

Honoring Ossabaw Island's Eleanor "Sandy" Torrey West (1913 - 2021)

BY ROBIN GUNN

Eleanor "Sandy" Torrey West, preserver and champion of Ossabaw Island, died on January 17, 2021, her 108th birthday, at her home in Garden City, Georgia.

Mrs. West and her brothers' children were the last private owners of Ossabaw Island, the 26,000-acre barrier island located at the southern tip of Chatham County, just south of Skidaway and Wassaw Islands.

From 1961 until 1983, Mrs. West operated several innovative interdisciplinary programs on Ossabaw and hosted thousands of people for creative, scientific



and historical projects. In 1978, the Torrey-West family, led by Mrs. West, sold Ossabaw to the State of Georgia for its preservation and establishment as Georgia's first Heritage Preserve.

As part of that sale, the state agreed to preserve it in perpetuity, and that its uses only be natural, scientific or cultural education, research or study. Mrs. West continued to live on Ossabaw Island, becoming a full-time resident in 1987. Until 2016, she lived in the family home

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Julianna Havens Rittmeyer
Photo submitted
by Miriam Rittmeyer

Isle of Hope Loses Another Friend

BY POLLY COOPER

Julianna Havens Rittmeyer died at home on Flinn Drive in Wymberley on October 20th, 2020.

She drove her golf cart around Wymberley chatting with friends and swimming in the Paxton Park pool. A neighbor, Bill Mintz, said, "Julie spent hours doing water

aerobics. She was a big supporter of the pool." "Julie" was born in New York and married Kodak executive, Andreas Rittmeyer, in 1962. They had two sons - Chris (Miriam), a pediatric gastroenterologist, and Rob (Pam), soccer director at Rio Rapids Northern

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Front Porch

BY CHRIS BRANTLEY, EDITOR

I've grappled with putting so many "obituaries" on the front page of the Isle of Hope News over the last year or so.

Some readers may think well, what about those who are still alive? I get that sentiment, but I also think it is important to remember those, particularly the long-timers, who have helped make the Isle of Hope the community it is today. Their lives need to be on record.

Most of the time, it is not me but a neighbor who offers to write the story because of the impact the person has had on the writer's life

And hopefully, in these crazy times when we hear about the death toll of Covid daily, it reminds us to LIVE now and do what we can to make our community better.

Sadness is always a part of losing a family member, friend or good neighbor, but so is celebration. Death should rouse us to live, not fear the end of our own lives.

So, I have concluded that a well-lived life deserves to be front page news!

Isle of Hope News

The Isle of Hope News is a bi-monthly publication serving Isle of Hope area residents and advertisers.

It was started by Isle of Hope resident Ed Yannett in 2011 and mails to 2,400 residents in Isle of Hope, Dutch Island, and surrounding areas.

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Rob (left) is the soccer director at Rio Rapids Northern Soccer Club in Santa Fe. Chris is a pediatric gastroenterologist here in Savannah. Photo submitted by Miriam Rittmeyer

Julie Rittmeyer

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Northern Soccer Club in Santa Fe.

Julie graduated from Rochester Institute of Technology with a BFA and MST. Her life was packed with art, travel, history and politics. She was a quilter, gardener, painter, cook and teacher.

Her dear friend, Jean Wise said, "Julie had a lovely voice and sang in her church choir. She and I drove to Arizona in 2007 stopping at Elvis's boyhood home and the Alamo. We went on to Scottsdale to visit my sister and family. Then San Antonio. So glad we went! So glad to be home!"

Neighbor Carolyn Tucker said, "There is a warm spot in Bill's and my hearts for Julie. Our daughter hoped to attend Savannah Arts Academy, but needed a portfolio. Julie worked with her on sketches, paintings, baskets, and tie dye to build her portfolio. She was accepted and graduated. Thank you, Julie!"

Another neighbor, Selma Bernard, said "All of us suffered a great loss with her passing. She made a great contribution to the community and was a good neighbor."

