

Home Activity Ideas to Suggest to Families During Stay-At-Home Social-Distancing

As you stay in contact and in communication with the families you are working with, they may be thinking, “*We are home all day – now what?*” Well, here are a few ideas you can suggest to families to help them fill the time with their young children. Remember to only suggest a few ideas at a time, not all at once, as you continue to connect with them during this stay-at-home time period.

General

- ◆ Keep a schedule! Get up at the same time, eat at the same time, go to bed at the same time!
- ◆ Turn off the television and limit the news. Children need calm and consistency.
- ◆ Eat healthy meals. Get enough fruits and vegetables. Limit sugar.
- ◆ It will be hard, but playdates with other children should wait. Trading germs is just not a good idea!
- ◆ Enjoy your time together!



Art

- ◆ All you need is plain paper, crayons, and some markers! Glue is great and so are scissors, but most children will be happy to be able to draw a picture for you!
- ◆ If you do have scissors and glue, grab some old magazines and cut out pictures for a collage. If you have some items that can be glued to paper – do it! That allows children to have a picture in their head and attempt to put it on paper.
- ◆ If you have some watercolors, fantastic! If you don't that's OK too! You can make some with water and food coloring, but that is not washable and will leave stains – just be prepared!
- ◆ Do not feel the need to correct their work. That is part of the process! It is their creation and theirs alone.



Physical (Small muscles and larger muscles)

- ◆ If you have puzzles at home, get one out! This helps your child in their visual discrimination and makes them use the small muscles in their hands.
- ◆ If you have a floor puzzle, this gets them moving the large muscles in their arms and legs.
- ◆ If you do not have puzzles at home and you have an empty cereal box, get out your scissors and cut puzzle pieces using the front of the cereal box!
- ◆ If you can't go outdoors then look for ways for your child to crawl under tables, jump from the tile in one room to the carpet in another, or just use their large muscles to move.
- ◆ If the weather is decent, then take sidewalk chalk and go draw on the driveway or sidewalk.
- ◆ Go outdoors and jump over the cracks in the sidewalk!
- ◆ Sit outdoors and read a story, go pick flowers, or pull weeds.
- ◆ If you play on outdoor equipment, be sure you have cleaned it like you do indoors to reduce the spread of germs.



Self-Help

- ◆ Children can carry their dishes to the sink following a meal. Ask them to help!
- ◆ Children love to use a broom and dustpan – ask for their help!
- ◆ Children can dress themselves with a bit of help, but do not do it all for them.
- ◆ Allow your child to pick out their clothes the night before. It won't matter if the clothes match as you are home anyway!
- ◆ If they choose clothing not appropriate for the season, that's okay – they will figure out they have clothes on for the wrong temperature for the day and will learn to go change or add to their clothes. Good lessons to learn.



Cognitive (Math, Science, Thinking)

- ◆ Read a book. Look at the pictures. Make predictions of what you think will come next.
- ◆ With many libraries closed, look for a story that is already online and available, but do limit this access to no more than 30 minutes for the day.
- ◆ There is always laundry to do! Have your child help sort it by colors (math), fold towels (math), and match socks!
- ◆ Have your child help create a menu (planning and writing). Then allow your child to help fix the meal. When they have a say in the meal planning and then help prepare it, they are more likely to eat it!
- ◆ At bath time, make those bubbles! (Science) What makes them grow in number? Do they float? How do you pop them?
- ◆ Have some trucks? Cars? Princess carriages? Then have a race! This helps children learn velocity or speed, and if you have something to use as a ramp, helps them with looking at the angle needed to make things roll faster or slower!
- ◆ Go for a drive! What do you see? Any leaves on the trees yet? See any cows? Make comparisons and get your child to recognize their surroundings. Listen for birds. All of this is math and science and very appropriate for your child's age.



Be sure to share this thought with the families you are working with... *Regardless of what activities you find yourself doing, encourage your child to help. Have fun and spend time with them. There is so much in our everyday activities that are learning activities that you want to be sure you take advantage of.*

