

A call to Battle

The Invisible Enemy:

We live in a new world whether we want to realize it or not. Since the disclosure by government of the global pandemic as we got to know it now as COVID-19 we have to adapt the way we live. For example, to make sure my family stays safe I am the one who takes the risk to go out a get anything we need. When I get back home I begin my cleansing tradition with rubbing alcohol for my hands and clothes, soap to wash my hands, Clorox wipes to clean shopped products, and washing veggies and fruits. When it comes to our children's health and safety we go into combat-mode against visible or invisible enemies. Yes, as fathers this natural instinct of protecting our children takes over and with COVID-19, this is no exception.

It is said by Sun Tzu in the book, *The Art of War*, "If you know the enemy and know yourself, you

need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you

know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle." As a father that understands your concerns, I wanted to share with all, information pertaining the invisible enemy

(COVID-19) which we are facing. By no means am I an expert, I am providing information that can help by leading experts in COVID-19 to help you combat the invisible enemy.

Below are some precautions from our friends at the Harvard Medical School that we can follow that can keep us safe:

- Wash hands – recommended 20 to 30 seconds
- Help boost immune system – healthy eating; exercise; getting enough sleep

- **Story Continues on Page 4**



Photo by CDC on Unsplash



A Galloway Head Start father and son



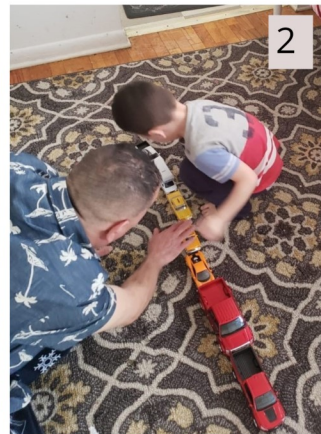
Father and child from Penns Grove II Head Start

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Issue 3 Volume 2

Our Dads in Action During COVID-19



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Ewing Head Start (left)

1. Ewing Head Start Dad Freddy Say gets some exercise and fresh air with daughters Dasheiry (Head Start Alum) and current Head Start child Blessing.
2. Anes and his Dad Bachir work on lining up vehicles sorted by colors.
3. Sofia and her Dad Eric Vasquez enjoy some special times together after Dad comes home from work.

4. Emely Taveras and her Dad Ronny having some giggles in the family car.

5. Jose Penalzoza Sr. works with his son Jose Jr. on activities sent by his Head Start teachers.

6. Head Start Dad Wilmer Barnhill is spending time reading with his family. Ewing Head Start child Kenneth (left) and his brother Head Start Alum Joan join in with Mom Margarita.

7. Zakariya Benkhoulka takes a dip with Dad Boubekeur watching over him.



(above) Galloway Head Start Center fathers have been engaging with teaching how to ride bike, write names in the sand, make a solar system and flower out of fruit loops. Our center's fathers have been enjoying themselves and engaging with their children and sharing ideas.

“Yo bro, You Need to Toughen Up!”: Men’s Mental Health

An area of concern to me personally has been mental health because I am vulnerable, and this is why thanks to Gateway CAP Head Start I am here to help children, families, specially fathers and male figures. I will share with you the losing my dad, my grandfather and my grandfather’s brother to suicide. My brother and my son amongst other family mem-

bers suffer from bipolarism. So when it comes to speaking about this subjects I am not

exempt from having a dear love one be part of the statistics on male mental health. I really thought it necessary to bring light upon the subject, especially now during this quarantine timeframe that we are experiencing high levels of anxiety. So I reach out to our EHS/HS Mental Health Manager Jameka Jones who helped me gather some important information pertaining this subject.

First, we want you to know that “while we may not be in the same boat; we are in the same storm”. There is always someone listening and willing to help. Here I have provided the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255). The Lifeline is 24/7 available to you and your love ones with professional help. Additionally, you can always reach out to our Mental Health team who is willing to provide information and resources

available to children, families, and male figures.

