

Self-isolation ideas for the family

Topic Summary

Whether you are choosing to self-isolate due to Coronavirus or simply have no choice, you might be looking for some fun ideas of things you can do with the kids that does not just involve screens! This fact sheet has been produced to offer some suggestions of how to keep you and your family active and engaged during this uncertain time.



Having Fun at Home

Treasure Hunt - with clues. Hide a favourite toy or treats somewhere in the house or garden.

Disco - pull the curtains, put on some music and string up some fairy lights. Play “freeze” or have a dance off. You could even try some dance routines or make some mocktails with a cheap cocktail shaker and some fruit juices.

Pamper Party/Day Spa - face packs, nail painting and even some hairstyling could brighten up an afternoon.

Cinema - the children could make tickets, pop some popcorn and even make up some pick and mix bags before you all settle down and watch a favourite film.

Bug hunt - look out for some cheap plastic magnifying glasses and go exploring in the garden. If your children don't like real life bugs then you could hide some plastic ones in the house.

Restaurant - If your children like to cook then they could set up their own pop up restaurant. They could decide what to make, design menus and table mats, make the food (with your help!) and then take on the role of waiters and waitresses when the 'guests' arrive. Don't forget that you may have to offer a tip at the end of the meal!

Make Play-Doh - [Click here](#) for a good easy recipe and tips on cleaning and storage.

Clothes Sort Out - Go through clothing from previous seasons, try on and cull things that are too small

Dressing Up - Play dress ups in mum and dad's clothes, make outfits out of old newspapers or just put crazy outfits together from their own wardrobes. – do a fashion show and a photoshoot

Graffiti - the garden fence or patio with [homemade chalk](#)

Bake Off - Go through recipe books together and have a bake-off challenge

Origami - Make Origami animals or paper ninja stars

Mud Kitchen - Make a mud kitchen in the garden and paint rocks and pebbles

Photo Stories - If your child loves to make up stories then they may like to have a go at making a photo story. They could use family members in the photos or even clay, paper models etc.

Gardens in a tray - using moss, water, gravel, leaves, twigs etc. your child might like to create a miniature garden inside a potting tray. Lolly sticks can make great fence posts and tin foil cases can be used to make the container for a pond.

Water Play - If your child likes water play then they will love this idea for a coloured water laboratory <http://happyhooligans.ca/colour-laboratory>

Marble Run - use old boxes and tubes to create a marble run and then use stopwatches to time the different size marbles. Your children might want to then change the marble run around to see if they can make the marbles reach the end in less time. If prepared in advance family members could add to your stash of tubes and boxes.

Den Building - if you think your child may need a little bit of quiet downtime then building a den might be a good way to start this. Once the den is built they could take books and a torch inside for some time away from everyone else.

Sensory Fun - thank-you to the **Rainbow Tree** for these great ideas.

Gloopy Gloop: <http://www.learning4kids.net/2012/05/24/playing-with-gloop/>

Mouldable Sand: <http://theimaginationtree.com/2011/11/recipe-for-mouldable-sand.html>

Non-Toxic Finger Paints: <http://theimaginationtree.com/2011/03/homemade-edible-finger-paint-recipe.html>

Rainbow Spaghetti: <http://theimaginationtree.com/2011/07/messy-play-rainbow-spaghetti.html>

Lego Bridges - build a Lego bridge to support 100 pennies: <http://frugalfun4boys.com/2013/02/14/lego-fun-friday-bridge-building-challenge/>. Or have a Lego challenge - who can build the best house, car etc.

Tint shaving cream with food colouring, paint pictures on the windows or glass doors (or the inside of the shower glass) then rinse it off

Cardboard box challenge—cardboard boxes can become anything with a little imagination for example a large flat shallow box is ideal for a train track or roads. Deeper larger boxes can become cars, planes, shops, houses the opportunities are literally endless. Boxes can be covered in papier-mâché, cut in to shapes e.g. wings, paper plates can be added to become steering wheels/tyres. Decorating the box can become as much of a family activity as playing in it once it has finished e.g. if you make a shop for example you could also make items to sell or a till.

Floating and Sinking - With a large bowl of water and a collection of objects your child could conduct their own floating and sinking experiment. They could try to work out which materials would make the best boat and then hold races by blowing them across the water with a straw.

