adult caregiver in a child’s life falls ill, the child’s basic needs could be impacted.

From the start of the coronavirus outbreak, the World Health Organization emphasized that the best way to avoid spread of the Coronavirus is to keep routine hand washing and good cough etiquette. However, we know that children are less likely to adhere to some basic hygienic practices without adult supervision.

2. Reduced parental supervision can leave children more vulnerable to negative influences and violence

During infectious disease outbreaks, caregivers may be unable to provide attentive care to their children due to illness, psychological distress, or other reasons. Reduced parental supervision can leave children more vulnerable to violence, exploitation, and abuse.

In Yemen, during the cholera outbreak in 2017, children who accompanied their sick caregivers to cholera treatment centers were at times left alone to sleep outside on the veranda while their caregivers were admitted for treatment. This unsupervised arrangement exposed children, especially girls, to risks of harassment, sexual violence, and abuse.[ii]

3. Disruptions to family income can have immediate and longer-term

consequences

Infectious disease outbreaks can have a devastating effect on families by limiting sources of income of family members due to illness, due to the need to care for sick family members, or by increasing household health-related expenses.

During an outbreak of Chikungunya in Orissa, India in 2006, for example, a study showed that families' increased health-related expenses threatened their ability to pay for other necessities.[iii]

4. A lapse in education can cause children to feel anxious

Children can perceive time differently to adults, and a few weeks or months out of school may seem like a much longer period of time to them. This means children tend to feel particularly anxious about any period of time they are out of school and the learning and socialization they are missing. They fear they will not be able to catch up and start to worry that the longer schools are closed, the more likely they are to forget what they previously learned.

In Sierra Leone, during the Ebola crisis, children said they felt they were becoming 'backward.'

5. Interruptions in social interactions can impact children's emotional wellbeing

Beyond the family, children's relationships with their friends can also be disrupted due to an infectious disease. Children may not be able to play or interact with their friends regularly or at all for long periods of time. Social interactions children have with peers play an important role in children's social development.

During the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, children reported feeling sad, lonely, and lost without the camaraderie of their peers.[iv]

6. At the community level, infectious diseases can disrupt the cultural way of life

Children generally grow and develop within family and friendship circles that are nested within communities. Disruptions to families, friendships, and the wider community can have detrimental consequences for children's wellbeing, development, and their protection.

The SARS outbreak in Singapore in 2003 had a psychological impact on healthy community members, fostered by anxiety and fear of infection.[v] In Tanzania, the impacts of a Rift Valley Fever (RVF) outbreak in 2007 included the stigmatization of affected communities for having lost 'respect and dignity.'[vi] All of these community-level impacts affect children."

Although everyone responds differently, from this brief excerpt we can see that there *is* a historical basis for some concern related to our children's welfare after going through the COVID-19 crisis. Probably most felt in the US would be more of the psychological, emotional, and social risks mentioned that must be considered going forward. If we ignore these examples with faulty thinking like "they're resilient" and "they'll just bounce back"...

What Current Experts Are Saying

What are today's leading experts saying about the present and future impact of isolation and social distancing on children?

The foundation that is developed in their lives today will have a big effect on how things will be in their tomorrows. There is no question that they will be affected, but to what extent and in what areas of their lives?

It seems that most of the thinking from experts covers four primary areas of concern for children's health: physical, mental, emotional, and social. Basically, these concerns stem from the expected effect a diversion from the old normal life kids had prior to the pandemic, to what may be their new reality for some time to come. The obvious factors leading to these concerns are stay-at-home orders and social distancing, which took them out of school and everything related to that environment.

The Physical Damage

As you know no doubt already know, it can be hard to motivate kids to be active during stay at home orders. They engage more in Xbox or PlayStation, watching videos online, social media, eating, and sleeping than exercise. Researchers believe extended school closures due to the pandemic and sedentary behavior could increase risk factors leading to *bad nutrition, weight gain, obesity, lack of fitness, and weaker immune systems*.

"The school closures are making it harder for kids to be physically active, and that means there's also going to be a lot more snacking on unhealthy foods," says Andrew Rundle, an associate professor of epidemiology at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health

"People are watching more television, which is a strong predictor of obesity. Netflix has been one of the better-performing stocks. With these consumption patterns, there is going to be weight gain and the risk of obesity not just among children," Paul Von Hippel, who is also the associate professor at LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas, Austin, states.

