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“There are days when the pandemic seems like a lot of “no”. No, we can’t go to the zoo, to the playground, to the library, to preschool. No you can’t go grocery shopping with daddy, he has to go by himself. No, you can’t go play with the kids next door, we have to stay in our own backyard. There are days when, even as an introvert, I miss interacting with others. So when the kids and I go for our daily walk, I hope that the couple that lives a few doors down is sitting out on their front porch so that we can say hello. The phone ringing, the chime from an e-mail or text message, or the sound of a Skype call coming through are all that more exciting now. And there are days when I compare this maternity leave to my previous one and am saddened that the activities that I did with my first child aren’t available this time around. This time, when I was feeling more confident in going out with a baby and wanting to build up my village, we’ve been forced to stay at home. On the other hand, there are days when the pandemic has made life easier. With so many things being offered online, the kids and I are still able to participate in some of our regular activities without the struggle of getting a 3 year old and a baby dressed and out the door on time. Instead of going for a walk to get us to a destination, we’re going for a walk to notice the small details of our neighbourhood - a pinwheel spinning in the wind, the tulips growing from bud to flower, the hearts and smiley faces taped to windows. And while we haven’t been able to expand our village to those outside of our home, with my husband now working from home, he has been around for a lot more of our baby’s first year of life. As much as I wake up hoping that this has all been a bad dream, I worry about what will happen as our city begins to open up. How long will it take before I’m ready to go out with my family and live the life that we lived before?”