Kelli Mills, said, "Julie was part of our neighborhood watch and a wonderful asset to Isle



Pretty little Julie is all gussied up for Sunday school. This endearing photo was taken on Prospect Street in Newark, N. Y, around 1945. Photo submitted by Miriam Rittmeyer

of Hope. We will miss her greatly." Julie was president of the Wymberley Garden Club from 2011-2015. She also managed charitable work - voter registration, literacy, battered women and hospital work.

She lived in Newark, Buffalo, Rochester, Zurich, Paris, London and lastly Savannah.

Retired nurse Mary Blaney said, "Scott and I moved to Wymberley to be near our family and the community spirit. Ms. Julie delivered cookies on our first Christmas. She gave puzzles and crafts to my eight grandchildren.

Scott loved her home-cooking at the Wymberley Garden Club supper for the Isle of Hope Fire Department. She tried to recruit me into the garden club, but with so many "Grandma" duties, I couldn't. She was a fine example of IOH community spirit!"

Julie's paintings and stunning quilts can be

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“Sandy” West

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now known as the Torrey-West Estate, that was left to her as a life estate by her mother in 1959. Mrs. West embodied the spirit of Ossabaw Island.

She was always eager to share that spirit, and her island, so that people could reconnect with the natural world, and with each other, in important and powerful ways. Her enthusiasm, joyful spirit, and her love of the experience of Ossabaw inspired thousands of people over her long and fruitful life.

“It is hard to imagine that the death of someone at age 108 is surprising, but we are in shock over the loss of our visionary and friend,” said Elizabeth DuBose, Executive Director of the non-profit Ossabaw Island Foundation (TOIF).

Since 1998, TOIF has served as the steward of Ossabaw Island, managing programming and restoring and using historic buildings on the island in accordance with the Heritage Preserve designations of the island, through a use agreement with the State of Georgia’s Department of Natural Resources.

“Ossabaw Island, as we know it, exists because of Mrs. West, and Georgia is a better



Eleanor Torrey West in 2006 with her dog, Toby, near one of her favorite spots on Ossabaw Island, Ga. Photo by Curtis Compton/The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

place because of her life’s work. We extend our deepest condolences to Mrs. West’s children, grandchildren, many other relatives, and legions of close friends.”


“It was Mrs. West’s vision, determination, sensitivity, and generosity that made the island’s preservation possible, all to the benefit

of the State of Georgia, the public, the arts and sciences, the environment--all of us,” said TOIF Board Chair M. Tyus Butler, Jr.

“God speed, Sandy. What a wonderful life! You are already sorely missed.”

What’s next for the Torrey-West Estate and Ossabaw Island?

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“Sandy” West

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In the 1978 sale of Ossabaw Island to the State of Georgia, the 23 acres known as the Torrey West Estate was purchased along with the rest of the island, but was set aside for Mrs. West’s personal use and management, in continuation of the life estate originally granted to her in 1959 in her mother’s will.

At Mrs. West’s death on January 17, 2021, the Torrey West Estate immediately became part of the Ossabaw Island Heritage Preserve and is now under the management of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and TOIF.

The defined uses in the Heritage Preserve requiring that all activities on Ossabaw Island be for “natural, scientific and cultural education, research and study” now apply to the Torrey West Estate; during Mrs. West’s life this property was exempt from those defined uses.

The Torrey West Estate is now part of the use agreement between TOIF and the State of Georgia, meaning that TOIF is coordinating and leading the management of the property, in the same way that TOIF provides access and use to the northern half of Ossabaw Island.

Mrs. West’s family has been granted time to visit the house,

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L-R, Elizabeth DuBose (TOIF Executive Director) and Eleanor Torrey West at Mrs. West’s 100th birthday party on Ossabaw Island in 2013. Photo by Mark Frissell



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Julie Rittmeyer

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purchased on Phalarope.org - an organization dear to the hearts of the Rittmeyers. Her daughter-in-law, Dr. Miriam Rittmeyer, is director.

This organization betters childrens' lives by empowering women through education, community outreach and opportunity in the US and Guatemala.

In her latter years, Julie was often seen relaxing on her red bench at her home reading or waving to neighbors. "Julie's Bench" is now at the Botanical Gardens on Eisenhower Drive. Given by the Wymberley Garden

Club, a plaque with her name and dates has been installed in her memory.

