

All they need is you...

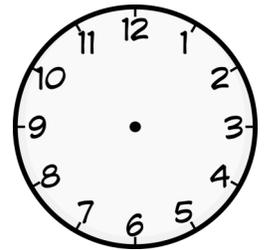
Parent Strategies for Sheltering at Home with Young Children

As you know, having the kids at home while you try to work, presents challenges. Here are some helpful hints to make the day run smoother...



Kids-Resist the urge to have play dates and get together. Sheltering in Place will help “flatten the curve.” Do this by limiting group interactions for now. Resist using group care settings if you have an informal option. Group care is more risky and frontline workers have priority. If your child misses their playmate, perhaps you can arrange a video. Use this time to really get to know your child. Focus on your child’s current interests and concerns and build their activities for the day around those interests and concerns. Often times, challenging behavior is simply the child asking for something different to do. Remember that young children do not have the language skills to tell you what they need. Children will be more likely to participate in and focus on an activity when it is something that they find interesting.

Routine-Not only do children thrive with a routine, it helps lessen anxiety for children and parents. Everyone will feel better when their days are predictable. Plan a daily schedule without putting strict times attached to specific activities. Young children especially need flexibility in the schedule for you to “switch things up” when they get bored. Foster their independence by setting up places in the house where they can engage in independent activities. Examine your workload and make time to play games, sing, or read together. Schedule healthy snacks, lunch, and naptime for your child. Establish routines for naptime and evening bedtime. While the children are sleeping, catch up on work tasks that were not when you were spending time with the children.



Interactions-One of the best things you can do with young children is to have positive interactions. Don’t be concerned with “educating” your child. Children learn best through play! Allow yourself to play with them and have meaningful conversations. Cooking involves counting and uses small motor skills. Build on their answers and introduce new vocabulary. For example, if your child sees a bug, you could reply “That is a cool bug! Do you think it is an insect or spider?” Encourage desired behavior by providing specific feedback. “I like how you worked with your sister to pick up the toys.” Make sure that you are consistent. Model for your children. They learn a lot by watching. Finally, remember that you are doing the best that you can and you... are all they need.

For more tips and support, contact Child Care Resources, 406-728-6446, or ccr@childcareresources.org