

Parenting expert shares COVID-19 tips

Wangaratta Chronicle · 11 May 2020 · 4 · By SIMONE KERWIN

NATIONAL parenting expert Dr Justin Coulson has shared his top tips for the COVID-19 period in a Facebook chat with Benalla's Tomorrow Today Foundation's Parents' Early Education Partnership (PEEP).



The live chat between Dr Coulson and PEEP'S program coordinator Cath Warnock was recorded to share with program participants as part of the ongoing parenting education work undertaken by the foundation.

It is now available online for all families to view.

Dr Coulson, a father of six and a sought-after public speaker, shared his expertise in positive psychology during the warm and practical video chat.

He advised parents isolating at home with their children to take control of their time by working in sprints, when their children are settled into an activity or before they wake in the morning, to get tasks done so they feel calm and in control.

He said parents should lower their expectations of at-home work and schooling for all involved, and encouraged parents to look after themselves by eating well and exercising so they could function well.

“It is inevitable that with children being home more often, there will be conflict,” Dr Coulson said.

“After conflict, give children the chance to calm down before talking it through and helping them work out better strategies for next time.”

He recommended providing calm guidance to children, saying: “Emotions are contagious; your kids will catch your chaos, they'll catch your crazy, they'll catch your cranky. But they

can also catch your calm.”

Asked about screen time during the current restrictions, Dr Coulson said too much screen time would have an impact.

“But - more importantly - it’s the kind of screen time they’re getting that matters,” he said. He urged parents to keep an eye on content, but said using devices a little more at this time, for educational and entertainment purposes, was okay.

The video of the chat with Dr Coulson is now available for all to see at [facebook.com/ Tomorrowtodayau/](https://www.facebook.com/Tomorrowtodayau/).