

Spring into Learning!

Birth-to-Five Guidance for April 9-17

Updated 4/7/2020

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Thank you for all that you do to support our city's youngest learners! This year, during the period originally scheduled for spring break – Thursday, April 9 through Friday, April 17, 2020 – we are called on to continue to support families with remote learning. As the coronavirus pandemic persists in New York City, and social distancing remains an imperative for all New Yorkers, ongoing opportunities for connection and learning are important for our families. Use this time to reflect on remote learning and see how families are doing.

To that end, start by checking in with families. You may find the questions in [Suggestions for Checking in With Families/Caregivers About Remote Learning](#) helpful in guiding your conversations. As you plan your support, be mindful that many families may be observing religious holidays in the weeks ahead.

This *Spring into Learning!* document offers activity ideas for each weekday between April 9th and April 17th, broken down by age and aligned to a theme. Each day also includes optional online resources for 3-K and pre-K children. Based on what you learn through your check-ins with families, we encourage you to share a few activities with them. You can use some of the ideas as they are written, or use them as a starting point to create your own activities that are meaningful, age-appropriate, and responsive to families' needs.

Thursday, April 9

College and Career

Infant/Toddler Activity Ideas

- **Infant:** Hold your baby so that they can reach your face. Allow them to touch and explore your facial features. Name what they are touching. You may also consider using a doll or stuffed animal, if available. As your baby explores the toy, talk to them about the areas that they are touching.
- **Toddler:** Invite the child to take care of you, a doll, or stuffed animal that isn't feeling well. If available, offer props like band aids, tissues, small blankets or other appropriate items for taking care of someone who is sick.

3-K/Pre-K Activity Ideas

- **Pretend to be a Community Helper.** Talk with your child about community helpers (e.g. fire fighters, letter carriers, etc.). Share that community helpers are people who have special jobs that help keep us safe and healthy and make our neighborhood better. Encourage your child to choose a community helper and act out that role. Feel free to gather props around the house to enhance their dramatic play. Encourage use of imagination!
- **Thank you, Community Helpers!** Write or draw a thank you card for a community helper who your family knows or another helper in your community. This can include tracing your child's hand to show that we appreciate the "helping hand" that community helpers give. After you are finished, deliver the card, post it in your window, or take a picture and send it to your teacher.

Optional Online Resources for 3-K and Pre-K Children

- Meet some of the people who keep NYC moving. These [MTA elevator and escalator operators](#) make sure New Yorkers can get to where they need to go.
- [Meet the Crew Behind Your Local NYC Bodega](#). Step into an NYC bodega, meet the staff, and learn about each of their roles.

Friday, April 10

Dance and Theater

Infant/Toddler Activity Ideas

- **Infant:** Sing “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes” or another song about body parts that is more familiar to you or you prefer. As you sing the song, gently touch the corresponding body part on your baby’s body.
- **Toddler:** Use socks, small paper bags, or another material to make puppets to tell or act out a story. Create your own story or retell a favorite story. Your child may prefer to watch the show, or participate. Repeat with other stories as your child is interested.

3-K/Pre-K Activity Ideas

- **Put On a Show.** Choose an area of your home that can be a stage, and help your child decide what kind of show they might like to perform. Will you act out a story? Sing a song? Take turns being the audience and performer, and have fun!
- **Create a Family Dance.** Put on your favorite music and explore different body movements. Will you move quickly? Slowly? Stretch high in the air or move low to the ground? What shapes will you make with your body? Have fun exploring movements and talking about your dance.

Optional Online Resources for 3-K and Pre-K Children

- Create an [interactive dance](#) together! Taryn Kaschock Russell, director of the 92nd Street Y Harkness Dance Center, walks you through fun, new ways to move your body.
- Learn more about theater! In this [PBS Learning Media](#) video, you’ll take a virtual trip to a theater, and learn about the roles needed to stage a production, including the cast, crew, and audience, as well as the interesting things that happen backstage.

