



Each week, MAEC's Collaborative Action for Family Engagement (CAFE) Center, in collaboration with Turning the Page, curates resources on how families can educate children at home, enjoy "out-of-school" time, cope with this new normal, and plan for the next school year. If you are a parent advocate or educator, and know families who could benefit from this information, please share it and help spread the word.

THE FAMILY ROOM

WITH CARLA EASTER
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH



THURSDAY | APRIL 21ST | 3PM EST

Come learn how to explore the human genome with your family members and NIH expert Carla Easter. Using a trait tree and other tools, we'll unlock life's code and have fun figuring out what makes us unique!

The Family Room

Thursday, May 21, 3pm ET

While we may be isolated these days, it turns out we are all still connected by our genomes. Come learn how you are 99.9 percent identical to that of everyone else. NIH expert Carla Easter will show us how to unlock life's code and figure out the 0.1% part of us that is unique. Afterward, stick around for the Question Corner with child psychologist Dr. Seth Shaffer* and education expert Mariela Puentes.

Miss the webinar last week? [Check it out now.](#)

[Register now](#)

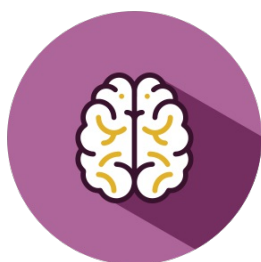
Ask Dr. Shaffer



Each week Dr. Shaffer answers the questions that readers like you submit! This week:

How do parents balance working at home with homeschooling? Finding time for self-care, creating a routine, and giving yourself some grace can help with creating more balance in your life. Read more about why and [submit your questions](#).

[Read more](#)



Grow Your Brain!

Take 10 minutes to “grow your brain” today with some simple exercises! You and your child will strengthen your body and mind with these 4 easy steps.

- Take a dance break to your favorite song
- Do 10 jumping jacks
- Drink a big glass of water
- Stretch! Touch your toes & reach for the sky



Local Resources



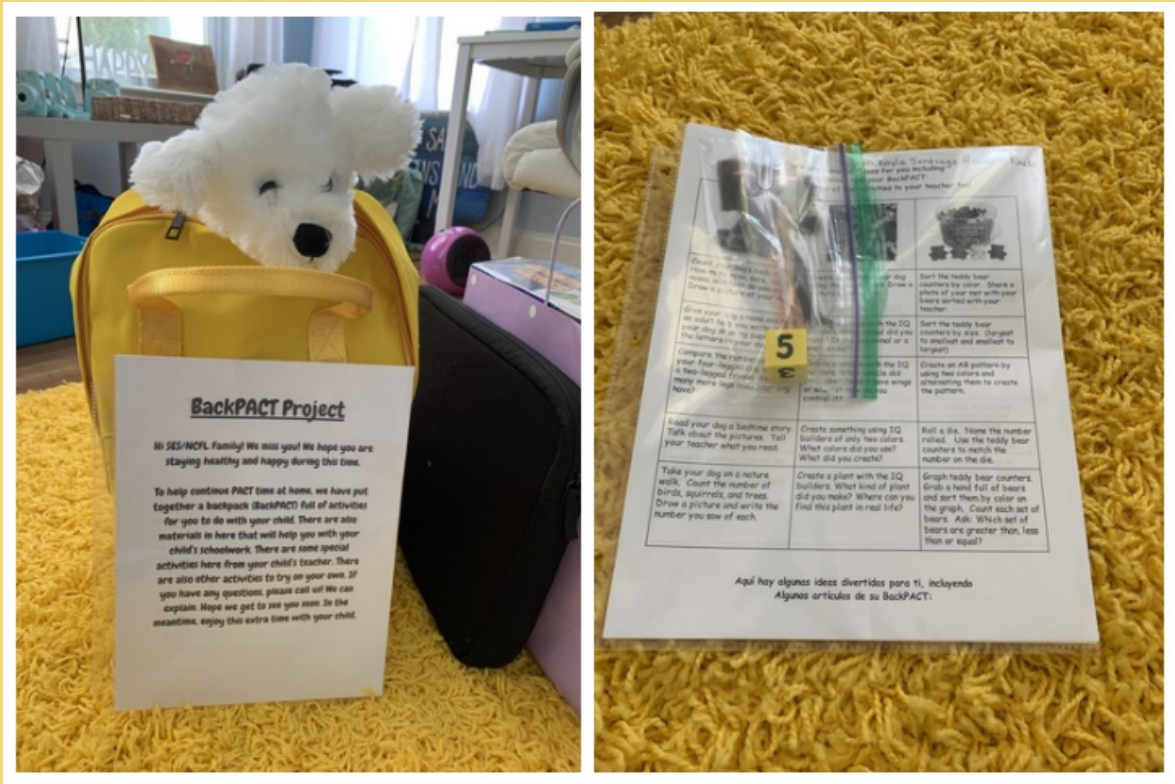
Have you or your loved ones been affected by COVID-19? MAEC has compiled the most up-to-date state resources to help address the needs of families during the COVID-19 pandemic, including information from the state departments of education, child nutrition, and unemployment offices.