Research shows that regular, moderate-intensity exercise has immune-boosting benefits that help children fight off infections, but without physical education this is likely out of their daily routine.

Additionally, school closures takes away access to school-based nutrition programs for those who need it, which will drive up malnutrition rates.

The Mental Damage

All school-aged children have seen their education interrupted, so millions of students have had their education routine abruptly altered. Even with online learning in place, the educational environment has become radically different and will have some effect. The experts are saying that when kids return to school, the demand for mental health services will be greater than what is already available. In addition, these students could suffer damage to their learning and potential.

Betsy Zori, Vice President of Save the Children, states that, "We know kids in low-socioeconomic communities lose two to three months in reading and math skills over a normal summer. With schools

letting out now and potentially not returning before the end of the school year, learning loss may be profound.” While Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, California’s surgeon general, makes the claim that, “We’re going to see increased stress-related cognitive impairment and diseases.”

“Social isolation can generate loneliness, and loneliness can be bad for mental health and wellbeing,” states Jay Belsky, professor of human development at the University of California-Davis. James Coan, a psychology professor at the University of Virginia, who studies the neuroscience of human connection, believes that, “For younger kids in particular, missing out on play with peers could take a toll. Play facilitates cognitive development.”

The Emotional Damage

In 2013, researchers found that children who were quarantined for disease containment scored four times higher on a post-traumatic stress test than those who were not—so the potential for conditions like depression, anxiety, sadness, and fear genuinely exist for children, especially if they are staying at home with a family that is in a health-related or financial struggle from the spread of the virus.

“We don't know how long this is going to last. And that can heighten anxiety. What's affecting them most is the new normal they are living through. Children certainly are being impacted by this because it's changed their worlds. And the loss of routine and the inability to socialize with friends can add to the feelings of anxiety and upheaval they're experiencing,” says Robin Gurwitch, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Duke University Medical Center. The National Child Stress Network states, “For school-age children, a traumatic experience may elicit feelings of persistent concern over their own safety and the safety of others in their school or family. These children may be preoccupied with their own actions during the event. Often they experience guilt or shame over what they did or did not do during a traumatic event. School-age children might engage in constant retelling of the traumatic event, or they may describe being overwhelmed by their feelings of fear or sadness.”

Dr. Amanda Gummer, child psychologist and founder of the *Good Play Guide*, says children “may be feeling disoriented and confused as to what's happening, anxious about their parent's jobs or wider family members' health, missing their friends, or struggling with lack of active play opportunities.”

The Social Damage

Between closed schools, social isolation, food scarcity, and parental unemployment, the coronavirus pandemic has fractured kids' support systems. Their recreational activities, play dates, and typical peer interactions have been shut down, which is a huge disruption in their lives. Of course, this is sure to have some impact, because now their encounters are with family members, which can be good, but doesn't include peer experience, which has its own benefits and drawbacks to grow from.

UNICEF states that, “Ninety-nine percent of the world’s children live with some form of pandemic-related movement restrictions; sixty percent live in countries with full or partial lockdowns. The echoes of COVID-19 will permanently damage our shared future.” Meanwhile, Kenneth Rubin, a professor of human development and quantitative methodology at the University of Maryland, believes, “Through play and other peer interactions, children also develop social skills and a sense of morality; kids need peers. One of the things about being stuck at home as a little kid is that you might not experience these essential interactive experiences that lead to the development of close relationships outside of the family.”

“Yes, they do a lot of connecting via social media, and that's still happening, but that face-to-face and being with their friends...they're missing that, says Laura Ross, a middle school counselor in Lawrenceville, Georgia. Another counselor, Mallory Streisfeld, LPC, LG Counseling, claims that parents are worried about the everlasting effects on children due to quarantine: “A lot of my parents have approached me with this concern: 'Are my kids, are my teens, ruined for life because of this? Because of COVID-19 and because of the fact that they've had to be quarantined so long and lack of social growth?’”

Your Child Will Be Impacted... Unless You Respond Proactively

Since you have read this far into the report, you have an unquestionably deep concern and care for your child. In addition, you now have the knowledge of the historical impact and what current experts think might be the potential fallout of the COVID-19 generation of children. Beyond this you have your own personal experience of what it has been like over the last several weeks for your child to be home under social-distancing and stay-at-home orders.

