LEARNING ON A CURVE

We’re still adjusting. From the way we learn to the way we live and play, we have had to radically rethink what was once our normal lives. Things may never get back to normal. It may be comforting to know that as we as we’re figuring it out what our new normal is, so is the rest of the world.
LEARNING ON A CURVE | SPECIAL EDUCATION

Distance learning gaps | A challenge to engage online among special education populations

A challenge to engage online among special education populations

Teachers and students describe their concerns with providing adequate resources to reach out and engage with their special education students.

Eliza Wilson

“...They miss that constant ‘I have to engage with an adult’ and academics...”

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A lot of the time, the social-emotional and academics get tied up.

Tobias McLeod

Special Ed

More than 50 students at Branham have yet checked in or participated in any online learning activities since the shut-down, despite numerous calls from teachers and support services and its contract with the San Jose Police Department.

LEARNING DISCONNECT

Providing tools for special education students a daunting task as they shelter in place

Elizabeth Wilson

“...said she felt sad for students whose primary social interaction comes from their friends at school...”

“...said she felt sad for students whose primary social interaction comes from their friends at school...”

Tobias McLeod

Special Ed

A solution for both has been catering to varying needs for each student by supplying information on-line as well as printing and sending copies of work packets to each student’s home.

While supplemental content for what students learn is adjusting, the social-emotional component of school is much more difficult to replace, according to both teachers.

They miss that constant "I have to engage with another human being outside of my house," said McLeod, as opposed to "Now I'm used to just being engaged with the people in my house and I have no other choice."
The pandemic is on track to create the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression, from mass unemployment to the increase in Branhum families receiving free lunches.

**60,000**

60,000 meals served to students during shelter in place.

**500**

500 meals served per day at Branham.

**$8 million**

$8 million in the cost savings that the district is considering. These cuts include CASSY counseling for at-risk youth, access to SVITE courses and the elimination of School Resource Officers on campus.

**20%**

20% of jobs expected to be lost in California due to the pandemic, according to Gov. Gavin Newson.

The highest unemployment rate figures will be released on May 22.

**We’re pretty much screwed.**

Missy Wiegand, owner Salon 383

“We’re gonna get through it.”

Kevin Nguyen, the food is afloat with take-out orders.

“None of our bartenders are working. It’s just a really tough time for everybody.”

John Heringer, the little guys, they’re gonna have a tough time. “It was pre-packaged, and we only need to set-up one table for take-out orders.”

“We’re successful, and we’ve been around.”

Missy Wiegand, business is on track to create the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression, from mass unemployment to the increase in Branhum families receiving free lunches.

**DEPRESSING**

numbers

The pandemic is on track to create the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression, from mass unemployment to the increase in Branhum families receiving free lunches.
At lunch, schemes and dreams

JULIANNE ALVAREZ
– Editor -

I claimed a bench in the quad during my freshman year. It was shaded and far away from the mingling groups. To this day, I still don’t know the purpose of the bench for the majority of the first semester. I had no one to talk to and actually looked forward to my classes starting so I wouldn’t feel so lonely. Freshman year me, whose voice was hoarse from not speaking, would never have imagined the thing I miss the most from school is lunch time. I abandoned my bench sophomore year I made friends but it was time for the bench to retire and I found the group of people I still sit with today. As time passed, people came and left but the feeling remained the same. Principal Cheryl Lawton even gave us a table to sit at after she observed us sitting in the exact same spot every day. Shanegans ensued once we got one and I constantly moved it to either the shade or sun depending on what the temperature was that day.

This led to the table being chained down outside of our normal spot and being taken over by a group of sophomores. This is just one of the many antics we got up to. Honorable mentions include yelling at study partners throughout the day, holding a short Lady Gaga karaoke session, and Minecraft Legos. I’m not sure if they would have believed that I came out of my shell to make myself a good group of folks. No matter what type of day I was having I could at least count on my bad or sad mood being lifted at lunch.

A few days before the shots-down, we were talking about staying gone prank on the last week of school. Suggestions in the running were bringing a tent to school, staging a camping trip, or a picnic complete with lawn chairs. It’s funny to think that at that moment we were thinking about the end of school when not even two days later school would be suspend for the first time.

That same day I woke up early coming back got pushed out to now I’ll never have lunch at school again. It’s hard to think that I’ll never eulogize Row N again. Something so simple that I took for granted is something I’ll never have again. Of course I’m bummed about prom and graduation, but it’s the little things that I’ll miss the most. Row N is spent at school. So many days I would be working or a picnic complete with lawn chairs. It’s funny to think that at that moment we were thinking about the end of school when not even two days later school would be suspend for the first time.

This was daunting, but we knew that eventually, our capacity to reflect on ourselves and see. I ended up wishing my high school years were more transparent with us: that they didn’t know what was going to happen, that they would have to wait and see about all of our school events and our return to campus. If the district had communicated the fact that they couldn’t really promise anything, we would have gotten a better sense of closure.

A few weeks later... we got the heart-crush- ing news that the rest of the year was canceled. While I was trying to process it all, I realized that I’d work better if the district was more transparent with us: that they didn’t know what was going to happen, that they would have to wait and see about all of our school events and our return to campus. If the district had communicated the fact that they couldn’t really promise anything, we would have gotten a better sense of closure.

I lived my high school career on a series of short term woes. This project is due Friday, I have a test on Thursday, New upper production is all week. And I lived for the notion that “since this next big project or test or milestone is over, I can finally relax and take care of myself.”

Branham seniors began their freshman year at a school literally rebuilding itself. Three principals in five years. Construction of four new buildings. More than 50% teacher turnover. Eventually, we got used to it, and the situation improved. The pandemic struck as we were about to leave, putting to a sudden halt events that we had spent our lives looking forward to: prom, graduation, saying goodbye to friends in person. It wasn’t the ending we imagined.

