Today’s piece was prepared by Sarah McHugh, MD and based on a New York Times article [When Playtime and the Coronavirus Collide](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/21/parenting/imaginative-play-kids-quarantine.html).

The piece takes a charming account of children dealing with the stress of Covid-19. The author gives several examples of how children cope and process the changes associated with Covid-19, with most of the examples being positive ones revolving around imaginative play and releasing emotions with parents. The author mentions to be watchful for more distress if a child is fixating on Covid-19 imaginative play but does not go into much further detail.

The article creates an uplifting but oversimplified twist on Covid-19 distress. The recent Pediatrics publication [Well-being of Parents and Children During the Covid-19 Pandemic: A National Survey](https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2020/07/22/peds.2020-016824.full.pdf) indicates worsening mental health for both parents and children, along with increased parental concern regarding children with prior behavioral health diagnoses, and worsened access to food and healthcare. Many families are struggling, which children may perceive and suffer related difficulties as well. The New York Times article only gave examples from parents who were able to be supportive and positive, which renders potential bias and inaccuracy; children among the selected families had healthy coping skills. Mention of challenges to coping was limited to “fixation” without reference to other common defense mechanisms, such as developmental regression, or to sleep difficulty.

**RESOURCES FOR PARENTS ON ANXIETY & COVID-19:**

HealthyChildren.org *AAP resource on varied topics, including:*

\* [Understanding Childhood Fears and Anxieties](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/emotional-problems/Pages/Understanding-Childhood-Fears-and-Anxieties.aspx)

\* [Mood-Boosting Tips for Families During the COVID-19 Pandemic](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Mood-Boosting-Tips-for-Families-COVID-19.aspx)

\* [How to Help Children Build Resilience in Uncertain Times](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Building-Resilience-in-Uncertain-Times.aspx)

\* [Parenting in a Pandemic: Tips to Keep the Calm at Home](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Parenting-in-a-Pandemic.aspx)

[Bright Futures Activity Book](https://brightfutures.aap.org/Bright%20Futures%20Documents/BFActivityBook_L%200626.pdf) *AAP printable activity book for kids (English & Spanish) on health & wellness*

[Psychosocial Issues for Children and Adolescents in Disasters](https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/adm86-1070r.pdf) *SAMHSA Nat’l Mental Health Info., Jan. 2000*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!