

I was 18 when covid started. When we first went into lockdown my birthday was a week away. I turned 19 in quarantine. It was lonely, and it continuously got lonelier. I was in my second semester of college and I know none of us expected to completely be cut off from our schools. In the fall of 2020, I transferred colleges. This was probably the worst time to transfer considering everything has been online since. It's almost impossible to make friends, to find study partners, or to connect with our teachers. I used to be a good student and now I barely know how to go to school. There is no separation between school and home.

School is online and the education is nowhere near the same. I see my friends and I struggling daily to understand our classes and to try and communicate with professors to try and have some sort of connection. I never thought I would miss school, but covid has made me miss school. I miss making friends. I miss meeting my teachers in person. I am an early childhood major, and I have to do my field experience over zoom. I want to be able to connect with students and learn and grow as an educator, but covid took that away from me. My first two years of college have been online, and I will never get those years back, those classes back, or the opportunities I missed back.

My birthday is a week away, which makes it a year since quarantine. It has been a year and I have now been vaccinated. As a childcare worker I was thrilled to get the vaccination. It felt like a milestone towards normal life. At my daycare we wear masks and the one thing that stands out the most is my toddlers will sit next to me and pull my mask down and smile. My kids don't even know what my face looks like and they smile when they can see it. My kids have to miss weeks of school because of covid and having to quarantine. It breaks my heart because they don't understand why they can't see their teacher, or why they have to miss school when they aren't even sick. This is what covid has been like for me. This is what covid is like as an early childhood education major.