Surely some of the thoughts of experts have rung true in your home with child. Across the country reports have come in of the challenges and side effects from the restrictions with the pandemic. Situations like: children who have pent-up energy unable to find an appropriate release; kids spending hours upon hours sitting in front of televisions and on phones playing games or watching videos; binge eating junk food along with long naps, and so on.

Of course, these issues have probably given you plenty of stress and grief as well. After reading to this point, you know that these kinds of consequences were to be expected due to the nature of things. With this being said, things don't have remain frustrating for you.

You can easily prevent things from becoming worse—but you have to be proactive!

Physical Exercise + a Positive Peer Group + Strong, Positive Role Models – is The Answer

First, everyone knows that exercise is important, and research has proven that regular physical activity benefits children in several ways. In regard to the consequences this report has mentioned that the pandemic might lead to for your child, physical exercise in the right environment combats all of them. There are many forms of exercise, and finding the right fit is an important component for what your child needs to move ahead in the best way possible.

The Women's And Children's Health Network states that kids need exercise because:

“It makes you feel fit, strong and healthy.

Your brain releases 'endorphins' (en-door-fins): chemicals that make you feel good.

You feel relaxed.
It stops you feeling 'stressed out.'
It's fun to exercise with others.
It keeps your weight down.
Your muscles get stronger.
You sleep better.
Your heart and lungs get stronger.
Your bones get stronger.
You have more energy to do other things.
You look great.
You can get rid of anger and bad feelings.
Your body stays 'tuned up' and works better.”

Next, it's obvious that children also need to have good social interactions. Kids love spending time with friends for play dates, recess, meals, recreational activities, and sports. They learn to cope and cooperate from engaging with their peers, which becomes the foundation for future communications. It is of great importance that most of these interactions are positive and in a structured environment, like a martial arts class nature so that your child develops good character as well.

Finally, kids need good examples in their lives to look up to and strive to be like while growing up for productive futures. A Martial Arts instructor can often be the best role model in a child's life. They are often a fatherly example to the fatherless, and a voice of reason in a confusing world. They can be the epitome of health and a courageous hero who can save the day. Martial Arts instructors are the kind of role model your child needs to learn from and emulate in reaching for the stars for a bright future.

OK, great! But how do you proceed if schools, community centers, YMCAs, and gyms are closed?

There are no PE classes, public recreational activities, sports, or any other exercise programs available through those channels. So what can you do?

The BEST Solution for Kids' Health & Wellbeing Available in Your Home Right Now!

The martial arts are well known for bringing tremendous benefits to practitioners of all ages. When considering your children, practicing the martial arts will deliver just what you're looking for, even during the pandemic.

Life-Changing and Sustaining Benefits Martial Arts Give To Kids:

- Positive Activity
- Respect
- Self-Discipline
- Focus
- Confidence
- Resiliency

- Better Grades
 - Physical Health
 - Mental Strength
 - Emotional Stability
 - Routine & Goals
 - Self-Defense Skill
 - Peer Interaction
 - Fun
- And So Much More!

You might be asking, “How is this possible during a pandemic with all of the social distancing and stay at home restrictions?” It's simple, convenient, and can be done in the most comfortable place in your home through **Virtual Online Martial Arts Class!**

Imagine your child being more *respectful*, spending less time playing video games and more time involved in *healthy physical activity*.

You'll see frowns turn into *smiles* from the exciting fun and joy of *socializing with friends* through the online interactive class structure.

Your child will *get in shape, eat and sleep better*, and have the *emotional and mental strength* to face whatever life brings with *courage and resiliency*.

Best of all, your child and even the whole family can practice from the comfort of your own living room!

Here's your chance to ease the stress from the COVID-19-prescribed isolating tactics for reducing the spread of the virus, but which do not consider the impact that confinement might have on children.

Now you have access to a means of combating the negative effects of what history and experts have shown and believe experiencing a pandemic can cause to your child.

**Give Your Child the Tools to Ward Off the Long-Term
Physical, Mental, Emotional, and Social Impact
of the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Start Virtual Martial Arts Classes Today!