Remembering his mother,

Dr. Chris said, "She was quirky, questioning, vibrant, bon-vivant and lived life full of creativity and gusto!"

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Do you know this man?

BY TOM PARRISH

I read a lot of crime fiction, and I pick up a lot of trash. What's one got to do with the other you might ask?

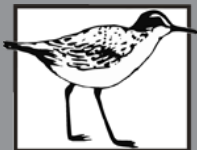
Well at a crime scene you're presented with some physical evidence, clues pointing you on a path to hopefully solving a crime. There are many starts and stops. Assumptions realized or discarded depending on their veracity. A good detective weighs all his options and hopes to connect

all the dots. Can he find the culprit?

A good book or movie will keep us guessing until the end. Litter gathering can be a boring repetitious chore if you don't spice it up. Myself, I like to channel my inner Harry Bosch or Dick Tracy persona, whilst at work. How did this item end up in the roadway, bushes or ditch? Who tossed it there? When and why? What kind of person would knowingly trash our home? So while gathering, I have a little fun to pass the time. I mentally catalogue the wide assortment of trash I've accumulated, and try to put a face on the perpetrator.

Obviously no one person could possibly produce all this trash, that's evident by the sheer volume, and its variety. Yet, there are many repeat items that indicate to this aspiring sleuth that we just might be dealing with a serial litterer. So I hope you'll find it humorous as well as thought provoking as I profile and offer up my composite image of said offender, based solely on his unsightly habit and my imagination. He's not a healthy individual that's for sure. Loves a candy bar and gorges on fast food. Enjoys his beer, and won't turn down

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Senior Tech Tuesday - FREE - First Tuesday of Every Month

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(See details on the next page)

BY ED YANNETT

Until recently, my mother, who lives 1100 miles away in Massachusetts, has had a flip phone. Mom has always been technologically challenged, so we're excited when she knows which remote to use to turn on the TV.

For years, my brother and I tried to talk her into getting a smartphone to send her pictures and let her see her grandkids more! Just recently, she gave in, and we got her a NEW smartphone.

Recently driving in the car, mom grabs her new smartphone out of her purse with the cord attached to the phone and the other end connected to the charging block, IN HER PURSE IN THE CAR. VERY frustrated, she says, "this stupid phone is not charging! This thing doesn't work!" UGG...TRUE STORY! Ok, so you may not be as technologically challenged as my mother.



Still, working with many seniors as a real estate agent, I have seen firsthand how this affects seniors! It kills me we can't share special moments and use the technology to be closer and share our lives with my mom! For my mom, the two big issues are the Cost and Who can do these things!?

Almost every technology problem I have encountered with clients and my mom are little things...like plugging the charging block into the wall!

In my mom's defense, the charging block had the plug that flipped into the block, so it wasn't easy to see how that worked! But still hilarious!

I don't want any seniors in our neighborhood to have these problems! So, if you're 70-years-old or older, on a fixed income, and need help with technology, we have set up a FREE Senior Tech Tuesday! On the first Tuesday of every month for Seniors! Free!

**CONTINUED ON
NEXT PAGE**



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We have partnered with Tom Hacker from Computer Works in Sandfly to do the work. Just call or text me at 912-844-9000, and I'll set up an appointment for you. Each time slot will be on the hour from 9 to 4 pm. Tom will spend 45 minutes fixing ANY technology problem you have! (This does

not include any equipment that has to be replaced.)

Please call me if you have questions! I hope this helps our seniors stay in touch with their loved ones and makes their lives a little easier! I am proud to serve our neighborhood as your real estate agent!

Crawl Space Encapsulation

BY ED YANNETT

For years I wanted to clean out the crawl space under our house, and last November we finally did it! It ALWAYS got pushed to the bottom of the list of things you want to do around the house! We've checked off lots of Redo Projects over the last 20 years: New Boys Bath, New Master Bath, Kitchen, New Roof, Paint House, New Windows, New HVAC, Paint inside of the house (3 times!), and New Hardwood Floors.