There’s no reassurance in false hope

ELIZABETH POSEY
– Editor -

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I enjoyed the journey cut short

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There’s no reassurance in false hope
The pandemic has made being a parent hard. It’s made being a teacher hard. Teachers who are both have it even tougher. In early April, the Bear Witness checked in with teachers who have school-age children of their own to have them share the struggles and joys of teaching while parenting.

Homeschooling tips

What teachers are saying parents and students should do as they are distance learning.

Let kids help set the schedule

This can give kids a much-needed sense of control. “Talk to them about what they thought their day should look like, how we need to get outdoor time, how we need to make sure the dog gets walked, how we keep our apartment clean and pick up after ourselves,” said Tobias McLach, a special education teacher with three young children.

Consider a “menu”

Instead of a strict timetable, here’s a strategy that English teacher Kerry Murphy has adopted. “My kids are rule followers and would focus too much on doing exactly the same thing at the same time,” she said. “That just feels way too stressful right now.” The menu gives them choices when they’re not a loss for something to do.

Teach in small bursts

“The rule of thumb is attention spans are between one and two minutes per age of your child,” said Leanne Haghighi, a special education teacher with two young children. Mini-lessons help students be as focused as possible for between five and 10 minutes of instruction before they practice. Instruction can be spread out in bite-sized chunks over the day or week.

Don’t overdo it

“If kids are getting frustrated, they’re not going to be able to learn,” said Nicole Trapasso, a former Branham chemistry teacher and parent of two, 8 and 5. “Take a break and return to the activity later.”

Teach what you know

Like life skills, which provide plenty of learning opportunities. “Now is a great time for teaching them your grandmother’s spaghetti sauce recipe (and including in math, science, and reading from following a recipe).”

Don’t forget downtime

“Having a schedule is nice, but there has to be balance for kids and adults to breathe. If space for play and downtime is not provided for everyone,” said Murphy, “Kids will eventually revolt.”

Find a space to decompress

It’s easy to get frustrated when families are in a combined environment for extended periods. Make sure to find time to take care of your needs, said Trapasso. Whether it’s five minutes, or 15 minutes, “Every second counts.”

Compiled by staff

ZACHARY MACAPANAN
Science and Health Editor

B rancham teachers with school-age children are pulling double-duty these days as their work and home life have become inseparable, balancing both parenting and remote-teaching responsibilities while sheltering in place.

Consequently, this has forced teachers to come up with ways to teach their students remotely. This new challenge has created difficulties for teachers that are also parents, requiring them to provide instruction for their students while also caring for their own children.

Special education teacher Leanne Haghighi and her husband Darius swap the care for her two children, Desmon, 5, and Elanna, 4.

“She also commented that she and her children ‘have kind of a loose routine’ that ‘can be a little hard to follow sometimes, so we kind of just go with the flow.’”

Though English teacher Kerry Murphy’s children are older, Aine, in kindergarten, Michael, in sixth grade and Vivienne in eighth. Each has mandatory school work to complete on a daily basis. The school agendas in the Murphy home begin at 7 a.m. and continues through the afternoon, which include soccer routines that their coaches provide.

Even with the routines, there has been less emphasis on structure (“Like Xbox comes out more than usual,” Murphy said.)

The family togetherness has spilled into her ability to work and there is less time to grade than before. “They’re home the whole time, Murphy emphasized. “There have been great things about being together at home, but there’s a lot of balance which is very difficult to keep.”

She says it’s been a challenge for her to find time for planning, preparing, and grading work for her students, while also helping her own children with their distance learning.

“I need to find some time and figure out how to put that into my schedule now,” Murphy said.

Social science teacher Tania Eaton feels similar conflicting schedule pressures. Her grade-school daughter’s school work begins daily at 9 a.m., with submission deadlines by 3 p.m.

“I feel the pressure to email students during the same time my daughter’s school work is due,” she said. “I’m supposed to be working so I’ll put her on hold to do my work for Branham.”

Eaton also expressed how her daughter’s school is asking for a lot of work from their students. While she’s thankful they’re holding their students accountable, it has caused her daughter to feel pressure to get work completed even during times of the day when she wouldn’t normally be at school.

Sometime’s it’s 7 or 8 at night even on the weekend and we’re still getting her work down!” Eaton said.

The switch to digital learning for the teachers is not provided for everyone, ” she said, “That just feels way too stressful right now”.

The menu gives them choices when they’re not a loss for something to do.

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Compiled by staff

ZACHARY MACAPANAN
Science and Health Editor
Coronavirus in the county
We break down the most recent numbers, and how the curve may be flattening due to the county’s strict shelter in place rules.

Around Branham
26 total cases
in the 95118 ZIP code, where Branham resides. With a population of 24,000 residents, that is a rate of 80 cases per 100,000 people.

In Santa Clara
2,731 cases, 141 deaths
As testing increases, the county saw an uptick in cases, with a rate of 3.7% infected. The county is lifting some of the more restrictive measures of sheltering in place as coronavirus continues to spread.

Cases by group age
Young people under 30 years old are more likely than any other age group to contract the virus in Santa Clara, though COVID-19 has the highest mortality among the oldest and the immunocompromised.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Rate of Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-9</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-19</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
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<td>20%</td>
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<td>60-69</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80+</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cases by ethnicity
Hispanic populations have been hardest hit by the pandemic, with more than 80% of cases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>% of Cases</th>
<th>% of pop.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Santa Clara Public Health

FINDING THE HELPERS

Medical personnel are at the frontlines of any pandemic, but even they need help. Personal protective equipment — masks, face shields — are in short supply, and grassroots efforts are sprouting.

Helping the sick fight loneliness

Dr. Misty Montoya helps patients contact their loved ones who cannot visit them in the hospital.

The homeless and vulnerable

Nurse practitioner Cameldot Thompson helps the homeless communities with the San Mateo County Health Clinic.

Face shields for our protectors

Santani Teng has enlisted a grassroots effort around the Bay Area to make and deliver face shields to medical personnel.

When he’s not steering his plane, Bay Area scientist Santani Teng studies how blind people see and feel the world around them at the selective Smith-Kettlewell Institute in San Francisco.

