

Early Learning in COVID-19 Times

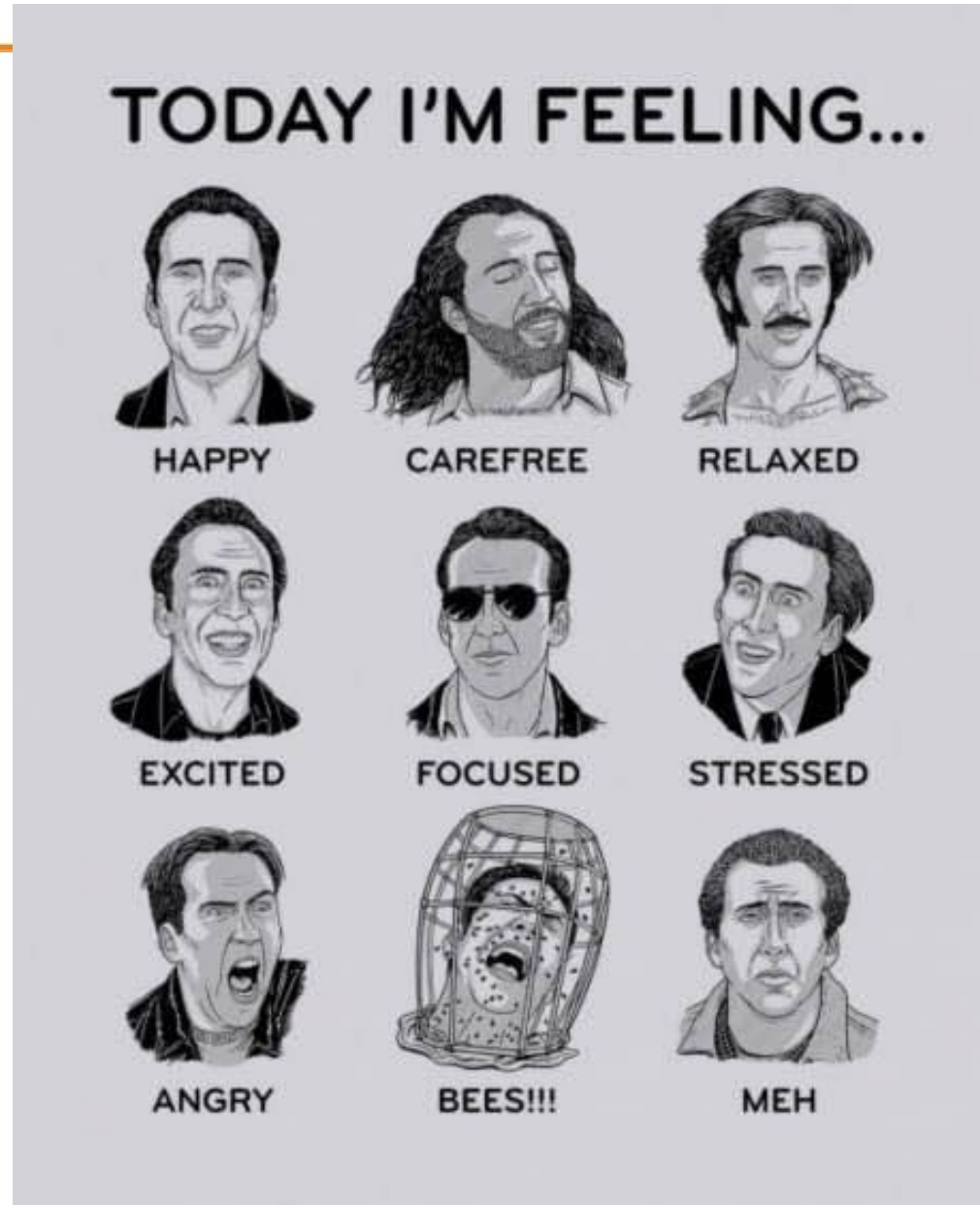


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But First - A Check-In



First Things First!

Talk

Listen

Play



Setting Children Up for Success



Young children will have lots of questions about COVID and its potential impact on the world. While there are still a lot of unknowns, it's important that we share what we can and provide space for children to talk about their feelings.

Acknowledging these Challenging Times

☐ **Talk to your children about COVID-19!**

- ☐ It is important that adults acknowledge children's feelings of stress, fear and uncertainty, but also remain calm.
- ☐ Here are some resources that offer ideas and examples from the [CDC](#), [NASP](#), and the [AACAP](#).

