

Dear friends,

You've been stuck at home for two weeks now. We know this isn't easy, so as president of the Consell de Formentera and on behalf of the entire local governing team, I'm writing this message especially for the children and youth of Formentera.

The weekend of 14-15 March was a different one. You left classes on Friday knowing you wouldn't be back for weeks. You'd been hearing about coronavirus for a few days already; your parents and teachers had likely already talked to you about the new illness, Covid-19, and the need to take steps to avoid its spread.

And then suddenly, you're faced with measures that are extremely difficult and, at first blush, difficult to understand. And it wasn't just schools that were closing; the cinema and Casal de Joves shut their doors too, extracurricular activities were cancelled and you were stuck at home.

The strangeness began that first weekend. Your parents told you that you couldn't go outside. Not even to see your grandparents, get groceries, go to the beach, hang out with friends or sweethearts; not even to do exercise or play in the town square or at the park.

And it's stayed that way since then, day in and day out, as if you were grounded. No, you're not grounded, no. By staying inside we're battling a virus that's forced drastic decisions worldwide; you're experiencing the first-hand effects right now.

Every day you're making a huge effort by doing schoolwork from home. And I know you miss your classmates, your teachers, your friends and your routines. Your normal classes have become online classes, your parents have to help you with home- and classwork and, worse still, many of them —those that aren't stuck working from home like you— have to keep going in to work. Keep in mind that all of this is new and difficult for adults, too.

You, the children and youth of Formentera, are showing us how it's done. In each and every home you serve as lessons in patience and effort. I'm sure you'll find a way to make the most of the extra time with your families. And, for Formentera's youngest, I hope that new tools in digital communication are helping you keep in touch with the friends who are so important to you.

But effort, strength and smarts aside, it's totally normal to have moments where you feel like giving up. If you do, I want you to know I'm here by your side to help you get back up. And if you're worried about something, you can tell me about it in an email, at presidencia@consellde formentera.cat .

And remember, above all, that when we come out on the other side of this thing that has turned our little world upside down, we'll be stronger. Don't doubt it for a second.

Alejandra Ferrer Kirschbaum
President, Consell de Formentera
27 March 2020