

## Here's To Us

Here's to the parents.

To the mom wearing a breast pump while providing tech support for her co-worker.

To the dad wearing a six-year-old on his back and a toddler on each leg, singing Old MacDonald for the 4,000 time today.

To the parents trying to work while their teenagers sap all the bandwidth.

To the parents who suddenly became teachers

And to the teachers who only get to see their students in tiny pixelated boxes.

Here's to the athletes.

To the rookie still waiting to play his first game in a Major League ballpark.

To the second graders whose soccer team won't get to compete for sparkly plastic trophies.

To the college kids who balanced basketballs and homework and friends and jobs and growing up, whose March was madness in ways no one expected.

Here's to the artists.

To the high school's cancelled production of *Much Ado About Nothing*.

To the six-year-olds tapdancing their first recital on cracked kitchen tiles.

To the stars waiting to light up Broadway once more.

Here's to the seniors.

To the valedictorian giving her speech over Zoom.

To the teens using Discord to play Fortnite on what should have been their prom night.

To the people born before the polio vaccine.

To the grandparents seeing extreme close-ups of their grandson's nose because he won't let Mommy hold the phone.

Here's to those watching their city turn into a warzone.

Here's to those staying indoors to protect people hundreds of miles away.

Here's to librarians.

Here's to EMTs.

Here's to shelters and food banks and Hope Line volunteers.

Here's to those who have to work, and those who no longer have work.

Here's to toilet paper.

Here's to toilet paper substitutes.

Here's to N95s and 3D printed face shields and homemade floral-patterned masks.

Here's to frozen fruit and freezer-burned ice cream.

Here's to staying inside and watching TV.

Here's to the word unprecedented.

Here's to checking in on a friend.

Here's to wearing pajamas all day.

Here's to the dogs overjoyed we're home, and the cats wishing we'd go away already.

Here's to being angry and bored.

Here's to wishing everyone would be quiet.

Here's to those living in quiet.

Here's to counting all the push-pin holes on your bedroom walls.

Here's to waving at strangers.

Here's to your mental health and your physical health.  
Here's to those whose day was just okay, and here's to those whose day wasn't okay.

Here's to being impatient for the world to go back to normal.  
Here's to a world that will never be the same.

Here's to us, adapting and fighting and crying and writing and playing and baking and teaching and sewing and dreaming and hoping and recognizing that waking up each morning is a triumph in and of itself.

And again, here's to toilet paper.