As kids move into virtual learning while spending so much time inside with families, new challenges arise, from blow-ups with siblings to difficulties managing fear and anxiety. As tensions could possibly build at home, social and emotional learning is important for developing a happier environment for everyone.

Family self-care can make you feel content and more physically, mentally, and emotionally able to deal with life’s pressures and stresses. For busy families, ensuring that self-care is a priority can help parents be better caregivers. Kids’ Orchestra would like to provide our family’s with extra tips and resources for creating a calm, productive environment for everyone amid confusion.

**PARENT SELF-CARE TIPS:**

- **Monitor Stress Levels** - Parents and kids monitor stress consistently and check in with each other during this challenging time. If you are feeling overwhelmed, it’s important not to pass on your anxiety to your child.
- **Create and Stick to a Schedule** - A good schedule should include the basics of sleep. Get plenty of sleep and make sure the children are as well. Also ensure that everyone is waking up on time and not staying up all night. Remember children should be eating healthy meals, not snacking all day. Set a time to go outside. If that is not possible, schedule some sort of family exercise at a certain time each day.
- **Teach New Life Skills** - Most times, parents focus on academic skills, however, this is a time to teach life skills. During this time children can learn how to cook, develop organizational skills, and develop study skills.
- **Avoid Conflicts Before It Begins** - In most cases when children fight or argue, it’s because they are bored or something has not gone well, and there is no structure. The best thing you can do to avoid conflict is to make sure there is a family routine and activities to keep children from becoming bored, which is when they’ll tend to fight and get into mischief.
- **Find New Resources and Reach Out for Support and Guidance** - School districts and other learning centers are well equipped to supply family resources for assistance during trying times.
FAMILY SELF-CARE ACTIVITIES:

- **Yoga for Kids** - Children benefit physically and mentally from yoga practice. In addition, their concentration and sense of calmness and relaxation improves. Please open the following link for a great example of kid-friendly yoga. [Yoga At Home](#)

- **Acknowledge and Express Feelings** - For more information on how to speak to your family and children about acknowledging and expressing their feelings during this time of uncertainty, please refer to the following websites: [casel.org](#) and [Second Step COVID-19 Coping Skills](#)

- **Sing and Dance** - Singing and dancing engages the brain, cultivates communication skills, allows self-expression, fosters physical skills, and contributes to creativity and imagination. Click on the link to enjoy fun singing and dancing: [Sing and Dance Along](#)

- **Brain Breaks for Adults and Children** - Brain Breaks are down time from learning and/or working. These breaks increase productivity and provides opportunities to develop creativity and social skills. For more information on Brain Breaks, please open the following link. Brain Break

- **Healthy Snacking** - Parents can talk to children about how certain foods help their bodies grow and healthy eating habits. Remind them that healthy eating improves minds, levels moods, and helps maintain healthy weight.

- **Drink Water** - Encourage children to drink water. Although it has no nutrients, H2O is essential to your child's health. Water aids digestion and is vital for proper blood circulation. To hear more information on the importance of water, please follow the link and discuss with your children. [Why Drink Water?](#)

- **Provide Moments for Creativity** - Art permits children to engage in “out of the box” thinking and can help them tap into their creative problem-solving skills. Parents remind students that there are no mistakes in art! For more art fun, see the following links:
  - [KO@Home](#)
  - [Knock Knock Children’s Museum Parent Resource Guide](#)