

## GIVE HOPE AND ENCOURAGEMENT

April 18, 2021

During the pandemic, it's been difficult for many children to adapt to change, especially when that change has been sudden and not gradual. When my six-year-old niece heard that she was not going back to school and would have to do her work virtually, she immediately started crying. At the time, she couldn't understand why she wouldn't be able to see her classmates, friends, and teachers. So right then and there, everyone in the household came together and made some positive decisions about how we had to live during the pandemic in order to provide a sense of hope and encouragement to everyone.



### Encouragement in the Everyday

The pandemic had disrupted my niece's schedule. Now at home, she became worried about breakfast and lunch, because she had received those meals at school every day. We saw that her young mind needed reassurances, so Great-Grandma became the lunch lady, preparing all the meals (including snacks and juice) and was ready when my niece took a break from the computer.

When I got her ready in the morning, we would create songs to affirm how our day would go. Because she loves to sing and dance, we incorporated music and movement every day to help her adjust.

She knew every morning Great-Grandma had her breakfast, and Auntie was ready with a song and dance.

### Encouragement in Prayer

On Sundays, we pray together as a family because even though our daily routine was disrupted, we still needed to ensure that *some things* remained the same, the main thing being prayer.

Here are a few ideas that can help you incorporate prayer into your daily and weekly routine with your children.

Pray together as a family.

- Pray together at the kitchen table.
- Pray together at night at your child's bedside.
- Let your child lead in prayer.
  - Take turns leading prayer with your child or pick a certain day that your child will lead prayer. Leading in prayer gives them a sense of ownership and responsibility. As parents, you get this opportunity to hear your child pray for their concerns, thanksgivings, and worries.
- Be creative with prayer.
  - Find positive words and create acronyms like this one:

- P- Positive Parents
  
  - R- Reassuring
  
  - All
  
  - Y- Youth are
  
  - E- Encouraged by
  
  - R- Righteousness
- An easy way to begin prayer is to create a list of ways to describe God using each letter of the alphabet. For example, “God, you are **A**wesome. Lord, you are a **B**eautiful Creator. Father, you are **C**aring. God, you are **D**ivine.” Take turns together and see how far you can go.

During hard times, children have questions, worries, and big feelings, so encouraging them can be a challenge. Spend time with them doing their favorite things. Maybe they like doing puzzles, baking, or kicking around a soccer ball. Read scripture together. Be with them and encourage them with love and affection.

Want to do a deep dive? Check out Family Fire's article [Finding Hope](#)

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<https://kidscorner.net/parent-blog/give-hope-and-encouragement>  
*Printed on December 3, 2024*