☐ **Help make what's going on more concrete for children.**

- ☐ [This is a great experiment](#) helping to visualize a virus and emphasizing the importance of handwashing
- ☐ [Here](#) is a Brainpop lesson about COVID

☐ **Resources:**

- ☐ Visit secondstep.org/covid19support for some resources
- ☐ Visit Mind Yeti on Youtube for some good breathing and relaxation efforts
- ☐ Check out [these](#) resources from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence

Additional Resources to Manage Anxiety and Stress

Check Out these Apps (free in your phone's app store):

- ☐ Calm
- ☐ Mindshift
- ☐ Breathe
- ☐ Welltrack
- ☐ Moodpath
- ☐ Tide
- ☐ Youper

Do:

- ☐ Go on walks
- ☐ Play outside
- ☐ Cook together
- ☐ Take lots of breaks
- ☐ Laugh, play, dance, and sing together



Best Practices for Remote Learning (*For Most Children*)

- ❑ Identify a workspace - let children personalize it, if possible.
- ❑ Set a daily schedule for yourself and your students (including meals and snacks)
- ❑ Get ready for work (e.g. get dressed, follow a morning routine)
- ❑ Create a 'tool box' with materials needed (could include snacks)
- ❑ Limit social media distractions
- ❑ Establish regular check-ins (and systems) with the people you care about
- ❑ Communicate!
- ❑ Provide choice, be flexible and patient, and focus on less-stress!



Setting Up Schedules & Routines

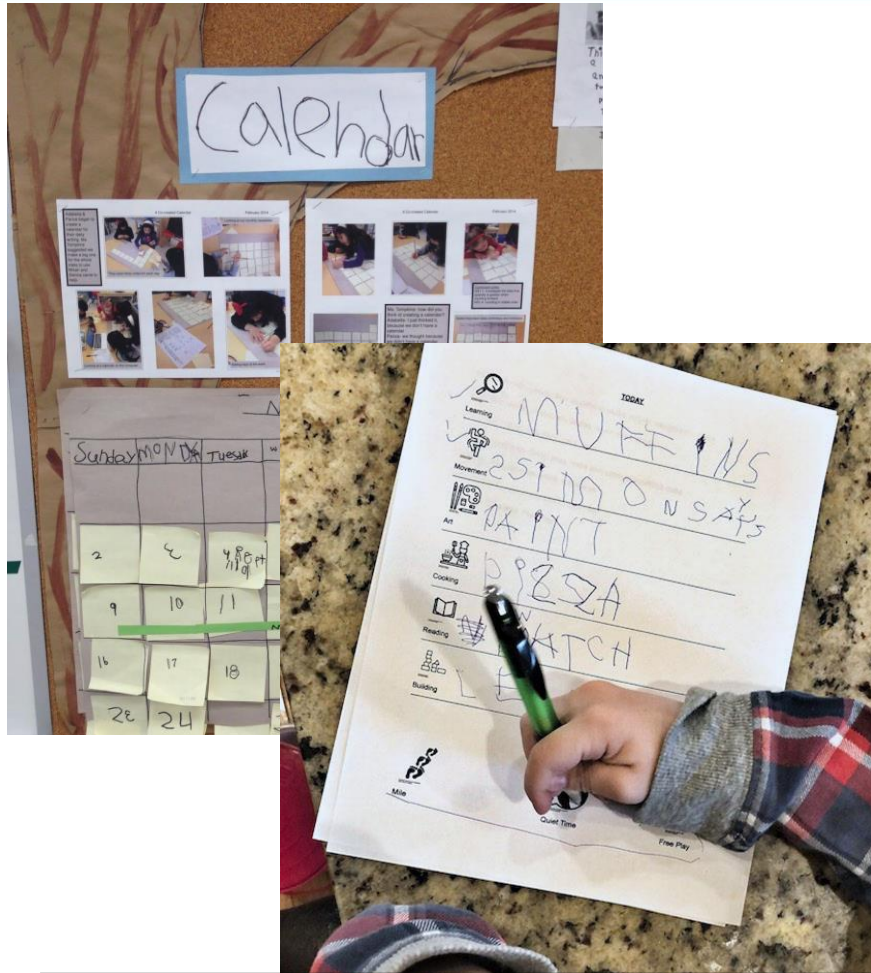


Set up a Schedule: Routine and consistency help children feel a sense of stability, which is particularly difficult during these challenging time. For many, a 'normal' school schedule may not be possible, but we encourage the creation of whatever routine is possible.