Mud Pies - Mixing mud, stick, stones and feathers can provide hours of messy fun in the garden. Using water cans can be a great way to create the mud piles. And yoghurt pots make great containers.

Hide and Seek in ice - Find a range of small toys and place them in an ice cube tray or pot, fill up with water and freeze. Once it is frozen your children can use things like a plant sprayer filled with warm water to help melt the ice and free the toys. You could add food colouring to the water to make the ice cubes even more interesting and ask the children to try and guess what is hidden within as parts of the object start to appear.

More ideas to try: (Tip: Print these pages out, cut into strips and have a daily lucky dip!)

- Do a **marshmallow toothpick engineering challenge**
- **Weaving** - Create a "God's eye" weaving using sticks and wool
- Build a **teepee fairy house**
- Try shadow drawing, leaf rubbings, painting bark or stones
- Build a **bug hotel**
- Try leaf threading and make a nature chandelier
- Use a mirror to draw a **self portrait**
- **Build a fort** using the sofa and every cushion/pillow you can find
- Thread pasta into **jewellery**
- Make **3D paper rainbows**
- Make your own **bubble blower**
- Put goggles on and **swim** in the bath
- Go through your board/card **games** and challenge yourself to play them all. Design your own game
- Make **greeting cards** to be used for birthdays and other occasions
- Paint a **family portrait** to be framed and hung
- Choose a book each and **read aloud** to each other in the biggest bed in your house
- Have a **handball tournament**
- Find 10 different shaped **leaves** in the garden
- Create a **paper crown** for a member of your family and decorate it
- Make a **paper chain** to hang up in the dining room
- Try the **travelling water** experiment
- Fill a small spray bottle with water and aromatherapy oil and then **spray** and wipe the house
- Fold paper and cut out **paper snowflakes**
- Make **pom poms** out of wool
- Play **drawing games** like Simon Says drawing
- Put on a **puppet show** using toys behind the sofa
- Make DIY **rain clouds** in a jar
- Do the **magic milk** experiment
- Create a **sensory shaker** bottle using an old bottle, glitter and water (and whatever else you like!)
- Fold **paper planes** and have a competition to see how far they will fly
- Learn how to **bake bread**
- Woodworking skills - Practice hammering nails into a plank of wood
- Research a favourite **topic** on the internet, download pictures and paste into a scrap book
- Keep a **balloon** in the air as long as possible
- Build a house with a **deck of cards**
- Play **hotels** using your bedrooms as 'hotel rooms' or restaurants by setting up the dining room like a restaurant with menus (or hospitals, vets, banks, etc)
- Make up a **workout** and do it together (eg: 25 star jumps, 20 squats, 15 crunches, hop like a bunny around the lounge room, frog leap your partner)
- **Press flowers** within a few heavy books

And more! (thanks to NorthShoreMums for some great ideas!)

- Make a **Lego zip line**
- Play the **gummy bear game** (using dice and 5 gummies each. Roll a 1 you eat one in your pile, a 2 you pass one bear to your left, a 3 you pass to your right, a 4 you keep it, a 5 you eat it, a 6 you keep it – keep playing till the gummies are gone!)
- Take some garden clippings and see which ones you can get to **grow roots** for replanting
- Use masking tape to make a **race track**. Race toy cars. Or use the inside of your bathtub as a ramp for racing
- With some old clothes, cut and **create clothes** for your toys
- Take everyone's **height measurements** on a door frame
- Using paper taped together, trace a partner's whole **body**. Include as many body parts and organs as you can
- Give someone a back, foot or head **massage**
- Take some **artistic photos** in black and white. Play around with filters and see what you can create. You could use a phone or learn how to use the proper camera (if you have one)
- **Water play** – buckets, scoopers, whisk, pouring jugs, straws, bubbles!
- Make a **Bottle Rocket**
- Make **Rainbow Paper**
- Make a **stained glass window** using glue and cellophane
- Paint a **stick gnome**
- Make a **Rainbow Stick**
- **Skipping rope**—can you get to 100 without stopping—can you do any doubles or cross hands?
- Sort through all your **crafts and art supplies**. See if something inspires you. Organise and sharpen all your pencils and test all your markers
- Take apart an **old appliance**. Can you put it back together?
- Research your **family tree** – see how far back you can go
- Make a **time capsule** of this time to be opened in 10 years
- **Wash** the car or your bike!
- Set up a **camp** in the garden and play inside the tent
- Lie on a rug in the garden and spot **cloud shapes**. Make up a story about what you see.
- Work together to make a **family emblem**, motto or song. Include things that are important to you and your family
- Learn to **finger knit, french knit** or braid wool into friendship bracelets
- Sketch your dream red carpet look!
- Make a **lantern** from an old jam jar
- Make a paper plate **whale**
- Learn how to **plait hair**, try some other hairstyles
- Try **tie-dying** some fabric or clothes using natural dyes
- Can you draw or paint with your **feet**?
- Make an infinite **paper flipper**
- Do a **Yoga** class together
- Learn a new craft skill - knitting, crochet, applique, scrap-booking...

