

# CONNECTIONS

A bi-weekly newsletter brought to you by

*Kids Path*

a service of AuthoraCare Collective

## LEARNING TO MOVE & Moving to Learn

Learning should be a fun, social activity. When movement is combined with learning, kids can often express their creativity that we as adults tend to stifle. Research has demonstrated that movement increases blood and oxygen flow, which positively affects cognitive development, physical health, and mental well-being. Studies show that movement helps children process information better as well as reduces stress and elevates mood. The following are a few ways to get kids of all ages moving!



### “You Are No Longer Human” Game

Invite kids to move and make the sounds of the animal that you name and describe. If the animal does not make a noise then they should be silent with the movement.

- Slow moving slinky inchworm.
- A turtle who has just stuck his head out of his shell and is starting to move.
- A frog who has just come out of the water.
- A caterpillar eating her way out of a cocoon.
- The caterpillar then turns into a butterfly.
- A playful kitten.
- A wild horse.
- A ferocious tiger.

### “Movement and Music”

Movement and music go hand-in-hand and can positively affect academic performance and learning outcomes. Here are a few ideas using music and movement together.

- Using a variety of music—from quiet meditation, to smooth jazz, to Motown hits, to fast paced rhythmic beats—and instruct kids to move for 30 second intervals, and “freeze” when the music stops.
- Encourage kids to move in place and make different types of movements to the beat of the music... adding arm movements, twists, turns, leaps, spins, hops, skips and/or jumps.
- Tell kids they are no longer on a regular surface, but are now standing on ice. Ask them to demonstrate the following:
  - Balancing on skates
  - Add a spin
  - Add a leap
  - Skate backwards
  - Speed skate

We hope you enjoy today’s issue of Connections and explore a variety of ways to enhance your family’s well-being.

For those of you who are teachers...or who are now new homeschool teachers...you may enjoy the following website that includes videos of teachers using movement in their classrooms.

<https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/movement/>

*Patti Gasparello*

Patti Gasparello, MSW, LCSW

Director of Kids Path



# CONNECTIONS

## Children

ISSUE 7 | 5/29/2020

### LEARNING RESOURCE

As we adjust to changing routines, many families have noticed challenges with their child's sleep schedule and nutrition. [Sleepfoundation.org](https://www.sleepfoundation.org) offers clear, specific information to help families develop healthy sleep strategies. A recent article entitled "Sleep Guidelines during Covid-19 Isolation" offers insight and guidance for the entire family. The "Sleep Strategies for Kids" article is a quick read that offers specific strategies geared toward children.

[Sleep Strategies for Kids](#)

[Sleep Guidelines for COVID-19](#)

Do snack requests seem to fill your days? Ellyn Satter is a licensed clinical social worker and nutritionist who offers a practical and helpful approach for families on feeding children. Her website ([www.ellynsatterinstitute.org](http://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org)) offers clear and approachable resources for families. [We recommend starting with this article](#) and then exploring other resources as you have time!



### MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

Being out of our normal routine can have significant changes on the ways that we move our body. Many people have noticed that they're moving less, which impacts our sleep and our overall physical well-being. In my family, telling Alexa to play some "Kids Music" has been the perfect remedy, and we have all been jamming out Disney Tunes and KidzBop. You can also find some excellent yoga videos geared toward kids online! CosmicKids Yoga has a wide array of yoga videos for kids with fun themes like Minecraft and Going on a Bear Hunt ([cosmickids.com](http://cosmickids.com)). LilyPad Yoga on YouTube offers several fun animal adventures with a special focus on relaxations strategies and mindfulness, strategies that not only help with sleep but also help kids cope with big emotions.



## FAMILY ACTIVITY

### Progressive Muscle Relaxation

To tie together sleep and movement activities this week, I'm sharing both a Youtube video and a script for Progressive Muscle Relaxation. PMR is an effective way to calm a busy mind and body for bedtime. I have used these with my kids before bed on multiple occasions. At times, I'm the observer, reading the script and observing my kids' bodies relax. Other times I participate as well, using a video or meditation to help us gradually tighten and release different muscle groups in our body. I invite your family to do the video together and see how it impacts everyone's sleep.

[Watch the Video Here](#)



Here's a script to read to your kids as well:



## relaxation script for younger kiddos



**hands and arms:**  
Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed. Repeat with other hand.



**face and nose:**  
Here comes a pesky old fly. He has landed on your nose. Try to get him off without using your hands. That's right, wrinkle up your nose. Make as many wrinkles in your nose as you can. Scrunch your nose up real hard. Good. You've chased him away. Now you can relax your nose. Oops here he comes back again. Repeat.



**jaw:**  
You have a giant jawbreaker bubble gum in your mouth. It's very hard to chew. Bite down on it. Hard! Let your neck muscles help you. Now relax. Just let your jaw hang loose. Notice how good it feels just to let your jaw drop. Okay, let's tackle that jawbreaker again now. Repeat.



