

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LINK TO MEDIA RELEASE

Celebrating Mother's Day or Graduations During the COVID-19 Pandemic

HILLSBOROUGH, N.C. May 7, 2020 — Orange County Residents have been following stay-at-home orders in place since March 27 to reduce the spread of COVID-19. At 5 p.m. on Friday, May 8th Phase One of the reopening plan will begin just as Mother's Day weekend begins. In years past, this would have also been the weekend that Carolina held commencement ceremonies.

The governor's new executive order continues stay-at-home guidance with some modifications. In the first phase of reopening, people will be allowed to leave home for commercial activity and more businesses will be open. Restrictions to encourage social distancing will continue.

This means that our community will have to find new ways to celebrate Mother's Day and graduations. Choosing to stay away from those you love is the most caring thing we can all do to support each other, at least for now. But, just because we cannot physically be together does not mean that we cannot be there for each other.

Mother's Day is May 10th

Here are some ways to safely celebrate our mothers this weekend during Phase One of the Stay at Home order:

1. If you live with your mother, make her breakfast in bed or a picnic in the backyard.
2. Create a craft with the kids (here is an example, <https://kidsactivitiesblog.com/137721/family-handprint/>)
3. If you can drive by your mom's house, decorate her front door, so she and her neighbors can see how much she is loved.
4. Take a virtual tour at the same time.
 - a. <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/travel/a31784720/best-virtual-tours/>
5. Watch a movie together (pop in a DVD/Blue-ray or stream, if you are not in the same household Netflix has made it possible to synchronize video playback so multiple parties can be watching a movie/show at the same time: <https://www.netflixparty.com/#landing>)
6. Host a virtual brunch (Zoom, Skype, Google Hangout, or another service).
7. Send her an e-card or an e-gift card.
8. Make a video message to send to her.

9. Order your mom's favorite meal from her favorite local restaurant for delivery or pick it up for her (through curbside pickup) and drop it off for her on her front porch (of course call her to let her know that there is food there).
10. Create a grateful jar: have members in the family (even those not living together) write on slips of paper things they are grateful for and put them in a jar, read a few out for mom over the phone or on a video chat and share them all once restrictions are completely lifted.
11. Find a recipe you and mom love and set up a video call and to bake or cook together.
12. You can always order a gift online (order supplies so mom can enjoy an at home spa day, like bath bombs, etc).

We also acknowledge and respect that Mother's Day may be difficult and complicated for some people, like for people who have lost their mothers, people who have strained relationships with their mothers, blended families, and those who have had issues with fertility. If you are in this category, do what you need to make sure you are taken care of while staying safe. Perhaps make it a day of self-care.

Graduations:

May also marks graduation time for many students, and it is a time to celebrate the accomplishments of a long-time educational journey. Since we should still stay home and not gather, we cannot celebrate in the traditional ways, but this does not diminish the pride and joy we have for graduating students! Congratulations! Here are some ways to celebrate grads during this time:

1. Watch: #Graduation2020: Facebook and Instagram Celebrate the Class of 2020. May 15th @2pm ET. Commencement address given by Oprah Winfrey, Awkwafina, Jennifer Garner, Lil Nas X, Simone Biles, and more.
<https://about.fb.com/news/2020/04/graduation-2020/>
2. Watch: Graduate Together: America Honors the High School Class of 2020. Airing on ABC, CBS, Fox, and NBC on May 16th at 8pm EDT. Commencement address given by Barack Obama, LeBron James, Malala Yousafzai, Ben Platt, and more.
3. Host a video Chat Party! (use Zoom, Skype, etc.)
4. Record a video tribute. Compile celebratory videos and send to the graduate.
5. If family want to send graduation gifts, send them to someone else who lives with them so they can create a "gift scavenger hunt."
6. Create a message where you show one of your favorite memories with the grad (old pictures are always fun!) and send to them. Maybe even do some scrapbooking.
7. Decorate the graduate's mailbox or door!
8. Have an at home photo shoot! Decorate a photo wall if you can to make it more festive!
9. Send e-card or e-gift card.
10. As always you can order gifts online. Maybe the grad can create an online wish list.
11. Plan now for a party later, once it is safer and restrictions have been lifted.

12. At 10 a.m. on Sunday, May 10, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will hold a video watch party on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) so graduates and their families can celebrate together until it's safe to hold an in-person ceremony. The stream will include special messages to the Class of 2020, highlights from their time at Carolina and virtual performances by Harmonyx and the Clefhangers. Look for more celebratory content throughout the weekend on Carolina's [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts including images of the Bell Tower lit up in blue to honor the Class of 2020 and video messages from Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz and scheduled commencement speaker, New York Times columnist and Carolina alumnus Frank Bruni.

While we understand that it is strange and perhaps disappointing to have to change our celebration traditions, it is necessary for the health of our community. Remember, there is no better gift than health.

Reliable Information

For the latest information and guidance relating to Orange County's COVID-19 response:

- Visit www.orangecountync.gov/coronavirus.
- Receive daily text updates on the crisis by texting 888-777 with OCNCEALTH for English speakers and OCNCALUD for Spanish speakers.
- Sign up for a twice weekly e-newsletter about the COVID-19 response via the [county website](#).
- Follow the Orange County Health Department on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
- The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services updates its [COVID-19 case count dashboard](#) daily at 11 a.m.\
- Learn more about the Stay at Home order: <https://www.orangecountync.gov/2416/Stay-at-Home>

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