

Summer Pandemic Planning: Activities to Promote Family Fun and Flourishing



Prepared by The Purposeful Parenting Team at Southeast Psych

Summer plans cancelled by COVID? Now what? We've got you covered!

You can have a summer full of fun and meaningful memories with less stress, despite the coronavirus pandemic. Design your summer with the Purposeful Parenting 7 Guiding Principles of what matters most to promote family flourishing. Here are a few family activities to play in order to have a summer of **PURPOSE**:

Activities & play that promote warm **P**ositive parent-child connection:

- Engage in **regular one-to-one play with your child** -- Play games that **your child enjoys**. Get on the floor and play Legos or American Girl Dolls; sort Pokemon cards, do arts and crafts; play with or watch your child play their favorite video game, like Minecraft or Roblox.
- As a family, create a **"Family Summer Bucket List"** of activities, games that are enjoyable for all.
- **"Family Game Night"** -- Pick your favorite board game or create fun "Kids Versus Parents Minute-to-Win-It" challenges such as: build the tallest Lego tower, ping pong ball toss into cups, trivia questions, cup stack, etc.
- **"Family Field Day"** -- Good old fashion fun with outdoor events like water balloon toss, egg-spoon race, obstacle course, crab-walking race, backyard bowling, Limbo, etc. Get creative and make your own events.

Activities & play that nurture your child's **U**nique nature & needs:

- High energy, active or "feisty" temperament children typically like stimulating play and may need several short and novel activities if they get bored easily.
- More cautious "slow-to-warm" kids typically prefer low activity, quieter play that is more predictable and familiar. Provide time for them to observe and adjust to new games & activities.
- Extroverts enjoy games and activities with others. Introverts tend to prefer solo or 1:1 play.

Activities & play that **R**einforce your child's individual strengths:

- Have each child create their **Individual Summer Bucket list** of enjoyable play activities with at least 10 indoor and 10 outdoor activities. Be as specific as possible. Ask them to star their top favorites.
- **Join their journey** -- If your child is a nature lover, make your own terrarium using a glass mason jar or organize a nature scavenger hunt. For sports fans, play together in the backyard or research facts on their favorite athlete. For your bookworm, start a summer book club together. For movie lovers, make a watch wishlist.

Activities that promote your **P**arental self-awareness, self-control, & self-compassion:

- Begin each morning with your **Personal Parenting Mantra** to set your intention for the day *"I will be patient. I will be present. I will practice self-compassion."* Find more [daily wellbeing practices](#) at [Greater Good in Action](#).
- Allow yourself **Parental Time-Outs** throughout the day to pause, reset, and recharge.

- Know your **threshold and set limits on social media and COVID news** -- Disable notifications. Consider deleting the News apps off your phone.
- **“WWW -- What Went Well” bedtime ritual** -- When you lay your head to bed, reflect and name 3 things that went well that day. *“We had fun playing hide-n-seek. I was calm and patient when the boys started complaining. I went on a nice long walk.”*

Activities that promote **O**ptimism:

- Practice Gratitude -- Start a **Gratitude Jar** or **Gratitude Wall** where everyone writes down things they are grateful for. Read them during meal time.
- Create a [COVID Time Capsule](#).
- **Find humor and laugh** with your family! Tell **Kid-Friendly Jokes & Riddles**. Look up **funny memes**, watch **Try Not To Laugh Videos**, or **Some Good News Show** on YouTube together.

Activities that promote **S**kills of flexibility, adaptability, problem-solving, and resilience:

- Create **“Family Trick Shot Challenges”** -- Get creative -- use different-size balls, try balls of different materials, and even try various poses, body parts, and props (e.g., standing on one leg, off the nose, with a spoon, etc.)
- **Build a House of Cards** or a [fort with household items](#).
- **Create a Marble Maze** out of Legos, paper towel tubes, and tape. Design your own **“Rube Goldberg Machine” Challenge** or search the web for other inspirational engineering or problem-solving ideas.

Activities that **E**ngage mindfulness to be fully present:

- Play **“I-Spy Your Favorite Color”** -- Choose your child’s favorite color. Set a timer for 30 or 60 seconds. When the timer starts, you and your child look around your surroundings and silently count as many items in that color. When time is up, take turns reporting your I-spy items *“I spy a green pen. I spy a green pillow, I spy green grass.”*
- Go on a **Mindful Nature Walk** with your child -- Take turns naming 5 things you see, 5 sounds you hear, 5 aromas you smell. Do an [“Awe Walk”](#).
- Listen to your favorite **Mindfulness apps** together, such as [Calm](#) or [HeadSpace for Kids](#).
- Explore more mindfulness activities in [The Big Life Journal website](#).



Want **more** summer activities?

Go to [MyPurposefulParenting.com](#) and
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Throughout the summer we will share new family fun activity ideas and Purposeful Parenting Tips for parents of kids in all ages and stages.



Providing Parents the practical skills for what matters most in parenting.

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