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How Your Family Can Help Combat Coronavirus

[Sarah Chamberlain](#) 01:58pm EDT

This is what it feels like it be at war. Although the enemy is microscopic, our fight requires the involvement of every person. We will be tested, but we will win. As in war, state and federal governments are accelerating research and mobilizing medical resources. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act signed into law provides immediate assistance to families and businesses, including full pay for sick leave or to take care of children because their school or day care is closed. Direct financial assistance to families will be passed soon.

As in war, we will need to boost our domestic manufacturing. We must produce antibiotics, vaccines, protective equipment, respirators, and medical supplies. We must increase the number of medical providers deployable to hot spots by hiring more into the federal the Disaster Medical Assistance Teams through the Assistant Secretary of Preparedness and Response.

We must change HIPAA and insurance payments methods to permit maximum flexibility for medical services through tele-health, and tele-mental health allowing needed care to continue. But that will not be enough, nor should it be. This war will require every one of us, without exception to play a major role. During WWII, everyone helped the war effort by recycling scrap metal and bacon fat, growing victory gardens, conserving soap, and forgoing stockings so that nylon could be used for parachutes. Americans showed their grit, pulled together, and we won. We will need that same effort again. Not with things the government can or should mandate, but things we have a moral obligation to enforce. So here I speak to you as a mother, daughter and American.

1. Yes, you are involved. Alert to teens, millennials, generation X, Z and anyone else under the delusion they are immune: This is real. Close contact, late night partying, drugs and alcohol increases risk and impairs your immune system. You can get sick, and you will spread the disease to others who are weak. Get home, and grow up. The world is no longer about you. There will be no more participation trophies. There will be no more helicopter parents showing up at your school with attorneys defending

you against the school principal for your bad behavior. We all share the full responsibility to maintain the cleanliness and social distancing to prevent the spread of this virus and save lives. You are responsible for your behavior.

2. Everyone stop hoarding supplies. Get what you need for cleanliness and hygiene, but remember others need them too. Making sure your neighbors also have sufficient cleaning supplies also reduces your risk. If they aren't clean, your community isn't clean. This message also applies to those of you who are stealing supplies delivered to someone's home or apartment. It's not yours. It's stealing. And you are hurting the rest of us.

3. Help one another. If you have something that others need, share it. Check in on each other, especially those who are medically vulnerable or alone to see if they need anything. This includes cleaning supplies, over the counter medicines, and food. A call helps people fight the pain of isolation. This isolation will take a while so keep connected.

4. Be a caring parent. Children need predictable and consistent schedules. Maintain school hours at home. No TV during school hours. Get books. Find on-line courses for their grade. Make sure they are studying. This is your hour to shine as a parent in the role of teacher. The influx of news can be frightening for them. Be calm, reassuring, and nurturing.

5. Draw from the experience and the strength of others. Talk with family members who can share experiences of how they made it through tough times in their past. Our nation struggled with Vietnam, recessions, unemployment, and 9/11. Learn from the stories of resilience of others who have weathered worse storms.

6. Focus on the good. Build a daily list of gratitude. Yes, we are all strained, but there is still much to be thankful for. If we focus on our losses we will be lost. Focus on our strengths and we will continue to grow stronger.

7. Strengthen your values. Value simplicity, sacrifice, and fortitude. For a while, we will have to do without travel, vacations, and other amenities. Finances will be tough for many. Be patient.

8. Keep moving. Sitting around adds to our waistline and stress. Get up, get out, get moving with walks or exercise. It burns off stress hormones and keeps your immune system strong.

9. Take care of yourself. Keep a journal. Write down your goals, experiences, and reflections. It's your lessons for the next generation of what it was like to live through this. Your journal will keep you grounded in reality, avoid panic and help you face the strains of the day.

10. Build your faith. Faith is stronger than fear. Whatever your religion or source of spiritual strength pray for healing, hope, patience and endurance.

Over the coming months we will be tried and tested. Drawing from the strength of every family, we will not only win this war, but in the future, we will look back with pride on the lessons and be able to say once again "this was our finest hour."