Monday, April 13

Science

Infant/Toddler Activity Ideas

- **Infant:** Share familiar and unfamiliar toys with your baby. Invite them to use their senses to explore the toys. For example, invite them to touch, tap or shake the toys. Note how they interact with the toys and how they respond to them. Describe their actions and reactions aloud to them.
- **Toddler:** Fill a container (e.g. sink, bathtub or other container) with water and gather various items that might sink or float. Place the items in the water, one at a time, or invite your child to put the items in the water. Talk with your child about what happens when you place each item in the water.

3-K/Pre-K Activity Ideas

- **Tall Tower.** Work together to build the tallest tower that you can, using whatever materials you have on hand – blocks, cardboard boxes, etc. Talk as you build: What materials will be strongest? What will help the tower become stronger so you can build taller and taller? Take a picture when you're finished and share with your teacher, if you would like.
- **Ramps.** If available, use a cardboard tube (e.g., paper towel tube) or a flat surface, such as a book, to create a ramp. Invite your child to tilt the tube/ramp to various angles. Roll a small toy car, ball, or other round object through the tube/down the ramp. Talk with your child about how the angle of the ramp affects how quickly or slowly the object rolls.

Optional Online Resources for 3-K and Pre-K Children

- Tune in to the [Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens](#) at 3 pm daily to learn more about their amazing animals! If you miss the live stream, all videos are posted on their [YouTube channel](#) shortly after the live stream ends.
- [Take a Virtual Tour of the NASA Langley Research Center](#) to see videos and pictures of space stations, rockets, and other space science in action.

Tuesday, April 14

Computer Science (Cognition)

Infant/Toddler Activity Ideas

- **Infant:** If possible, find a box with a small opening, such as a diaper wipes or tissue box. Fill the box with materials your baby can pull out (e.g. scarves, socks, fabric pieces). Invite your baby to pull the items out of the box. If your baby is interested, play peek-a-boo as they pull out the materials.
- **Toddler:** Gather an assortment of socks and ask your child to help sort them by size, color, type, etc. This activity could also be done with other items, such as mittens/gloves or plastic cups.

3-K/Pre-K Activity Ideas

- **Obstacle Course.** Make an obstacle course with your family. This can be in the house, hallway, or outdoors, if you have a safe outdoor space. Before trying the course, talk together about the plan. Which objects are you going under? Over? Around? Are there any creative movements you want to incorporate? Take turns changing the obstacle course for each other.
- **Make a Pattern with Your Body.** Use your body to create a simple pattern (e.g. jump, clap, jump, clap, jump, clap). Ask your child to follow along. After doing the pattern together a few times, stop and ask your child to describe the pattern. Repeat with other patterns. When children can follow along and describe the pattern, move on to more difficult patterns (tap knee, tap knee, tap head, tap knee, tap knee, tap head, tap knee, tap knee, tap head). Consider inviting your child to create patterns for you to follow and describe, too.

Optional Online Resources for 3-K and Pre-K Children

- Patterns are all around us! From nature to computer science, our world is built on patterns. [Smithsonian Magazine's Patterns in Nature](#) slideshow shows some of these amazing patterns. Look through the pictures, talk about what patterns you see, and guess what is being shown.
- Blast videos are made just for you about all the topics you have ever wondered about. Check out [Discovery Mindblown](#) for quick and engaging videos.

Wednesday, April 15

Health and Wellness

Infant/Toddler Activity Ideas

- **Infant:** As you go through the day, label emotions for your baby as you observe them or see them change (e.g., it looks like it makes you happy, frustrated, content, sad. etc.)
- **Toddler:** Look through photos of familiar people and talk with your child about what is happening in the photo and how the people may be feeling. If possible, use pictures of your child.