Visit our site



Innovation & Inspiration

We are inspired by school districts finding innovative ways to address the specific concerns of our most vulnerable students. This week we feature a story about Queen Anne’s County, MD. It shows that when teachers, district leaders, and non-profit partners come together, anything is possible.



Queen Anne’s County Public Schools is a rural county in Maryland that is supporting families in many ways. Their demographics are 87% White, 7% Black, 4% Hispanic or Latino with 26% receiving free and reduced lunch (NCES, 2017; MSDE, 2019). The county distributes meals, food donations, and personal hygiene items to support families during school closures. Each week they distribute around 900 meals. The county also provides smart buses and personal hotspots to ensure internet access in the community.

One school in the county, Sudlersville Elementary School, has begun distributing a backpack or “BackPACT” as part of an existing program with The National Center for Families Learning, which is sponsored by CAFE at MAEC. The backpacks include educational activities that parents and children can do together, materials to help with children’s schoolwork, and activities from the child’s teacher. The backpacks were personally delivered to families this week along with all of the accompanying materials and supplies.

Voices from the Community



We believe that hearing from one another helps to create community and connection at a time when we are separated. Every week we ask families and students one question. This week:

How are you maintaining social connections while physically distancing?



“As much as I can, I try to be involved with my children's school work, and I get them involved in my teaching work too! As a music teacher, my family has agreed to sing along in videos or take pictures in musical projects with me, that I then share with my students. I think it's important for everyone, especially children and teens, to feel useful and that we are able to help each other out, even in small ways. I also think this is a time for students to see that everyone, teachers and students, are all experiencing this together. We are isolated, but not entirely alone.”

- Anna Upston, parent and teacher

“While I'm in quarantine I'm only allowed to do 6 foot porch visits. I don't love it.”
- Mags, student, 7 years



[More submissions](#)

Respond to Next Weeks Question

Given how COVID-19 has affected the world and the way we live, what is one hope that you have for your child when things get back to normal?

Submit your words, artwork, scanned letters, to be included in next week's newsletter or website.

[What do you think? Let us know!](#)



Resources for Families

Super Gene: Mutation Fact or Fiction?

Watch this video to see what happens if DNA code gets deleted, put in the wrong place, or switched (suggested for grades 6th-12th).

[Watch it now](#)

Extract DNA from a Strawberry

You've probably learned about DNA in school, but with this experiment, you can see it for yourself using strawberries and some basic household materials.

[Check it out](#)

Grow Food Indoors

Embrace the warmer weather by planting food indoors using scraps and containers you already have around the house. Avocados, lettuce, herbs, and tomatoes all work well. You can encourage your children to keep track of the plants' progress and change the water every few days!

[Find out more](#)

Contact Us

Are you looking for information or assistance?

[Contact Us](#)

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***Disclaimer:**

I, Seth Shaffer, Psy.D. (PSY 27492), am a licensed psychologist in the State of

California. I work in outpatient clinical settings, and provide therapy to children, adolescents, and families.

Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC) has hired me to share general school related parenting strategies for families affected by COVID-19. **The information I provide in the MAEC webinars or website newsletters is not a mental health service or therapy. Sharing the information does not establish a therapist-client professional or confidential relationship between me and any other person who accesses or learns of the information.** All information shared is based solely on my knowledge, expertise, and clinical training. But it is not intended to be a clinical mental health service or therapy for a specific person or circumstance.

Any viewer/participant who believes that they may be experiencing psychological distress or symptoms should consult a local mental health professional right away. They may consider calling the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) 24/7 National Hotline (1-800-662-4357) or another reputable referral organization for help.

I have no conflict of interest with any organization or entity mentioned in MAEC presentation and subsequent MAEC webinars.

