

## **TIP SHEET #1**

### **Social/Physical Distancing**

Social distancing—what does that even mean? Social distancing is “deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness.” We all need to stay in place, avoid social gatherings and be smart about our hygiene in order to slow the spread of COVID-19.

However, social distancing does not mean also distancing yourself from having a good time. It simply means you need to be more creative with socializing and having fun!

### **Indoor Camping**

Enjoy a night under the stars! And by stars, we mean the dimmed lights in your living room. Build a blanket fort/tent filled with comfortable pillows. Dim the lights or relax by candlelight. Cook typical camping food such as hot dogs and baked s'mores. Tell stories, drink a beverage and bask in family company (from a safe distance, of course)!

### **Bowling at Home**

Bowling MIGHT be the best sport to ever exist...

If you have 10 full water bottles—plastic or preferably a few reusable ones—place them in a triangle, like they are set up at a bowling alley. Find a ball, any kind, and have a fun night inside! You can turn on music and make food you would find at a bowling alley—such as nachos—to make the experience as realistic as possible.

### **Movie Marathon**

Most theaters have closed their doors, but a movie night is still within your reach. Several streaming services offer hundreds—if not thousands—of movies available under your roof. Pick a series or a few movies you and anyone else at your place would like to watch. Pop some popcorn and fill your glasses up with your favourite beverage. Dim your lights like at the movie theater and snuggle into a blanket (by yourself, anyone else can snuggle their own blanket). Voila! You are now at the movie theater, at your own place!

### **Hide and Seek**

Hide-and-seek, is a popular children's game in which any number of players (ideally at least three) conceal themselves in a set environment, to be found by one or more seekers. However, please use this alternative – Hide an object or objects in the house/back yard and have your children find them.

### **BINGO**

It's always fun to play Bingo with children! Create your own bingo cards/boards or search online for an abundance of ideas.

***Stay Safe and Have Fun while Social/Physical Distancing***

## TIP SHEET #2

### Outdoor Activities

Balance on stepping logs. Not only it would bring endless excitement to a child, but it would also significantly enhance their balancing skills.



### Limbo

Place a limbo set in your backyard, and play some fun music to enhance the mood.



### Observing and Learning about Insects

Provide children with a magnifying glass, and let them observe the different kinds of insects in your backyard. At the same time, you could explain to them the behaviors of various insects and their role in the ecosystem. For example, why would worms come off the ground after a heavy rain? How will they enrich the soil? What kind of foods do crickets eat? How do ants carry their foods?



## Outdoor Scavenger Hunt

Take the children outside!



### Tip Sheet #3

#### Family Activities

Make a “reading tent” using chairs, pillows and blankets. Crawl in and READ

Draw a picture or make a card for someone special today. Do not forget to sign your name!

Count flowers. Count socks. Count spoons. Count steps as you climb. Count everything.

Sit across from each other on the grass and hold hands while you sing (and rock): “Row, row, row your boat”

Have a bike or wagon washday in your yard.

Practice your cutting. Use flyers, magazines or cereal/cracker boxes.

Make some mud stew today! What interesting things can you find to put in your stew?

Have your child look out the window. Then have her/him describe 3-4 things he/she saw.

#### LIVING LETTERS

Give each child an aluminum pie plate with holes punched in the bottom. Invite children to fill their pans with potting soil. Next, have children use their fingers to “write” the first letter of their names in the soil. (Be sure each child’s letter is about ½-inch deep.) Help children place grass seed inside the outline of their letters in the soil. (A seed every 1/8 of an inch should do it.) Cover the grass seed with a layer of soil. Then water. Be sure to put the pie plates on a cookie sheet to catch the extra water. Watch for the letters to come alive! A great opportunity to talk about seeds, plants, and the things plants need to grow. Happy planting!

Make homemade instruments with your child and use them to keep the beat. You can make:

- drums out of oatmeal boxes and use wooden spoons as drumsticks;
- cymbals out of pie pans;
- shakers by filling containers with rice or buttons and fastening them securely;
- guitars by stretching a variety of rubber bands around an empty shoe box;
- tube kazoos by using a paper towel tube cut in half and covering one end with wax paper held in place with a rubber band. The kazoo is played by humming into the open end of the tube.



## Tip Sheet #4

### At home

Try to keep daily routines as stable as possible during this break. As much as possible, try to stick to daily routines, with wake-up times, meals, naps, and bedtimes as usual. Children thrive on predictability, and it's good for their caregivers, too. (It's much easier to deal with a long day with little ones if it's divided into smaller, more manageable pieces.)

Remember that one of the most favorite types of play for children is helping you with “real” work. Think about whether your toddler can help with meal preparation, setting the table, sorting or putting away laundry, cleaning up (for example, putting shoes in the closet) or putting new toilet paper rolls in a basket in the bathroom. These tasks may take a bit longer with our toddlers, but it's fun for them and also teaches the value of cooperation.

