



North Dorset

Home-Start North Dorset Family Activity Pack

Activities

The first point should be to not worry if you are not learning a new language, a new instrument etc etc. What is more important is to keep everyone safe and calm and sane! However, if people want more activities here are a few ideas:

1. Make a mini beast hotel



2. On your daily walk you could create a Story Stick. Collect a decent size stick and any interesting natural objects such as feathers, sheep's wool, flowers, leaves and bind them together with either string or grass. Make them as individual as possible and talk about them as you go.

Cross the River

Home Physical Education

Can you work out a method for successfully crossing the river

How to play:

- Agree a start point (one side of a big river) and a finish point (the opposite side of the river).
- Using two objects (cushions, pillows, or other flat objects) can you cross the river without touching the floor?
- You are only allowed two objects to cross the river with.
- Can you complete the challenge and cross the river with out touching the floor!



If you fall in, can you keep trying to cross successfully?

Top Tips

Place the Pillows

Place the pillows down on the floor. If you throw them you may over stretch and fall in.

Let's Reflect

What was the best method for crossing the river?

How did you feel when you crossed successfully?

4. Create some VE Day bunting. To make out of paper or card:

fold a piece of paper or card in half across the middle

From each corner of the fold draw 2 lines to meet in the middle of the bottom of the paper

This should form a triangle

Decorate

Hang from your window!



5. Make music with bottles or glasses filled with water.

Line 5 glasses up. Fill the first with a little water and gradually fill each glass up with more water (add food colouring for more interest). Notice how the tones are different. The glass with the most water has the lowest tone and the least water has the highest tone.

6. Make some rainbows! Not only will this only show support to the NHS, this will also keep your children entertained. The Imaginary Tree has over 40 rainbow activities a for all age ranges and abilities.

<https://theimaginationtree.com/40-fantastic-rainbow-activities-for-kids/>



- **ACTIVITIES/EDUCATION**

- Oxford Reading Tree books online form the Oxford Reading Tree website <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/>



- This is a new, completely free, e-picture book by Jon Burgerman to help anyone big or small who has been feeling worried lately https://en.calameo.com/read/000777721945cfe5bb9cc?authid=Xu9pcOzU3TQx&fbclid=IwAR2C8SlXnuPmRs6fgqh22QM_aMhzQBuvkk6_VNZc1uPnFRUehBZvk1K7js8
- This is a list of free online courses and activities <https://kidsactivitiesblog.com/135609/list-of-education-companies-offering-free-subscriptions/>
- Also check out Tumble Tots at Home on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHU4Z2ztQns> Each one is about 25 minutes long and could be a good part of the daily routine.
- BBC Tiny Happy People <https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/activities/zjh8hbk> This page has activity ideas to try at home with children from pre-birth to age 4-5, divided up into age ranges. There are also videos and transcripts for 7 nursery rhymes and songs – perhaps you can learn a new one!

- If having time to read with your children was always an issue, now might be your opportunity! The BookTrust has some tips: <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/reading-tips/> This is good page to start on, but there are other helpful pages on the BookTrust site, including read-alongs with popular books. If in doubt READ, READ, READ! Even if you are making up the story by looking at the pictures. Children love the sound of your voice and the chance to cuddle in. If you don't have many books at home you can make up stories, the most popular are when your child is the hero/heroine!
- Audio books are great for an alternative to TV's or ipods for relaxation and great for pre-readers or older children who struggle to read. If you would like access to some stories, you can download the **Libby app** (virtual library) and download stories for free. Also **Audible** are making hundreds of books FREELY AVAILABLE. Or try <https://www.storynory.com/> for younger children.
- We are teachers <https://www.weareteachers.com/audible-covid-19-closures/> has details on free audible and also other downloadable resources.
- The Imagination Tree site has created a stay at home survival guide <https://theimaginationtree.com/stay-at-home-survival-guide/> Some of the activities here require quite a lot of planning and resources, and some suggestions are very structured, which may not suit everyone. However, ideas like writing to friends and family, having a Lego design contest, and doing a book or movie review are more manageable.
- If you are worried about children missing out on education time, there are structured activities linked to key stages on the BBC Bitesize site <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/primary>

