

COOKING: An Educational and Therapeutic Activity

Did you know that cooking is not only a key life-skill but builds a variety of academic and therapeutic skills?

Cooking involves planning, organizing, focus, attention, self-esteem, social skills, comprehension and fine motor development.

It can mean teamwork, learning safety rules, using kitchen equipment, nutritional awareness, math concept development and incorporates communication development.

So, while you are at home, unable to engage in regular daily activities, you and your son or daughter can **COOK** and you can rest in the fact you are addressing a variety of key skill development activities.

HOW?

- 1) Tell your son or daughter you have to plan a healthy lunch or dinner and need his/her help.
- 2) Have them help you design the menu (use on line pictures from a store, newspaper ads that come in the mail, their AAC device, google images or if they are verbal, their verbal ideas).
- 3) Perhaps encourage them to look in your cupboards, freezers, refrigerators to see what is readily available that can be used or determine if shopping needs to occur.
- 4) You can either go into the store, or order on line and pick up or have items dropped off.
- 5) Once the menu is agreed upon, then they can participate in locating items (in the home, on-line) and watch you place an order. If they have verbal skills, perhaps the 2nd time you do this, they can order on the phone or carry out the on-line steps. This is a great communication skill development activity.
- 6) Now, you may have decided to use a particular recipe. This involves reading and comprehending directions.
- 7) Using a recipe requires using measuring cups and spoon. Now you are into math development.
- 8) Meal preparation involves, pouring, cutting, flipping, scooping, opening, greasing, spreading (all motor planning and development skills)
- 9) Getting ready to cook involves locating all the cooking supplies and equipment. This teaches problem solving. It is always a good idea to have your son or daughter put away all the items purchased at the store. Then they know where to find things. It is also great to have them learn how to wash a dish or use a dishwasher and then unload or put away dishes. This helps them problem solve as well and develops fine motor and memory skills.

- 10) Setting the table for the meal is a great idea. This involves counting the number of family members and then counting out the number of place mats, napkins, forks, spoons, cups etc.
- 11) Another reading skill that is developed in cooking is the reading of labels and dates on food items.
- 12) Math skills can be developed by having your son or daughter, if they are at that level, determine the costs of all the items having to be purchased for the meal. Making a best guess is okay. Then you could tell them you only have a \$100.00 bill and ask them to determine if its enough or if you will receive change.
- 13) When reading recipes, or selecting the menu, you can also talk about what food family the item is in (fruit, starch, protein) or if it is liquid or solid. Now you are teaching Science. You could even talk about how much sugar is one item and compare to the other.
- 14) Finally, when the table is set, the meal ready and family called to eat, your son or daughter can engage and be social by brining items to the table and serving something (asking if their sister or brother would like a specific item is a great reciprocal activity).
- 15) Then the whole family can have a table conversation and also comment on the meal and its preparation. This increases the self-esteem of your son or daughter.

It's okay if your son or daughter isn't ready to do all steps. It is okay if they are not kitchen safe. It's okay if they have never helped select food, prepare food, serve food, use equipment. Just start somewhere. They can find one or two items you need. They can stir or scoop and avoid cutting for now. They can empty the utensil tray of the dishwasher at first. They can make a simple snack (toast and butter, cereal and milk, a can of soup, a smoothie, a sandwich etc.)

Nurture Independence.

Nurture Communication Skills

Nurture Motor Development

COUNT & MEASURE -TIME, AT HOME

You can measure with a tape measure, a ruler, your hand, or your foot even. You can count with your own memory, an IPAD, your Phone, a computer, or fingers.

- 1) You can have kiddos measure the height of chairs, bookshelves, or dressers.
- 2) You can have kiddos measure the length and width of tables, beds, doors, windows.
- 3) How many inches is their phone, iPad, TV, computer screen or the remote.
- 4) How tall is mom, dad, brother, sister, or grandmother?
- 5) How big is their bedroom room (width and length), the kitchen, the backyard?
- 6) How many books, colored pencils or musical instruments do they have?
- 7) How many cups, plates or spoons are in the draw?
- 8) How many bikes does the family have?
- 9) How many rolls of toilet paper are left!!!! 😊
- 10) How many apples, bananas, tomatoes, milks, cookies, chips are there in a bowl, in pack, on a rack?
- 11) How many tires are there on the car or on their bike?
- 12) How many bedrooms in the house, or kitchens in the house, or bathrooms in the house?
- 13) How many fingers and toes do they have, does the cat have, or the dog?
- 14) How many pairs of socks do they have in their drawers?
- 15) How long is their pant leg or shirt sleeve?
- 16) They could use measuring spoons and cups to measure rice, beans, or water.
- 17) How many teaspoons of water in a cup of water? How many cups of rice in a bag?
- 18) How many pieces is there in a puzzle they have?
- 19) If you have a stop watch, they could see how long you or a sister or brother can hop, jump, bounce a ball or hold their breath.
- 20) If you have a timer on your IPHONE they could see how long it takes water to boil, toast to toast, to make their lunch, snack, or dinner.