Setting Up Schedules (a Sample)

	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Ideas</u>
7:30 am	Wake Up & Breakfast	What's your child's 'comfortable' wake up time?
8:30 am	'House' Jobs	Teachers can provide guidance here. Are there class jobs that can still be done? What about chores that students can help with.
9:00 am	Morning Meeting	Your teacher may be providing content here. You can also ask you child what their morning routine at school is; they can teach you.
9:30 am	Story Time	Time to read a story! You can also watch a teacher read aloud online
10:00am	Music and Dance	Put on your favorite kids bop and dance away!
10:30am	Exploration Time & Lunch	This can be child-directed play and exploration.
12:30pm	Activity Time	Literacy, Math, STEAM activities; use found materials
1:30pm	Free Reading, Art, Outdoor Exploration	Time to read again! Is there an activity (writing/drawing) that children can do aligned to the book? An outdoor scavenger hunt?
5:00pm	Dinner & Fun	Family time and meal time
7:00pm	Bed Time	Children need lots of sleep! Keep[an early bedtime if possible

Tools to Support Schedules and Routines



Create a daily schedule and/or calendar *with* your child



Create a visual cue system for when you can help/when you can't be interrupted.



Use timers and songs to help children transition. For example a 3 minute 'clean up' song can help children focus on the task at hand.

Tools to Support Schedules and Routines

❑ Setting up Home Jobs/ Chore Chart:

- ❑ Encourage families to watch this video about [classroom jobs](#)
- ❑ Ask children to brainstorm a list of jobs they can do around the house - for example: table helper (setting the table), lights monitor (turn off lights around the house), librarian (putting away books), and more
- ❑ Make a chore chart or job chart - older students can do this themselves.
- ❑ Track success with stars or stickers!



Embracing Learning (On and Off Line)



We know that the foundations of early learning are about relationships, language, and exploration. While we know virtual learning is not ideal as the primary mode of instruction, we recommend some tools to maximize those foundations and recognizes the still-growing independence of early learners.

Morning Message/ Routines Ideas

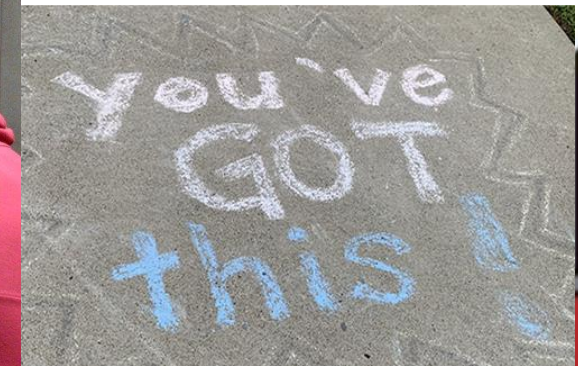
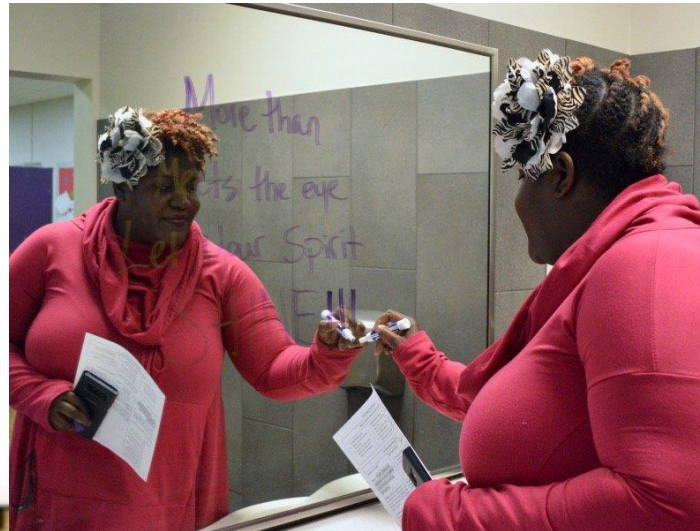
- ❑ Send a loving and thought-provoking message to start the day
- ❑ Play some of the same songs and routines that your children loves
- ❑ Consider talking about feelings every morning or having a mood board
- ❑ Talk about consistent things like weather, months of the year, days of the week, letters and numbers, shapes and colors
- ❑ Ask your child what else they usually do every morning!