Since the pandemic began, he’s had a more urgent calling that’s taken him out of the safety of his home: helping meet the critical global shortage of protective hospital equipment.

 Armed with a small team equipped with 3D printers, Santani Teng has enlisted a grassroots group to make and deliver homemade face shields for health care workers on the front line of the coronavirus pandemic.

Teng, who grew up in Milpitas, said he was called into action by his physician friends describing how they are putting themselves at risk by reusing their hospital equipment, including face shields and masks.

“I don’t want them to be overwhelmed,” he said. “I don’t want them to get sick.”

He described a text message from a friend saying he used his face shield for an entire eight hour shift and until “it literally just disintegrated” on his face.

The coronavirus pandemic has the potential to overwhelm hospitals across the United States that are struggling to supply their employees with personal protective equipment, which includes vital N95 masks and gloves.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that both manufacturers and distributors of PPE are facing challenges related to increased demand and high volume orders.

Teng is joined by countless scientists and tinkerers like him around the world racing to get PPE to hospitals and building equipment to meet worker demands.

To make the National Institutes of Health-supported mask, Santani Teng relied on his MIT alumni network, who have already been making such protective equipment for Boston’s hospitals.

The current shortage, caused by a strain to the PPE supply chain, is causing major delays in hospitals that are treating patients with the virus. It frustrates him that “I’m still surprised that anything we’re doing is either necessary or useful,” said Teng. “But I’m super grateful.”

When he sees the face shields, he used models that were created and tested by Budmen, a company that designs and manufactures 3D printers. Making the face shields requires a 3D print of the polycarbonate sheet covering the face, elastic bands to secure it.

His passion has taken him out of the safety of his home: helping to secure it.

Wearing that personal mission for me,” he said, “because for some reason, it’s just a part of me, and I feel a calling to do what I can.”

NOLAN ZILS
Copy Editor

KATELYN LOWENFELD
Arts & Entertainment Editor

ELIZABETH POSEY
Editor-in-Chief

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Face shields for our protectors

Santani Teng has enlisted a grassroots effort around the Bay Area to make and deliver face shields to medical personnel.
In 2009, Branham was alone in the Bay Area in closing its doors after a student contracted the swine flu, known as H1N1. The district’s approach to the closure then was different in nearly every regard — from its communication to its rollout of school resources.

Swine flu: Easily spread, but not as deadly

In the spring of 2009, a new version of the H1N1 influenza virus — the virus that caused the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic — emerged and began to spread rapidly. That swine flu killed anywhere from 151,700 to 575,400 people worldwide in its first 12 months, through April 2010, according to estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and may have infected over 1 billion by the end of 2010. The swine flu spread easily person-to-person, just like COVID-19, and possibly even from people who were presymptomatic.

So why didn’t the swine flu overwhelm our healthcare systems and put so many people out of work? The main difference is that it ended up being a much milder and less deadly infection. There are a range of estimated case fatality rates for swine flu, but even the highest, less than 0.1 percent, are much lower than the current estimates for COVID-19.

Source: Santa Clara Public Health

Technology and distance learning

11 years is a long time in terms of advances in technology and access. Curriculum delivery: Primarily overhead projectors, and Microsoft PowerPoint. Now, teachers primarily use the Google Suite of education apps, and other apps such as Quizlet, Kahoot, Poll Everywhere and other interactive formats to supplement their teaching.

Wifi access: In 2009, smartphones had not yet gained mainstream penetration, and each class possessed one or two PCs for internet access. Since distance learning began, the district is moving to loan Chromebooks, and has lent out more than 100 mobile hotspots. In total, more than 800 Chromebooks were loaned out to students in the district.

School communication: The district has been sending twice-weekly emails updating parents on the rapid COVID-19 changes, and has shared advances on its website. In 2009, one email was sent out after the student contracted H1N1.

Lone swine flu infection in 2009 a lesson on planning and communication

Athletics activities director Landon Jacob recalled that students and staff still congregated with each other, just not at school. The tone is a lot more different with the current pandemic, he said. “Everyone is taking this much more seriously than they did in 2009,” he said. “The majority of people were just happy to have the week off and not have to worry about the responsibility of school work for students, or work for staff.”

The low mortality rate of swine flu (.002%) may have contributed to the complacent nature the Branham community had toward the disease, said science teacher Juan Fernandez. “Ten years ago, most people didn’t worry about the swine flu,” he said. “The school closed in response to some extremely worrisome parents.”

Compared to the swine flu outbreak, the district’s handling of the coronavirus involved weekly communications among the Santa Clara County school district superintendents and the Health Department, as well as frequent conversations with school administrators.

Distance learning has been made easier with the advent of Google Classroom, Zoom and greater broadband penetration providing the infrastructure necessary. In 2009, using PowerPoint for presentations had just entered the mainstream, and many teachers still used overhead projectors for their instruction.

Branham’s closure may have been a blip on the pandemic radar, but for teachers and students currently surviving their second pandemic, it serves a study in contrasts in instructional practice found in time.

With school indefinitely closed, the community is living in unprecedented times.

“It felt like most of an isolated experience compared to the whole county, state and country imposing school closings,” said special education Leanne Hughligi, who was student teaching at the time. “I do not remember it being as somber or anxiety-inducing as COVID-19.”

Note: Michael Posey is the father of Elizabeth Posey, the Bear Witness Co-Editor-in-Chief.
Editorial

The opinion of the Bear Witness editors

Branham - the physical space - is the glue that holds our school community together. From school to sports, friends to teachers, it was a living hub from dawn to dusk. Since sheltering in place began and distance learning took place, our fragile community has splintered to 1,800 microns, with no clear way to bring them together. COVID-19 has tested our school’s resolve to build that community, wherever it is.

There have been many successful meetings in student and teachers’ families where they are. Hundreds of meals are served to students and their families each day. Administrators are making house visits to ensure students had access to Chromebooks and wifi hotspots. In the community-building sphere, our Leadership group has taken to social media in a big way, providing information about the campus closures and grading policy changes, to celebrating the quirks of sheltering in place via daily challenges. (The Bear Witness has reported on these, too.)