Got Paper Bags?

If you want to work on fine motor skills, communication skills and social skills try making paper bag puppets this summer. If your son or daughter has a favorite SUPER HERO or ANIME CHARACTER, that could be the motivator. Then when all the puppets have been made, its puppet show time. It's time to practice puppet conversation, scripting and hand movement.

All you need are paper bags, scissors, glue, colored papers or white and maybe some colored pencils or crayons and your creativity. I bet you can find a super hero drawing on the web to copy.

For the puppet theater, you just need an empty box left by Amazon Prime or a large furniture box.



JUST CHALK IT

Okay, head out to your local art store, CVS, Dollar Store or grocery store and pick up some **CHALK**. Thick chalk is easier to hold for those with fine motor challenges. Favorite colored chalk could motivate. Use your patio, drive way or sidewalk for your canvas. Have some fun creating chalk shapes, numbers, words that ask you to do something (jump, hop, clap, dance, sing, touch toes) or draw favorite characters or just scribble your heart out with each color in the pack. Then at night when your kiddo is sleeping you can wash it away with just water and start all over again, or leave it on for a few days and practice using it.





Just Take a Walk with Your Kiddo

A walk for air, movement and understanding

This walk helps you and your son, daughter, grandchild or guest, client or resident. It allows the body to stretch, the eyes to see, the body to breathe and language to be shared and understood. It will help you see what you may have missed, always being in a hurry to get where you are going. This is not a walk to get somewhere. This is a walk to be present in and notice, label, point out, model, talk about the things you see, hear, smell and feel as you walk. This walk begins as you get ready for the walk and ends when you return home and put your walking things away. It could have a beginning, middle and end if your kiddo needs that structure. It could have a time frame, if your kiddo needs that type of structure.

Examples:

We are going to walk for 20 minutes.

We are going to walk four blocks, turn right for three blocks, turn right again for three and then do four more blocks back home.

We are going to walk until we have passed 50 houses. We will count them together.

We are going to walk and count how many blue painted houses we see on our block, then white, then green and then brown.

Step I:

Put a daily schedule up on the refrigerator. Put a picture or word or icon for **WALK** on it. Have your son or daughter check daily schedule. When it is walk time, bring them to the open door or window and have them work with you on whether or not a jacket or sweater is needed. Have them get it. Find out if a water bottle is needed for the walk. Have them fill it and carry it. Maybe a backpack is needed for this.

Step II:

Explain what will happen on the walk or what might be the structure of the walk (see above).

Make sure you have your phone for timing, or picture taking of the walk, for a later discussion and keys to the house.

Make sure proper walking shoes are on, everyone has gone to the bathroom.

Step III

Take the walk.

Walking tips:

Think about your kiddo's interests and try and pull them into the walk. Naming trees, looking for dogs and cats, identifying colors, house numbers, mail boxes, windows, doors, fire hydrants, cars, trucks, tires, flowers etc. **Ask them to point to or name or find these things of interest. Maybe they can take pictures of them to talk about later or show other family members.**

If you hear things, name them (dogs barking, birds chirping, horns beeping, garbage cans dragging, children playing, cars starting up, fire trucks digging). Listen, I hear _____. Can you hear it? Can you find them, point to them or look to them with your eyes?

You could encourage additional movements on your walk (skipping, hopping, running, hands and arms moving quickly beside them)

You could encourage deep breathing at the end of each block, before stepping off the curb to cross.

You could draw attention to stop signs and street icons (walk, stop, wait) and label them.

You could teach pressing the button on the signal.

You could teach look left, right for cars coming.

If You do see someone you know, also walking, you could encourage a wave, to greet a neighbor. Could social skill opportunity.

