



Department of Developmental Services  
COVID-19 RESOURCES

Non-Academic Curriculum Ideas  
For Families and Skills Trainers  
Developed for the  
COVID-19 *Safer-At-Home* Advisory



# Non-Academic Curriculum Ideas For Families and Skills Trainers

## Everyday Skills COVID-19 Supports Indoor and Outdoor Activities



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
**Department of  
Developmental Services**  
Jane Ryder, Commissioner

This resource guide is intended to be a set of ideas for families and their children to work on a variety of skills in their home. These ideas are not intended to be an assessment, nor is this a list of "must do" items or a complete list of all the things your child might be able to do. The Department of Developmental Services recognizes that each family will select the ideas and tasks that are appropriate for their family.

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This booklet was created by the Department of Developmental Services Policy, Planning and Children's Services Unit.

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Start here!

Teach your Child to . . .

- Pick up blankets and put on bed
- Pick up pillows/ cushions and put on couch
- Throw away trash
- Put dirty clothes in hamper
- Wipe doorknobs clean
- Wipe off counters
- Put books on bookshelves
- Help make beds
- Push in chairs at table
- Turn off lights around house



Next, have your Child try these ideas . . .

- Put away toys
- Water plants
- Feed pets
- Brush pets
- Clean out under bed
- Dust furniture
- Dust baseboards
- Sort laundry by color
- Carry groceries
- Collect trash from bedrooms
- Collect trash from bathrooms
- Match socks
- Sort recycling
- Fold washcloths, hand towels and bath towels
- Sort and put away clean silverware



Here's more ideas . . .

- Sweep floor
- Make bed independently
- Set table
- Clear table
- Wipe down table after meals
- Put away dishes
- Bring trash can back from curb
- Wipe down bathroom sink
- Change lightbulbs
- Put away groceries
- Put away clean clothes



Keep going with these ideas . . .

- Fold clothes
- Bring in mail
- Wash mirrors
- Wash windows
- Make simple snacks (no cook)
- Switch laundry from washer to dryer
- Dust photos
- Help clean garage





Start here and teach your Child to . . .

- Remove clothes with assistance
- Carry towel and change of clothes
- Climb into tub/shower
- Climb out of tub/shower
- Identify soap, shampoo, washcloth
- Put shower curtain inside tub/shower
- Put dirty clothes in hamper



Then, show your Child how to . . .

- Grasp a washcloth
- Reach and turn to wash soap off body
- Tolerate water over head and face
- Help rub shampoo into hair
- Help use soap/bodywash to wash body
- Identify body parts to wash
- Ask for help with any areas they can't reach yet



Next, build your Child's independence by having them. . .

- Turn water off
- Use measured soap/bodywash and wash body
- Identify and wash all body parts independently
- Rinse all soap off body
- Rinse all shampoo from hair
- Apply measured shampoo and wash hair independently
- Dry body with towel



Don't stop, Here's more ideas. . .

- Turn the water on and adjust temperature
- Measure out shampoo independently
- Measure out soap/bodywash independently
- Hang up bathmat
- Dry their hair with a towel

## Working on Independent Dressing

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Next teach and have your  
Child practice. . .

Start with teaching  
these skills . . .

- Cooperating with getting dressed and undressed
- Selecting clothes (shirt/pants) for the day
- Putting a hat on and taking it off
- Pulling off loose fitting socks
- Removing unfastened shoes
- Unzipping a large zipper
- Removing all clothing with help for fasteners
- Unbuttoning large buttons
- Zipping up pre-hooked zippers with help
- Putting on shoes with help for right and left
- Pulling pants up from floor to waist
- Fastening Velcro closures



## Working on Independent Dressing (continued)

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And your Child can keep working on...

Then your Child might work on...

- Removing open front shirts
- Selecting socks and underclothes
- With supervision and assistance, putting on underclothes, pants and shirts
- Identifying front and back of clothes
- Buttoning large buttons with large buttonholes
- Zipping up a large zipper independently

- Undoing and removing shoes, removing all clothes independently
- Putting shoes on correct feet
- Unzipping and unsnapping all clothes
- Using smaller buttons
- Using smaller zippers





Once your Child can ...