Hundreds have participated in the virtual Battle of the Classes, which has historically seen low participation among a small group of dedicated students. The recent Montclair Hunky Games event drew in students who normally wouldn’t volunteer in the all-class rally games. Teachers are rising to the occasion, switching from in-person teaching to being experts at Zoom and multimedia. Some for the first time. Professors are being supportive of students struggling to make the transition to online learning, giving extra time on coursework and accommodating students with academic struggles.

Visual and performing arts programs such as the band program are hosting virtual concerts to celebrate student achievement. By these means, in-residence and online, students are playing double duty, trying to keep their children safe, while creating and revising their lessons to an online environment.

This pandemic has put an economic strain on our society, and is testing the strength of Branham’s community to withstand challenges. But it’s not the first time we’ve faced a crisis of confidence. When Branham reopened after being closed for a decade in the 1990s, teachers operated with an undeserved mind-set. They would try whatever it took to keep things going. It took years of experimentation and cohesion among staff and students for the results to pay off, and Branham has consistently been at the top, or one of the top schools in the state in any given year.

The spirit of thoughtfulness in experimentation will be the glue that holds this community together, whether we’re in person or online.

A short history of Trump vs. science

COVID-19: Indecisive doctor

Early this month, Trump raised the idea of injecting disinfectant to fight the coronavirus, which health officials warned was dangerous. The president later claimed he was being sarcastic, although the transcript of his remarks suggests otherwise.

COVID-19: U-turn

Trump also suggested ultraviolet light, even internal light, could be a possible preventive measure, contrary to scientific advice.

COVID-19: Malaria drug

As the recorded U.S. death toll passed the 50,000 mark, the Food and Drug Administration issued an alert about the dangers of using hydroxychloroquine, a malaria drug that Trump has repeatedly promoted for coronavirus patients.

Solar eclipse: Staring into the abyss

When a rare solar eclipse happened in 2017, astronomers and eye doctors repeatedly warned people not to stare directly at the sun without protection. Photos show Trump did anyway. He later demanded protective glasses, however.

Climate change "boast"

For decades, scientists have called climate change a pressing issue, pointing to data, physics and chemistry. Trump regularly called it a hoax until recently. He also pressedissue, pointing to data, physics and chemistry. Trump regularly called it a hoax until recently. He also

A learning curve

Hanson Nguyen, Junior

“I’m not a big fan of it, but it forces me to be more motivated and get involved.”

Gez Palacio, Freshman

“I really like the schedule of distance learning. I feel like classes are spaced out well and an hour a day is very nice. I definitely have struggled with having motivation to do work at home and setting a schedule for myself. The amount of emails I receive in a day is insane and I miss so much of what the teachers tell us in those emails. Also, I miss the social aspect of school like getting to see my friends or work with others on stuff, so it’s really tough to force myself to get stuff done.”

Kelsey Migliore, Junior

“I feel more comfortable in the classroom because I’m allowed to be in class in the comfort of my own home. I haven’t experienced much boredom due to distance learning, but my computer crashed one time and that set me back. It is also harder to get questions answered by teachers, but there is that “I had no idea” parade with distance learning.”

David Sandel, Junior

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LEARN OF A CURVE

School community can thrive in pandemic

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Bite-Sized
Minor solutions, minor problems

Problem: Sports is a huge part of my life and it sucks to not have anything to watch. I'm devastated and need my daily dose of sports-centric highlights!

Solution: Every sports channel should replay memorable games to keep us entertained. That way, I can pretend that I'm watching Super Bowl play, even if it's a game from three years ago.

Problem: The lack of toilet paper in stores.

Solution: Invest in a paper towel - has a similar texture to toilet paper and is reusable/paperless.

Problem: How can I get my daily dose of sports content highlights?

Solution: Tune into a sports channel that provides significant and competitive moments from past games. This way, you can rewatch your favorite moments and stay entertained while waiting for the next big game or event.

Problem: Biden can fill leadership void in pandemic

Solution: Despite the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, President Biden has demonstrated his commitment to public health and unity. His focus on vaccination, stimulus checks, and infrastructure improvements are key steps towards a stronger and more resilient nation.

Reality TV: Not real, but its lessons are

From the trashy to the transcendent, these shows teach us more about ourselves than about the lives of celebrities

‘Love is Blind’ | Netflix

A social experiment where single men and women look for love and get engaged, all before meeting in person. This series is a breath of fresh air in the world of reality TV, as viewers get to watch couples really struggle with falling in love with someone.

‘Next in Fashion’ | Netflix

Another example of a reality competition show. This one stands out, with hosts Alexa Chung and Tan France providing a fresh perspective on fashion. Viewers can learn about style, creativity, and the importance of self-expression.

‘Wipeout’ | ABC

A wild competition where people jump off trampolines, bounce off poles, and try to avoid elimination. It's a fun and exciting show that showcases physical prowess and strategy.

‘Be Our Chef’ | Disney+

In this fun cooking competition, home chefs compete to have their dishes judged by professional chefs. Viewers can learn cooking techniques and get inspired by the creativity of the contestants.

‘RuPaul’s Drag Race’ | VH1, Hulu

This show has quickly become a cultural phenomenon. It’s not just drag, it’s about empowerment, diversity, and representation. Viewers can learn about the journey of drag queens and the importance of self-confidence.

‘The Bachelor: Listen to Your Heart’ | ABC

In the mood to see cookie-cutter families, then you’ll be thrilled to see this show. The Bachelor franchise presents a new spin on romance with this heartwarming series.

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Reality TV shows that we can’t put down during quarantine

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Reality TV: Not real, but its lessons are

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The equation adds up: Fewer classes and more free time mean increased sleep. However, coronavirus-related anxieties and increased screen demands complicate our sleep formula. 

Scientists say that it’s inevitable, but screen limits OK

The importance of sleep in a pandemic

When confronting the COVID-19 pandemic, though, sleep becomes even more essential because of its wide-ranging benefits for physical and mental health, according to Sleep Foundation.