If you have neighbors you know, your kiddo could make a picture and drop it off in their mail box.

For a second journey, your kiddo could use his scooter or trike and stop at every other house or every time he/she sees a white fence or a mail box.

On your walk you could point out the things you like about someone's house or a particular flower or car you really like. Let your kiddo know your preferences, your interests.

On your walk you could look **UP**. Point out blue sky, clouds, airplanes overhead, birds in trees, the color of the sky when the sun is setting,

If your individual is hard to take for a walk, perhaps a song could work. Head phones or earphones could bring in favorite tunes and melodies which could keep your kiddo engaged on the walk.

Take short walks at first. But take them. Short walks allow them to know the end is coming. Increase by 5-minute intervals if your individual is resistant. Use a time timer, stop watch, iPhone to show time passing to them. Let them know he/she only has a couple more minutes until the walk is over.

Final Step:

As you approach your home, building, office or center prepare your kiddo for the transition. Let them know that it would be time to put away their jacket or water bottle first. Going to the bathroom a great idea and washing their hands another. Then provide them with a verbal or visual reminder of what they are going to do next.

Make sure you tell them how great it was to take that walk with them. Look at those pictures you took and remember the walk with each other.

Let's Get Moving

As we welcome in more and more light, I am reminded that it is really very important that we help our sons and daughters to move. Movement brings air to our lungs, flexibility to our motion, strength, stability and endurance into our lives. Joint compression movement brings calmness, regulation and focus. Movement with others builds social engagement.

Those with learning differences aren't always thrilled with movement, exercise or anything that resembles strength development. Some are not motivated to move away from the computer screen. Others are stuck and do not know how to start.

It's up to parents, care providers and teachers to design movement in their lives and help motivate and then celebrate small steps in the process.

- 1) Start with walking to your son or daughter's favorite shop to purchase an item. Tell them the car isn't working properly.
- 2) If your son or daughter is into their phone, tell them you need pictures of different kinds of homes, cars, signs in the neighborhood. Then take that walk.
- 3) Create a favorite music play list of your son or daughter or student and create a dance party or movement time to their music.
- 4) Some understand the whole idea of fitness, wellness and being in good shape and you can use those concepts to design movement activities (jump roping, weight lifting, squats, crunchies, yoga). If old enough check out fitness centers in your local area and enroll them in classes. This is a great idea for social engagement.
- 5) Some love being in the water, so first coach them to use a kickboard and do laps, exercising their leg muscles and then they get free time water play. If they are good at swimming, a swim team could become a place of social engagement.
- 6) Family bike rides can be very beneficial.
- 7) Family hikes are great ways to spend time together, with a great picnic at the end.
- 8) Maybe they have a favorite hero and that hero is into karate or some type of martial arts. Use that character to motivate them to join a class.
- 9) Work with your son, daughter or student on throwing, kicking and catching all kinds of balls (soccer ball, football, tennis ball, volley ball, rugby ball). This works on joint attention, crossing the mid-line, taking turns and could lead to them joining some type of special Olympics or neighborhood sport club.
- 10) Consider dance classes or camps that are filled with daily movement activities.

