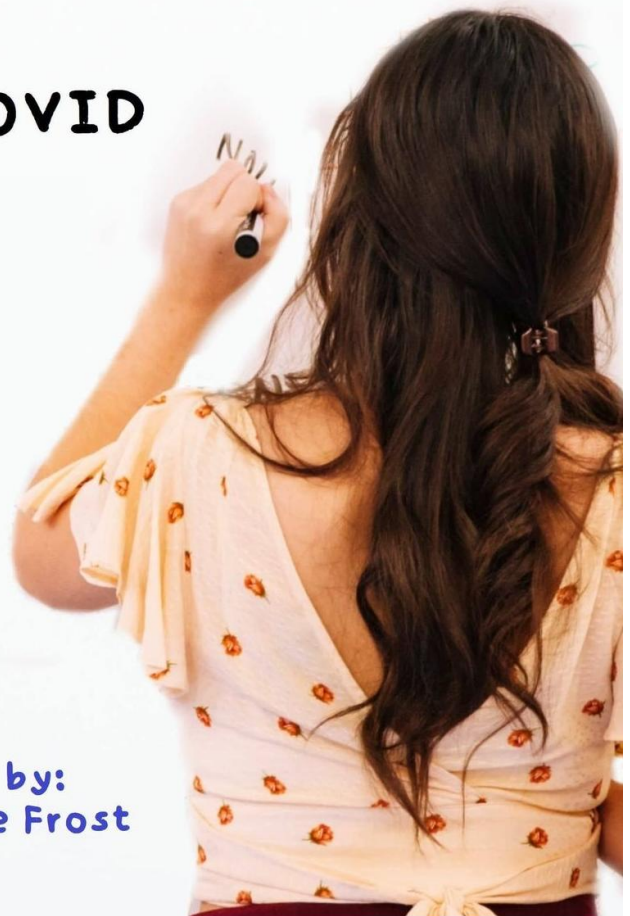


# Remote learning during COVID +'s & -'s



a project by:  
Valerie Frost



Northern Kentucky  
Single mother, Falmouth, KY  
One elementary aged learner

### Pendleton County At A Glance

- Ranked 13 out of 120 For Children Living In Food Insecure Households
- Ranked 38 out of 120 For Children In Foster Care
- 18% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan

## **“I feel like every parent is just doing the best they can...They're not educators.”**

“ My son goes in-person Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday I have to figure out other things for him while I'm working. He goes to my sister's house on Wednesdays. On Thursdays and Fridays, he goes to our local daycare center, which I'm not thrilled about. I really don't have a choice; it's the only daycare center in town. On the three days he isn't in-person, the school has three live meets a day. The daycare keeps his school schedule to a point, but they have so many school-aged kids so they can only do what they can do. I'm a single mom and it makes it harder. I think more than anything the single-parent households are struggling the most.

I don't think COVID has affected his grades only because I'm on top of it. I work in education. My son's teacher says I'm the only parent whose child completes the missed work she sends out. I don't think other parents are struggling to do the schoolwork, I think parents are just struggling. I feel like every parent is just doing the best they can to survive. They're not educators. My son is doing okay because I am one.

I think my son's behavior is worse since COVID because he doesn't have a lot of social interaction. We used to do cub scouts and sports. He was constantly getting to do something. He still does cub scouts now but it's all virtual and he doesn't want to do a virtual meeting because he's been doing it all day. It's a struggle to get him to do anything outside of watch TV.



*Photo courtesy of Unsplash*

Northern Kentucky  
Early Childhood Program Supervisor,  
Covington, KY  
Ages Birth to Five

### Kenton County At A Glance

- o Ranked 7 out of 120 For Children Living in Food Insecure Households
- o Ranked 67 out of 120 For Children In Foster Care
- o 21% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan (Covington Ind.)

## **“The families’ priority isn’t kindergarten readiness anymore...They’re trying to just get food on the table.”**

“ Schools have been in-person and out back and forth all year long—it's been rough. We have programs inside elementary schools and if they don't open, we don't open. The struggle is very real with families asking if we can open up for school-aged care. Families are desperate to find someone to take their children so they can carry on with their workday.