Sleep empowers an effective immune system. Solid, nightly rest strengthens our body’s defenses and, surprisingly, has been found that lack of sleep can make some vaccines less effective.

Sleep heightens brain function. Our mind works better when we get good sleep, contributing to complex thinking, learning, memory, and decision-making.

Sleep enhances mood. Lack of sleep can make a person irritable, drag down their energy level, and contribute to feelings of depression.

Sleep improves mental health. Researchers have found that a lack of sleep is linked with mental health conditions like anxiety disorders, depression, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Sleeping Well

In the midst of the daunting challenges, there are a handful of steps that can promote better sleep during the coronavirus pandemic.

If you’re increased screen time and don’t give up, you can take time to stabilize your sleep, and you may find that you need to sleep fewer hours than before. It’s important to try to keep a schedule and try to go to bed and wake up at similar times each day. You might need to adjust your sleep schedule around school or work schedules.

Set your schedule and routine. Establishing a routine can facilitate a sense of normalcy even in stressful times.

Sleep-specific aspects of your daily schedule should include:

Wake-up time: Set your alarm, bypass the snooze button, and have a fixed time to get every day started.

Wind-down time: It can involve things like light reading, stretching, and meditation along with preparations for bed like putting on pajamas, checking your phone, and brushing your teeth. Given the stress of the pandemic, experts suggest creating a wind-down routine along with limiting exposure to screens after dinner.

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The group this month released some guidance stating that yes, there should still be limits on watching and consuming media. However, it said limits should not get in the way of a teen’s mental health.

Families are urged to make time to unplug and get away from screens, which can help them ‘connect emotionally, process difficult experiences, and heal,’ the guidance states.

Although an increase in screen time is not ideal, many, including Branham students, are using technology as a way to connect with each other and reach out to friends.

“Not seeing the people that I normally see on a daily basis made me realize how much I appreciate them,” she said.
With dining out still a luxury as we shelter in place for the time being, we highlight some local businesses near school that could use your business.

How to safely order takeout
Leave delivery instructions
Apps such as DoorDash and GrabHub let you decide how you want your meals to be delivered. Some suggestions include letting them leave food at the door, or providing a photo where it should be placed.

Wash hands after food is delivered
While there is no evidence of COVID-19 being transmitted through food, it can live on in instruments that people touch, including utensils.

Leave a good tip
Food delivery drivers are typically either paid by the job (through DoorDash) or by the hour (at other restaurants). They don’t have a work-from-home option if they want to earn money. The safest way to provide a tip is through the app itself.

American Blue Rock BBQ, 1001 Mendonca Ave.
- In this barbecue-inspired restaurant serves all types of barbecue favorites from pulled pork to chicken. Customers can choose from a list of sides including hush puppies, mac and cheese, fruit salad and more.

Mexican Jalisco, 525 E. Campbell Ave.
- Jalisco offers authentic Mexican food at a reasonable price. The menu is extensive, meaning there is something for everyone. The dishes come in very large portions with sides of rice and beans. Customers rave about the salsa and the customer service.

Mediterranean Framos, 2180 S Bascom Ave.
- With a menu that includes greek dishes such as gyros, chicken souvlaki, and falafel. Customers can also order sides like Greek salad and french fries.

Colombian Nitilos , 4662 Mendonca Ave.
- This Colombian bakery is most commonly known for its empanadas. They also serve sweet pastries, jasques, salados, and more. Customers describe the empanadas as “flaky and buttery.”

--- Katelyn Lawemsky

WORKING TOWARD SAFETY

With school hours offering more flexibility during the day, some students in customer service are working longer hours, potentially putting themselves at risk. How are they coping with

JAZZY NGUYEN and RYAN WALTERS
Staff Writers

Junior Mike Long and senior Sarah Huh are both essential employees. Long is a courtesy clerk at Safeway, and Huh helps her parents with their sushi restaurant. Since the shutdown, they both have worked extra hours at their jobs, which are adapting to include social distancing measures.

As a courtesy clerk on the Safeway on Union Avenue, Long said that the increased hours as well as the corralizing of the initial crowds of customers have taken a toll. In the first weeks, he’s been witness to uncontrolled hoarding of items such as toilet paper and sanitizer. The panic has since died down, but he said he’s still as busy as ever.

“It’s more stressful,” Long said. “It’s even worse than Christmas shopping now.”

Long said he’s bothered by the scores of customers unhappy about the social distancing rules at the checkout lines, sometimes ignoring the tone.

Long’s workplace has an enforced social distancing rule by using tape on the floor by the checkout stands to keep people at least 6 feet away from each other for a safer shopping run.

To ensure social distancing, the workers are required to wash their hands every 30 minutes.

He initially was not as panicked about the pandemic, but said he is now seeing the importance of wearing masks, which, along with social distancing, is the Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention’s recommended method to slow the spread of the virus.

Local restaurants are also under greater pressure to change their order of operation, as they risk getting shut down for not being COVID-19 compliant.

Huh, whose parents own and operate Sushi Heaven in Saratoga, says that they’ve physically blocked off customers from employees, who must maintain a six foot distance from each other.

The restaurant, like most that are operating, are on a take-out or delivery basis.

In order to minimize the risk, they have also cut down on the number of employees that work within the restaurant.

“We’ve told around 60%-80% of the workers to just stay home,” Huh says. “We usually have five [service] people, but now it’s one server, only at dinner time.”

Her family has even changed how the pickup system works in order to allow employees the least amount of contact and the most safety.

Huh says that they are only allowing one customer to enter the restaurant at a time, and that they enter and leave the establishment through different doors, as to keep customers from interacting.

The danger is real for students and families to take measures to sanitize those as well.

Set your groceries up there (on the dirty side). You get sanitizing wipes and you wipe every package, every box, and then you set it on the clean side.”

Of course, this is more easily said than done.

The bottom line, for Phalen, is to wash hands after any outdoor interaction.