- If your children are interested in nature they can follow webcams from San Diego Zoo <https://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams> or Monterey Bay Aquarium <https://www.montereybayaquarium.org/animals/live-cams>
- And Wildlife Watch <https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/> has loads of great resources and activity packs to download.
- In times like these, we recognise the importance of bringing people together, and know lots of you won't be able to meet up in the same way as before. So, we're trialling a little 2 week daily creative challenge for you to use with friends, family, in school or community groups, for workmates working from home – whatever you like, and however you'd like to use it. You do need to enter an email address to sign up to this. I've tried it and haven't been spammed yet! <http://dothinkshare.com/creative-inspiration/create-to-connect/> If you don't want to enter an email address, all the previous weekly challenges are here: <https://dothinkshare.com/category/the-weekly-challenge/>
- **Cheap, easy and fun activities to do at home:**
 - **Tape papers towel rolls to the wall** to keep toddlers busy. Post small objects through the top end to collect in a bucket below.
 - **Toy Car Racing** If you happen to have any spare guttering lying around (!) it makes a great race track for toy cars. Lean it up against a wall/bed and play around with jumps at the bottom or timing them coming down.
 - **Build an inside den or camp.** Get a rug or old sheet/blanket and turn your living room/ bedroom into a secret hide-away. Use chairs or taller pieces of furniture to hold one side of the rug. Drawers are good for this as you can tuck the end of a sheet in the drawer and shut it to secure.
 - **Hide and Match.** Cut up some old cards or pictures in magazines or newspapers in two. Give the child one half and get them to find the other half which you have hidden around the house.

- **Get wet!** Fill up the kitchen sink with water and bubbles and let the children wash up/ get wet! Children love playing with water and pouring, so fill it with plastic jugs and cups. The bath is great for this as well. You can get washable paints, so if you dread the thought of mess, get them to do all the messy play in the bath.
- **Inside Picnic!** (This one is great for fussy eaters!) Lay a rug on the floor and have an inside picnic. It's amazing how food suddenly becomes delicious when it's eaten on the floor picnic-style.
- **Guess the Object.** Get an old pair of (preferably) thick tights and fill one leg with household objects like a clothes peg, scrubbing brush, a cup, a beaker, a pepper mill or a toy car. Get your child to firstly guess what they are by looking at them, then if they're struggling they can feel them and if they still can't guess they can put their hand in for a feel. Have a prize if they guess them like a sticker or biscuit.
- **Dressing up Box.** You don't need to buy expensive dressing up clothes, just hold on to some of your clothes if you're having a clear out. Children love wearing adult clothes. You can cut off legs of long trousers or use safety pins to make things fit better. Collect them all in a box or bin liner (including any old jewellery or hats you don't want) and see if your children can create a play or show. Let their imaginations run wild.
- **Doctors and Nurses.** Line up the teddies and dollies (or Mums or Dads!). Collect some cotton wool balls, medicine spoons, a little mirror, a spare plaster or anything else that looks vaguely medical (a spare roll of loo paper for bandages?) and decide what is wrong with each patient and begin the checks. Temperature, heartbeat, ear, nose, throat, broken bones or other stranger made up complaints such as a dinosaur bites. Help smaller children with their bedside manner!
- **Have a wall that becomes an art wall.** Not for the faint hearted, but if you feel brave choose a wall in your home that can become an art/ideas wall during this isolation phase. Everyone in the family can add to it over time and you can then just paint over it in the future. Make sure children know it is only THIS wall!
- **Ideas for coping with the endless requests for snacks!** Set up a tuck shop and give each child a certain amount of money per day (your choice, £1, 50p...) to spend. Make a list of items and their cost, so apples and bananas

etc may be 5p, whereas a packet of crisps might be 50p. They then get to choose and pay for what they want as well as learning some great maths and social skills.

- **Cut out letters and faces from newspapers/ old magazines.** Cut out single letters and jumble them up to make poems or nonsense sentences, or for smaller children put together different eyes, hair, noses and mouths etc to make strange faces.
- **I went to the shops and I bought a**
- **I packed my suitcase for my holiday and I put in a** Each person says one thing and the next player has to say what the last players said plus add their own.
- **Hide and Seek.** Inside or outside this is always a winner.
- **I spy.** Something beginning with...
Something the colour of.....
Something the shape of.
- **Get me 4, 5, 6....** Things that begin with the letter
- Get me 4, 5, 6 That fit in my hand.
- Get me 4, 5, 6 Things that fit in a shoe box.
- **Snap** with normal cards.
Snap with same start letter.
Snap with same sound.... Starting ph – f etc.
Snap with two items of the same... i.e.: 2 toy cars etc.
- **Hide an object.** Something small for an older child or bigger for a younger child.
- **Make up a story** and act it out.