### Hair Care

- Allow someone to brush hair
- Allow someone to tie back long hair

### Nail Care

- Allow someone to file or clip their fingernails
- Allow someone to clip their toenails

### Oral Care

- Allow someone else to brush their teeth
- Allow someone else to floss their teeth
- Rinse off toothbrush when finished
- Spit and rinse mouth

### Skin Care

- Allow someone to apply wet facecloth to neck, face and ears
- Rinse hands in running water
- Allow someone else to use a Q-tip to clean their ears



Then you can work with them to ...

### Hair Care

- Help brush hair (hands on brush/comb, holds hair tie, etc.)

### Nail Care

- File fingernails with direction and support
- Identify difference between fingernail and toenail clippers

### Oral Care

- Apply toothpaste to toothbrush
- Grasp toothbrush and help with brushing motions
- Floss front teeth when given flosser

### Skin Care

- Use wet facecloth to wash face, neck and ears with support
- Splash water on their face
- Use hand soap (bar or liquid) with minimal supervision



After those skills,  
they might learn to . . .

### Hair Care

- Brush own hair with support and directions

### Nail Care

- With supervision, use fingernail clippers without cutting too close to quick
- File fingernails independently

### Oral Care

- Rinse with pre-measured mouthwash
- Brush teeth independently, with reminders to get tricky spots

### Skin Care

- Use soap on face and neck
- Rinse off soap on face and neck (either by splashing or using wet facecloth to wipe off) with supervision
- Use Q-Tip with supervision



If they need more challenges,  
you can work with them to . . .

### Hair Care

- Brush hair independently
- Use large hair ties to tie back long hair

### Nail Care

- Independently use fingernail clippers safely
- Use toenail clippers with supervision

### Oral Care

- Brush teeth independently for two minutes
- Measure and use mouthwash
- Use flosser to floss between all teeth

### Skin Care

- Measure out soap for face and neck
- Scrub face and neck until clean
- Rinse face and neck independently



First steps in toileting are when your Child can ...

- Show interest in using the bathroom
- Identify and communicate the need to go
- Sit on toilet with support
- Stand at toilet (boy)
- Stand up from seated position with assistance
- Dry hands with towel



Then your Child needs to be able to ...

- Void into toilet
- Wash hands with support
- Use toilet paper
- Unroll toilet paper with a cue to stop
- Turn off water
- Pull pants/underpants down independently
- Pull pants/underpants up with help
- Flush with support and reminders
- Sit on toilet independently
- Stand up from toilet independently

## Working on Independent Toileting (continued)



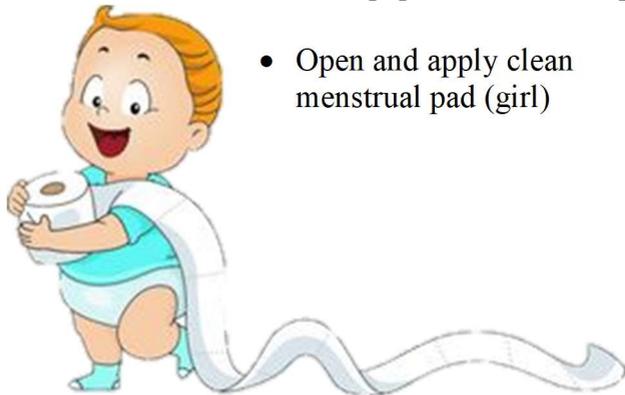
The next skills to work on, are to have your Child . . .

- Pull pants/underpants up independently
- Turn on water at sink (with faucets labeled hot and cold)
- Wash hands independently
- “Aim” at targets in toilet bowls (Cherrios®, etc.) (boy)
- Remember to flush independently
- Return hand towel to rack after drying hands
- Remove menstrual pad (girl)



Keep working with your Child to . . .

- Raise and lower seat as needed
- Unroll an appropriate amount of toilet paper independently
- Wipe up spills at toilet or sink
- Use toilet paper effectively, and determine if they need more paper or another wipe
- Open and apply clean menstrual pad (girl)



Use a rope and tie knots 6 feet apart on the rope. Have your child hold one knot and you hold another to demonstrate how to measure 6 feet.