It's Time to Get Moving

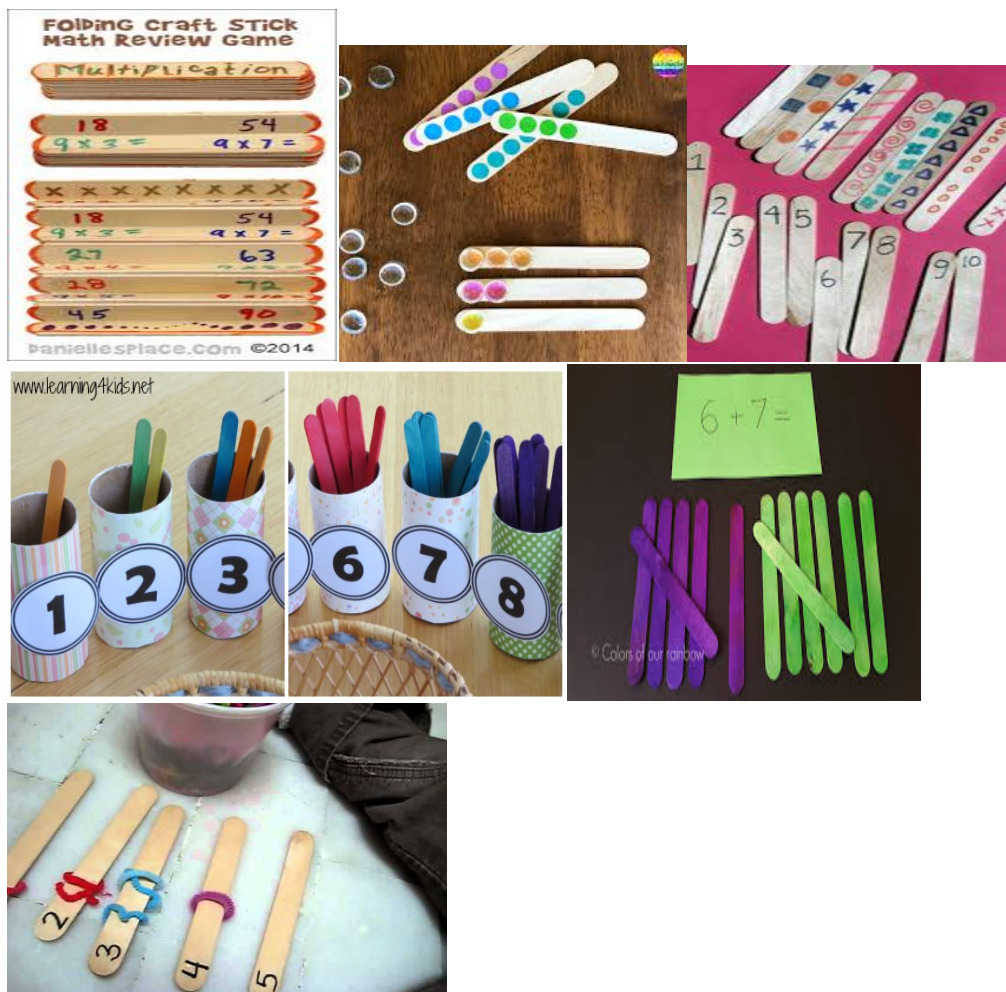




POPSICLE STICKS ACTIVITES

Popsicle sticks are everywhere. Find them at your local grocery store, CVS, Rite Aid or Dollar store. You can teach with them and build with them. You can develop fine motor skills, math skills, motor planning, problem solving and social and communication skills. Get creative. Get away from paper and pencil activities. Get into project-based activities.

Math Examples:



Creative Activities: Use your kiddos interests to build things.



GOT ROCKS?

This weekend, I was sitting in my backyard, sipping coffee and realized that I had all kinds of rocks in my own backyard. What about you? Perhaps you could gather them up in a bucket or bin and create some activities for your kiddos. If you don't, you could go to a building supply lot and pick them up, the beach, a stream, river, a trail or some secret outdoor place you know that has plenty of rocks to gather up.

Then you get creative. Try rock piling? Try rock painting? Create paths with rocks to wonder through? Count with rocks, make shapes with rocks, paint some blue and some red and play Tick Tack Toe with rocks.

Rocks are tactile. They require motor manipulation. They can present problems to solve.

All our kiddos typical or with learning differences could benefit from simple activities using rocks

GO GET SOME ROCKS.

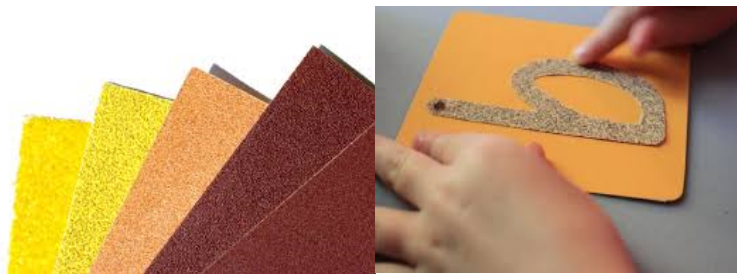




WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH SANDPAPER?

TEACH, PLAY, ENGAGE

Well, time to look in the garage and see if you have any sandpaper. If not, ACE hardware, Safeway, CVS will have some. Good to get some different grades of sand paper, so kiddos can feel different depths of textures. You can cut out shapes, letters, words out of sandpaper, have your son or daughter feel them with their fingers, outline them with their fingers and then tell you what letter, what word or what shape they have just traced. You can have them put a piece of paper over the sandpaper shape or letter and color over it. What happens? What did they make? You can draw a shape on the regular paper, put sandpaper shape under it and teach them to color within the lines. If they go outside the lines, they will feel the crayon go right off the edge of the sandpaper underneath and stop. You can also find pieces of wood, sand them and put them together for a special project.