3-K/Pre-K Activity Ideas

- **Feelings Check-In.** Use or create pictures of people expressing various feelings (e.g., cut pictures from a magazine, use [Fun with Feelings cards](#), draw some faces, or use emojis on a tech device) to check in on how everyone is feeling. Try doing morning and afternoon check-ins. Ask questions such as, “How are you feeling? Why do you think you feel that way?” If someone is experiencing a difficult emotion, consider asking, “What will help you right now?” If you like, you and/or your child could draw a picture of the mood.
- **Community Agreements for the Home.** How can we treat each other kindly at home? Come up with a list of ideas that you can all agree to. For example, “say please when you need something” or “clean up our messes when we are finished with something.” Write/draw out 3-5 simple Community Agreements and post them in a place that you and your child can easily see and access. Revisit your agreements throughout the day, noting when family members are following them well, or using them as a reminder when family members are having a hard time.

Optional Online Resources for 3-K and Pre-K Children

- Help Sesame Street friends “[grow their colors](#)” as they grow healthy fruits and vegetables for their picnic.
- [Cosmic Kids Yoga](#): Try yoga, mindfulness, and relaxation exercises with your child through this unique story format!

Thursday, April 16

World Languages

Infant/Toddler Activity Ideas

- **Infant:** Sing to your baby. If you know songs in multiple languages, share them. As an alternative, listen to songs in multiple languages. You can sing with your baby at any time!
- **Toddlers:** Introduce the child to a new type of music, such as a song with a new language, genre or tempo. Invite the child to dance to the music using a scarf, ribbon or piece of fabric.

3-K/Pre-K Activity Ideas

- **World Music Dance Party.** Have a dance party together! Start your party with music that is familiar to your family/culture/heritage, then explore music in other genres, cultures, and languages.
- **Connect and Share.** Call or video chat with a family member, classmate or friend. Share one of your favorite family activities or traditions, and ask them to share one of theirs. If they speak a language that you are not familiar with, ask them to teach you a few special words in their language, and vice versa.

Optional Online Resources for 3-K and Pre-K Children

- Move your body and learn how to say “hello!” in different languages with [this song](#) from GoNoodle. When the song ends, practice the call and response from the song with your little one, and hear their favorite way to say “hello!”
- Join the 92nd Street Y for a [Cuban Dance party](#) to the music of Grammy-nominated Pedrito Martinez. Consider watching a portion of the video, and creating your own drums at home to play along!

Friday, April 17

Music and Visual Arts

Infant/Toddler Activity Ideas

- **Infant:** Sing a song to your baby that you both enjoy. Gently clap the baby's hands together in front of them, or tap their body gently to the rhythm of the song.
- **Toddler:** Sing the Hokey Pokey, Here We Go Looby Loo or another music and movement song you know and/or enjoy. Support your child in doing the movements with you.

3-K/Pre-K Activity Ideas

- **DJ for a Birthday Party.** Plan a virtual party together. Select a family member or friend with an upcoming birthday, then select a party theme. Create a Spotify or YouTube playlist around the party theme, and record yourselves singing and/or dancing to one of the songs. Share the video with the birthday honoree.
- **Family Art Exhibition.** Create a family art exhibition over the course of a day or several days. Start by thinking together about what types of art you might like to create and display. Will it be two-dimensional (drawings or paintings)? Will you include three-dimensional art (using glue, playdough, etc.)? How big or small will your art objects be? Be creative and celebrate all artistic efforts! Pick an area of your home where you will display your art. As art is created, add it to your gallery or exhibition.

Optional Online Resources for 3-K and Pre-K Children

- [Chrome Music Lab](#) makes learning music more accessible through fun, hands-on experiments. Create your own beats or songs and share them with friends!
- Listen together to "[Welcome My Baby](#)," sung by musician Patrice E. Turner, an educator in Jazz at Lincoln Center's WeBop early-childhood jazz education program for young children. Feel free to sing, stomp, and swing with your little one to the joyous jazz rhythm of this song.
- Explore the Met with [#MetKids](#), a digital feature made for, with, and by kids.