## Ideas for teaching the meaning of 6 feet of physical distance:

Have your child stand in a hula hoop and imagine that cylinder goes all the way to the top of their head

Have your child spread their arms wide. If they can touch another person, they are too close

## Ways to say hello without a hug or handshake

Thumbs Up



Hand to Heart



Wave Hello



Namaste Hands



Bow to each other



Say Hello



Shaka or Hang Loose



Working on Maintaining Social Space (continued)

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Some phrases to use with your children when explaining social distancing

**THIS ISN'T FUN**

**WE ARE SAFE**

**Isn't that interesting**

**Lots of things are still the same**

**HERE'S WHAT WE CAN DO**

*This is weird*

**We will get through this**

*I have an idea*

*We are all working together to keep everyone safe*

**We can go back to school and work when it is safe**

**We can be creative with our time at home**



### **When you should wear a face covering**

When you go to a store such as a supermarket or a pharmacy

When you are outside and will come close to other people (waiting in line, taking a walk)

When using public transportation or a ride-sharing service



### **When you don't need a face covering (but could wear one if you want)**

When you are in your own home or car

When you are outside and not within six feet of other people (in your yard, walking the dog, riding a bike)

### Ways to build tolerance for wearing a face covering with your child

- Start with small increments of time
- Encourage trying different types of face coverings (see next page)
- Have your child make their own face coverings
- Have your child select from a variety of face coverings for the day
- Talk about how face coverings are for safety, like seatbelts



*Massachusetts has advised that anyone who is unable to wear a face mask for medical reasons, does not have to – but cautions that everyone is safer if they are wearing a mask.*

### Pros and Cons of Different Styles of Face Coverings

#### Bandana or Scarf Face Mask

**Pros:** Can be made from bandana or scarf you already have. Variety of colors and fabrics can be washed and reused.

**Cons:** Requires retying multiple times if the bandana or scarf comes loose.



#### Painter's "Around the head" Mask

**Pros:** Large elastic goes around the whole head. Doesn't irritate ears

**Cons:** Not reusable. Can irritate skin where mask presses into face. Usually made of stiff, papery material.



#### Neck Gaiter or Balaclava

**Pros:** Variety of fabrics and colors. Easily moves from neck to face covering position. Can be washed and reused. Stays in position without creating undue pressure on face.

**Cons:** Can be uncomfortable in hot weather. Requires touching mask to move from neck to face.



#### Ear Loop Face Mask

**Pros:** Quick to put on. Soft feeling on face.

**Cons:** Not reusable. Can irritate ears. May make glasses fog up. Metal nose piece may irritate nose.

#### Tied Fabric Face Mask

**Pros:** Variety of fabrics and colors. Can be washed and reused. Can be adjusted to wearer's comfort, tied either behind ears or head

**Cons:** Fabric ties can come loose



*Massachusetts has advised that anyone who is unable to wear a face mask for medical reasons, does not have to – but cautions that everyone is safer if they are wearing a mask.*

**Help your children practice good hand washing habits by establishing a routine for when and how hands are washed.**

- Any time children come in from outside the home
- Before eating
- After using the bathroom



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Remind your children that washing hands means more than just squirting soap and water on their palms. Good handwashing gets under the fingernails, between the fingers, and the back of both hands to the wrist.



Inside, Outside, In Between;  
Get Your Fingers Squeaky  
Clean!



## Hand Sanitizer

Using hand sanitizer is a good alternative when soap and water is not available.

### Use Hand Sanitizer

- While you're in a public place
- After being in a public place
- After touching items in public
- After being in "common areas" of a work or living space



### Ways to conserve hand sanitizer

Put sanitizer in small bottles

Wrap an elastic around the pump spout to shorten the pump action

Always use soap and water if available

### Hand Sanitizer Recipe

**2 cups 91% rubbing alcohol**  
**1 cup aloe vera gel**



Using a clean 1-quart jar with a lid, add the ingredients and close lid tightly.

Shake the mixture vigorously until completely combined (about 1 minute).

Pour mixture into clean, small bottles for regular use.

### Using a “Wait Card”

Learning to wait is a skill that many children must be taught. Using a tangible item such as a wait card gives children a signal and structure they can rely on when they are asked to wait.

