

## **Women: how to survive the coronavirus with your safety and sanity intact**

The COVID-19 virus has upended life — I don't have to tell you that. So far, I've heard far more encouraging stories than negative ones. Companies, families and individuals are taking the lead and working together to see us through this unprecedented crisis. However, the fact remains that women often have special challenges during this time, between working (either remotely or on site), childcare, household realities and the many other things that we had juggled successfully until the coronavirus threw us for a loop. And by no means does this diminish what men do — we certainly understand that gender equality is more prominent now than ever before, but studies show that women still bear a heavier burden when it comes to balancing work and family, despite progress in recent decades to bring about gender equality in the workplace.

Everyone is stretched right now, and might not have time to plow through a long article. What I want to do is offer online resources you can tap into when you have the time and the need. So with the expert assistance of Dr. Jeanne Kusina, Coordinator of Participatory Learning and Research at The University of Toledo as well as a visiting faculty member teaching in Women's and Gender Studies and Philosophy, let's cut to the chase.

First of all, staying informed with solid, dependable information is crucial for everyone. The national go-to site is the [CDC's](#). For readers in Ohio, the [Ohio Department of Health](#) has set up a virus-specific site. [Michigan](#) has a similar site.

Check these sites once a day; think of it as your daily briefing. Then unless you have some specific reason to go further, sign off and focus on your daily routine. And I probably don't have to remind anyone, but don't rely on social media for your information. It's a great place to stay connected with family and friends, but it's also a place where disinformation and misinformation are rampant. Be smart — get your data from places that you can trust.

For those of you with kids, you know that they have questions and concerns that they may hide from you. How do you talk to them about this new reality? [UNICEF](#) offers an article with good tips: ask and listen, be honest, show them how to protect themselves, offer reassurance, and in other ways meet them at their own level to deal with the situation. Pediatric health system [Nemours](#) offers many similar ideas.

Then there are your own daily challenges. If you're new to working at home with kids in the house, you're probably already finding strategies that help you survive and thrive: set a schedule, set boundaries, trade childcare shifts with your partner if you have one. I found this article from [CNBC](#) very down-to-earth and practical — with pictures.

Remember that your home office is probably anything but conducive to good posture, which over time can affect your overall health — and taking care of yourself right now is more important than ever. [CBS News](#) offers some ideas on indoor exercises. Remember, work is important, but relieving natural anxiety through exercises will help you get that work done.

Great Britain has been dealing with COVID-19 longer than we have, so here are tips from the [BBC](#) on making a successful transition from business office to home office. Notice how they stress the importance of physical exercise, too.

Remember that it helps everyone to share your challenges and your successes, so let me know what you're experiencing and what you need — it will help us offer future articles or roundtables to support you. Until then, stay strong, stay positive and stay healthy. Being adaptable will strengthen our national response to this crisis — and women may well be the most adaptable people out there thanks to all our experience!