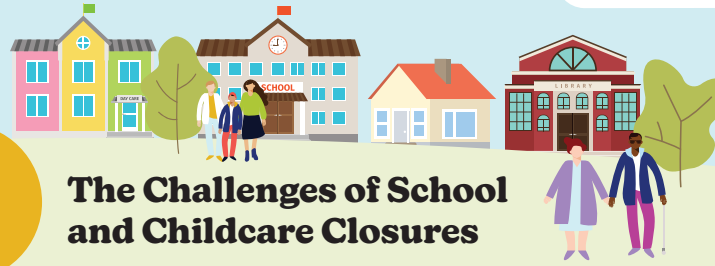


family snapshots:

NAVIGATING THROUGH SCHOOL AND CHILDCARE CLOSURES



Concrete and economic supports create positive foundations for families to thrive.

Such supports include access to meals, medical or therapeutic care, paid leave, flexible work schedules, and quality childcare and education. However, the COVID-19 pandemic restricted these supports by closing schools and childcare facilities.

We asked caregivers¹ how the pandemic impacted their families' supports.

This is What We Heard:



Relational Supports Buffered Closure Concerns

Despite concerns about school and childcare closures, some caregivers created opportunities for positive relational supports to blossom:



Caregivers supported and helped with their child's learning—bringing everyone **closer together**.



Caregivers **formed connections** to other caregivers.



“We have close relationships with our neighbors, most of which have children of a similar age to ours. The fact that **[our] children were able to play together** (after a brief quarantine period) **provided relational normalcy and stability** to them, and us.”



The Challenges of School and Childcare Closures

Caregivers experienced worry, stress, and extreme concern due to **school and childcare closures**.



1 out of 2 caregivers worried their youngest school-aged child fell behind in school. About half of those caregivers constantly felt stressed, nervous, or overwhelmed.



Concerns about their child falling behind in school was **associated with caregivers feeling angry at their children**.



Caregivers with **financial concerns and no daily routines** for their children were more likely to be concerned their child was falling behind in school.



In some households, remote education made it difficult to **keep children motivated and increased stress**.



Caregivers of children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) reported **feeling more stressed and overwhelmed** than those without CYSHCN.

“As a grandparent providing for the educational needs of my granddaughter's schooling, **I felt totally unprepared**. This caused much stress between us. **It was awful for us both.**”





Why It Matters

Caregiver concern and worry were associated with increased anger and spanking in the home—growing up with these household tensions may have long-lasting effects on children and families. By working together to reduce stress and support families, we can also **reduce**:



Parental stress



Problematic child behavior



Harsher parenting



Child abuse and neglect



Ways to Promote Positive Childhood Experiences

As children return to in-person learning and childcare, we should connect with caregivers and discuss stressors related to school and childcare. We all have a role to play in supporting caregivers and creating [safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments](#)² for children. Here are some ways you can support families in your community:



Ask families, including families with CYSHCN, about their children's education, specific needs, and concerns—**recognize their challenges** and **offer them support**.



Encourage families to **create and maintain household routines**³.



Promote [positive ways for caregivers to cope with stress](#)⁴, such as getting physical activity or talking with friends.



Support **community programs**, like [home visiting](#)⁵, that help create safe and healthy conditions for families.



Share these ways of **promoting positive childhood experiences** with families and others.

Working together, we can support families to **navigate through stressors** caused by the pandemic, **build resilience**, and **create more opportunities to provide positive childhood experiences**.

To learn more about how you can help create a better tomorrow, visit bit.ly/FamSnapshotsC19

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¹ Data reported in this infographic were collected as part of the Family Snapshot Surveys: aap.org/en/patient-care/family-snapshot-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/

² cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/CM_Strategic_Direction--OnePager-a.pdf

³ healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/Pages/The-Importance-of-Family-Routines.aspx?

⁴ cdc.gov/violenceprevention/about/copingwith-stresstips.html

⁵ healthyfamiliesamerica.org/

