

Issue #3


Playtime's Guide to Activities Families Can Do Together!



We hope you are continuing to stay safe and healthy during this difficult time. For issue 3, we've found more fun and easy ways to reduce stress and keep children occupied while the nation shelters in place.

<p>1. Combine body movements while practicing the alphabet. Say each letter of the alphabet and challenge your child to make the shape of the letter using their body. For any letters that might require two people, jump in and create joint letters with your child. This is a great way to develop coordination, letter recognition, and bond in a fun way!</p>	<p>8. Time My Move. Choose a movement or action and see how long your child can perform it while another keeps track of time. See how long they can balance on one foot, or how long it takes to run up a hill or clean up their clothes off the floor.</p>
<p>2. Have a Family Costume Night. Create a theme and let the children make funny outfits with clothes they have. For example, Royalty Night where everyone can dress like a king or queen. No costumes? No problem! Wrap a T-shirt around your head to make a crown, or use a towel as a robe.</p>	<p>9. Freeze Dance Rhyme Dance. Crank the tunes and let the dancing begin. Unlike the regular game, when the music stops, a designated person calls out a word. If the other dancer(s) can't respond with a word to rhyme with it within a designated time period (say 5 to 10 seconds), that person is out.</p>
<p>3. Use markers and old socks to make sock puppets that children can use to play pretend. (Check out Playtime Puppet Pals on our YouTube channel: https://bit.ly/PlayChannel)</p>	<p>10. Shout it Out. Challenge your children to find things around the room with the same color you shout out.</p>
<p>4. Create an "I-Spy" jar. Hide small toys/objects in a clear container filled with rice/sand/dirt/flour for children to spot/identify the items.</p>	<p>11. Kitchen Tennis. Crumple up a piece of paper and use spoons or other kitchen utensils to toss the paper back and forth.</p>
<p>5. Create a family band. Pick objects around the room to create different "instruments." (For example, a box and a spoon as a drum set.) Take turns creating different beats and then play your beats at the same time to create fun music as a team.</p>	<p>12. Bounce to Win. Have your child bounce a ball or rolled up socks 100 times. Even an empty water bottle will do. Time how long it takes to get to 100. This encourages children to count and practice perseverance.</p>
<p>6. Shape hunt. Give children 5 minutes to look around the room and identify items that are a specific shape. The easiest shapes to use are circles, squares, and rectangles.</p>	<p>13. Check out https://www.skypeascientist.com/ and enjoy a Q&A session with a scientist of your choosing to learn fun and exciting information.</p>
<p>7. Song Charades. Challenge your child to create hand signals and movements that represent a song for you to guess without singing out loud. For example, <i>Itsy Bitsy Spider</i>.</p>	<p>14. Check out Playtime's YouTube channel to see videos of our staff and volunteers doing fun activities to keep you and your children entertained! https://bit.ly/PlayChannel</p>

Free, Educational Apps for Kids (that can be played on your phone)

Children ages 2-5	Children 5-teens (and adults too)	Especially for Parents!
<p>Sesame Street’s new “Caring for Each Other” resources provide free songs, stories, and games to help children during this time of crisis:</p> <p>https://www.sesamestreet.org/caring</p> <p>Elmo’s dad also has a message of support for parents out there!</p> <p>https://youtu.be/aEmaWlxyhj8</p>	<p>Lavar Burton from “Reading Rainbow” hosts live read-alouds every week for different age groups!</p> <p>https://twitter.com/levarburton</p> 	<p>Parent University through DCPS has an amazing video with tips to help your child manage stress. It’s worth checking out:</p> <p>https://youtu.be/mzqnMcqKzCM</p> 

No Wifi/Data Plan Needed

- **Quick Math Jr.** – An app that covers the essential foundations of mathematics, including counting, addition and subtraction, place value, writing numbers and much more.
- **Endless 123/Endless Reader** – Apps that encourage early reading and math success.
- **Elmo’s ABC Lite** – Explore the alphabet with Elmo!
- **Tinybop: The Human Body Lite** – Dive into the skeletal, muscular, nervous, circulatory, respiratory, and digestive systems. The heart beats, guts gurgle, lungs breathe, and eyes see.



Tips for Parents

Parents have the most important and challenging job in the world: raising children and supporting your family during a time of crisis. Here are ways you can care for yourself so you can best support your kids:

1. **It's OK to ask for help.** Even the best parents and caregivers get overwhelmed and need support. Help is out there. Reach out and ask!
2. **Model for your children** how to calm yourself down and manage difficult emotions. *“I’m feeling frustrated; I’m going to take deep breaths to calm down so I can think. I need your help giving mommy some quiet time.”* (Try breathing in for 4 seconds, hold for 7 sec, and breathe out for 8 sec.)
3. **Think of a trusted person in your life** that you can call if you are in a parenting crisis, and if you don't have someone or can't reach them, call one of the numbers below:

National Parent Helpline Monday to Friday 1pm-10pm EST: 1-855-427-2736

DC Mental Health Access Helpline: 24 hours a day: 1-888-793-4357

SAMHSA’s National Helpline: Free, confidential support and referrals to wellness support including counseling: 24 hours/day: 800-662-HELP (4357)

DC’s school-based mental health for kids: school.mentalhealth@k12.dc.gov

Be An Advocate for You and Your Child!

During this time of isolation, it’s especially important to reach out and ask for what you need. Many schools and shelters have extra emergency resources that can help. Contact your child’s school to ask for help with Distance Learning. That’s their job to help you make it work. If you need support, call us too!



If you’ve found this guide helpful or have ideas for future editions, please contact us at: info@playtimeproject.org

Stay safe and healthy and please ask for help when you need it!

Playtime Helps Children Rise

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