### Teaching Children to Wait Using the “Wait Card”

Starting Out:

1. Select a preferred item or activity that you will use to teach your child the skill of waiting (for example: a turn-taking game or a toy that can only be used by one person at a time).
2. Place the wait card in front of your child and say “Wait” or “You are waiting”, after placing the card, interact with the item or otherwise withhold it for a short time. A first, it must be as little as a few seconds.
3. While your child is waiting comment “You are waiting”.
4. After waiting, remove the card and immediately provide the activity or the item they were waiting for.
5. The wait time can be extended, little by little over, time. Start with immediate, then move to 2 seconds, 5 seconds, 10 seconds, etc.

Identify multiply daily opportunities for your child to wait appropriately by showing them the wait card, verbally acknowledging their waiting and providing immediate positive reinforcement.

Your child should make the connection that “wait” and “no” are different.



Possible images for “Wait Cards” for your child

### Temperature Checks

*Most facilities that are doing temperature checks are using no-touch thermometers.*

Practice having your child stand quietly for 5 seconds and allow you to bring a thermometer near their head

Once your child is comfortable with you doing a temperature check, have another trusted adult bring the thermometer near their forehead

Repeat this process several times per day to build a comfort level



### Can your Child?

- Color a picture
- Build a block structure
- Design a tangram
- Assemble block puzzles
- Participate in jigsaw puzzles
- Paste pre-cut shapes
- Decorate sticker books

### Can your Child?

- Play connect the dots
- Paint or color by number
- Make simple crafts
- Connect Legos®
- Cut and paste paper
- Search for hidden pictures

## Board Games for Multiple Players

- Checkers
- Connect Four®
- Candy Land®
- Sorry®
- Zingo®
- Don't Break the Ice®
- Battleship®
- Trouble®

- Chutes and Ladders®
- Topple®
- Mancala
- Chess
- Monopoly®
- Jenga®
- The Game of Life®
- Yahtzee®



Can your Child?

- Draw a picture
- Complete a word search
- Build Lego® structures
- Take the lead in jigsaw puzzles
- Complete crossword puzzles with a word bank
- Use a weaving loom
- Write a poem

Can your Child?

- Solve sudoku
- Knit
- Crochet
- Complete jigsaw puzzles independently
- Think through logic puzzles
- Engage with brain teasers

**Cards Games for Multiple Players**

- Go Fish
- Crazy 8s®
- Uno®
- War
- Rummy
- Memory

- Spit
- I Doubt It
- Whist
- Cribbage
- Hearts
- Old Maid



Whole Body Exercise can be difficult when indoors. Try some of these ideas to build muscles and keep bodies moving when going outside isn't an option:



### Balloon Fun

- Catch a balloon on a funnel
- Kick a balloon against the wall
- Hit the balloon into the air, and keep it from touching the floor
- Hang a balloon from the ceiling and hit it with a cardboard tube (wrapping paper roll)

### Design an Obstacle Course

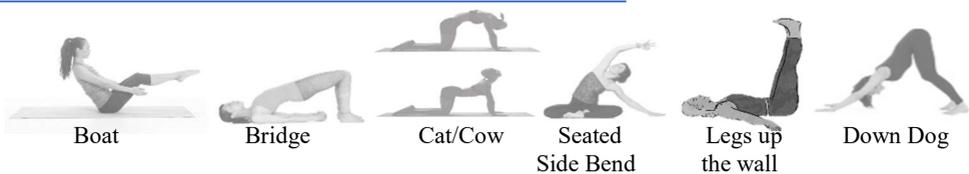
- Jump in and out of cardboard boxes
- Jump over plastic cups
- Push a laundry basket full of books
- Pull a sibling or a pet on a blanket for a "ride"
- Place stuffed animals in locations to be "rescued"
- Mark lines on floor with painter's tape walk forward, backwards, sideways



### Activities without props or when you only have a few quick minutes



- Jog or run in place
- Jump up and down from a bottom step
- Have a dance party
- Play "Move Like Me"
- Jumping jacks
- Push ups
- Bicycle legs
- Alphabet Body
- Squats
- Freeze Dance



### **Boat**

Sit on buttocks, extend arms and legs straight in front of you, and rock gently like a boat

### **Bridge**

Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the ground. Rest your arms down alongside your body, tuck your chin into your chest and lift your buttocks and back to create a bridge

### **Cat/Cow**

On your hands and knees, arch your back and tuck your chin (cat) then drop your belly and lift your chin (cow)

### **Crescent Moon Shape**

Stand with arms straight above head and palms pressed together. Bend to the right side and stretch left side muscles. Then bend to the left side and stretch right side muscles.

