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COVID-19 demands that we pay attention to who does the care work – and how we support them

COVID-19 has demanded quick public health responses. As the scope of the pandemic expands, we must also pay attention to care: to who provides care in elder care facilities, nurse-provided medical care and who does the unpaid care at home, where we are all increasingly now spending our time: it is overwhelmingly women.

Women continue to be the vast majority of those at the higher end of exposure, and the lower end of pay in the health professions.

Women also do more care work in our homes. Globally, women carry out on average, more than 3.3 times the daily care work that men do and take on 30 minutes to an hour per day more work of some kind (paid and unpaid combined) compared to men. Women who are employed as home-based care workers often lack access to healthcare or paid time off, or other benefits of a safety net.

COVID-19 also calls into stark profile gender inequalities in decision-making. While women are being disproportionately called to care for the ill – and thus putting themselves at risk – in many countries they are underrepresented in spaces of decision-making power, particularly when it comes to public health; and there are many other gender-related inequalities which COVID-19 may exacerbate.

In this moment of global crisis, we need action toward equality. We must listen to women's voices now, their demands and requests for what they need to provide quality support. As organizations, governments, and communities, we must do what it takes to support those who provide care. We need to ensure employees receive paid leave and paid sick days to alleviate some of this burden, and emergency income supports for those in most need; we also need to increase funding in the long-term for eldercare facilities, increase wages for care workers, and provide additional support for home carers.

And individually, men must support women who are performing care, and do their own share of care work: this means taking care of others and taking care for themselves (namely seeking health care when they need and practicing prevention). First and foremost, we all must follow recommendations for social distancing and putting the care of others – our children, our partners, the elderly and vulnerable, and those who depend on us – over ourselves.

Ultimately equality for women – social, political and economic – means that men and boys must do half of the paid and unpaid care work. We need more men in



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the care professions, and we need men doing our share at home. Engaging boys early in doing hands-on care at home, exposing boys to care professions, paid parental leave and incentives for all caregivers to use leave, engaging men from prenatal visits onward, father training, and engaging the corporate sector and workplaces as allies can all work to shift the gendered care divide.

COVID-19 is a global health crisis and is already calling into sharp relief the existing gender inequalities in the US and globally. We must pay attention to the brave care workers around the world – mostly women – and the need for men to embrace a culture of care. Indeed, it is the only way we will mitigate the effect of this pandemic – together. COVID-19 is ultimately a crisis of care and it offers an opportunity for all of us – women and men and individuals of all gender identities – to embrace our collective and equal duties as caregivers.

Source: [Promundo Global Consortium](#)

Challenges in the time of COVID-19: how to maintain healthy and non-violent family relationships?

Today the world is facing a serious epidemic that has changed the dynamics of work, daily routines and family relations. With the need for isolation to contain the escalation of contamination caused by COVID-19, families face serious challenges in dealing with work, financial obligations and family relationships. In order to help families to deal with these challenges, the PARENT Project has gathered a series of resources created and recommended by international organisations, in order to promote healthy, non-violent family relationships.

With schools closed and children at home, with the need to adjust to working from home for some, or with the need to continue work activities at their workplaces for others, we know that the levels of anxiety and uncertainty are very high. In addition, the latest data from several countries alert us to an escalation of cases of domestic violence.

We know that, for different reasons, social isolation represents a different challenge (and risk!) for people, according to the situation in which they find themselves.

Below you can find several links with relevant information and tips that aim to make your daily routine more positive and safer.



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- [PARENTING FOR LIFELONG HEALTH: COVID-19 online resources](#)
Open-access online parenting resources in a collaboration from different organisations: WHO, UNICEF, the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, the Internet of Good Things, USAID and Center for Disease Control and Prevention.
- [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) advice for the public: Healthy Parenting \(WHO\)](#)
- [Q&A on COVID-19, pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding \(WHO\)](#)
- [Taking care of others and yourself: Guidance during COVID-19 and beyond \(MenCare – A Global Fatherhood Campaign\)](#)
- [The Impact of COVID-19 on Gender Equality \(Titan M. Alon, Matthias Doepke, Jane Olmstead-Rumsey, and Michèle Tertilt\)](#)
- [New Resource Pack: Positive Parenting in COVID-19 Isolation \(End Violence Against Children\)](#)
- [Coronavirus: 5 ways to work from home with your kids \(and stay sane\) \(World Economic Forum\)](#)
- [Tips for parenting during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak \(UNICEF\)](#)
- [Corona crisis - leaflet for men under pressure: initiative to prevent domestic violence \(Männer.ch\)](#)
- [Supporting Families During COVID-19 \(Childmind.org\)](#)
- [Parents and COVID 19: Helping Your Children to understand what is happening \(Info About Kids\)](#)
- [COVID-19's Devastating Impact on Children](#)
- [Recommendations for men with a history of sexist violence during confinement](#)
- [COVID-19: Sexual Health Help and Services \(Brook.org\)](#)
- [Coronavirus infection and pregnancy \(Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists\)](#)
- [Overcoming the challenges of co-parenting for separated and divorced parents \(Kingsley Napley Co\)](#)
- [Tips for handling work and kids during COVID-19 isolation \(Live Science\)](#)
- [How to Care for Kids if You're Sick With Covid-19 \(Wired\)](#)

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About PARENT

ENGAGING MEN TO PROMOTE CHANGE IN SOCIAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR REGARDING GENDER ROLES IN CAREGIVING

PARENT brings a gender-synchronised approach (Program P) aiming to tackle the challenges of prevention and eradication of violence against women and children. By engaging men in co-responsible parenting and caregiving and promoting an equal share of unpaid care work in 4 EU countries: Portugal, Italy, Lithuania and Austria.

PARENT intends to contribute to the prevention of domestic and intra-family gender-based violence and violence against children. It seeks to promote change in social attitudes and behaviour regarding gender roles in caregiving.

Find out more: parent.ces.uc.pt

Partners

Portugal

Centre for Social Studies (CES/UC)

Nursing School of Coimbra (ESEnfC)

Austria

Association for Men's and Gender Issues in Styria (VMG)

Italy

Cerchio degli Uomini

Lithuania

Center for Equality Advancement (CEA)

Collaboration

Promundo-Portugal

MenCare



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