We've done everything you can imagine, but not the crawl space! Who really cares about under your house! (At least not my wife.) Well, let me tell you! This is the thing we should have done FIRST!

Here are 6 reasons you need to do this ASAP!

- 1 - Supper HIGH humidity levels under the house!
- 2 - We had critters living underneath the house! DISGUSTING!
- 3 - Completely change the atmosphere of the inside of the house! It smells cleaner! MUCH less humid in the house!
- 4 - The cleanout! Danny Poppell and his crew took out 18 - 55-gallon black trash bags of crap out from under our house!!!
- 5 - Peace of mind! It is a strange but good feeling that the underneath of my house is clean and perfectly climate controlled!
- 6th - Last but most definitely the nerdiest! I have



an app that tells me the conditions under the house! Temp and Humidity!

So, I would 100% recommend having this done NOW! All the other things you see are nice and they make for a happy wife (even Lisa was impressed with the encapsulated crawl space!) This is one of those adult things that makes all the other things last longer and makes the house more enjoyable, healthy, and safe!

Danny Poppell did this job for me, and I would highly recommend him. His crew did an amazing job, and his bid came in MUCH less than the others! His cell number is 912-507-9476. CALL HIM!

To watch a video on the full transformation of the crawl space go to Youtube - <https://youtu.be/TK8Dq3VOIXc>



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Eleanor Torrey West portrait
 Photo by Robert S. Cooper
 Photography

“Sandy” West

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collect personal effects and hold a private memorial service.

Both the Georgia DNR and the Ossabaw Island Foundation will continue to work together to honor the legacy left to our state by Mrs. West and her family, as we care for and share the island that so many Georgians have enjoyed visiting over the years, while preserving it for future generations.

For information on how to visit Ossabaw Island, visit ossabawisland.org or call The Ossabaw Island Foundation office, 912-344-3900. Robin Gunn is project coordinator for the Ossabaw Island Foundation.

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Do you know this man?

- Continued from page 7 -

a shot of Fireball. A chain smoker who also enjoys the occasional cigar.

A dreamer who fantasizes about hitting the lottery. He's a dog owner, but by no means a responsible one. Judging by the mislaid toys and clothes, I'd say he's a family man. He is literate; I'll give him that, and more than willing to share his extra Pennysavers with the rest of us.

Well there he is - do you recognize him? No? Well unfortunately he's a conglomeration of us all. There's a piece of each of us in his make-up, with one important trait lacking. Pride! It's impossible to say you respect your home, your neighbors or your community, then turn around and poop on our living room carpet. I wish I could close this case, problem solved, but as we all know that is sadly just not the case.