Sensory Support

Parents take time to observe well, become good detectives and then you can support your son/daughter's sensory challenges

First things first:

Just think about these categories (hearing, seeing, touching, smelling, moving, mouth and muscles)

Now think about all the things you observe about your child, teen or young adult that are related to these categories.

Do they cover their ears, do they flinch at unexpected noises, are they having difficulty following your directions, or does certain music disturb them? Perhaps their **auditory system** is being overwhelmed.

Do they prefer darker spaces, do glares bother them are they distracted every time someone comes in their space? Perhaps their **visual sense** is bothered.

Do they pull away from touch or do certain clothes bug them? Perhaps their sense **of touch** is affected.

Do they have balance or posture challenges? Perhaps **moving** is hard for them.

Maybe scents irritate them or perhaps the smell of foods stop them from trying new foods. Perhaps their **smell** is on overload.

Maybe your son or daughter does not like to move or moves to, to much. Maybe their **muscles** are having challenging times.

Finally, maybe your son or daughter doesn't chew or suck or blow. This could mean there are sensory challenges in his or her **mouth**.

Challenges and some recommendations:

Can't sit: (sit on a ball chair, wedges, t-stools, use an indoor jumper before asking them to sit, offer some dancing time, walking up hills and down hills before sitting is required, heavy carrying activities, wearing a weighted blanket or vest, carrying a book bag around prior to having to sit).

Trouble visually: Try lower wattage light bulbs, dimmer switches, sit near a window for direct sun light, using sunglasses or hats, even indoors, could help. Use a room divider or screen in a room.

More eye supports: A slant board, a small lamp, anti-glare on computers and devices, sunglasses, natural light, floor lamps, darker, smaller spaces or different colored paper to write and read on.

Muscle Work: Try gyms with teens and young adults. Using weights or resistant machines could help. Let them carry the laundry basket and help put groceries away. Pull someone in a wagon. Mop, sweep, scrub surfaces use muscles. Have them help rearrange the furniture. That can be heavy work too. Dig in the garden, hammer and fill buckets with water and move them.

Crash on pillows, fall into a beanbag chair, catch a heavy ball, tug of war is good too. Knead cookie dough, push chairs under the table, chew gum, do chair pushups, offer a heavy quilt at bed time.

Mouth Fidgets: Eat crunchy foods, use a water bottle to increase sucking, use chewie's around the neck, bite crisp apples and carrots.

Tactile tools: Hand fidgets are great, squishy balls, pens and pencils with grips, wrist bands to pull on.

Auditory supports: Offer headphones, quiet areas to work in, lower music or different types of music, windows or doors closed to avoid noises from vacuums, mixers, alarms, printers.

Olfactory supports: Evaluate the scents you use for cleaning and laundry. Think about food scents and introduce gradually. Maybe they avoided sitting in the kitchen when things are cooking on the top stove. Evaluate your deodorants and perfumes you use on your body.

Addressing sensory challenges can help make all the difference in the way the day goes by for you and your family members. When they are not overly distracted by what they see, hear, smell or touch then they avoid frustration and irritations and are better able to connect, follow directions and move through their day.

Put on your detective glasses, notice how your son or daughter's senses are being affected and then begin to move through your house and make some adjusts. Start small, but start.

Parents Can Be Communication Facilitators TOO!!!!

Can't get to the speech therapist? School is closed.

Your son or daughter doesn't really respond well to distance learning.