- **Fold down paper game** (Head, body, legs etc).
- **Playdough.** 1 Cup Baking Powder, ½ Cup Cornflour, ¾ Cup Water. Mix dry ingredients together, add water, heat slowly in a pan until dough forms, and then knead.
- **Make up a story** by each person saying one word or a sentence. See where you end up!
- **Place objects on a table/ tray.** Get them to look at them carefully. Close their eyes, take one away. Can they spot which is missing?
- **Exercise classes!** Joe Wicks will be running 5 minute P.E fitness sessions on his You Tube channel for children: The Body Coach.
- **Send letters.** Local care homes are requesting letters/postcards and jokes to be sent to them from children. They promise to write back.

CHILDREN WITH SEN:

- Children on the autistic spectrum may find the change in routine particularly hard. This family life blogger shares her experiences of autism, and has created a **social story** on the Coronavirus for people with autism. It's free to download and you don't have to enter any details. You can also customise it by removing pages that aren't relevant and writing in things like numbers of days. <https://littlepuddins.ie/coronavirus-social-story/>
- Below is a link to a visual timetable you could print out and put up at home to help them know what is going on through the day: <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t-c-081-visual-timetable-for-home>
- If you don't have a printer, you could make them up yourself with basic drawings and stick them on the wall with blue tack.

- There are also many online resources specifically for SEN children with printable sheets for education but also emotional and behaviour support. <https://www.senresourcesource.co.uk/> (There is a cost to some of these though.)
- <https://senresourcesblog.com/2020/03/16/weve-launched-home-learning-videos-on-youtube-to-help-if-schools-close-due-to-coronavirus/> is also a useful one, with YouTube videos of projects to do with children. These will be updated most days.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES.

- If government advice changes and we are advised not to go outdoors unless we are dog walking it is important to keep active as this is not only good for our bodies but vital for our mental health. It will also help children keep to a routine. Everyday Joe Wicks will be running an exercise class for children on youtube. <https://youtu.be/d3LPrhI0v-w>. You could also set the whole family a daily challenge such as: how many press-ups, who can hold the longest plank or wall sit. The prize could be that person choosing food/tv programme/ bedtime story or which challenge for the next day.

Follow my Leader. Form a line and get the person at the front to do things that everyone behind has to copy. ie marching, hopping, clapping, making silly noises, singing. When they've had a good enough go, they go to the back and the next person is leader.

- **Obstacle Course.** If you have space outside you can create your own, getting the children to climb under chairs, jump up and down steps, put on some gloves and a hat and scarf and run round in circles. Or if in the Park, time them to run round trees, get from A to B. Make a course they can follow and try to beat their own time.
- **Treasure Hunts.** These work particularly well in woods, but you could also create a imaginary wood at home, hiding things around the house. Create a list of things for your children to find or spot, ie a feather, a red leaf, a cone, a stick shaped like a sword, a piece of bark that looks like a dinosaur tooth, something beginning with M, an aeroplane etc etc.

- **Make a Birds' Nest.** Collect bendy sticks and mould them into a small circle, then add grass, moss, twigs, wool and leaves. You could also have a go at making a Natural Mobile or Wind Chime or a Woody crown.
- **Make a Dream Catcher.** Bend a freshly cut stick into a small circle. Attach a long piece of thread to a point in the circle, pull it to the opposite side of the circle and wind it around the stick a couple of times. Repeat several times to make a web. Decorate with feathers and other interesting objects.
- **Potion Making.** Get children to collect nice smelling leaves/flowers/petals or wild fruits and add them to a little water in a jar to make a beautiful perfume or cocktail. (make sure they don't eat anything suspicious). Or make a potion with slime from a slug and a drop of dew from a spiders web and perhaps a pinch of fairy dust!
- **Hide and Seek.** Sometimes the old ones are the best. This can be played inside or outside and is great for all ages.