

Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health

C&A Cares Newsletter June 12, 2020



Ideas and Tips for engaging in activities with children

Child's Game/My Time:

This is a great way for families to spend more fun time together. Spending quality time together is a social reward or positive attention we are able to give to our children naturally. Social rewards are things that are not bought (or tangible), like your praise and doing fun things with you.

Child's Game is special time with your child to engage in something that they like to do. During this time, it is your responsibility to give your child/children your *undivided attention* and positively describe and talk about what you see them doing while being present within the play.

My Time is used to describe the time spent with teenagers. Teenagers still need our attention and support. A great example of this time is when you're driving in the car with them allowing them to have control of the radio, discussing their interests in the music or the artist. You can also have them teach you about their video games or cook dinner together. Allowing children, no matter the age, to teach us and lead the activities empowers them and lets them know you believe in them.

Try making a summer bucket list together, letting them choose what activities they would like to do during this time together. The following are a few effective strategies to utilize during your time together.

Descriptive commenting:

Descriptive commenting is another creative way to engage with your children. This activity is similar to hearing a sports commentator over the radio; however, we as caregivers are supportively commenting or describing

what our children are doing while playing. Children love to know that we see them and are paying attention. This also helps little ones with language development.

Academic and Social Emotional Coaching:

When children are little, we often ask many questions: "What does a cow say? Or what color is the truck?" We ask these questions in an effort to teach our children and engage with them. Sometimes asking too many questions can start to be overwhelming, less supportive and not as child directed. Commenting on or listing colors, numbers and the use of words like 'sharing' or 'patience' in the moment help teach without too many questions. The comments listed below can help teach while providing support and attention, letting them know we are paying attention.

- "You're putting the blue block on top of the yellow block"
- "You're sharing your toy and being a great big sister"
- "I see your eyes are big and smiling, you look excited."

These comments are helping to encourage academics, social skills and emotional regulation while simply stating what you see. This helps children feel that we are with them and feel seen.

Praise:

We see more of what we pay attention to. We water flowers, not weeds. If you want to see more positive and cooperative behavior over the summer, let them know what those behaviors are. All children want and truly need our attention, and will accept it in any way it's given. Using this as a tool to enhance the good stuff will save you from needing to address unwanted behavior as often.

How to manage summer boredom:

Finding balance is never easy. This can feel overwhelming sometimes. Keep it simple this summer. When things seem to get off track, focus on reconnecting with your kids first. Then, look at this list and see which summer fun activities you can do at home with your children.

<https://www.itsalwaysautumn.com/101-summer0fun-ideas-kids-can-home.html>

Stark County has a fabulous free resource for families with young children over the summer called Pigskin Pals. Check out their Facebook page for more ideas and information.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/pigskinspals>

Local libraries have summer activities. Visit your local library's website for details. Stark County Library has a summer reading program and even a summer challenge. For more information, visit <https://starklibrary.org/home/events/2020/summer-challenge>

Stark Parks has many activities and spaces to explore together. Visit their website for more information and guidance during COVID-19 closures.

<https://starkparks.com/kids>

Our Stark County Youth Led Prevention groups created two imaginative ways to encourage self-care activities this summer. These activities are a great way to practice "My Time" while building self-care routines for you and your child.

Self-Care Summer Bucket List *created by Stark County Advanced Youth Led Prevention:*

- Spa Night (face mask, foot scrub)
- Eating your favorite meal
- Spend a day outside
- Read a book that you get lost in
- Tie die something
- Crafting or something creative
- Listen to music
- Go on a bike ride or a drive
- Movie night at home or drive in
- Go on a hike with a friend
- Take a day Trip
- Learn something new to do





Spending Quality time with kids

With summer here, we as parents and caregivers have the opportunity to spend quality time with our children. The *quality* of our time is much *more important* than the quantity of our time. We as adults may still be working in or out of our home which requires time away while children stay busy with sitters, in childcare and some of our older children independent for some time. Keeping children busy is a fabulous way to keep them out of trouble, giving them a purpose and keeping their brains active. Some quick tips and tricks to summer are:

- Routine (including sleep)
- Clear rules and expectations
- Limited screen time
- Outdoor time
- Quiet time
- Social time
- Feed your brain

Routines are more relaxed over the summer, however, are still needed to ensure everyone is eating, sleeping and engaging with each other daily. These routines help reduce anxiety and unwanted behavior when we can predict what will happen.

Clear rules and expectations are also helpful with decreasing anxiety and unwanted behavior. They provide a sense of safety, consistency and trust within the family and household.

