Creative Ways to Stay Engaged!

Presented By: Stephanie Heitkemper, MA MFT, LPC, RPT
Today’s Objectives:

- Gain exposure to creative ways to engage children.
- Learn tools to help regulate children, while their schedules and routines have been interrupted.
- Practice 2 strategies to support healthy process conversations around the activities.
- Walk away with some new fun ideas!

Activity Themes include:
- Sensory
- Touch
- Mindfulness
- Movement
- Arts & Crafts
- Games
- On-Line Games
- Legos
- Music
- Outdoors
- Virtual Tours
- Grief
- Family Resources
- Bibliotherapy
## Concentration Spans:

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<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Average Concentration Span</th>
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<tr>
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Touch:

- Routine hugs
- Intentional opportunities of connection
  - Sitting on your lap reading a book
  - Hand squeeze
- Play together
- Snuggle time
- Back rub
- Brush teeth
- Brush hair
- Foot massage
Movement:

- Tik Tok Challenges
- Go Noodle
- Tissue dance
- Egg Hunt Charades
- Balloon dance
- Penguin Waddle
- Jump Rope
- Sticky Spider Web: Using painters’ tape
- Build an indoor obstacle course
- Mirroring activities:
  - Scarves, dishtowels, old scraps of fabric, hand towels and/or bandanas
  - Feelings
  - Movement to music
  - Alternating who is the leader, and who is the follower.
Yoga activities:
- Cosmic Kids Yoga
- Free Printable Yoga Cards For Kids

Indoor Hopscotch: Using washi tape or painter’s tape

Invisible Maze:
- Set up a grid (can use paper cut outs, potholders, wash clothes
- Draw a grid on a piece of paper.
- Have one person be the leader and the rest are participants trying to get through the maze.
- The leader will mark off the maze on the grid.
- Rules include: only being able to go left, ride or forward.
- Participants must restart the maze, if they make an incorrect move.
- Winner then gets to become the leader.

Tape Line Jumps: approximately 5-10 lines
- Long jump
- Run’n’ jump
- Long jump backwards
- Hop
- Reach & stretch
Outside Ideas:

- Walk the dog!!
- Teach yourself how to do a handstand!
- Stargaze
- Create & bury a time capsule
- Backyard or back patio camping
- S’mores & Bonfire
- Build an obstacle course
- Nature Walk
- Neighborhood Scavenger Hunt
- Make birdfeeders
- Backyard Carwash
- Paint with a fly swatter
- Make a leaf scrapbook
- Hula hoop
- Make a nature Mandala
- Have a driveway dance party
Virtual Tours Museum Edition:

Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History

Van Gogh Museum

National Museum of Anthropology, Mexico City

NASA

Women’s History

National Museum of the United States Air Force

Museum of Fine Arts Boston

Metropolitan Museum of Art
Virtual Tours Zoos & Park Edition:

- National Aquarium
- Monterey Bay Aquarium
- San Diego Zoo
- Houston Zoo
- Georgia Aquarium
- Disney Parks
- Legoland
- Hidden Worlds of National Parks
- Machu Picchu
- Pyramids of Giza
- Stonehenge
- Colosseum
Music:

- Sing Snap
- Karafun

- Making a playlist
- Creating family roles - One day, it’s the entertainment coordinator
- Using the “I Am Safe Song”
I am Safe Song:

I am Safe
(To the Tune of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star)

I am Safe and I am strong
Take a breath (Triangle Breathing: Up, Down, & Across)
And Sing this Song
I am growing strong each day
Everything will be okay
I am safe and I am strong

Version 2:
(Make up your own tune)
I’m safe x2 I’m not alone
I’m loved x2 I’m not alone
I’m safe x2 I’m loved
## Name it to Tame it:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right Side (emotion)</th>
<th>Left Side (logic)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Worried</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Love</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Courage</td>
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<td>Sadness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>Pity</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Nervousness</td>
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<td>Shy</td>
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<td>Confident</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Right Side (emotion) to Left Side (logic)
On-Line “Family Favorite” Games:

Scrabble
Go
Ticket to Ride
Monopoly
Yahtzee
Uno
Battleship
Mindfulness:

- Create a glitter jar
- Blow bubbles
- Mindfulness meal: focus on chewing, and time.
- Body Scan
- Mindfulness Coloring Sheets:
  - Youngest
  - Middle
  - Older
- Heartbeat exercise
- Mindfulness Walk Indoors and/or outdoors:
  - What are 5 things you can see?
  - What are 4 things you can touch?
  - What are 3 things you can hear?
  - What are 2 things you can smell?
  - What is 1 thing you can taste?

Bibliotherapy:

"Good Morning Yoga" By: Mariam Gates
"Good Night Yoga" By: Mariam Gates
"Zen Hen" By: Keri Powers-Pye
"Peaceful Piggy Meditation" By: Kerry Lee MacLean
Sensory Checklist:

Movement:
- Riding a bicycle
- Running or jogging
- Walking or hiking
- Aerobics
- Dancing
- Stretching
- Lifting weights
- Yoga or Tai Chi
- Swimming
- Jumping on a trampoline
- Rocking in a rocker or glider
- Rocking yourself
- Bean bag tapping
- Shaking out your feet/hands
- Playing an instrument
- Doodling
- Re-arranging furniture
- Gardening
- Taking a shower
- Cleaning
- Driving
- Washing a car
- Skiing/skating
- Building things
- Skiing/skating
- Building things
- Driving
- Washing a car
- Skiing/skating
- Building things

