



## HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

# Woman Helps Children 'Beat the Heck' out of Coronavirus

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When the coronavirus pandemic began last year, Carolina Tolladay Vidal's party business suffered immediately. People cancelled parties and no one was buying piñatas from her business in the American state of Alaska.

A piñata is a container usually filled with small treats -- like **candies**, fruits, or gifts. It is hung up at parties or celebrations. A person, likely a child, with eyes covered would hit a piñata with a **stick**. And the objects inside would fall to the ground for everyone.

Tolladay Vidal told Alaska Public Media recently that many of her projects were moved to other dates. "Many," she added, "were canceled."

She had to find new ideas to bring back her business. So, Tolladay Vidal decided to make large, red piñatas shaped like the coronavirus.

After she shared an image of her handmade coronavirus piñata on social media, she said the orders started pouring in.

She explained why so many people want to beat up a coronavirus-shaped piñata. "I think you really **smash** them and break them and hit them with meaning," she said, "because it has been **tough** for everybody."

Rose Consenstein, age 8, agrees. She said, with her eyes covered, she could not see it. But that did not stop her from "beating the **heck**" out of a coronavirus piñata at her birthday party.

Tolladay Vidal started her piñata business about four years ago. One of her daughters wanted a piñata shaped like “Cloud Guy,” a **character** from the movie *Trolls*.

She said she could not find one in stores or online. So, she said, “Well, you know, it shouldn’t be so hard to make up a piñata.”

Tolladay Vidal grew up in Mexico and spent years creating piñatas with her family. She said, “I have a memory of my **grandma** setting up all the grandchildren and helping her make a **couple** star piñatas with the seven points.”

Kate Consenstein is Rose’s mother. She said the coronavirus piñatas were perfect for her daughter’s **outdoor**, socially distanced birthday party.

“Coronavirus,” she said, “is the perfect **villain** for children.” Children can “understand that this is the thing we want to defeat. There was so much cheering,” she said, “when it exploded.”

I’m Anna Matteo.

*The Associated Press reported this story. Anna Matteo adapted it for VOA Learning English. Hai Do was the editor.*

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## Words in This Story

**candy** *-n.* a sweet food made with sugar or chocolate

**stick** *-n.* a long thin piece of wood

**smash** *-v.* to hit (something) violently and very hard

**tough** *-adj.* very difficult to do or deal with

**heck** *-informal noun* : used as a more polite form of “*hell*”

**character** *-n.* a person in a story, play, or movie

**grandma** *-informal noun* : the mother of one's father or mother

**couple** *-n.* two persons married, engaged, or otherwise romantically paired

**outdoor** *-adj.* done, used, or located outside a building

**villain** *-n.* a character in a story, movie, etc., who does bad things

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