Like most health experts, Phalen also recommends that people wear masks when going outside there they could potentially be exposed to the virus.

“Weary, it won’t prevent you from contracting COVID-19, but it would help stop people from spreading the virus days before the symptoms occur,” she said.

She added that wearing masks also serves as a reminder to avoid touching your face, which is one of the easiest ways to encourage infection.

Similarly, Long encourages other to follow social distancing rules in place and to have patience and kindness with others.

“The customers need to realize that the rules are for our safety and their safety,” said Long, who has been employed since October.

“They panic is no reason to be rude to those who cater to them at grocery stores and other businesses.”

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LEARNING ON A CURVE | ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEES
Cubs remain active during shutdown

The annual Battle of the Classes ended in an epic match—not through carefully choreographed dance moves in the school gym, but online in a gritty, entertaining Mincerebellum event (freshmen handily won, by the way), helps students reach beyond physical form. Monday morning we have brought our event to you, as our team is preparing for careers in fashion, but sadly I'm not making any clothes," Armat said. "I was insecure my freshman and sophomore years and it's kind of hard but I just think about it like I'm expressing myself through clothing," Martinez said. "You're coming into it kind of blind, especially if you don't have inspirations," Van Tassell said.

"Sometimes I feel like I'm being judged sometimes and it's kind of hard but I just think about it. I was insecure my freshman and sophomore years and it's kind of hard but I just think about it like I'm expressing myself through clothing," Martinez said. "They have different types of expressions," Van Tassell's confidence came after she was able to engage teens online

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JUNIOR Dylan Armato, in his favorite outfit, designs clothing that are only able to leave their homes for necessary outings. The shelter-in-place has an upside and a downside for Armato. "The quarantine has given me time to focus on fashion, but I'm not making any clothes," Armat said, "I was insecure my freshman and sophomore years and it's kind of hard but I just think about it like I'm expressing myself through clothing," Martinez said. "You're coming into it kind of blind, especially if you don't have inspirations," Van Tassell said.

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FASHION FORWARD

For Branham's clothing designers, finding their niche takes patience, practice and tagging the school account, @seewhatsbruin. "I was called "gay" for wearing nail polish to school. He tried to brush it unaniemously.

Van Tassell and Courtney Martinez first took an interest in fashion freshman year when they noticed from TV shows such as "Friends" and "That’s ‘70s Show." She still uses inspiration from her youth to gain experience and overcome beginner's struggles.

"My favorite thing about online BOTC is that it is a different audience than BOTC at school would watch," Knudsen said. Previous BOTC events drew on choreographed dance routines and elaborate class decorations to award each class points, with several dozen students participating. "I would not have participated in the one at school," Knudsen continued. "It is bringing in new people rather than the same crowd who usually participates.

With this expanded engagement of this year's BOTC- both the #whatabotc and #whatabotc hashtags have added over 200 followers in the past month- many feel that it is helping the Bruin community find common ground during social isolation.

"My favorite thing about BOTC is how students are able to stay connected and not only stay a part of the school when we’re all apart,” said sophomore Paige Knausen, who participated in this year’s dance challenge, to write teacher thank-you’s. Students are encouraged to upload their contributions to their Instagram stories and tagging the school account, @seewhatsbruin.

"The inspiration of BOTC brought in more than 400 participants, including senior Paige Knausen, who participated in this year’s dance challenge, to write teacher thank-you’s. Students are encouraged to upload their contributions to their Instagram stories and tagging the school account, @seewhatsbruin.

“People have liked what I’ve worn,” Armato said. “I didn’t really let it affect me too hard, but I did get mad.” Armato stands out among his peers, since he’s one of a handful of students who makes his own clothing, following the footsteps of designers who developed into a talent that did not go unnoticed. She approached the owner of a local brand, noticing her wish to gain experience and overcome beginner’s struggles.

"I really don’t let people affect me too much, but I shut down. At the end of the day, it’s kind of hard but I just think about it like I’m expressing myself through clothing," Martinez said. "You’re coming into it kind of blind, especially if you don’t have inspirations," Van Tassell said.

During the quarantine caused by the COVID-19 virus, Bay Area residents are stuck at home and are only able to leave their homes for necessary outings. The shelter-in-place has an upside and a downside for Armato. "The quarantine has given me time to focus on fashion, but I'm not making any clothes," Armat said, "I was not able to get any of my fabrics or materials before the quarantine." Martinez has benefited from the time the quarantine has allowed her to present her work with an opportunity. Her hobby of painting clothes developed into a talent that did not go unnoticed. She approached the owner of a local brand, asking for advice on how to start her own brand. Shortly after, she was asked to design shirts for an upcoming project that showcased their similar style interests.

"His brand has always been ‘edgy’ so we both collaborated on designs that would fit his brand," Martinez said. Van Tassell is also maximizing her time and working her hardest to begin a long-scale project. "Recently, the hardest part is trying to find a pattern that I like but I’m going to work on a skirt or a dress," she said.

All three designer students have grown through their fashion experiences and use it as a creative outlet to show their true colors. Martinez feels that it can truly help people with their own mindsets to be helped her. "I was insecure my freshman and sophomore years trying to fit in with everyone else," she said. "I encourage other people as well to get involved in fashion because it’s really a good outlet for people.

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"The downside: School is canceled (in its physical form)." It was a fitting end to this year’s festivities, adjusted and reimaged to target a different crowd online.

Taking place on Google Classroom and through social media from March to April, this year’s BOTC involved a new challenge each day, from students sharing photos of their pets, up-cycled items for a re- Green Botc event. People have liked what I’ve worn,” Armato said. “I didn’t really let it affect me too hard, but I did get mad.” Armato stands out among his peers, since he’s one of a handful of students who makes his own clothing, following the footsteps of designers who developed into a talent that did not go unnoticed. She approached the owner of a local brand, noticing her wish to gain experience and overcome beginner’s struggles.