Limited screen time is still recommended throughout the summer. There are benefits to technology, there is a social and academic component to screens. Too much screen time can negatively impact a child's brain development and their mental health while increasing challenging behavior. Teaching children to practice moderation is key.

Outdoor time and physical activities are always important, during the summer and these are easier to achieve. Some suggestions include chalk, bubbles, bike rides, walks, basketball, football, baseball/softball, mindfulness walks or scavenger hunts.

Quiet time activities allow the brain to relax and regulate thoughts and feelings, reducing stress. Activities

include reading, listening to music, journaling/writing, coloring and cooking/baking.

Social time is more challenging during these times of social distancing, however, many of the activities above can be done with others at a safe distance of six feet apart. Social connections are important for overall development and mental health. Technology can be used to connect with others as well.

Feed Your Brain time is speaking to the idea of stimulating the brain with new information or settings and exploring problem-solving. These can easily be turned into family activities. Zoos, museums, parks, arts and crafts, board or card games, reading, minute to Win It Challenges – <https://teachmama.com/minute-win-games-kids-family>.

SUMMER schedule

MAKE IT MONDAY

CRAFT • SEW • BAKE
COOK • DIY • PAINT

THINKING TUESDAY

LEARNING PRINTABLES • QUIET BOOKS
STEM PROJECTS • SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS

WATER DAY WEDNESDAY

GO TO THE LAKE • VISIT A POND
GO SWIMMING • GO TO THE BEACH
PLAY WITH WATER BALLOONS, SPRINKLERS,
SQUIRT GUNS, OR SET UP A SLIP AND SLIDE

TAKE A TRIP THURSDAY

GO ON A SCAVENGER HUNT
BOWLING • LIBRARY • SPLASH PAD
ZOO • MUSEUM • PARK • PLAYGROUND

FUN DAY FRIDAY

FAMILY PICNIC • MOVIE DAY AT HOME
LEMONADE STAND • CAMP IN THE BACKYARD
PLAY DATE • LIBRARY STORY TIME • TEA PARTY

SELFLESS SATURDAY

DO SOMETHING NICE FOR YOUR PARENTS
HELP A NEIGHBOR • WALK THE DOG • VOLUNTEER

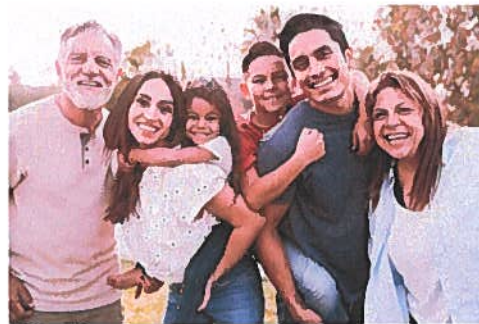
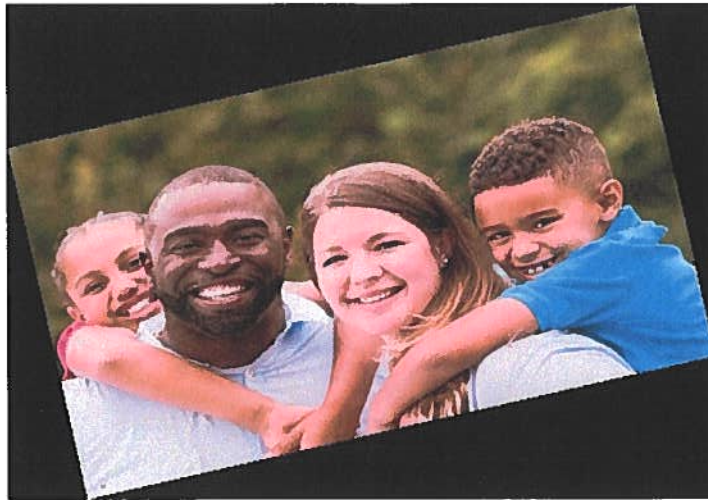
SPONTANEOUS SUNDAY

KIDS DECIDE WHAT TO DO.



B I N G O

Exercise (jump on a trampoline or jump rope)	Try a new hair style of color	Do something for someone	Ride your bike	Create a gratitude journal (write what you're thankful for)
Watch 30 minutes of your favorite show or video	Have a spa day (face mask, foot soak, bath bomb or paint nails)	Play outside (like playing in the rain!)	Clean and organize something	Give a compliment today
Play in water	Write with sidewalk chalk or blow bubbles	Free!	Paint a picture of something or someone you love	Try a new snack
Eat a healthy snack	Do a craft	Take a walk	Draw a picture	Try something new
Do a puzzle	Make your bed	Appreciate nature (sit by a tree or go for a hike)	Read something for 15 minutes	Play with someone that lives in your house



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