### **Bicycle Legs**

Lie on your back with your arms flat alongside your body. Bend your knees and bring them close to your chest. Then circle your legs as if you are riding a bicycle upside-down.

### **Seated Bend**

Sitting crossed-legged, reach above your head, and press both palms together. Bend to the right and stretch the left side muscles. Then bend to the left and stretch the right side muscles.

### **Extended Table**

Come to all fours, extend one leg out behind you, the opposite arm in front of you and look forward.

### **Three-Legged Dog**

From Down Dog, then gently lift one leg at a time towards the ceiling.

### **Down Dog**

From a standing position, bend down and place your palms flat on the ground. Step your feet back to create an upside-down V with your buttocks high in the air. Straighten your legs, relax your head and neck and look down between your legs.

### **Child's Pose**

Sit on your heels slowly bring your forehead down to rest in front of your knees, place the palms of your hands flat out in front of you, and take a few deep breaths.

### **Squat Pose**

Squat down and waddle like a duck.

### **Legs up the Wall**

Lie flat on your back and slowly raise your legs up straight towards the sky, making an L shape with your body. You could rest your legs on a wall instead.

### **Plank**

Step back to balance on your palms and on your bent toes, keeping your arms straight and your back long and flat

### **Up Dog**

Lay on your belly. Place the palms of your hands next to your shoulders and look up. Then straighten your arms and expand your chest.

### **Tree**

From standing lift one foot and rest against opposite leg (can keep toes on floor and put heel against ankle to start). Keeping balance, grow your tree's branches to the ceiling by stretching your arms above your head

## Small Space Activities

Make Sidewalk Chalk Art

Play Hopscotch

Use a Hula Hoop

Build a Fairy House

Go on a Bug Hunt

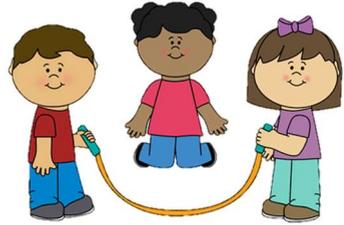
Plant a Garden in Pots

Make Water Balloon Babies

Run through a Sprinkler

Jump Rope

Blow Bubbles



## Paint Day

Paint some **Rocks** in some fun colors

Collect some **Seashells** and paint some beach scenes

Paint your whole **Body** and roll on a large paper

Use your **Fingers** to paint what's in your heart



### Large Space Activities

Ride a bike

Play Red Light, Green Light

Compete in a Bean Bag Toss

Play Duck, Duck, Goose

Ride a Scooter

Play Follow the Leader

Use a Balloon to play Volleyball

Throw a Frisbee

Complete an Obstacle Course

Squirt Each Other with Squirt Guns

Win a Game of Freeze Tag

Play Red Rover



Dribble a basketball

Pass a soccer ball

Throw a baseball

Hit a tennis ball

### Have A Ball

Catch a baseball

Kick a soccer goal

Shoot a basketball

Toss a football



# Department of Developmental Services

## COVID-19 RESOURCES

### **DDS Northeast Region**

Hogan Regional Center  
450 Maple Street  
PO Box A  
Hathorne, MA 01937  
Main: (978) 774-5000  
Fax: (978) 739-0410

### **DDS Central/West Region**

140 High Street  
Springfield, MA 01105  
Main: (413) 205-0800  
Fax: (413) 205-1604

### **DDS Southeast Region**

151 Campanelli Drive, Suite B  
Middleboro, MA. 02346  
Main: (508) 866-5000  
Fax: (617) 727-7822

### **DDS METRO REGION**

465 Waverly Oaks Road, Suite 120  
Waltham, MA 02452  
Main: (781) 314-7500  
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June 2020

