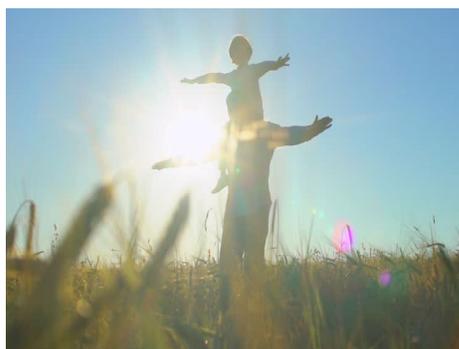


The body heals with play, the mind heals with laughter and the spirit heals with joy.



KIDZCOMMUNITY WEEKLY UPDATES & ACTIVITIES

We are living through a world pandemic. This is no small stuff. Some of you may be trying to work from home and/or “homeschooling” school-age children, and all the while, also trying to keep the “littles” engaged. Here’s some advice from Rae Jacobson from the Child Mind Institute...

“Manage your own anxiety....

It’s understandable to be anxious right now (how could we not be) but how we manage that anxiety has a big impact on our kids. Keeping your worries in check will help your whole family navigate this uncertain situation as easily as possible.

For those moments when you do catch yourself feeling anxious, try to avoid talking about your concerns within earshot of children. If you’re feeling overwhelmed, step away and take a break. That could look like taking a shower, or going outside, or into another room and taking a few deep breaths.

Check in with your children...Young children may be oblivious to the facts of the situation, but they may still feel unsettled by the changes in routine, or pick up on the fact that people around them are worried and upset. Plan to check in with younger children periodically and give them the chance to process any worries they may be having. Children who are tantruming more than usual, being defiant or acting out may actually be feeling anxious. Pick a calm, undistracted time and gently ask how they’re feeling and make sure to respond to outbursts in a calm, consistent, comforting way.”

And remember to find time to play with your children. Play, laughter, and joy heal.



Loose Parts Activities

*Loose parts are open-ended objects and materials that children can freely move, manipulate, combine, and/or assemble in a variety of ways. There is no pre-determined way the materials should be used, allowing for problem solving and creativity. No right or wrong. They can be natural or synthetic. Here are some loose parts you might have around the house. Be aware of choke-able objects for young children who may still be mouthing things (3 and younger).

What else do you have, and how might your children use them?



Ok, I've got some loose parts, now what do I do??

- Organize – Put like items into containers (toilet tubes into a box, pine cones into a basket, etc). Preschoolers (some toddlers) can help you sort like items.
- Be aware of small items for those “littles” who might still put things in their mouth.
- Notice textures and aesthetics - pinecones in a basket = natural and rough; wool balls in a cloth basket = soft; plastic lids in a stainless steel bowl = plastic color against grey metal.
- Encourage your child to use them in different spaces – on a table, on the floor, on a blanket, in an empty picture frame.



And so...

- When you have a chance to play with your child, let them lead the play. Observe their play; watch and listen.
- Ask some open-ended questions (ones that have no right or wrong answer), but be aware of limiting interruptions.
 - I wonder why....
 - How do you know...
 - What do you think might happen next....
 - Tell me about....



Loose Parts Possibilities...

Corks

Pine cones

Dirt

Paper towel tubes

Flowers

Egg cartons

Wood scraps

Bottle caps

Wooden planks

Tiles

Tape

tree branch cookies (rounds)

rocks

sand

scarves/cloth scraps

leaves

hair curlers

shower curtain rings

plastic bottles

crates

boxes

sheets

nuts and bolts

gravel

sticks

shells

bowls

pool noodles

spools (all sizes)

tin cans (edges smoothed)

paper/plastic cups

packaging

baskets



Hamburger Pie (Shepherd's Pie)

From *"Better Homes and Gardens Favorites
Made Lighter"*

This was a family favorite when our children were younger, we omitted the green beans and covered the top with cheese before baking, you can also make in cupcake tins that have been lightly oiled for yummy bites (drain the stewed tomatoes for this option)

Ingredients:

1 lb of potatoes
1/8 tsp salt
2-3 tbsp skim milk
1 lb lean ground meat of choice
½ c chopped yellow onion
1 9oz package frozen green beans
¼ c water
1 14 ½ oz can low sodium stewed tomatoes
½ of a 6 oz can low sodium tomato paste
Basil, thyme, paprika, pepper
to taste (chopped finely or dried)
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

Boil potatoes until tender, drain well and mash. Add a bit of unsalted butter and the salt mix well, mix in a bit of skim milk and cover keeping warm.

In a skillet cook meat and onion until done, drain off fat, stir in green beans and cook until tender, add undrained stewed tomatoes, the paste and seasonings.