Good morning Xander and Xavious,

Today is Wednesday. It is going to be a wonderful day! We are going to go outside and play in the afternoon, because it is sunny. We are also going to read a new book all about shadows. Have you ever seen your shadow? What do you think causes shadows?

Love,
Dad



Today is Monday, the 16th day of March

How do you feel today?

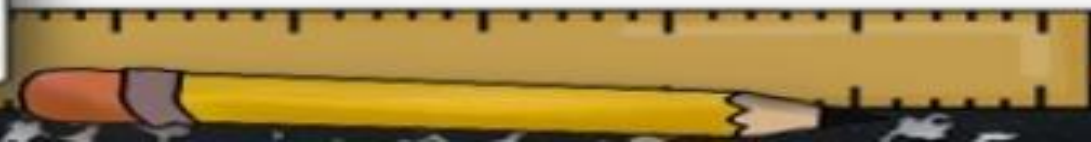


Today's Letter of the Day is: **S**

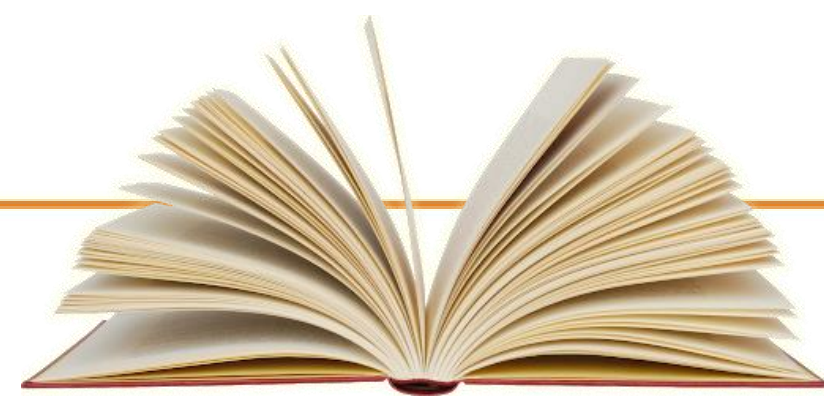
Snake School Sad Soft Sand

Today's Number of the Day is: **24**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30



Story Times/ Read Alouds



☐ **Some Best Practices for Reading Aloud!**

- ☐ Check out this video from the [Speech School!](#)
- ☐ Talk about parts of the book, author/illustrator/etc.
- ☐ Explain vocabulary using PAT (Point, Act Out, Tell). (And then try to use those words later!)
- ☐ Ask lots of open-ended questions! (Those are questions without a yes/no or single correct answer.)
- ☐ Build connections between the book and the world, or from one book to another.

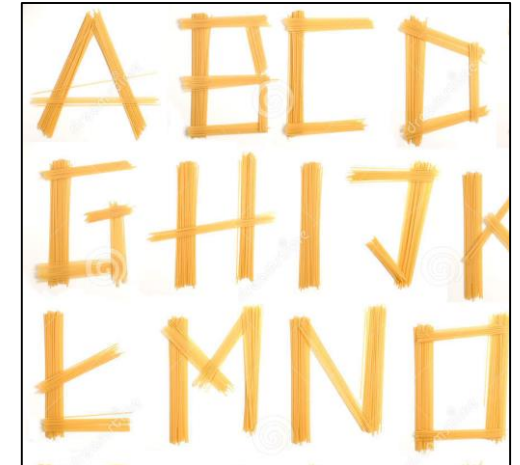
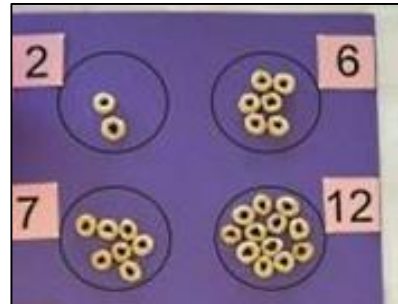
☐ **Resources:**

- ☐ Use a physical book! Check out some great information about [START](#) reads and reading books multiple times.
- ☐ OR use a digital book - APS (TumbleBooks), Fulton Library, local library or school system.