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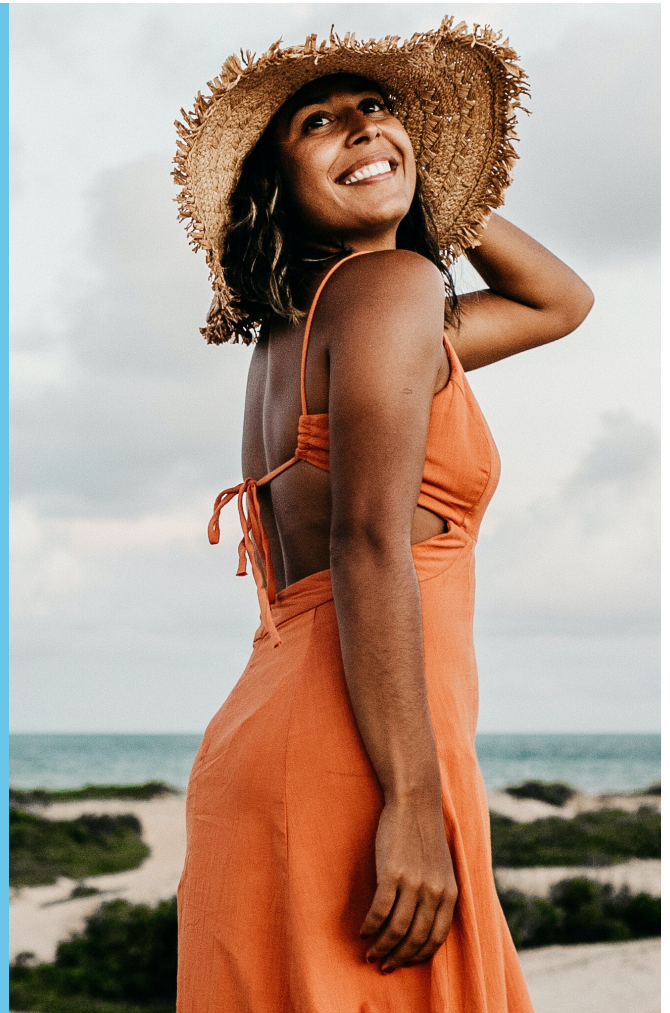
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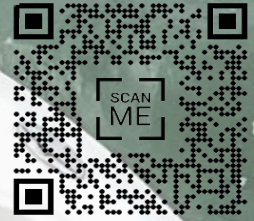
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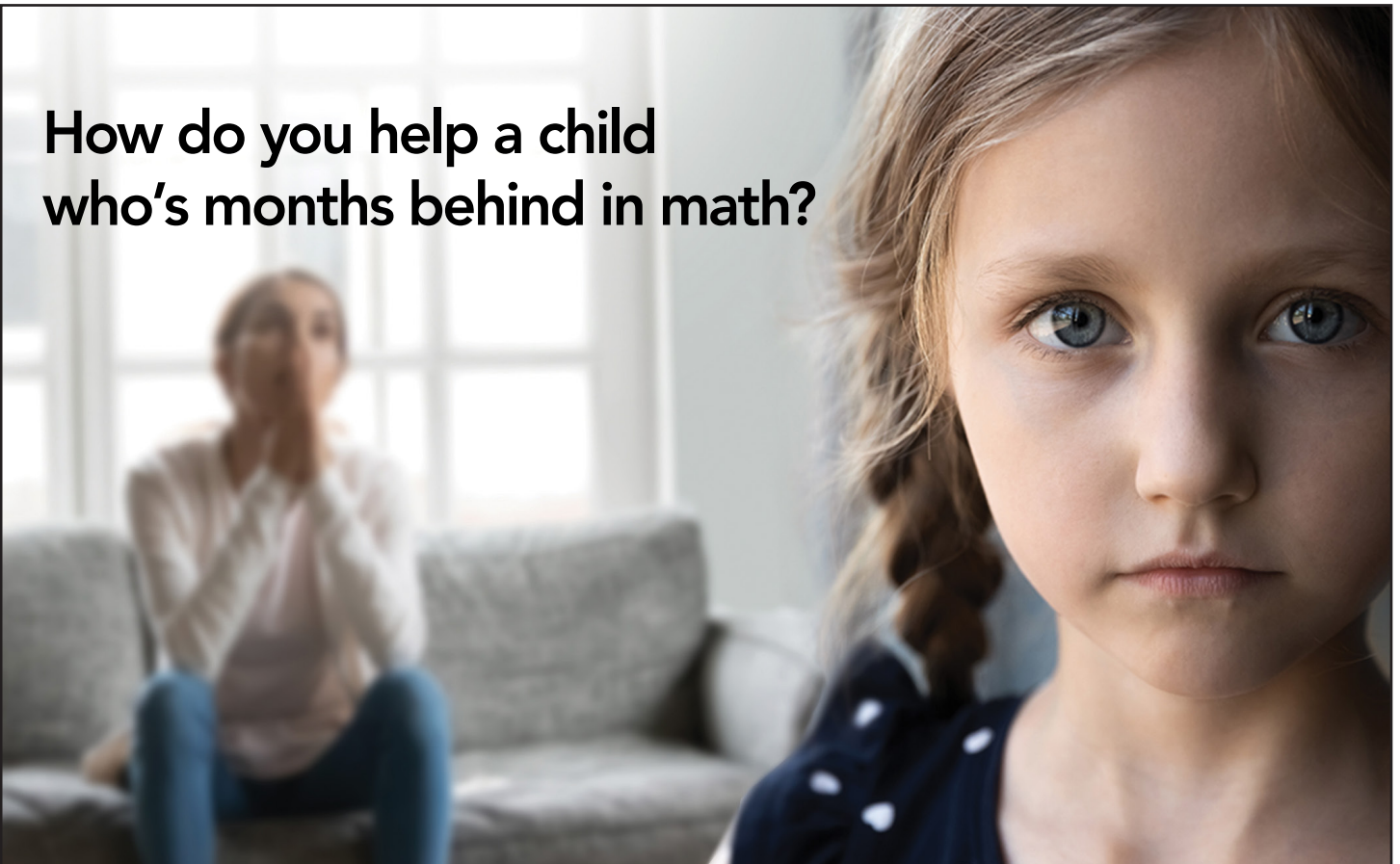
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*Learning During COVID-19, November 2020 - NWEA Research; How Kids Are Performing, Fall 2020 - Renaissance Learning