Transfer skillet ingredients into a casserole dish and top with the mashed potatoes (and cheese)

Bake at 375°F for 20-25 min. Serve with pickles and a salad if you like.

Creamy Dill Dip

From *"Better Homes and Gardens, Family Favorites
made Lighter"*



1 8oz package of light cream cheese or other soft cheese (goat, coteja etc)

1 8oz carton low-fat dairy sour cream or crema

2 tablespoons chopped green onion (use the whole onion)

2 teaspoons dried or fresh dill weed

1-2 tablespoons skim milk

Garlic fresh chopped finely or powder optional (not garlic salt as it will not taste right)

Mix all ingredients in bowl until fluffy. Kids will love to mix this up and help measure out the ingredients. Cover and chill for up to 24 hours. Enjoy dipping vegetables of any kind into this creamy and cooling dip. Makes 2 cups. This also makes a great spread for a turkey or ham sandwich.

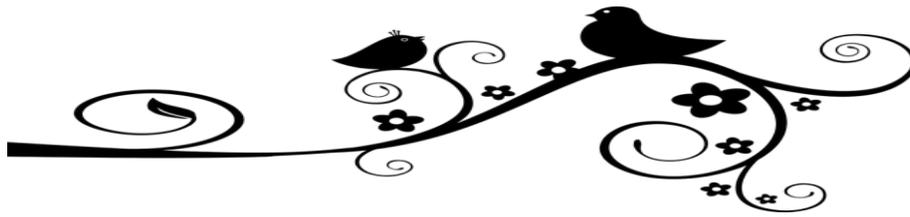
If you add a bit more of the skim milk, this makes a great salad dressing or topping for street tacos or burritos.

Cornstarch Play Dough

1 cup cornstarch
1 lb baking soda
1 cup water
1/8 tsp oil
Food coloring

In a large pot, combine ingredients. Cook over medium heat until "mealy." Allow to cool on a plate, covered by a damp cloth. Knead well and store in an airtight container.

Substitutions
Use oil and food coloring that is safe for your allergy.



Child Pose

Kneel on the floor with your knees as wide as your hips, and bring your big toes to touch. Then, sit back on your heels. Exhale, rest your torso between your thighs, and place your forehead on the mat. Stretch your arms in front of you, palms facing down, and then rest your elbows on the mat. Relax every part of your body in this pose as you hold for 5 breaths.

STRESS

The Basics

What is stress?

Stress is an emotional and physical reaction to a physical, psychological, or emotional demand.

We all show stress in different ways.

Some stress is good; it motivates us to turn in our paperwork on time.

Too much stress is not good and can have short-term and long-term effects on our health.

What are some symptoms of stress?

Increased heart rate and blood pressure, feeling tense, irritable, fatigued, or depressed.

Lack of interest, inability to concentrate, racing thoughts, and too much worry.

Avoidance behaviors: excessive alcohol, cigarette smoking, and drug use.

What are some causes of stress?

Expectations we place on ourselves.

Expectations of others.

Our physical environment: noise, room size, crowding.

Our internal environment: work pressure, frustration, not enough time.

What are ways to manage stress?

Practice effective communication: *State feelings in a clear way (for example, "I feel angry when you yell at me.")*.

Establish "me time": *Make time to enjoy hobbies.*

Practice specific stress reduction techniques: *Learn relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, muscle relaxation, and meditation.*

COMING SOON MORE STRATEGIES TO REDUCE STRESS...

CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION
Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development



Funded by the Office of Head Start/ACF, DHHS (#90YD0268)

Notes	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	 milk	 bye	 ball	1 Make silly faces in front of a mirror	2 Practice saying "milk" during meals	3 Find three things that are "BIG"	4 Play hide and seek. Say "I see you"
	5 Talk about what people are doing in a book (He is eating)	6 Repeat the word "in" when cleaning up	7 Ask your child "Where is the light?" and see if he/she points	8 See if your child can point to their hair, tummy and feet	9 Build with blocks together	10 Teach following directions "Get the big ball"	11 Read an animal book with your child
	12 Have an egg hunt (on, up, in, by under)	13 Sing The Wheels on the Bus	14 Play outside in the grass with shoes off	15 Do something silly together	16 Read a book with poems to your child	17 Blow bubbles and talk about where they land	18 Play with cars together. Where are they going?
	19 Give 5 people a high five today	20 Pet an animal that is soft	21 Ask "Who is this?" and point to their favorite character	22 Make a toy from recycled materials today	23 Sing Row, Your Boat	24 Follow the direction "Give me a hug and a kiss"	25 Make an obstacle course in your living room
	26 Kick a ball back and forth	27 Point to pictures in a book and say what they are	28 Say "eat" or "eat banana" during meals today	29 Play dress-up	30 Follow directions to "Clean up". Put toys "in" containers.		