

Growing and Learning Together

Dear families

In light of the current Coronavirus lockdown situation, we understand families will be spending an excessive amount of time together in their homes which may prove stressful. These are challenging times for all, including our children, who may not be able to understand the restrictions put on them and could get upset and frustrated. So, every week we are going to be issuing some fun, easy and interactive ideas to help you create special times together. Stay safe, stay indoors whenever possible and have fun.

STAY HOME ▶ PROTECT THE NHS ▶ SAVE LIVES

Den Building

- Using sheets, towels, fabrics etc. help the children to create a den
- Just simply throwing a sheet over a table or a couple of chairs can create a lovely cosy space
- Let your children decide how they want to use their new special space with you:
 - Is it a story-telling space?
 - Does it need cushions and pillows added to it?
 - Do you need to use pegs to hold the fabric?
 - Could you add Christmas lights?
 - Is it a space for building creations together e.g. duplo or lego?
 - Are they imagining it's a rocket, a train, or a flying tent etc – could you make up a story together?
 - Could you all squeeze in there for a picnic lunch?
 - Could you remind and practise pretend hand-washing techniques together?
 - Or is it just a lovely cosy space to quietly lie in together and have a cuddle?
 - Take photos to look back at and chat about the special times spent together

Toddlers will be thrilled with being in a small cosy 'new' space and older children will love experimenting with their creative and imaginative den-making skills – just be mindful of health and safety as some children can get quite adventurous with their den creations.



Household Routines - fun doing the laundry

It is never too late to involve children in the life-skill of carrying out household routines. With all the extra pairs of hands at home, get them involved in the laundry.

- Explain what the process is with putting the washing in the machine, measuring out the soap into the dispenser and choosing which setting and why
- Look at the washing going round and round - chat about what you can smell, see and hear - it's fascinating for young children to watch the washing and soapy water going round slowly, fast and then stopping repeatedly - can be strangely fascinating for you too!
- Have fun sorting the laundry when dry. Have a go at 'Find the Matching Sock', practising their early maths skills by sorting socks by colour, size and owner and watch the children concentrate on finding the pairs
- If you have space for a washing line - set one up with a piece of string and let the children have a go at pegging the laundry on it - praise their successes as managing pegs is a real skill for little hands

Always be mindful of health and safety as items like washing powders, capsules, liquids and string can be a severe hazard to children.

- Take photos to look back at and chat about the laundry process again.

Everyday activities, which may be tedious for adults, can be a source of great interest to young children. It may take longer to carry out but it is time well spent...and most of us are experiencing having a lot of time right now.



Listening and Looking 'I-Spy' Game

This 'I-Spy' game can be done indoors as well as outdoors by just looking through an open window.

As you know, children will need to be supervised at open windows and never to lean out.

Give the children a little time to listen and look around and then ask them if they can hear or see any of the following:

Picture	Word	Hear	See
	Bird		
	Tree		
	Car		
	Cat		
	Dog		
	Bee		

You can always add other objects depending on what you can see from your windows. For older children make the challenge harder by asking them to identify different cars, birds, trees etc.

Finish off the game with everyone drawing a picture of what they saw - have a go yourself!

Creating Special Moments

Cuddle up to your loved ones and share a favourite story or song – and not just at bedtime! With spring in full bloom here are some “baby rabbit” themed suggestions. Can you think of any other baby animals that could feature in your stories/songs?

Guess How Much I Love You (Sam McBratney) – Narrated version is available [here](#)

Little Peter Rabbit - Sing and sign with the Singing Hands

The Tale of Peter Rabbit (Beatrix Potter) – Narrated version is available [here](#)



Children learn through play and they learn most from you so make your time together as playful as possible. They will love playing with you and many special memories can be created during this challenging time. Try and create a daily routine for you and your children - include making regular contact with other family members via social media so that children still feel connected to them.

Useful information to help explain Coronavirus to your children

Coronavirus explained through a cartoon by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

[UNICEF guides to coronavirus for parents and children](#)

If your child is worried or anxious about coronavirus, find professional advice from [Parents Helpline experts at Young Minds](#)

This information has been provided by The Education People, Kent County Council's Education Services Company



Early Years and Childcare Excellence



Enhancing Family Involvement in Children's Learning

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