

Daily Connections: Move, Make, Meet, and Mindfulness Activities for Your Child

Connecting with your kids daily strengthens the parent-child bond, which helps to build resiliency in your child. These activities can help you connect with your child across their cognitive, social-emotional, and motor development. Reading aloud to kids has clear cognitive benefits and strengthens children's social, emotional, and character development. Cultivating creativity is an important aspect of developing a child's brain to be strong and resilient later in life. Promoting movement and mindfulness helps mitigate stressful events in your child's life and the anxiety that can come from them.

~Move~

- ❖ Make a path game outside in the driveway or a safe neighborhood street. Kids will get to be their own life-sized game pieces! Draw a chalk path and include as many spaces as you can. Use a large die to determine how many spaces kids can hop on along the path.
- ❖ Grab a laundry basket (or a large bucket or cardboard box) and their favorite stuffed animals. Have your kids make a game of throwing their beloved stuffed friends into the basket. Encourage them to back up a little each time they make a successful toss. Keep score and tally up the points at the end for a prize or special treat.
- ❖ Color-matching and recognition: Choose a few colorful old socks and fill each sock with dry rice, beans, or something similar. Tie the ends together. Then place sheets of paper on the floor—with one for each color of sock. Your kid will play this game by tossing the homemade bean bag onto the corresponding color of paper.
- ❖ Go on a scavenger hunt walk through your neighborhood! Set a theme for the scavenger hunt, like "red flowers" or "blue yard art" and take turns pointing out what you see. It can also be fun for older kids to take photos of what they see and then make a social media post out of it when you get back home. When on your walk, make sure to practice social distancing and stay at least 6 feet away from anyone you meet on the street.
- ❖ Get a clean bedsheet and get your child up and moving by making a bedsheet parachute. Ask your kid to pick a side to hold. Place a stuffed animal, small ball, or another non-breakable item in the middle and work together to try and shake it off. This is a great educational moment disguised as a collaborative game to help develop your child's gross motor skills and encourage parent-child bonding.

~Make~

- ❖ [Make Play-Doh](#) with the Witte Museum in San Antonio.
- ❖ Cut out an [Ocean Mobile](#) with these directions from PBS Kids.
- ❖ Create [Paper Bag Monster Puppets](#) and put on a puppet show!
- ❖ [Melt crayons](#) on a canvas or piece of paper and frame it!
- ❖ Get creative with our TexProtects Family Guide to Thrive [coloring book](#).
- ❖ Follow along with Cooped Up With the Carter as they [weave a simple yarn tapestry](#).
- ❖ [Make a cookbook](#) and try out some recipes from Molly of Denali.
- ❖ Bake along with Joe the Baker's [Quarantine Cooking](#) show!

Daily Connections

~Meet~

- ❖ [Talk about anti-racism](#) in a developmentally appropriate way with your kids.: Studies show children develop ideas and biases about race starting at birth and having conversations about race are an important part of a child's social identity development.
- ❖ Meet your kids where they're at with some [simple block play](#).
- ❖ Check out [Storyline Online](#) for some great read-alongs from prominent figures.
- ❖ Watch together as animals at the [Houston Zoo](#) go about their daily lives.
- ❖ Have your kids call a grandparent or another older member of the family and ask them to teach a song from when they were younger. Sing the song together over the phone or a video-conferencing platform.
- ❖ Set up mini-interviews with each other or as a group. Have your kids interview you and then interview them back. Ask questions like: Who is your favorite character in a book and why? What is your favorite food? When is your favorite time of day? [Check out more questions!](#)

~Mindfulness~

- ❖ Have kids stomp the left foot, stomp the right foot, and then exhale deeply. Continue this pattern of stomp, stomp, exhale, stomp, stomp, exhale, stomp, stomp, exhale. During the stomping, ask your kids to feel the connection of their feet with the floor. As they exhale, have them imagine blowing away any anxious or restless thoughts.
- ❖ Close your eyes and follow along with this [Sleeping Dragon exercise](#).
- ❖ Teach your kids the [Box Breathing technique](#) to help them center themselves or calm down.
- ❖ Guide your kids through a [Five Senses exercise](#).
- ❖ Follow along with this instructional [Starfish Breathing](#) video.
- ❖ Practice the STOP Strategy of mindfulness from ZERO to THREE: S) Stop. Pause and focus. T) Take a deep breath in and out. Notice how it feels to breathe. O) Observe and acknowledge. P) Proceed with calmness.