Reversing Math Learning Loss for a COVID Generation

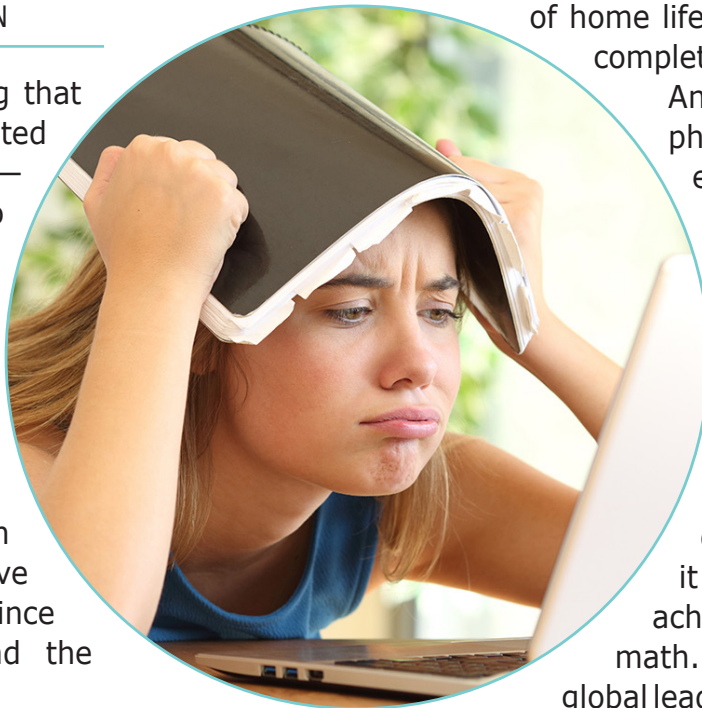
BY AILEEN CLARKSON

It goes without saying that the pandemic has disrupted every aspect of our lives — from the way we live, to how we interact, to the way we work and play. And as most parents of school-aged kids are well aware, it has also greatly impacted our children's education.

How students learn and teachers teach have changed dramatically since COVID emerged around the globe.

Instead of teachers providing consistent in-person instruction to children in a classroom, a majority of schools transitioned to online learning – which proved to be challenging for a great many kids.

Students had to learn to balance the distractions



of home life with daily instruction and completing assignments.

And many students faced physical, psychological and economic effects of the pandemic that further impacted their ability to learn. Recent studies have shown COVID's negative impact on many aspects of our children's education.

But one subject stands out above the rest when it comes to the effect on achievement and growth: math. Renaissance Learning, a global leader in research, assessment and learning analytics, recently released a study illuminating the negative impact of COVID on education.

The study drew upon a sample of more than 1 million students in grades 1-8 from all 50 states. For math, all grades showed students were performing behind expectations. The average child in some grade levels was found to be 12 weeks behind expectations in math.

While it's true that students are facing unique challenges with learning and progressing in math, teachers are also experiencing their own set of challenges. It's difficult enough to offer individual instruction to a classroom full of kids during normal times.

But it's an entirely different thing to help students make up for learning loss during a global pandemic. Thousands of parents are already turning to supplementary education providers to reverse math learning loss for their children.

It's the right choice during normal circumstances, but it's especially crucial during the extraordinary times in which we are living now.

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