*Photo courtesy of Pexels*

What our families have expressed a lot is kids' grades are suffering. "I don't know math the new way," they say. They teach math the old way, the way they learned it, to get the kids through the assignment. Report cards aren't too pretty. People are panicking. They think their kid will fail this year because the bulk of the year was up to them as the parent, but when they go back to school it will be a different set of standards. What happens then?

The population in particular our programs try to help is the one trying to climb up and out of poverty. We seek out locations for our programs that are low-income, where poverty is a heavy burden. We try to ensure that everyone can have quality access. All of this is going to lead to a kindergarten readiness issue. The families' priority isn't kindergarten readiness anymore; it's about survival. They're trying to just get food on the table.

It's a total mess. Families are scrambling trying to figure out what to do.

North-Central Kentucky  
Mother, Louisville, KY  
One kindergartener, One elementary aged learner

### Jefferson County At A Glance

- o Ranked 14 out of 120 for Children Living in Food Insecure Households
- o Ranked 28 out of 120 for Children In Foster Care
- o 13% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan

## **“My son doesn’t want to go back. He loves NTL.”**



*Photo taken by and provided courtesy of participant*



*Photo taken by and provided courtesy of participant*

“ My third-grader has been virtual since March of 2020. We've never gone back to in-person. Last year, they started NTL. Before August, they revamped everything and called it NTL 2.0. It is better.

My son doesn't want to go back. He loves NTL. He usually gets all of his work done. They were talking about maybe going back to school and the

new guidelines. He doesn't want to sit there for seven hours. He doesn't spend that much time doing NTL. I can tell he's declining, though. And he needs some social interaction.

My kindergartener started virtual learning in August. I'm kind of glad because I wasn't this involved with my third grader when he went. We did his nightly work, but I was not as involved with helping him read letters and do numbers. It kind of makes you look at yourself.

I don't feel like the school has asks the students to do anything unreasonable. It all seems manageable. I do think my kids are learning.



East-Central Kentucky  
Co-parenting single mother, Winchester, KY  
Two elementary aged learners, one with  
an IEP

#### Clark County At A Glance

- o Ranked 35 of 120 For Children Living In Food Insecure Households
- o Ranked 80 out of 120 For Children In Foster Care
- o 16% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan

### **“I just really need structure for my child. I'm struggling.”**



*Photo taken by and provided courtesy of participant*

“ My neurotypical child has 30 minutes of live virtual class on Wednesdays and everything else is prerecorded other than an additional half-hour one-on-one with his teacher on Fridays. Class meetings are recent; up until November, they had all paper packets. He wants to go back to school and see his friends.

My third grader has an IEP. His assignments are all through Google classroom. At the beginning of the year, he got two 1/2-hour live sessions for reading, one 1/2-hour session for math intervention, and one 1/2-hour session for special education. His special ed teacher checks in four days a week for 10 minutes.

I feel like every week is different as far as what my special needs son gets on Zoom. He is starting to have a lot of behavior issues. I work remotely from home two days a week. He's with his dad three days a week. What he needs is a set schedule. This county is not doing a good job offering affordable childcare options. They don't have NTI camps here. I can't even find a learning pod here. I just really need structure for my child. I'm struggling. Churches, libraries...someone somewhere should have something.



*Photo taken by and provided courtesy of participant*

Central Kentucky  
Stay-At-Home Mom, South Lexington, KY  
Two elementary aged learners

### Fayette County At A Glance

- Ranked 7 out of 120 For Children Living In Food Insecure Households
- Ranked 61 out of 120 For Children In Foster Care
- 11% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan

**“The times when I get frustrated it isn't with the teachers—it's with the situation...it's not the same [as] it was before.”**

“ My oldest daughter we adopted as a baby and she has special needs. She spends more time on the computer than her neurotypical peers and usually, it's the opposite. To get her one-on-one time, she has to do it after classes. There was a learning curve at the beginning of the year with virtual learning with how to use a computer and her physical restrictions make it more difficult. She has regressed in some areas.