Types of Touch & Temperature:
- Blanket wrap/weighted blanket
- Getting a massage
- Holding/chewing ice
- Soaking in warm bath
- Using art/craft supplies
- Warming up by a fire
- Pottery/clay work
- Petting a dog, cat or other pet
- Holding a dog, cat, or other pet
- Planting or weeding
- Warm/cold cloth to head/face
- Hot/cold shower
- Hand washing
- Washing the dishes
- Using a stress ball
- Fidgeting with something
- Twirling your own hair
- Going barefoot
- Getting a manicure/pedicure
- Washing or styling your hair
- Bean bag tapping or brushing
- Cooking or baking
- The feel of certain fabrics
- Being hugged or held
- Knitting/crocheting/sewing
- Being in the shade or sunshine
- Using powders or lotions
- Playing a musical instrument

Use this checklist to see what each member in your family needs for their sensory diet.
Sensory Checklist Continued:

Auditory/Listening:
- Enjoying the quiet
- The sound of a water fountain
- The sound of a fan
- People talking
- White noise
- Music box
- Wind chimes
- Singing
- Humming
- Whistling
- Plays/theater
- Live concerts
- Radio shows
- Ocean sounds
- Rain
- Birds chirping
- Ticking of a clock
- A cat purring
- Using the telephone
- Use of MP3 player
- Listening to musical instruments
- Relaxation or meditation

Vision/Looking:
- Photos
- The sunset or sunrise
- Snow falling
- Rain showers
- Fish in a tank
- Autumn foliage
- Art work
- A mobile
- Waterfalls
- Cloud formations
- Stars in the sky
- Ocean waves
- Watching sports
- Movies
- Animal watching
- Window shopping
- Photography
- Reading
- Looking through different colored glasses
- A flower
- Water or fish swimming in a lake
- Looking through picture books

Use this checklist to see what each member in your family needs for their sensory diet.
Sensory Checklist Continued:

Smelling:
- Scented candles
- Essential oils
- Cologne/perfume
- Baking/cooking
- Coffee
- Aftershave
- Freshly cut grass
- Flowers
- Tangerines/citrus fruits
- Herbs/spices
- Chopped wood
- Smell of your pet
- Linens after being hung outside to dry
- Scented lotions
- Incense
- Herbal tea
- Mint leaves

Chewing/Tasting:
- Chewing gum
- Chewing crunchy food
- Sour foods
- Chewing ice
- Sucking a thick milkshake throw a straw
- Chewing on your straw
- Yawning
- Deep breathing
- Biting into a lemon
- Eating a lollipop
- Drinking coffee/ cocoa
- Drinking herbal or regular tea
- Drinking something carbonated
- Listerine strips
- Mints
- Hot balls
- Chewing carrot sticks
- Spicy foods
- Eating a popsicle
- Blowing bubbles
- Chocolate
- Strong Mints

Use this checklist to see what each member in your family needs for their sensory diet.
Sensory Activities:

- Oral Sensory Activities
- 100 Sensory based activities
- Liquid Tiles
- Homemade wrapping paper
- Salt Dough Ornaments
- Cinnamon Ornaments
- 40+ Sensory Bin Ideas
- Sensory Eggs
- Messy Activities
- Essential Oil Playdough
- Playdough without cream of tartar
Creative Ideas:

- Homemade puffy sidewalk chalk
- Melted muffin/ice cube crayons
- Painting old tennis shoes
- Folded paper bracelet
- Post it note origami
- Snuffle mat for dogs and cats
- Salad spinner art
- 52 Crayon Ideas!
Legos:

- Build a Lego that describes you
- Build your home using Legos
- Develop a key for how to speak about Legos
- Lego Challenges
- Daily Lego Challenges inspired by Lego Masters
- Secret Codes
- Lego Geography
- Science with Legos
Games:

- Talking points for games
- Racko
- Sequence
- Race to The Treasure
- Heist
- Suspend Game
Spell It Out:

Supplies:
Scrabble tiles from the board game or A-Z Tiles

Things to include in puzzle:
- Name
- 2-3 coping skills
- 2-3 words to describe the person who died
- 2-3 “one” word memories
- 2-4 feelings regarding your grief

Rules:
- Build the puzzle similar to how you play the game of Scrabble
Memory Lane:

- Ask your child what do they like to do? Prior to all this change, what made them happy?
- Look at old pictures of the person who died, at similar ages.
- If there aren’t pictures perhaps send a video message, letter or email to family members allowing your child to ask questions about the person at “x” age.
- Slow down to explore life back then.
Grief Recipe:

**Supplies:**
- White plates
- Sharpies

**Plate Ideas:**
- Recipe
- Picture of favorite outing
- Everyone writes a word that describes the person who died.

**Baking Instructions:**
- Bake at 350 degrees
- 30 minutes and let it cool in the oven
Current Favorite Bibliotherapy Titles:

- Bug in a Vacuum: Melanie Watt
- My Big, Dumb, Invisible Dragon: Angie Lucas
- The Invisible String: Patrice Karst
- What Does Worry Say?: Allison Edwards
- After the Fall: Dan Santat
- The Heart and the Bottle: Oliver Jeffers
- The Rabbit Listened: Cori Doerrfeld
- Marcy's Having All the Feels: Allison Edwards
- The Boy with Big, Big Feelings: Britney Winn Lee
- What Do you Do With an Idea?: Kobi Yamada
References:


"Alone we can do so little; Together we can do so much." - Helen Keller

- Meredith Hammond, MA, LPC, RPT-S & incredible family!
- Samantha Cerami, LCSW
- Sue Montgomery, LCSW
- Jessica’s House
- Comfort Zone Camp
- Melissa Lunardini, MA, MBA
- Khara Croswaite Brindle, MA, LPC
- Jane Burdette, MFT-C & hilarious daughter!
Let's Stay Connected!

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