

Tool Kit for Social Distancing

What is social distancing? during a pandemic-type emergency, schools, churches, and other social gatherings are cancelled to help stop the spread of illness. This is a time when you and/or your family will most likely remain at home for an extended period of time (days, weeks, or possibly months).

Review your tool kit each year as your children grow; updating resources and ideas as needed.

How to Prepare for Social Distancing

Identify what you have already done to prepare:

Make a list of these things as a start to your social distancing tool kit.

- What activities do you do on rainy days?
- Do you have a Sunday box of activities?
- What type of projects do you have lying around that you have wanted to get into and finish? (Craft projects, home improvement projects, deep cleaning, etc)
- What skills have you always wanted to teach your kids but can never find the time?

Daily Schedule/Routine

A daily schedule communicates the family's shared goals and allows children to contribute to the success of those goals while adding a sense of security and comfort

1. Start each day with a family counsel and/or devotional. This will allow time to go over goals, expectations, work, and fun for the day as well as set a spiritual tone (if you choose to do a devotional).
2. If you have older children let them help plan most of the day - talk about it together and form a plan together. This will help them take ownership of the schedule and *hopefully* maintain a cooperative attitude.
3. Plan group and individual time periods throughout the day for activities (learning/quiet or active activities). Some of the time should be free choice for the kids to choose their own activity.
4. Have a back up plan for those time when everyone is tired of being together and they need some unwind/alone time. Backup plan may simply be: everyone find a different room or corner of the house and spend 20 minutes alone doing whatever will help them unwind.

Ideas for Different Times of the Day

WORK TIME:

- Schedule the work activities early in the day when everyone has energy and good attitudes
- Assign family members age appropriate jobs
- Evaluate the efforts frequently and change jobs or partner kids up with a sibling in order for the work to get done in a timely manner
- Work time can be as simple as making beds, cleaning up rooms, emptying kitchen trash can OR it can involve projects such as deep cleaning areas of the house that haven't had attention in a while (like baseboards, blinds, etc) or sorting through clothes in closets and drawers and making keep and donate piles.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE TIME:

- Consider adding family or individual exercise or physical activity time to the schedule.
- This could include:
 - setting up stations that everyone rotates through (jump rope, push ups, sit ups, moderate weight lifting exercises like bicep curls...the options are varied and endless for different stations)
 - family or sibling basketball game or game of HORSE or PIG or lightning (dependent on whether or not there is a basketball hoop available)
 - making a simple obstacle course in the yard or in a room in the house
 - running "laps" around the house if the area/home permits or doing a running lap followed by a walking lap followed by skipping lap, etc.
 - yard work

EDUCATION TIME:

- If a school closure is announced and your kids use physical textbooks (vs online textbooks), have them clear out their lockers and bring those home
- Check online/google classroom if your school district has that in place and set aside time each day for school work
- Have kids continue practicing musical instruments if they play any or normally have lessons (could even have them give mini family recitals to give them something to work toward)
- Use the downtime to begin or continue journaling. If you currently don't have journals, get spiral notebooks or just stapled paper and have journaling time each day - could also give the kids (and adults) a writing "assignment" each day, like poetry, fun fictional story, writing down a family story, etc.
- If the lock down in your area is for a longer period of time, you could set a theme each week and have the kids do a variety of projects related to the theme and present them to the whole family (if supplies are an issue, using google docs or google slides is easy and fun)
- Use the time to learn a new educational skill:
 - photo editing program (Photoshop or there are several free ones available online)
 - typing ([typing.com](https://www.typing.com/) or other online resources)
 - putting together presentations on Keynote or Power Point or Google Slides on fun topics they like
 - sewing or crocheting or other crafting skill (lots of YouTube how-to videos online)
 - memorizing (print out poems, religious scriptures or documents, or historical essays like the Gettysburg Address for them to choose and memorize)

ENTERTAINMENT/FUN/ACTIVITY TIME:

*You can keep this area of time as unstructured or structured as you like (same goes for all the other areas, too, actually!)

- Read - as individuals, read out loud as a family or as an older child to younger siblings, etc.
- Board games and card games - consider taking an inventory of games you have and possibly adding to them (via online orders or trips to the store if that is appropriate in your area during this time); watch videos or read a book on how to play chess or other strategy games
 - Puzzles
 - Drawing - have a tub of washable crayons or markers for younger kids with coloring books (or printing off coloring pages online), for older kids, pencils and paper (online drawing tutorials like ArtHub are super fun)
 - Crafts - play dough, perler beads, stringing beads, lacing cards (for younger kids), latch hook kits, etc.
 - Teach your kids hobbies you enjoy like gardening, sewing, crocheting or knitting, cooking, scrapbooking, jewelry making, wood working, etc.
 - Screen time as appropriate for kids' ages and interests
 - Older kids can plan and act out fictional "movies" - record them on a phone or tablet, edit them on built-in editing apps on most electronic devices, and show them to the family
 - Learn origami or learn magic tricks with a deck of cards
 - Choreograph a dance to a favorite song (with other siblings or alone)
 - Compile a boredom busters list (see attached) unique to your family and what you have available

Essential Supplies to Keep on Hand

*below are just suggestions; if you make your own household cleaners or use essential oils for sickness or cleaning, adjust the list below to include those ingredients and items that you would need.

- Tylenol (children and/or adult as needed)
- Ibuprofen (children and/or adult as needed)
- Decongestants
- Antihistamines (like Claritin, etc)
- Prescription meds individuals in the family use
- Thermometer
- Tissues
- Masks (for holding an infected child or going to the doctor)
- Disinfecting wipes
- Laundry detergent
- Dishwasher detergent
- Hand soap
- Dishwashing soap
- Household cleaners and sponges
- Diapers/wipes (if needed)
- Tampons and female sanitary needs (if needed)
- Toothpaste
- Toilet paper and paper towels
- Flashlights + batteries
- Garbage bags
- Food (pantry, fridge and freezer staples)
- Clean water for drinking
- Pet supplies

Basic Sanitation Procedures for Preventing the Spread of Illness at Home

- **Hand washing:** wash hands regularly and often in warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes:** virus germs are believed to spread through droplets from the mouth and nose. Use a tissue to cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Or teach kids (and adults) to cough or sneeze into the crook of their elbow or arm (as opposed to doing so in their hands). Throw tissues away immediately and wash hands right after.
- **Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth:** according to the CDC, germs can live for 2-8 hours on hard surfaces so it's easy to pick up those germs without knowing it (by touching a door knob or light switch and then rubbing eyes or nose). Remind kids of this often.
- **Regularly clean your home:** clean and disinfect hot spots for germs regularly but no need to be obsessive
 - kitchen sponges or dish rags
 - home desks and keyboards
 - kitchen countertops
 - toilet and faucet handles
 - sinks
 - kids' toys
 - door knobs
 - cupboard handles
 - stair rails
 - phones
 - remote controls
- **Wash and dry clothes** on a hot setting (there usually isn't a need to wash sick people's clothing separately). Always wash hands after handling dirty laundry.