Here is how to be a Communication Facilitator during sheltering-in times:

- 1) Remember looking, reaching, pointing at something he/she wants is a communication intention, acknowledge it. "Oh, I see you are look at ____ you want ____."
- 2) Don't just put out all the toys and games, foods and snacks! Provide a simple choice of two or three options and have your child reach for point to, ask for what he/she would like.
- 3) When he points to the chips, don't hand the bag over, ask how many he would like. Then count them out.
- 4) Keep the clicker to the video, TV etc. up high. Encourage requesting, not taking.
- 5) Don't just put all meal items of their plate and if you do, very small servings to create need to ask for MORE!
- 6) At the dinner table encourage them to ask for something to be passed to them in order to obtain more.
- 7) Don't lay out their clothes. Have them choose/request what pants, what shirt, what socks they would like to wear today.
- 8) Have them read a recipe and ask for all ingredients. Don't put them all out.
- 9) If they enjoy toys in the bathtub, don't just put them all in. Let them request which ones.
- 10) Prepare an art project but for get an item (scissors if cutting is involved, glue if assembling is required)
- 11) If they are able to use a computer or IPHONE have them Face grandma and grandpa, sister or brother, a friend and ask how they are, wave, show them a picture made.
- 12) Have them put household objects away and learn prepositions. Put the pot **under** the stove. Put the towel **on** the rack. Put the clicker **next to** the TV. Put the napkin **next to** the dish. Put the spoon **in** the cup.
- 13) Work on numbers with them. Please get me **three** apples and **one** banana. How many does that make? Let's count the days we have not be able to go to the store? Let's mark them off on the calendar. Put an X in each day of the week.
- 14) Go out side and work on verbs with them. Let's **jump**. Let's **march**. **Throw** the ball to me. **Roll** the ball to me. **Kick** the ball to me. **Bounce** the ball. **Hop** around. **Skip** around. **Run** around.
- 15) Increase verbs development in the kitchen. Let's **wash** the carrot. Let's **peel** the banana. Please **pour** milk in your glass. **Scoop** the ice cream into the bowl. Look, what am I doing? Yes, I am peeling, pouring, scooping, washing etc. Find that on your device and show me.
- 16) Work on developing adjectives while doing the laundry. What **color** is your shirt, pants, socks? **How many** shirts, towels, socks are we putting into the washer? Do we want to use **hot or cold** water-cycle? Is this a **big shirt or small** shirt?
- 17) Encourage them to use gestures to express their needs and wants.
- 18) Encourage them to use pictures, devices, writing, sign language, drawing to make their wishes known.
- 19) Help them problem solve. Don't do everything for them. Make communication **MEANINGFUL**.

Summer Time

As the days get longer and, in most places, warmer, what are some of the activities you might engage your son or daughter with autism in? These are great activities for everyone.



Making ice cream or popsicles:

Purchase from the store. Make. Wait. Ice cream party.

Prepare a shopping list.



Alone time in a tent in the backyard.
Nap time.

Video watching. Book Reading.



Early morning walk. A Trip to the driving range.





Making Lemonade. Make a list. Shop. Prepare and share with family.



A walk through the sprinklers.



Swinging, sitting, reading in a hammock.



Make bubbles. Blow bubbles. Pop bubbles.

THE SHORT, SWEET and KEY STEPS

For Kiddos on the Spectrum Successful Return to School

It's all about maintaining **health** and avoiding **transmission** first and foremost

It's about **COLLABORATION** between home and school next

FLEXIBILITY will be the key word for families and the school

Perhaps we need to look at process as **PREPARATION, FIRST WEEK BACK, ADJUSTMENT, STABILIZATION**

- 1) Schools have been and should be continuing to be in contact with the families. **They need to know what's been going on in the home in regards to anxieties, routines and the process around understanding the Virus (what are the words the family has been using to manage (handwashing, mask wearing and other health risks.))**
- 2) Everyone needs to understand that these are **uncertain** times and the future of the systems more than likely will continue to **change** for a while. **FLEXIBILITY**
- 3) Teachers need to be communicating what will be **different** at school. **Social Stories** written and even **videos taken** and shared about what the school may look like. Students may not be changing rooms and all activities may be done in one room to reduce **transmission**. Lunch and snack may be altered.
- 4) Each student's school day and time may need to be **different**. This should be discussed and agreed upon between home and school. Some schools may only be able to offer less days and shortened days to begin with to keep up health standards.
- 5) Student should have a first visit. Short meet up with teacher and staff. Tour of school. Desk area observed. Safe areas pointed out. Lunch areas and bathroom areas. Told what parts of the building will be **OFF LIMITS**.
- 6) What will be the **outcomes** of the 1st week, 2nd, 3rd week etc. Interest based activities identified for motivation.
- 7) **Rules** set down for families. Student must not come to school if Parents will pick up student IMMEDIATELY if there is a health risk or transmission risk
- 8) Schools need to understand some families **will not be ready** to send students. Parents will need to understand that schools may **not be able to provide supports** due to distance regulations, health and transmission issue

WHAT CAN YOUR CHILD, TEEN or ADULT LEARN FROM A DECK OF CARDS?