Ideas and Skills for Activity Time

Reviewing Skills and Concepts:

- ☐ Naming letters, numbers, shapes, colors, days of the week, months of the year
- ☐ Counting and sorting, making patterns
- ☐ Understanding same/different, bigger/smaller, over/under
- ☐ Exposure to science and social studies concepts
- ☐ Writing and recognizing full name
- ☐ Talk & introduce vocabulary!



Resources:

- ☐ Found materials are great tools - magazines, cheerios, dried beans, leaves, socks, beads, earrings, spaghetti, and more can all be used for the activities above.
- ☐ Use an online whiteboard, if you don't have a supply of paper but *do* have a computer.
- ☐ Manipulatives: Toy Theater Manipulatives; National Library of Virtual Manipulatives ; Didax Educational Resources, Virtual Manipulatives by McGraw Hill
- ☐ Additional Resources

A Note on Pre-K/Kinder Readiness

Pre-K and K teachers agree - the most important skills you can give your child are social-emotional.

- ☐ Taking turns and sharing
- ☐ Identify emotions in words
- ☐ Practice calm self down
- ☐ Taking responsibility (e.g. for mistakes or accidents)



Additionally, physical skills can also be helpful

- ☐ Hygiene and restroom etiquette!
- ☐ Putting on shoes and clothing
- ☐ Opening food items and drinks independently
- ☐ Cutting, gluing, folding, and more
- ☐ Skipping, jumping, leaping, hopping



Providing Additional Resources



There are lots of great resources out there to support families in ensuring students are engaged - even on their own. Some core resources are virtual field trips, music & movement resources, access to literature, STEM ideas, and more! Of course, we also encourage you to limit screen time - where possible! - and support outdoor or in-house exploration.

Additional Resources: Art, Music, & Movement

Visit:

- ☐ [Gonoodle.com](https://www.gonoodle.com) has great music and dancing.
- ☐ [Jarrett Lerner](https://www.jarrettlerner.com) has created lots of blank comic strips and activities to inspire kids.
- ☐ [PBS Kids Music](https://www.pbskids.org/music) has lessons, songs, and more to inspire your students.
- ☐ [Little Bins for Little Hands](https://www.littlebinsforlittlehands.com) also has a huge number of resources and ideas!

Create and Explore:










- ☐ Ask children to invent a song about their home or family!
- ☐ Ask children to identify their favorite song. Why do they like it? What do they think inspired the song writer?
- ☐ What items at home can be used as instruments? Can they make a song?
- ☐ If they could transform their room into a private island, what would it look like? What animals would live there? What would be growing on the trees?

Additional Resources: Virtual Field Trips

Check out these great virtual field trips that students can benefit from:

- ❑ [Center for Puppetry Arts](#): check out puppet shows and learn about the ATL treasure
- ❑ [Georgia Aquarium](#), [National Aquarium](#), [Tennessee Aquarium](#): explore like you're there!
- ❑ [Panda Cam at the Atlanta Zoo](#), [Jelly Cam from Seattle](#), [San Diego Zoo](#): spending some time relaxing with animals
- ❑ [Learning about Farms](#): take trips to many different types of farms and orchards
- ❑ [Nature Conservancy](#): several ~45-minute trips to different habitats around the world
- ❑ Walk [the Great Wall of China](#) with this virtual tour.
- ❑ Smithsonian Virtual Tours - [National Museum of History](#) and more
- ❑ Tour of the [California Redwoods](#)

Resources: A Calendar of Options & Scavenger Hunts

Things to Practice						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Count a handful of pennies	Write your first name 3 times	ABC Say the alphabet to someone	Have an adult read a book to you	Practice Tying your shoes 	Find 3 circles in your house 	Have an adult read a book to you 
Look for A, B, C's in the newspaper or magazine	Tell someone a favorite story	Practice Tying your shoes 	Draw a picture of someone you love	Draw a house and cut it out 	Zip or button your coat 	Look for D,E, F's in the newspaper or magazine
Find 4 square things in your house	Have an adult read a book to you 	Write your first name 3 times	Look for G, H, I's in the newspaper or magazine	Count your fingers	Sing a Song!	ABC Write the alphabet
Find 5 blue things in your house	Count a handful of coins	Cut out 3 circles all different sizes 	Write your first name 5 times	Sort coins by color	ABC Say the alphabet to someone	Have an adult read a book to you 
ABC Write the alphabet	Have an adult read a book to you 	Draw a tree and a house	Count your toes	Find 5 red things in your house	Zip or Button your coat 	Write your first and last name



How many things can you spy?