Speaking up load about men’s mental health is required to break social status quo stigmas allotted to the male gender causing males to internalize their problems without a healing avenue for fear of being seen as pathetic. Two key figures helping males with an eye-opening experience are Paul Kival and Tony Porter with what has now become known as “the man box”. Understanding the male gender socialization factors can help males know unconscious contributing pressures affecting men’s metal health.

Reflecting upon the chart provided above it would seem males are enclosed to expectation that are heartless. “The Man Box identifies the limitations on what a man is supposed to be and what he believes. These expectations are taught to men – sometimes unconsciously – and reinforced by society. In the

ketball player from the Cleveland Cavaliers Kevin Love wrote “Growing up, you figure out really quickly how a boy is supposed to act. You learn what it takes to “be a man.” It’s like a playbook: Be strong. Don’t talk about your feelings. Get through it on your own. So for 29 years of my life, I followed that playbook. And look, I’m probably not telling you anything new here. These values about men and toughness are so ordinary that they’re everywhere ... and invisible at the same time, surrounding us like air or water. They’re a lot like depression or anxiety in that way.” (Kevin, 2018)

We wanted to end by giving you a 10 simple questions to check on someone’s mental health.

How are you feeling today, really?
Physically and mentally.
What’s taking up most of your head-space right now?
What was your last full meal, and have you been drinking enough water?

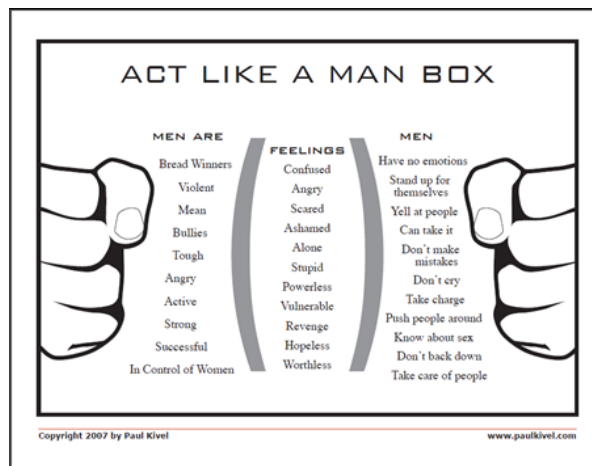
How have you been sleeping?
What have you been doing for exercise?
What did you do today that made you feel good?
What’s something you can do today that would be good for you?
What’s something you’re looking forward to in the next few days?
What’s something we can do together this

week, even if we’re apart?
What are you grateful for right now?

**Your mind matters.
You matter. Talk**



Photo by Gemma Chua-Tran



Man Box, men are supposed to be: powerful and dominating, fearless and in control, strong and emotionless, and successful.” (A Call to Men, n.d.)

No one is exempt, even bas-

I need a Break! My Children Are Driving Me Crazy!

Coronavirus quarantine can feel intense especially with our children home and not in school. During usual circumstances a child gets up in the morning, eats breakfast, heads to school, comes home, plays for a while and we got them ready for bed to do it all over again the very next day. This was a routine that the majority of us lived until the outbreak of COVID-19. It feels like now chaos rules our homes, so we give in and allow our children to vacation. However, even when we vacation we usually have made out a plan that we follow.

In an article for Medium Corporation Doctor Damon Korb a Developmental Behavioral Pediatrician shares with us some insight in staying sane. Doctor Korb says “staying organized is the key”. In Doctor Korb article states “When structure falls apart, restlessness sets in and chaos can take over.”

He shares with us a few tips to bring order to chaos and here they are:

Keeping routines – they help behavior and in our Head Start classrooms we help children to learn our daily set routines. (For more help with routines please reach out to your child’s center classroom Teachers they are the experts)

Provide Outlets – Have an exercise routine, maybe a

jump rope, a crazy dance party, just take a walk with them. Anything that can help a child with physical activities. (As I mentioned before if you need ideas our Teachers are here to support you with physical activities)



Maintain limits and rules – Make sure that your child knows your house rules. Children in Head Start have classroom rules and they know them very well

because we constantly use reminders throw-out the day. Set some rules, write them out and remind your child throughout the day that is business as usual. (Teachers can help you with coming up with some rules from the classroom that can be applied at home.)

