



THE WHALE STUDY 2020

Message from the Lab Director

Welcome to The WHALE Study newsletter! You're receiving this because you are a participant in our study. First, thank you so much for helping us do science! Second, we were planning to send a newsletter a few weeks ago, but the last few weeks, have obviously seen many changes, so we're devoting our first newsletter to the ongoing situation with regards to COVID.

We are writing to you in a difficult time where many things are uncertain and everyone's lives are changing rapidly. We hope you and your family are healthy and staying safe indoors. We, as a lab, have stopped data collection for a while as part of social distancing. We're hoping that by not interacting with others more people stay healthy and the hospitals can help those in greatest need. We are sure you are taking similar measures.

This can be incredibly hard, especially with small children. Here are some basic topics that we thought we could address here, look for more information in upcoming weeks.

The WHALE Team is excited to announce that we are working to develop ways in which families can **participate in paid research remotely** through quick and easy surveys that can be completed via paper, over the phone, through text, or on a computer. Stay tuned each week for updates!



Please reach out if you have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding The WHALE Study or the COVID-19 situation. Staff can be reached by call, text, or email: whalestudy@unc.edu | 252-651-1280



TALKING WITH KIDS ABOUT COVID 19

Deciding how much information to share with your child about serious issues can be tricky, and the situation with COVID-19 is no different. There is a balance between ensuring that your child is aware of what is going on in the world during this time and information overload, which may overwhelm them and create a larger problem.

Research suggests that children who are exposed to the consequences of large-scale traumatic events, such as the global shutdown and uncertainty that have come with COVID-19, are at risk for negative outcomes.

There are a few things that you can do to prevent these outcomes. Talk about it in a way that makes sense to kids, call it a 'serious cold' that lots of people are getting. Answer questions that your child may have, but don't go into too much detail. You can re-direct questions if you think the answers are making your child more scared. For example, if your child asks if people are dying from the virus, tell them yes, but don't discuss the death toll at length and make it clear that they and you are likely safe but that everyone is trying to protect people who are older or already sick.

PARENTS YOU ARE OUR HEROS

"Sheltering in place" with small children is incredibly hard. Young children need constant care and attention, providing that 24 hours a day is enough to get on anyone's nerves. Not to mention that you may also be trying to work. As a parent, your first job is to keep children safe.

If you have to leave to work, make sure there is someone who can watch your children.

This might mean that you and another family, or some extended family members, 'social distance' together. Often, caregivers who can help are grandparents, but be careful--grandparents, unlike children, are really vulnerable to COVID-19. When you come back from work, wash your hands & change your clothes first before greeting anyone or touching things at home.

If you begin to feel overwhelmed, take a break.

Children are likely to be scared and as a result may behave worse than usual. This is normal. Now is not the time to teach children 'how to behave'. It's a time to help them and yourself be as calm as possible. Taking a break can be hard, but if you need to, distract your child with a favorite game or TV show and give yourself time to calm down before you re-engage.

What to do if you or your child are not in a safe situation?

Keeping kids safe is your primary job as a parent and if you can't do that in your own home, now is the time to take action. Greater restrictions on movement are being put in place, so making sure you and your children are in a safe place needs to happen now. **On the next page, you will find resources** to help if you or someone you know are unsafe in their home.

FILTER INFORMATION KIDS ARE GETTING



- ❖ Limit exposure to the media coverage surrounding the virus, especially TV news. Children between 4-7 don't need to watch any news about COVID-19. If you want to watch, try to do it with headphones in or after kids are asleep. The goal here is to protect kids from the anxiety that is naturally arising for everyone.
- ❖ Help kids watch free educational videos instead of choosing their own content. Many of these are really interesting and fun - check out PBS online or on your local TV for many examples. <https://www.pbs.org/show/rootle/>
- ❖ Research shows that kids who watch educational TV (like sesame street) are more academically ready than those that watch only other sources. It also might comfort kids to read books or watch movies they know by heart, giving them as much consistency as possible will help you.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES (CLICK BLUE LINKS)

HEALTH & SAFETY

- [Compass Center for Women and Families](#)
 - 919-929-7122
- [Durham Crisis Response Center](#)
 - 919-403-9425
- [InterAct Family Safety and Empowerment Center](#)
 - 919-828-7501
- [Orange County Rape Crisis Center](#)
 - 866-935-4783 (call)
 - 919-504-5211 (text)
- [Freedom House](#)
 - 919-967-8844 (Crisis Unit, Chapel Hill)
 - 1-877-967-8844 (Mobile Service)
- Suicide prevention lifeline: 1-800-272-TALK

CHILDCARE

- [NC Hotline for Critical Workers Seeking Child Care Options](#)
- [Covid Childcare Co-op Creator](#)
- [Covid Urgent Childcare](#)
- [Child Care Services Association](#)

LEARNING

- [Scholastics Learn at Home](#)
- [Khan Academy](#)
- [ABC Mouse](#)
 - Free with code: AOFLUNICEF
- [PBS Kids](#)
- [CDC Tips for Talking with Children about COVID-19](#)

HOUSING

- [Durham Continuum of Care \(CoC\)](#)
- Eviction Information
 - 216-965-5095
- [Durham Rescue Mission](#)
 - 919-688-9641
- [Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness](#)
- [Urban Ministries of Durham](#)
- [Durham County Social Services](#)
- [Orange County Social Services](#)
- [Wake County Social Services](#)

FOOD & GROCERIES

- [Wake County Public Schools Free Meals](#)
- [Durham County Public Schools Free Meals](#)
- [Orange County Food Resources](#)
- [Chapel Hill/Carrboro Schools](#)
- [TABLE](#)
- [Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina](#)
- [Wake County Food Resources](#)

OTHER RESOURCES (CLICK BLUE LINKS)

Comprehensive Resource Sheets

- Click [here](#) for a list of resources and services in Durham County
- Click [here](#) AND [here](#) for a list of resources and services in Orange County
- Click [here](#) for a list of resources gathered by the Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness
- Click [here](#) for a list of resources and services in Wake County

Information about the Virus

- Center for Disease Control → <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- World Health Organization → <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>

Stay-at-Home Order Frequently Asked Questions by County

- For questions regarding Orange County's Stay at Home Order please click [here](#).
- For questions regarding Durham County's Stay at Home Order please click [here](#).
- For questions regarding Wake County please click [here](#).