Time to pull out that old deck of **playing cards**, or make a quick trip to the nearest Safeway, Rite Aid or CVS or just use your Amazon Prime. Matching, counting, adding, subtracting, concepts of smaller, larger, put in order and of course the game of WAR or Fish can all be implemented with a deck of old playing cards.



Let's find all the twos in the deck. Let's count by twos. Show me hearts.



Let's count by fives. How many hearts do you see? How many diamonds to you see? Can you add up all the hearts and diamonds?



Let's put the cards in order from two to six. Can you count forward? Can you count backwards?



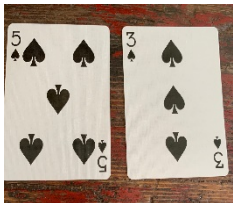
Let's do some subtraction problems. 10 spades minus 8 spades is?



Let's do some addition problems. 3 spades plus 2 spades are?



Find the letter K, find the Q, find the letter J. Now, find the Queen. Find the King? Find the Jack? Point to the one that is wearing an orange crown or a yellow crown.



Point to the five. Point to the three. Count the spades on the five. Count the spades on the three. Which one has more spades on it? Which one has a smaller number of spades?

Well, it is just the Family Vehicle!! Oh, Yea?

How many times have you taken your son or daughter to school, to therapy, to the doctor, to the park or for a long ride to pass the time and calm them?

Well now its time for them to say thank you for all the taking and bringing and getting them to and from. Now its time to learn from that vehicle they interface with all the time. What are its parts? How does it work. How is it maintained?

I believe our kiddos, teens and adults can do some part if not all of this with just some support and guidance.

Think about the outside first.

- 1) You could have them **show** you the windows and then **count** how many. (comprehension/math)
- 2) You could have them show you **lights** on the **front** and then lights at the **back**. (nouns and adjectives)
- 3) You could have them **count** the number of doors on the car and or tires on the car. They could **find** the trunk. Then you could help them learn to open and close doors and trunk. This works on **motor planning** and fine motor and strength. This works on communication **comprehension**.
- 4) Now, for very interested kiddos, perhaps opening the hood of the car would engage. Show where we put window cleaner. Show them how you measure the oil. Perhaps the next time you go to the gas station they could help you buy the window cleaner and add or see what a can of oil looks like.
- 5) Now, if your kiddo likes to play with water and the hose, what a great opportunity to help you wash the outside of the car. They learn to get the hose out, turn on the water, use the interesting nozzle with all kinds of settings (hard, soft, showering, spraying). Here once again is **motor** development and **vocabulary** development.
- 6) Now, you and your kiddo can prepare a bucket of soapy water, grab some washing items and begin to wash the car (front, back, side, door, window, tire, trunk). Up and down, side to side. Lots **of vocabulary** development here. Lots **of motor work** here.
- 7) Then its rinse time, once again exploring those hose settings. Show them what rinse off means. Point out what still needs to be rinsed (dirt, suds). What is clean mean? What does dirty mean?

Move to the inside:

- 1) You know by now you can talk about front and back seats.
- 2) They could count the seats.
- 3) They could find all the seat belts and count them as well.
- 4) They could practice putting them on and opening and closing them.
- 5) You could ask them to show you the stirring wheel.
- 6) You could ask them to show you the radio and work on turning on and off and finding stations.

- 7) They could practice rolling up and down the windows, you talking about open and closed.
- 8) You could put some Windex in a small spray bottle. Teach them to spray, two times, put down and then use a towel to wipe or window wiper, **top to bottom, left to right**. This shows a beginning and an ending.
- 9) Let them lift the floor pads out. You point out dirty. Then help they hose off. Show them clean now.
- 10) Teach them to put them back on the floor. Count them.
- 11) Show them how to vacuum dirt off car carpets. Once again point out **dirty/clean**.

So, your individual does not get confused, use a Social Story <https://carolgraysocialstories.com/social-stories/what-is-it/> to introduce the event. We are going to clean the car today. We are **NOT** going on a ride until we clean the outside and inside. We are going to rinse, wash, and rinse again the outside. We are going to vacuum the inside. We are going to clean the windows. Use pictures of your car.