Teach life skills – You can ask them to help when washing the dishes or doing laundry. This would be a great time to roll play with your child. (Teacher can provide you with examples)

Connect with your Family - We use family style meal to teach children skills when sitting at the table to eat. Additionally, we have conversations with them during meal time. Make sure to connect with your love ones by putting time a side to do things together.

If you enjoyed the tips given here and want to learn more, please refer to Dr. Korb’s article at the following link. <https://medium.com/@organizedchild/parenting-in-a-pandemic-5b6f2a58db28>

(Continued:) A call to Battle The Invisible Enemy: What Fathers Can Do To Protect Their Children

Make sure your children’s vaccines are up-to-date

Teach children not to touch their faces, noses, mouths (easier said than done)

Teach children about not touching surfaces when in public locations

Additionally,

As much as possible stay away from people that are sick

If you host visitors, do not allow sick people in the home and make your visitors wash their hands

If anyone in your house gets sick, have them self-quarantine in their bedroom

If your child gets a fever and cough;

Call your child’s Pediatrician for specific advised

If Pediatrician does not think your child needs to be checked; help child by;

Keeping child hydrated

Using acetaminophen or ibuprofen for fever (Ask Doctor for right dosage)

Use humidifier for congestion limiting the use of over-the-counter cold medicines in children under the age of 6

Make sure they have plenty of rest

Watch for warning signs of problems, and seek medical attention if they occur:

any trouble breathing
severe cough that won’t stop
high fever that won’t come down with acetaminophen or ibuprofen
unusual sleepiness
irritability or pain that you cannot soothe
refusal to take fluids, or any signs of dehydration (dry mouth, no tears when crying, not urinating at least every six hours).

For more advised please read the following article: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/coronavirus-what-parents-should-know-and-do-2020020518846>

Protect yourself while shopping

Following are tips by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for running essential errands. My hope is that you are able to stay safe and protect your children and family while running errands.

Following are some recommendations to follow:

Stay at least 6 feet away from others while shopping and in lines.

Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering when you have to go out in public.

When you do have to visit in person, go during hours when fewer people will be there (for example, early morning or late night).



Photo by Anshu A on Unsplash

If you are at higher risk for severe illness, find out if the store has special hours for people at higher risk. If they do, try to shop during those hours. People at higher risk for severe illness include adults 65 or older and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions.

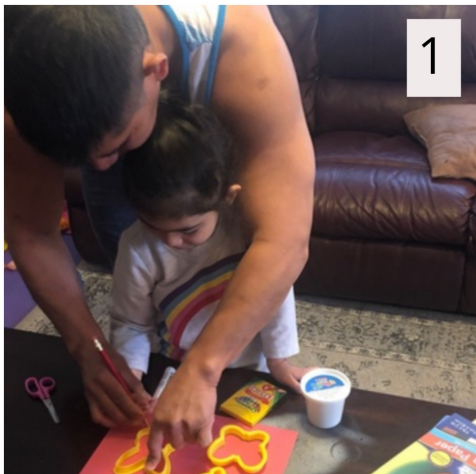
Disinfect the shopping cart, use disinfecting wipes if available.

Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.

If possible, use touchless payment (pay without touching money, a card, or a keypad). If you must handle money, a card, or use a keypad, use hand sanitizer right after paying.

For more information on how to stay safe please visit CDC site (Available information for multilingual families). Here is the link: <https://www.cdc.gov/>

More of our Head Start Dads at home during COVID-19



1. Ocean City father Carlos Arana working with Valentina Arana with art crafts center provided
- 2 & 3. Penns Grove II Head Start Father and child work on an art project from home.