Start with a Toy Rotation - If you have a variety of toys, try a toy rotation. Pick a few toys to leave out for your child to play with and put the rest away out of sight. After a week or so, switch out the toys they've been using for the ones stored away, and boom, it feels like they have new toys!

Physical Play: Little ones need to move and work their bodies...and voices. They will need opportunities to be loud, run, climb, and jump. This may happen outside or inside. Use a bedsheet as a parachute (open it wide and raise it up above your heads, then bring it down to the floor). For infants, raise and lower a light blanket over them while playing peek-a-boo. Create an obstacle course using furniture, pillows, and toys.

Slime: Make some jello. Pour unset jello into a stove pot, add some tapioca and boil it for a few minutes. Allow to cool and put the mixture into a large bowl. Add plastic insects, dinosaurs, or other things to the jello/slime. Let your child explore the mixture with their hands.

Mystery Box: Put a bunch of different things in a box, like socks, a favourite toy, some pebbles, or grapes. Have your child reach in and guess what they are touching. You can also put in pictures of your family or some things around the home. Have your child guess what is coming out next.

Boxes for Forts:



## Tip Sheet #5

### Miscellaneous

#### 1. Wind Chimes

Paint keys and hang them from a stick to make a beautiful chime that will brighten your front porch.



#### 2. Whirlpool

Remove the tops from both bottles. Fill the first bottle  $\frac{3}{4}$  full of water. Add a few drops of food coloring. Hold the second bottle above the first with the bottle openings together. Use the duct tape to join the two bottles together securely. Tip the bottles so the water flows over the joined section to verify no water leak occurs. If water leaks out add more duct tape. Create a vortex. Turn the connected bottles vertically so that the bottle with the water is above the empty bottle. Swirl the bottles in a circular motion as fast as possible. A whirlpool will form in the top bottle as it drains into the bottom bottle.



#### 3. Flubber

To make basic flubber, mix together  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (175ml) of water and 1 cup (240ml) of white school glue in a bowl. Next, mix 2 tablespoons of Borax with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (120 ml) of water in a separate bowl until all of the Borax dissolves. Then, combine both mixtures together in one bowl and stir thoroughly.





### 3. Nature's Paint brushes

Sticks (1 for each paint brush)

Many interesting pieces of nature

Elastic bands (or string)

Poster paint

Large roll of paper

Collecting your nature for this activity is half the fun. Go on a walk and see what interesting things you can find. Look for different textures and patterns. Talk about which pieces of nature you think will make good prints.

Making the nature paintbrushes is easy: Simply attach a piece of nature to each stick using an elastic band (or a piece of string).



### 4. Stick Art

Gather up sticks of different sizes. Find an outdoor space for your child to create its own design. Snap a photo! Start over again and snap another photo. You can add glue and poster board for the final creation.



### 5. Stick Crown



Gather as many sticks as you can (40 of similar size). Use two strips of duct tape to hold the sticks together. Measure your child's head for the correct length.

**Family Activities**

**1. BIG FOOT RACES**

Get children moving with Big Foot races. It is a unique way to provide entertainment for you and your children. All you do is take shoeboxes and cut holes big enough so your children can slip their feet in. Then, you tape the lid to the box, have the children put them on and race.



**2. PAPERPLATE EXERCISE GAME**

Under each plate is printed an exercise. It might say "5 arm circles," "10 jumping jacks," or "15 floor touches." You could also do push ups, sit ups, hops, squats or twists. The thought is that you have the children run to a plate. When they get to a plate, they look underneath to reveal the exercise. Add a photo of the exercise for non-readers. They then do the exercise. When done? Run to another plate and do the exercise there. The element of surprise keeps them going.



**3. DECORATE YOUR OWN UMBRELLA**

Spring has sprung. Rain has come and soon the hot sun! Have your children decorate their own umbrellas. You just need a plain umbrella and some paint markers.





#### 4. SPA DAYS

Do simple manicures and pedicures with the basic manicure toolset you have in your own home and try your hand at a professional look with some polish to finish. You can also do facials that include face scrubs, cleansers, and masks. There are some easy at-home masks and scrubs that you can make by looking up the recipes online.



#### 5. PUZZLE ART

Using puzzle pieces from old puzzles create unique art pieces. Paper plates, glue, markers and puzzle pieces.



#### 6. MENU PLANS

Create a weekly menu plan with your family! Take turns choosing the daily main meal.



#### 7. VIRTUAL TOURS

Take advantage of virtual zoo tours online! <https://kids.sandiegozoo.org/videos>



## Tip Sheet #7

### Easy Makeovers for Outdoor Play Spaces



Shower curtain reading nook



Construction site



Outdoor seating area



Mud kitchen



Toddler play space





Fence activity



Balance apparatus



Seating area