Having Fun Outside

Even with restrictions on socialising, kids need to get outside!

Follow the latest recommended guidelines to stay safe.

Picnics - Even picnics in the garden can help to make meal times a little more fun. Children could help to make the food and perhaps come up with a lovely summery smoothie for everyone to enjoy. You could give your picnic a theme to make it more fun, even dress up!



Photography - If you are going out for the day then your child may find it fun to take along a camera so that they can record the day from their own perspective. You could use a disposable camera and then use the pictures to start a summer holiday scrap book to take back to school in September.

Hide and Seek in ice - Find a range of small toys and place them in an ice cube tray or pot, fill up with water and freeze. Once it is frozen your children can use things like a plant sprayer filled with warm water to help melt the ice and free the toys. You could add food colouring to the water to make the ice cubes even more interesting and ask the children to try and guess what is hidden within as parts of the object start to appear.

Obstacle courses - If your children need to burn off some energy then getting them to design obstacle courses can be a great way to do this whilst having some fun. You could use garden toys or even cardboard boxes to make obstacles and add in some challenges like dribbling a ball around some posts for added difficulty.

Painting with water - This is a great activity for little ones. All they need are a pot of water and some big paintbrushes so they can paint the paving, playhouses etc without any real mess.

Gardening – weeding, pruning bushes, picking flowers for a vase. Many families have mentioned that gardening is something that really helps their child feel calm (as long as the weather is ok of course).

<http://www.netmums.com/activities/summer/gardening-in-the-summer>

More garden fun:

- Create an **river** out of Aluminium foil in the garden and float things down it
- **Outdoor games** like egg and spoon race, tag team races, three legged races, or play stuck in the mud. Or hold your own Olympic Games
- Do a **scavenger** hunt in the garden



Educational help

Lots of schools are offering help and resources for children and young people via the internet and other technology. However, other help is also available if you and your family are self-isolating or your child's school has closed:

Twinkl are offering their Twinkl Ultimate service FREE for a month to help cover school closures. Visit www.twinkl.co.uk and enter code **CVDTWINKLHELPS** to set up. They are also offering free resource packs, [click here](#) to access.

Parent Guide to GCSE have produced a home learning timetable to help KS3 and KS4 with new learning links updated every day.

Online learning platform, **Sumdog**, has a number of engaging and challenging maths and literacy games that your child can use to enhance their learning at home.

BBC Bitesize is an excellent online resource that provides students help with revision and learning. Here you will find a number of free videos, step-by-step guides, activities and quizzes by level and subject on every subject for students aged from three to 16 and over.

If your school does not use **GCSEPod** they have some free resources available that anyone can access <https://www.gcsepod.com/>

What if you need some extra help?

If you are worried and think that you may need a little extra help, then there are several local and national services that may be able to help.

Helplines :

- **NAS** - 0808 800 4104
- **Contact (a Family) Helpline** - <https://contact.org.uk/our-helpline/>
- **Challenging Behaviour Foundation** - <http://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk/supporting-you/for-families/for-families.html>
- **Scope** - <http://www.scope.org.uk/support>
- **Mencap** - <https://www.mencap.org.uk/familyhub>
- **Your local SENDIAS Service** - Can help with signposting you to support services, identifying local activities and connecting you with local organisations. Please see: <https://www.westberkssendiass.info>

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