My neurotypical first-grader complains a lot about virtual school. She complains that it's too easy and boring. They can't differentiate as well. She just really misses doing stuff in person, as most kids do. Back in the summer, when people started thinking about learning pods, it seemed like a good idea. Once we got into the school year it was like, how do we find time to make this work? She misses seeing her friends and doing the specials.



*Photo taken by and provided courtesy of participant*



*Photo taken by and provided courtesy of participant*

I feel like the school's expectations aren't crazy. The times when I get frustrated it isn't with the teachers—it's with the situation. That has nothing to do with the school, it's the district. I haven't been super happy with the district's leading with all this. The school itself has always been such a huge support for our family. They're doing the best they can but it's not the same way as it was before. I really just want something consistent. It's a loss for both of my girls.

Central Kentucky  
Mother, South Lexington, KY  
One kindergartner, One elementary aged  
learner with special needs

### Fayette County At A Glance

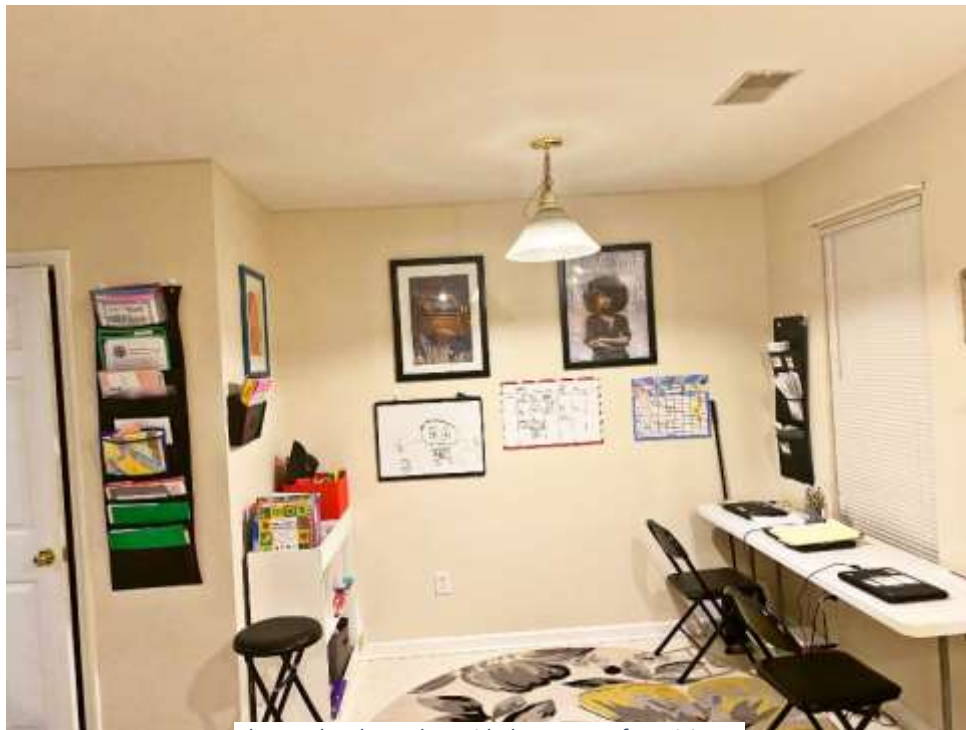
- Ranked 7 out of 120 For Children Living In Food Insecure Households
- Ranked 61 out of 120 For Children In Foster Care
- 11% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan

## **“It’s a fight and it’s exhausting.”**

“ We have been doing all virtual. I've had to make adjustments. My girls are not independent and I have to stagger my work schedule. I do some of the work that I can do solely on my laptop in the morning. If I have to have client interaction and make calls, I do that in the afternoon when I don't have to watch over the girls to complete their schoolwork.

Academics is very important in my home. I feel like my oldest daughter is falling further and further behind, especially in math. She is starting to really despise school now. I used to get her to read a whole lot when she was going to school in-person. But now, she hates everything about school. She runs from it. It has made her regress. She doesn't like to read anymore. It's a tug of war to do math with her. It's a fight and it's exhausting.