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Recognizing seniors from spring sports
The season was cut short shortly after it began. With seniors rights out of the question (as well as any spring banquet), the Bear Witness would like to recognize the following seniors:

Badminton
Macy Pa
Emma Le
Kaitlyn Lee
Jessie Lim
Brittany Pangilinan
Danielle Phan
Eric Zheng
Jasmin Tem
Madison Vu
Alan Vu

Baseball
Sammy Agame
Ryan Brennan
Nath Contreas
Jake Herriott
Carter Jones
Connor Kelly
Ethan Norris
Benjamin Pasmanzini
Cameron Rybardi
Jack Spanganga

Competitive sport cheer
Anna MacPherson
Desha Quincy

Golf
Nathan Kim
Kritsha Sharma
Tusha Sharma

Softball
Ashley Donaldson
Kyu-Yeon Ngagey
Caraa Rivera

Swim and Dive
Atticus Ahearn
Carly Joachim
Balma Donaldson
Mana Manel
Melissa Music
Caroline Ralston
Izzy Thrane
Carlyne Yglesias
Rebecca Young
Ben Ammon
Ray Chavez
Sasha Gao
Anderson Lengyey
Mitchell MacAllay
Quantes Kashy
Matthew Nguyen
Olivier Pahla
Max Sharp
Tam Truong
Alyse Wongs

Boys tennis
Rohan Joshi
Ian Mickebben
Ethan Nguyen
Mayank Sood

Track and field
Evan Franco
Diego Hammana
Brettic Hicks
Connor Kendall
Frank Poz
Pari Wolffgram
Juliaan Ahearn
Tilde Arturman
Nada Delpecha
Lindsey Gopalbo
Sarah Huh
Phoebe Nash

Boys volleyball
Jesse Gonzalez
George Miller
Jose Silva
Aiden Yelamos

RECOGNIZING SENIORS FROM SPRING SPORTS

Despite the loss of the seniors’ last season, there are still many things to be grateful for. The Bear Witness would like to recognize the following seniors:

Badminton
Macy Pa
Emma Le
Kaitlyn Lee
Jessie Lim
Brittany Pangilinan
Danielle Phan
Eric Zheng
Jasmin Tem
Madison Vu
Alan Vu

Baseball
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Ethan Norris
Benjamin Pasmanzini
Cameron Rybardi
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Competitive sport cheer
Anna MacPherson
Desha Quincy

Golf
Nathan Kim
Kritsha Sharma
Tusha Sharma

Softball
Ashley Donaldson
Kyu-Yeon Ngagey
Caraa Rivera

Swim and Dive
Atticus Ahearn
Carly Joachim
Balma Donaldson
Mana Manel
Melissa Music
Caroline Ralston
Izzy Thrane
Carlyne Yglesias
Rebecca Young
Ben Ammon
Ray Chavez
Sasha Gao
Anderson Lengyey
Mitchell MacAllay
Quantes Kashy
Matthew Nguyen
Olivier Pahla
Max Sharp
Tam Truong
Alyse Wongs

Boys tennis
Rohan Joshi
Ian Mickebben
Ethan Nguyen
Mayank Sood

Track and field
Evan Franco
Diego Hammana
Brettic Hicks
Connor Kendall
Frank Poz
Pari Wolffgram
Juliaan Ahearn
Tilde Arturman
Nada Delpecha
Lindsey Gopalbo
Sarah Huh
Phoebe Nash

Boys volleyball
Jesse Gonzalez
George Miller
Jose Silva
Aiden Yelamos

THE LOST SEASON
Senior spring athletes mourn being robbed of their last hurrah as a Bruin

CIANNA HOLLINGER
Senior Bailey Donaldson, didn’t know that her last swim meet of the season was going to be her last until March 12, the first at the newly renovated Aquatic Center, Branham’s swim teams (girls and boys JV and varsity teams) swept Silver Creek. It was an easy victory, but Donaldson described the uncertainty in the air. Crowds were rising in the state, and in Santa Clara County, more than 30 cases were announced that day. With talks about a closure imminent, athletes and coaches prepared their goodbyes.

“We hugged and laughed and enjoyed each other’s company,” she said. “We cherished for each other as loud as we could.”

Still, the announcement via email and social media came swiftly. School was out.

“I didn’t want to believe it because I didn’t want it to end so fast,” she said. “I’ve waited four years to swim in the brand new pool we got, and I was only able to swim for one meet.”

Swim coach Dave Mackey was reappointed to the team a few days before the last meet, where he had been talking about the team’s plans with his captains, and wished he had been able to plan ahead, especially for the graduating seniors.

“It’s unfortunate, but it seems the necessary decision at this time,” he said. “I feel bad for the seniors.”

However she believed that despite her sport’s cancellation, she felt it brought her teammates closer together.

“It brings everyone’s spirit down knowing that winter and fall athletes got to finish their season and we didn’t,” she said. “I think it brought us together though because we are all going through it together.”

To cope with their loss, the swim team has turned to social media to celebrate its athletes, especially the seniors. For each post, senior Matt Nguyen, the team’s Instagram manager, posts a stat box for each senior and their fondest memories.

“Every time I see a stat box, it is about all of us working together,”

Michele Corell Competitive Sport Cheer

“The bonds that you created with your team and the experiences that you did have with your team are greater than this situation. I am extremely thankful for the two amazing wins I had with my CCS USTF team.

Be thankful for your health and the opportunities you had. This is a time to reflect on how great you did have, as well as the ones you sure to have in the future. There’s no reason to not set the new stuff.”

“Since college, I have said running/working out as an outlet during times of stress. Germs spread and away better health awareness.

“Just like anything else in our lives we are learning how to be more responsible under stressful times.

Our athletes should take extra health awareness and extended eligibility for spring sports.

“Just like anything else in our lives we are learning how to be more responsible under stressful times.

As an athlete, play and practice each day like it is the last. It is up to each of us to decide how we will use the time.

