



Introduction:

When families are at home spending time together, a challenge can be finding things to do that connect us with our children and our children with us and each other. We have put together an alphabet full of ideas that might help. You can use this list to select activities each day – some are relaxing and some are more active – but all are about connecting.



A – Art activities:

This can range from messy to clean and big to small. What about painting, crayons, mosaic, body art, anime, paper mache or clay?



B – Blowing up balloons:

You can do this for real or pretend to blow up as many balloons as you can! The deep breathing can be helpful when everyone is feeling a bit out of control.



C – Chalk, Concerts or Colouring in:

Here is an outside and an inside option, a loud and a quiet option, depending on everyone's mood.



D – Dancing:

Having a dance party is a great way to show off some moves and to burn off some energy. You will have to decide who gets to choose the music each time.



E – Exercise class at home:

Now is a great time to see if your child has a career as a personal trainer ahead of them. Get them to lead the 'class'.



F – Find the....:

You can select some treasured objects together and then someone can hide them around a room or the whole house or apartment and then you have to find them. It is a lovely chance to talk about why you have selected those objects and why they are so treasured.



G – Growing things:

It could be seeds, seedlings, flowers, herbs or veggies, or trees depending on your home and your plan. This one does require a bit of time and patience.



H – Handball, Hula Hoops, Heads or tails quiz:

Let's bring back some of the games of parents' childhoods. The heads or tails quiz lets one person come up with true or false questions of their own that they then ask everyone else. If you think it's true you put your hands on your head, if you think it's false you put your hands on your butt!



I – Imagination:

The opportunities are endless for imagination games and activities. You can look for shapes in the clouds, make up stories about different rooms or objects in the house eg: What if the pantry comes to life at night?, where will we be in 10 years?.....



J – Juggling:

Why not learn a new skill? Look for online tutorials and once you have all mastered the basics see if you can juggle between two (or three or four) balls or other objects.



K – Knitting:

If juggling is not your thing, maybe knitting is. Maybe you can Facetime with someone who knows how to do it if it isn't your forte?



L – Listening:

There are lots of listening games to play, what about pass the message (sometimes called Chinese whispers), name that song or what animal is that? Or you could just listen to a meditation session, listen to the house, listen outside or whisper words and guess what they are.



M – Making stories, Making music, Mandalas:

Here is a thinking activity, a loud activity and a quiet one. Select the one you need today.



N – Night walk, Night spotting:

If you can head out then it is always amazing to see what you can find in the dark – different animals, birds, the stars, the moon in all its phases. But if you can't go out for a walk then just looking and listening outside after the sun has gone down can be a special time together.



O – Obstacle course:

You can build this inside or outside and then see who can get the best time, who is the most precise (doesn't knock over or touch any obstacles) and who is most creative obstacle course creator.



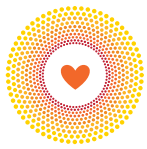
P – Paper planes, Pass the parcel:

There are lots of activities that are not just for parties. Why not just have a party....just because?



Q – Quizzes:

Your child (or each child in turn) can be the quiz master and create all the questions and answers. It is great to see that you might know lots about something that the rest of the family doesn't.



R – Routines:

Routines help us all feel a bit more in control. Design a daily planner as a family and then ensure that everyone is clear about the plan for the day.



S – Stomping together, Skittles:

Stomping around the house or the garden gets lots of frustrations out and then you can come in to knock down the skittles you have made from whatever is around the house, with whichever ball you choose to use.



T – TV:

Well, sometimes you just need some downtime all together!! As a variation, try turning the sound down on the TV and family member have to speak for characters on the TV show.



U – Upside down ping pong or tennis:

The world looks different from upside down. Position chairs or couches so that people are lying upside down on them and then try to hit a ball between you.



V – Virtual games:

This isn't what you are thinking! It is time to play virtual schools (who will be the teacher today and what are we learning about?), virtual dress-ups or virtual sports (playing virtual footy causes much less damage in the house than kicking a real football!)



W – Writing:

Songs, stories, poems, letters....Let the creative juices flow.



X – X-box:

While not promoting any particular brand, sometimes just playing games on screens is a great way to connect. The key thing is to do it together.



Y – Yoga:

There are lots of yoga classes available online that are for children and families.



Z – Zen garden, Zoos:

A zen garden requires sand, objects and a rake. It could be made outside if you have the space on something as small as a dinner plate, depending on what's available at your place. You can use special toys as the objects to be placed in the garden and you could use a garden rake, down to a baby fork to order the sand into neat patterns. Zoos are live streaming regularly now so we can all look at baby animals and others doing what they do when we aren't there. Often the animals are playing together too!