It's very overwhelming. I've found myself a couple of times needing to have my space so I don't get too snippy with my kids; they're being kids. It's frustrating.



*Photo taken by and provided courtesy of participant*

South-Central Kentucky  
Mother, Richmond, KY  
One high school learner

### Madison County At A Glance

- Ranked 20 out of 120 For Children Living in Food Insecure Households
- Ranked 76 out of 120 For Children In Foster Care
- 17% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan

## **“A veces, tiene que irse a la cama después de la medianoche...quería dejar de ir a la escuela.”/ “Sometimes he has to go to bed past midnight...he wanted to quit school.”**

“ Mi hijo mayor está en la escuela secundaria y él y yo estamos muy frustrados con la escuela en línea. Antes mi hijo tenía excelentes notas, pero ahora está muy frustrados con las clases en línea porque pierde mucho tiempo viendo los videos y tarda mucho en hacer la tarea después. A veces, tiene que irse a la cama después de la medianoche. Durante un mes, no asistió a las clases ni hizo las tareas. Él quería dejar de ir a la escuela. Todos los adultos en nuestra familia hablan español. Nuestros hijos hablan ingles y español, pero si nivel de inglés es tan bueno como si fueran nativos. No hablo ni entiendo inglés, así que no puedo ayudarlo. Un maestro me está ayudando a ver si está haciendo su trabajo. Con la ayuda de ella, mi hijo está mejorando, pero sus notas no mejoran.

“ My oldest son is in high school and he and I are so frustrated with online learning. My son used to be an A+ student, but now he is so frustrated with online classes because it takes him so much time to watch the videos and do the homework after. Sometimes, he has to go to bed past midnight. For a month, he didn't take classes at all or turn in homework. He wanted to quit school. All the adults in our family are Spanish speakers. Our children are bilingual, but their English vocabulary is not the same as native speakers. I don't speak or understand English, so I can't help him. A teacher is helping me to see if he is updating and turning in all the homework. With teacher support, my son is getting better, but his grades not so much.



*Photo courtesy of Pexels*



Eastern Kentucky  
Mother, Ashland, KY  
One elementary aged learner

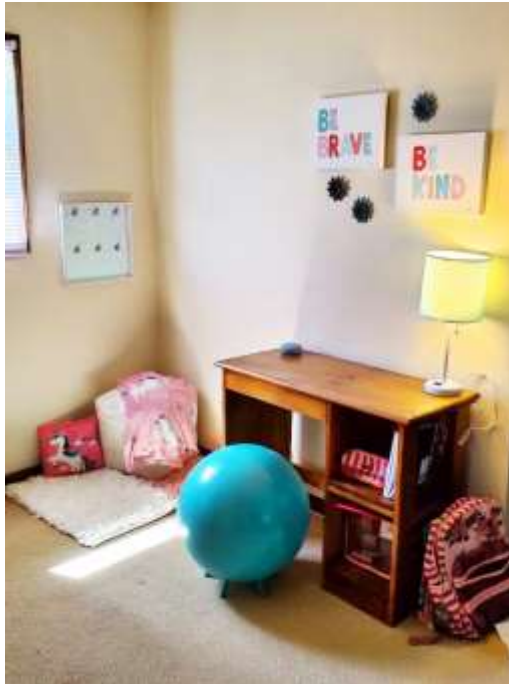
### Boyd County At A Glance

- o Ranked 77 out of 120 for Children Living in Food Insecure Households
- o Ranked 117 out of 120 for Children In Foster Care
- o 19% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan (Ashland Ind.)

## **“I think it's been very overwhelming...It's just a lot.”**

“ From March to May, all the kids had NTI work that was basically packet assignments they had to bring home and complete. Now, the kids who started back in-person in September, they do more than the packets. On the days they aren't in-person, they do Google classroom and Meets with the teacher.