Leaf 	Water 	Park 	Acorn 	Sand 
Mailbox 	Sun 	Bug 	Clouds 	Picnic Table 
Grass 	Stop Sign 	Mushroom 	Bird 	Fire Hydrant 
Flying Bug 	Fence 	Butterfly 	Swing 	Bike 
Car 	Tree 	Dog 	Rock 	Ball 

Put your children to work finding things around their house and neighborhoods! You can also provide choice boards with skills and ideas to practice. Let your child tell you what they want to practice and what they want to look for! Encourage them to create hunts for siblings or friends.

Additional Resources: Literacy and More



Need some more ideas about literacy? Check out the [day-by-day learning](#) experiences from Scholastic. Each day has a video, a story, and an activity or two. The Atlanta Speech School has also launched an [online preschool](#) which includes some great resources rooted in a book! Additionally, the Department of Early Care and Learning has launched [GA Pre-K at Home](#)!

Additional Resources: Exploration & STEM



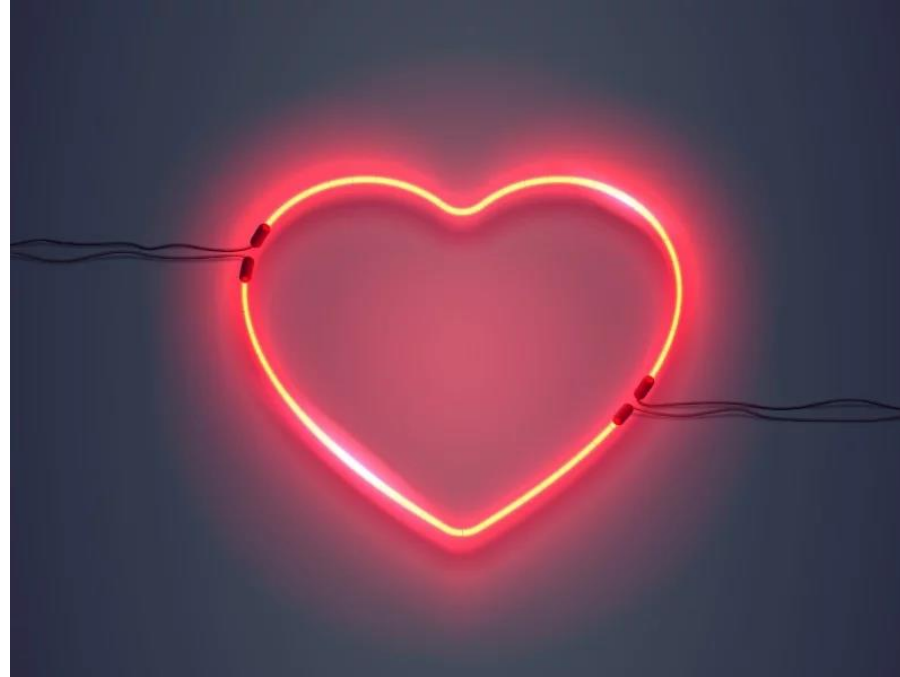
Want to give students problems and challenges to explore and engineer? Check out [this calendar](#) of creative suggestions and ideas that will keep little minds and hand busy and learning. Or check out some of [these interesting projects](#) or this [giant list of ideas and resources](#).

Providing Additional Resources: Just in Time Options



Got families feeling overwhelmed and need *something* to do? Check out [this calendar](#) of livestream events, classes and more that families can access.

Closing Notes



Most importantly, be **kind to yourself! Take breaks and give your children breaks. The best thing that *everyone* can do is make sure that children (and adults!) feel loved, supported, and nurtured.**

Post Script: Additional Resources

- ❑ Check out our online portal for families - apsearlylearning.weebly.com. You'll need a password for the 'education' page. It's apsearly!
- ❑ Check out [Wide Open School](#) for some more of each /all of the types of resources mentioned above.
- ❑ Visit [here](#) for a list of speech therapy resources
- ❑ [Read 4 K](#) is a text-based resource. Text "GEORGIA" to 70138 to sign up.
- ❑ A huge list of resources including websites, tools, and more is [here](#)!
- ❑ American Reading Company ARC is [giving away 20 free ebooks!](#)