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As an athlete, play and practice each day like it is the last. It is up to each of us to decide how we will use the time.
Students find creative outlet while staying in
From podcasting to making music, teens are making themselves heard during pandemic

LILY MIDDLETON
Student Life Editor

C risis breeds creativity, and with more time on their hands due to sheltering in place, Branham students are turning to their old passions and finding new ones as well. In a snap online poll of 150 students, many reported dabbling in painting, stepping up their exercise regimens, or developing their music skills to cope with this crisis.

Two seniors, Cassidy Chang and Julianne Alvaré, the Bear Witness editors-in-chief, have started a podcast, three episodes and counting since the closure began. Their episodes range from 30 to 20 minutes long and discuss their struggles of being seniors, such as not getting to see some of their friends in person. "It's really a way for seniors to feel like they are not alone," Chang said. "They can relate to each other and know that they aren't the only ones feeling this way, and feeling like they have someone to talk to."

Chang and Alvaré said they are particularly proud of their third episode, which featured a conversation with students about their hobbies and interests. "We really wanted to give students a chance to talk about what they enjoy," Chang said. "We want to create a space where students can feel comfortable sharing their interests and hobbies, and connecting with others who share those interests as well."
THE NEW QUARANTINE ROUTINE

The loss of our sense of our school routine is making us feel, well, lost.

Chantal Wang/Special to the Bear Witness

**CLASS PRE-QUARANTINE**

As long as you’re up before your ride to school, you’ll be fine. Before school ended, teachers voted to adopt a new schedule, which moved first periods to 7:30 a.m. and eliminated lunch period, which starts at 11 a.m. Either way, you’re groggy from a lack of sleep.

First class of school. It’s still quite early, so you focus on keeping your eyes open and on the board. This class is usually quiet, but every once in a while, someone asks a question, which perks you up a bit.

It’s tutorial. Time to finish the science notebook due at the end of the week. You might not be in the mood to work, so you make an excuse to get a pass to the teacher who doesn’t care about having phones out.

Brunch was too short, and you were only able to quickly check in with your friends. Suddenly the class is a bit more chatty now, a bit too much, since you can’t hear the teacher talk.

It’s lunch, the best time to socialize. You meet at your usual spot to joke, complain about your homework, and not think about class. Even at 3:30 p.m., it’s over too soon.

You stare endlessly at the clock waiting for the day to end and the able to talk to your friends. Who can stand only sleeping late. Time to unplug and repeat this again.

**CLASS DURING QUARANTINE**

It’s 9:30 a.m. Time to get up. You spent the last night watching a show too many Netflix dramas. You grab a snack in the kitchen and check your Google Classroom for the class ID.

Wake-up

Time to get on Zoom. It’s 9:30 a.m. and still the teacher is waiting for people to log on. The clock is ticking — there’s only 55 minutes of this left. Everyone’s so excited with their video turned off. You used a private message to your friend. “This isn’t fun!”

First class of the day

You’re the only person checking in to your tutorial. It’s not required anymore, so it’s just you and your teacher, who seems to be desperate for conversation. You didn’t really have a question to ask, so you sign off after a few minutes.

Tutorial

The second and last class of the day. Sixty minutes seems to be the ideal time to listen to the lecture. No one seems to have worked the pre-class work, so the teacher is repeating the instructions again. Oh, bother.

Second class of the day

There are two hours for lunch — which seems excessive. It’s tempting to go outside. Some are heading to school to pick up free food — Principal Cheryl Gamble says that the line gets longer every day. The pandemic is hitting many people hard.

Lunch

If you were a good student, you would be using the free time to get some work done. But since the transition has been made to a pass fail system, it’s hard to try anymore. Tests are open note, and the projects aren’t exactly taxing. But you’ve been working too long and it’s almost dawn. No one is alone, since most of your peers are sleeping as, but they’re also sleeping late. Time to stop and repeat this again.

Last class of the day

Refresh your social media. Scroll. Refresh. Your friends want you to go on another walk. This is the third time today. An Instacart driver几何 — a real human picked all of those items. Later your DoorDash armies. Time to eat.

After school

Netflix and you are fast becoming best friends. But you’ve been watching too long and it’s almost dawn. You’re not alone, since most of your peers are sleeping as, but they’re also sleeping late. Time to stop and repeat this again.

At night

**ESTABLISHING A ROUTINE**

When so much is uncertain, it can be reassuring to have a consistent schedule to stick to. Here are some tips for staying in a routine and how to add habits or activities to it.

Mimic your regular school routine

If you haven’t already, create a daily structure similar to if you were still on campus — getting dressed in the morning, going to Zoom classes online, or eating lunch at the same time, and doing homework when you would have on campus (i.e. after sports, in the evenings, etc.)

Distinguish between when you’re working and when you’re not

Put a copy of your schedule on your door or your family knows when you are in class or during schoolwork.

Construct your own deadlines

If your teacher has pushed back deadlines for major projects, assignments, or exams, set your own mini-deadlines to break up the work or studying so you don’t leave it until the last minute.

Stack habits

If you’re trying to implement new activities or tasks into your routine, try habit stacking. Instead of trying to implement a new habit at a new time and location in your day, add a portion of that habit to something you already do consistently. According to Kevin Kruse, a self-help expert, habit stacking greatly increases the likelihood that you will stick to an added activity or behavior. Thensee you do something, the stronger the neural networks for that activity becomes, increasing the likelihood that you will get it done and with ease. By linking new habits to habits you’re already committed to, the likelihood you can maintain the new habit.

Here’s an example: Before/after CURRENT HABIT, I will NEW HABIT. For example: Before I watch my insta, I will spend 10 minutes doing work for the same class” “Before I turn off the light for bed, I will read for 5 minutes.”

Start small

Another way to implement new activities into your life is to start small and gradually build from there. For example, if you want to journal every day, first start with a minute before bed for a week, then 5 minutes the next week, and continue to build on until you reach your goal.

Be patient

Life happens! Especially when many things are uncertain, sometimes you may throw off your schedule. That’s okay! If you’ve been trying to stick to a routine but just haven’t been able to, try adjusting the routine to maximize your success. Everyone is different and different things work for different people.

— Ziv Galpaz

Sources: Healthline.com, UNICEF