I am working from home and my husband goes into work every day, so we decided in the fall to do virtual. Boyd County offered Virtual Academy. It is essentially like we are homeschooling. The platform is called Calvert. It has all the assignments and a parent learning guide. The platform is not user-friendly to navigate, which is my biggest complaint about Virtual Academy. It is a lot of self-



*Photo taken by and provided courtesy of participant*

direction for a child her age. If I wasn't able to help her during my break or weekends, I don't think she would be able to do it.

There is no live instruction. She is not even considered in the teacher's class. We have a facilitator that checks in. She is still considered a student with the elementary school but is not on a roster. There isn't interaction or fun activities for her group. The class she would have been in, they could go get a Christmas present from the teachers. She didn't get to do any of that. It felt like she didn't belong.

I think it's been very overwhelming. We are a two-parent home, we both have a good source of income, and it's been overwhelming for us. I can't imagine if I was a single parent and didn't have the resources I have. Our daughter is not happy. She's been more emotional and not as focused. She definitely wants to see her friends. It's just a lot.

## Eastern Kentucky

Family Training Coordinator, Booneville, KY  
Learners of Grandparents Raising  
Grandchildren

### Owsley County At A Glance

- Ranked 104 out of 120 For Children Living in Food Insecure Households
- Ranked 93 out of 120 For Children In Foster Care
- 14% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan

**“She doesn’t know how to turn on a computer, let alone operate it.”**



*Photo courtesy of Pexels*

“ Some of the grandparents are not tech-savvy. One is raising a kindergarten student. She is extremely frustrated—at wit's end. She doesn't know what to do. Her granddaughter basically had to do paper packets, which subtracts the teacher from the whole situation. The child needs the teacher, she's in the process of learning how to read. The grandmother doesn't know what to do. She doesn't know how to turn on the computer, let alone operate it. She's just very aggravated.

It's worse when there are older children involved. The grandparents think the kids are doing okay. They're under the impression the student is doing what they need to do. Then they finally get a report card and it's like, "Uh oh."

The tragedy of this is, the ones who were behind already are the ones super behind now. There's one boy the school hasn't heard from all year. There are 13 weeks left. He's already failed the year. He's going to have to make it up. For his dad, education is at the bottom of his list of priorities at the moment. Education is something that ranks the lowest when you're worried about a roof over your head and food in your belly and have other things going on. It's sad but that's how it is.

Western Kentucky  
Single Foster/Adoptive Mother, Bowling  
Green (city schools), KY  
One elementary aged learner, one middle  
schooler, two high schoolers

### Warren County At A Glance

- Ranked 16 out of 120 For Children Living in Food Insecure Households
- Ranked 95 out of 120 For Children In Foster Care
- 12% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan (Bowling Green Ind.)

**“...she doesn't like to learn on a computer. She wants a teacher.”**

“ I adopted all of my children through the foster care system. One has an IEP and another has a 504 plan. All of them are going to school two days a week and doing three days of virtual learning. Last year in 2020, when we first went virtual, the school gave devices to anybody who needed devices. The schools have been very accommodating with devices.

My youngest is the one who has the IEP. When NTI first hit last year, it was hard with him because the teacher was sending work home, the resource teacher was sending work home, and the speech teacher was sending work home. He was already behind and then was getting three times as much work and I didn't know what parts of it to do or where to start. This year it has been much more coordinated.



*Photo courtesy of Pexels*

With hybrid schooling now, my younger two are doing better in school. It's much better for both my younger kids to have smaller groups. My high schoolers though, they're not doing as well. They love smaller class sizes because it eliminated behavior issues in the classroom but my daughter says she's not getting enough time on content so she can pass the class. She has a couple of classes she is failing. My son has a bunch of classes he's failing. The school started a catch-up program where you go to a computer lab and go on a program. You take a pretest and if you pass you go to the next unit. If you fail the pretest you work through the content then take a posttest and hopefully pass that. My son started the catch-up program but my daughter opted not to because she doesn't like to learn on a computer. She wants a teacher. Neither of them was failing before COVID. It has clearly affected their grades.

