

Anxiety has always been a part of my life, so when I heard school was closing due to the coronavirus, I was very scared. See, my mom still had to go to work each day, so I was left home alone with my two dogs. During the first week, I would email my mom every five minutes and get furious when she didn't answer right away—scared that something had happened, when in reality it was all fine. But after the first week, I realized that this wasn't so bad! I was more independent and I loved it.

Being independent is like getting a power-up in a video game or winning a prize at the claw machine. You're getting a boost of confidence. I made my own rules and had to decide between right and wrong choices, such as, 'Should I have a healthy option for lunch, or a bowl of ice cream?' (Sometimes I picked ice cream, but you get my point.) I got so into preparing meals that I started to make lunch for my mom and homemade treats for my dogs.

I have learned that gaining independence is a lot like being a baby bird: You're cared for and nurtured for a while. Then you leave the nest, and it may be scary for a few days but you get the hang of it. I know I did.

Sable, winning essay in the Let Grow Independence Challenge

