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Still Social Distancing? More Tips and Activities

By Adrienne DeWitt, M.A., CCC-SLP

Super Duper first provided social distancing tips and activities in “Social Distancing with Children: Tips and Activities” [Handy Handout #615](#). But as social distancing and self-isolation policies have lasted from weeks into months, we thought you could use some extra ideas:

Tips

Create your own classroom! As time goes on, it may become harder and harder to convince your children to attend to their academic activities. Spice things up and make a classroom with a classic pillow fort! Have your children help you construct the classroom with blankets, pillows, and Christmas lights; you can even make it under a table! Add a hard surface to work on and a dry erase board if one is available. Only students who are studying are allowed in the classroom. This will give your children an incentive to keep up their learning!

For young children, **use songs to transition to different activities** during the day. There is a reason why “The Clean Up Song” has been wildly successful over many years. Day care, preschool, and elementary school classrooms use this fun technique to signify a change from one activity to another. Make sure to incorporate a visual schedule (as discussed in “Visual Schedules for Daily Routines” [Handy Handout #492](#)) with the song. If you use songs and schedules consistently, your children will move along to the next activity without prompting. Use a song from an internet video or make up your own. A singing background is not required!

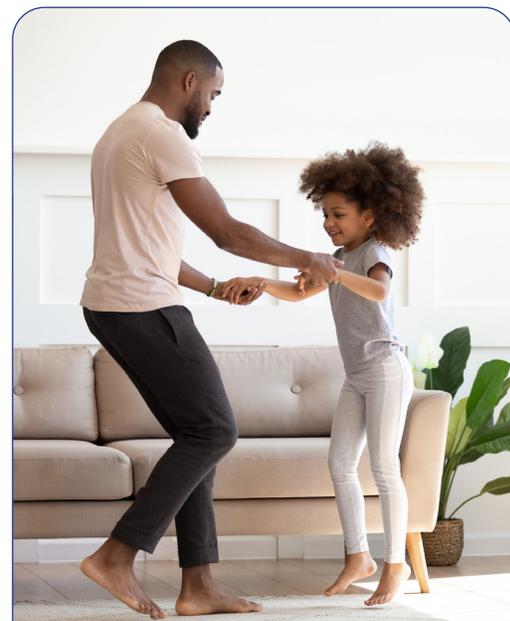
The days can blend together, **so make the weekend special**. This will separate the days for learning/work from the days for relaxing together; it helps everyone stick to a schedule. Kick off the weekend by supporting local business and getting take-out. Maybe you can have a Friday movie night or a dance party. Creativity is key as the days roll on.

As mentioned in “How to Talk to Children about the News” [Handy Handout #614](#) and “What’s Happening? Talking to Children about Current Events” [Handy Handout #511](#), negative news on a constant stream can impact both children and adults. Make sure to **incorporate lighter content** in your media consumption. As it goes, laughter is the best medicine, so make sure to watch funny movies, read funny books, and subscribe to comedy podcasts.

Activities

Journaling is a great way to process complex emotions. Help your child write through their feelings with a journal. You can teach new words for emotions, such as “lonely,” “nervous,” “anxious,” “calm,” or “antsy.” You can do this by giving your child a word bank on a separate piece of paper. Start by jotting ideas down, then go back to work on grammar and punctuation. Expand simple sentences from, “I feel lonely today,” to something more linguistically rich, such as, “My friends seem so far away, and loneliness is creeping in.” The term “unprecedented times” is thrown around a lot lately. Your children can use journaling to document their experiences and look back at their writing when they are older.

Video chatting is a great way to connect with friends and family. Why not have a **virtual family game night!** Classic games that do not require materials, such as Charades and 21 Questions, can easily be played through video chatting and are great for language learning. Check out other language learning game ideas in “12 Verbal Literacy Games for Speaking, Listening & Thinking” from [childhood101.com](#). If you would like to try something new, use Super Duper’s [MagneTalk® Match-up Adventure Kit Barrier Game](#). Send the duplicate boards and magnets to a friend. Make a scene,



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(cont.)

and have your friend recreate that scene using your best language and listening skills. If you would like a relaxing activity, have storybook time with friends and relatives over a video chat. Make sure to comment on the pictures in the book and ask questions just as you would if the child was sitting next to you (check out “Reading is What? FUNDAMENTAL!” [Handy Handout #611](#) for more tips about reading with children).

HearBuilder is a web-based program that targets pre-literacy and auditory processing skills in four titles: Following Directions, Phonological Awareness, Auditory Memory, and Sequencing. Children work independently through the program, and parents receive reports on objectives, accuracy, levels of progress, etc. HearBuilder is great for home learning and offers a free trial. Go to hearbuilder.com to learn more and start a free trial.

Since time is abundant these days, your children can start **writing their first books!** Plan out what kind of book they would like to make: an autobiography, mystery, science fiction, etc. Then start prewriting (e.g. who is in the story, what will happen first, next, etc.) Fold some paper and start the creativity! In addition to writing, children can incorporate drawings and stickers into their stories. Maybe they can make a pop-up book. The limit is your imagination!

Although this change in our routines is difficult, it can still be a time of learning, growing, and bonding. We would like to say thank you to all of the caregivers who became educators overnight. Hopefully, our products and expertise can help guide you through your new profession. As always, stay safe, stay positive, and wash your hands.

Resources:

“12 Verbal Literacy Games for Speaking, Listening & Thinking,” accessed April 8, 2020, from <https://childhood101.com/learning-games-for-speaking-listening-thinking/>

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Helpful Products

The list of Super Duper® products below may be helpful when working with children who have special needs. Visit www.superduperinc.com and type in the **item name or number in our search engine**. If you’re viewing this Handy Handout on a computer, click the links below to see the product descriptions.

Emotions Skill Strips™



[Item #STRP-45](#)

MagneTalk® Match-Up Adventure Kit



[Item #GB-181](#)

Clues for Critical Thinking



[Item #FD-236](#)

HearBuilder® Online Subscriptions



[Item #HBH](#)