Western Kentucky  
Adoptive Mother, Bowling Green  
(county schools), KY  
Two kindergarteners, one elementary aged  
learner, two high schoolers. One with an  
IEP

### Warren County At A Glance

- o Ranked 16 out of 120 For Children Living in Food Insecure Households
- o Ranked 95 out of 120 For Children In Foster Care
- o 14% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan

## **“I didn’t even know how to do that stuff and I had to turn around and try to teach them.”**

“ Last semester, the three little ones were all virtual. The oldest ones did attend two days a week. My plate was overfull trying to get everybody online. My two youngest girls had to meet at six different times during the day. My third grader met two times. So that's eight different times, not counting my high schoolers.



*Photo courtesy of Unsplash*

I didn't know how to work the computer programs. I'm not computer literate. I can do just enough to not crash a computer. My five-year-olds had no idea how to use a computer or mouse. They didn't know their numbers, so they couldn't do the numbers to sign in with. They didn't know their username and email. They were supposed to take pictures to send to their teacher. I didn't even know how to do that stuff and I had to turn around and try to teach them. I had no idea how to do that, no clue.

My older three, academically, it's been harder for them. It's a hot mess. An absolute hot mess. This is not "teaching;" it's totally different. The kids need to go back to school.



## Western Kentucky

Stay-At-Home Mom, Russellville, KY  
One elementary aged learner, one middle schooler, plus two elementary, one middle, and one high schooler from in-laws who foster/adopt

## Logan County At A Glance

- Ranked 32 out of 120 For Children Living in Food Insecure Households
- Ranked 46 out of 120 For Children In Foster Care
- 20% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan (Russellville Ind.)

### **“For some families, it brought them closer...For families that had issues, it got worse.”**

“ The three older kids go to school in-person two days a week and three virtual. The three younger ones currently go to in-person school five days a week. It wasn't easy in the beginning at all for any of us. The school provided Chromebooks for all the children so that wasn't as much of a problem as having our Internet working consistently. At times, we would have three kids kicked off and three others that would be working and having their meetings. Ever since that bombing in Nashville our cell reception has been awful. Our Internet even went down at one point.

From what I'm hearing from other parents their kids are struggling. The school had videos when it first started. They had, I think it was like an hour, for math and reading subjects for the younger kids. The older kids had numerous Google Meets to get on depending on what time you had that class. Older kids had the class times, for the younger ones schoolwork was more flexible. For some kids who haven't done their schoolwork, I think their grades have gone down.

I think probably the older ones--the high school kids--because they're so used to socialization, struggled more than any other kid in the house. For some families, it brought them closer because they didn't have the outside influence of other kids. For families that had issues, it got worse. When you had sports with basketball and football you could interact with other kids your age and get away from your home if your family was bugging you. Even with church. It was helpful to have other people to be with to get space from your family.



*Photo taken by and provided courtesy of participant*

Western Kentucky  
Youth Liaison, Paducah, KY  
McKinney Vento eligible (Homeless) and  
Foster Care Learners

### McCracken County At A Glance

- o Ranked 39 out of 120 For Children Living In Food Insecure Households
- o Ranked 66 out of 120 For Children In Foster Care
- o 10% of Students With An Individualized Education Plan (Paducah Ind.)

## **“My students are not going to school...they’re just focused on survival.”**

“ We're hybrid right now. You can choose to be all virtual or you can go two days a week. Students who are not doing well have the opportunity to go four days a week.

Right now, on my caseload, I have 129 students who are experiencing homelessness and 52 foster students. My numbers are way lower than normal. We're having a hard time identifying students who are McKinney Vento eligible because of COVID. Most places now, you're doing online registration. But most families don't have access to the Internet.

My students are not have a lot that are They have an get a job and make support themselves. that opportunity. disconnected from school. They're just survival.



*Photo courtesy of Unsplash*

going to school. I not doing well. opportunity to some money and They're taking They're teachers and the focused on

Communities are looking to schools to maintain this rigor that we have. I think it's hurting students and families. I take it very seriously that my students also take education seriously. That's their way out of poverty, out of homelessness. But I also think the expectations at the school level have been pretty high. I think it's okay for us to relax a little bit.