Use pictures of the parts of your car. Use mom or dad and his name in the story, even pictures of your kiddo and you. Read the story to them a whole week before beginning to involve them, unless of course change is not difficult. New is not difficult. They love cars. Then read once before and get going.

Remember your kiddo does not have to do all steps. Start small. But start. So much is learned by having them engage in a meaningful activity. You are building understanding. You are building contributing. You are building motor development and comprehension. You are outside with them. The sun is shining.

Be sure to thank them for their help. Be sure to follow through if you have said you would take them somewhere. Set a **timer perhaps**, to help them know when things are getting close to be finished.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WE CAN'T GO CAMPING?

Camping grounds may or may not open and if they are, they could have less reservations and limited facilities to support to interest. So how can you bring camping to your son or daughter right in your own backyard? Like this:

- **Clean up the back yard.** Create a work party to get ready for camping. Everyone should have a job, (Pulling weeds, sweeping up fallen leaves, washing down cement, cleaning the fire pit or barbeque, shaking out the sleeping bags and making sure the tent has all its pieces, are just a few).
- **Make a camping food list.** (ingredients for smores, hot dogs, hamburgers or plant burgers, buns, pickles, fresh corn on the cob, drinks, fruit and favorite snacks). Get shopping.
- **Next, its game location:** Gather all the fun games you have been playing indoors and get them ready to do OUTDOORS. Don't forget Charades and of course all those funny games Ellen DeGeneres has out now.
- Maybe you can purchase some **hammocks**. Lying in a hammock outdoors and reading, napping are all good camping activities.
- Maybe you can set up a **volley ball** court and have a game.
- Maybe you can purchase or make some **soccer goals** and bring out the soccer ball and have a shots-on-goals competition.
- **Water Play:** You could go purchase a fun wading pool (local hardware store or Target) to splash around in, a sprinkler head that attaches to your hose that creates a waterfall that goes back and forth.
- **Squirt gun** competitions can be fun
- Gather up all your **art supplies** and make some signs to post around the neighbor thanking all our essential workers and teachers or people special in your life.
- If safe, have a fire going as the sun sets. If you are musical bring those instruments outdoors and sing some **camp songs**. If not, make a play list of camp songs that you can sing to.
- Marshmallow roasting is a definite activity after sundown. Remember **SMORES** (chocolate, graham crackers, marshmallows) YUM You need some type of roasting sticks. Put those on the food list.
- Now **make a plan**. What will you do during your homemade camping day or weekend? Then just do it. Everything outside. NO GOING INTO THE HOUSE, EXCEPT to use the bathroom.
- Make some **rules around cell-phone** use, device use. Limit electronic connections. Remember cell and device service are usually minimal on camping trips.
- Sorry that **rafting and fishing** are not available, but you could make some floating boats and a slip and slide and send those toy boats down the slides. You could get some toy fishing polls and some toy fish and use the pool to try and catch them. If you have a water fall in the backyard or a swimming pool or pond, then all kinds of activities can materials. Volley ball in the water. Marco Polo in the water. Sailing toy boats down the water fall.
- Don't forget the **scary stories** around the camp fire just before bed!
- Don't **forget flashlights** for night time trips to the bathroom.

- Check for Mosquitos and bring some **repellent** to make sure you are protected

ENJOY CAMPING



WINDOW WASHING

Preparation for Reading and Independence

Grab a plastic squirt bottle and add liquid, some paper towels or cloth and pick up a window wiper at ACE Hardware, The Dollar Store, CVS, or Rite Aid. Grab whatever glass cleaner you like and put all in a carry case for ease.

Teach your son or daughter how to squirt the plastic bottle. Start with water. Help them count each time they squirt. Have them aim at specific objects and spray that object 2, 4, 6 or 8 times.

Discuss the concept of dirty and clean. Show them dirty windows and then clean windows. Model for them. Then have them help you with the first step. Grab all items in the carry case and bring to the window.

Then add steps. Pick up spray bottle, squirt left to right, top to bottom. Put bottle down. This is how we read. Then add pick up window wiper. Start in left corner and move wiper from top to bottom, left to right. You could add a green DOT, (go) (paper, tape) in the left corner and a red dot (stop) in the bottom right corner of the window.

This same process can be done when wiping a table off. Squirt, left to right, top to bottom. Dry left to right, top to bottom.

