



# FAMILIES

TACKLING TOUGH TIMES

# TOGETHER



**FAMILY**  
CHILDREN

## Our Family Can Do This! Sharing a Positive Outlook

Our families may be spending more time together because of the pandemic. While some children are back at school, others are learning from home. Young children may feel sad, mad, or frustrated about not being able to do some of the things they enjoy doing. Helping our children to build resilience is easier when we help them to focus on what they **CAN** do instead of what they can't. Being grateful is one way to help our children look at things positively. We can help foster resilience in our children by encouraging them to think positively about the things they are grateful for!

### Encouragement and Positive Thinking

The benefits of having a positive outlook are endless. Positivity helps children to better deal with difficulties and also helps build coping skills. When our children feel better about themselves and the world around them, they are more likely to express their emotions in a positive way. Encouragement is also important for young children. When we encourage our children, it helps build their self-esteem and “can do” spirit. Children model what they see - if we encourage our children daily, they will, in turn, learn the benefits of encouraging others.

### Filling Someone's Bucket Activity

Filling someone's bucket can be a fun way for children to spread positivity, gratitude and happiness. Filling a bucket can be as easy as saying or doing something nice for another person. Each time your child or family member says something nice or does something nice for someone, invite them to place an item like a note or pebble in the person's bucket! [Click here](#) for one example of how this activity can be done with young children.

### Supplies

- You may wish to use things you already have around the house such as jars or plastic containers. These can be filled with smaller items such as little toys.
- An alternative to a bucket could be making a poster and using check marks or stickers on a small poster to hang on the refrigerator. Encourage your child to fill the “buckets” of others as well as their own!
- There are several books for young children about filling someone's bucket. You may enjoy viewing “[Have You Filled a Bucket Today?](#)” with your child.

### Scaffolding Tip

- For toddlers, consider using sign language to help fill a bucket. Filling a bucket can be as easy as encouraging your toddler to use sign language for “[thank you](#)” or “[please](#).”

The above activity was adapted from [Fill a Bucket by Carol McCloud](#).

To learn more about the science behind bucket filling and character education, you can read:

- [The effect of character education literature of bucket filling strategies on the ability of 5-year-old students to self-regulate in a Montessori classroom.](#)
- [Proactive measures in combating bullying in schools: examining the effectiveness of the Bucket Fillers program in character building education.](#)



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College of Health and Human Sciences

## Welcome to Families Tackling Tough Times Together!

We hope you find the enclosed ideas and suggestions helpful as you care for your family during the pandemic. We know the pandemic is a very big challenge. How families cope can affect both parents and children for a long time.

We are scientists, educators, and students from Purdue University, and we are here to help! For nine weeks this fall, we will provide weekly collections of ideas for families to use to build on their strengths.

These tools are free, flexible, and informed by science. They are designed for families of all types, with tailored suggestions for children, youth, young adults and older adults, and suitable for both civilian and military families. We hope that your family will try one activity each week!

### Would you like to earn financial rewards?

We especially welcome families living in the continental US who are interested in trying out project materials and telling us about their experiences. These families can earn financial rewards by sharing about one hour of their time over the next two months. Sign up now at the link below!

[https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_3vK1BJq2EiUksAJ](https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3vK1BJq2EiUksAJ)

For more information

- Join the Families Together Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/HHSFamiliesTogether/>
- Or visit the project website: <https://www.hhs.purdue.edu/families-together/>