**legs and feet:**  
Now pretend that you are standing barefoot in a big, fat mud puddle. Squish your toes down deep in to the mud. Try to get your feet down to the bottom of the mud puddle. Push down, spread your toes apart, and feel the mud squish up between your toes. Now step out of the mud puddle. Relax your feet. Let your toes go loose and feel how nice that is. It feels good to be relaxed. Repeat.



**arms and shoulders:**  
Pretend you are a furry, lazy cat. You want to stretch. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head. Way back. Feel the pull in your shoulders. Stretch higher. Now just let your arms drop back to your side. Okay kitten, stretch again. Repeat.



**shoulders and neck:**  
Now pretend you are a turtle. You're sitting out on a rock by a nice, peaceful pond, just relaxing in the warm sun. It feels nice and warm and safe here. Oh-Oh! You sense danger. Pull your head into your house. Try to pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders. Hold in tight. It isn't easy to be a turtle in a shell. The danger is past now. You can come out into the warm sunshine and once again you can relax and feel the warm sunshine. Watch out now. More danger. Hurry pull your head back into your house and hold it tight. Repeat.



**stomach:**  
Hey! Here comes a cute baby elephant. But he's not watching where he's going. He doesn't see you lying there in the grass, and he's about to step on your stomach. Don't move. You don't have time to get out of the way. Just get ready for him. Make your stomach very hard. Tighten up your stomach muscles real tight. Hold it. It looks like he is going the other way. You can relax now. Let your stomach go soft. Let it be as relaxed as you can. That feels so much better. Oops, he's coming this way again. Get ready. Repeat.

References: Carkhuff, R.R. Helping and human relations, Vol. 1, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969  
Monica Fitzgerald, Ph.D.

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# CONNECTIONS

Tweens & Teens

ISSUE 7 | 5/29/2020

## LEARNING RESOURCE

### Sleep Can Help Heal

Most of us have been told how important sleep is for our mind and body. The article below from the Sleep Foundation is written especially for teens and may include some new information about sleep. During challenging or stressful times, it's completely normal to notice your sleep pattern change, and it may feel like it's been turned upside down. You may have had trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or feeling rested the next day. As this article describes, getting enough sleep (8 to 10 hours per night) can also help you with focusing on schoolwork, eating healthy, taking care of yourself, and feeling less worried. Many teens are having a harder time sleeping because of all the changes due to the COVID-19 situation.

[If you are noticing any sleep problems, this article may help give you some ideas of possible solutions to try at home.](#)

It's important to be patient with yourself if you are experiencing sleep difficulties, as it can take time to get back to your normal pattern. What is in your control is to try some positive ways to improve sleep, like get enough physical movement during the day and eating nutritious meals. If you feel frustrated about sleep problems, try to remind yourself a positive thought like *"I have the power to try new things to help me get more restful sleep."*



## MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

### Relax Melodies Phone App

[DOWNLOAD THE FREE APP](#)

The Relax Melodies App can be a creative way for you to make your own sleep melody. In this app, you can play relaxing white noise sounds that may help you fall asleep. Relax melodies also has meditations and stories available to help you relax before bed or release emotions.

### Yoga with Adriene - Yoga for Teens

[CHECK OUT THE VIDEO ON YOUTUBE](#)

This is a great twenty-minute yoga video designed for teens, available on YouTube. Physical movement and breathing can help you feel strong, while practicing taking good care of yourself.



## FAMILY ACTIVITY

### Turn Up the Music and Dance

Time to get moving..... here is an idea for music and using simple movements to take care of ourselves, get our bodies moving, and lift our spirits!

#### [Check out the Cha-Cha Slide on YouTube.](#)

Feel free to get creative and adapt this activity so it's special for your family. There are Cha-Cha Slide videos for wheelchairs, younger kids, and even for Seniors. You may find lots of other similar line dancing songs. Maybe you have a favorite? Remember the Chicken Dance? Have fun, laugh, and get a little silly all while taking care of yourself! Moving is a great way to get "unstuck" while having to stay at home.



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# CONNECTIONS

## Parents & Caregivers

ISSUE 7 | 5/29/2020

### LEARNING RESOURCE

As a health psychologist at Stanford University, Kelly McGonigal wants us to understand the impact exercise has not just on physical well-being but our social and emotional health as well. Her article below is drawn from years of research into the mind-body connection and how we can support our mental well-being through movement.

[Five Surprising Ways Exercise Changes Your Brain: Moving your body is one of the most beneficial things you can do for your mind](#)



### MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

#### Sleep Apps

The American Sleep Association website recommends several apps proven to be effective in helping promote healthy sleep. My favorite on this list is called Relax Melodies. This free app (for iPhone or Android) allows users to choose from a variety of options to promote ease in slipping off to sleep such as selecting a “soothing soundscape,” listening to a guided relaxation, or even selecting a bedtime story to listen to as you drift off.

[Download the Relax Melodies App](#)

[For more options for sleep apps and other useful information, please see the American Sleep Association website.](#)

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## FAMILY ACTIVITY

### Family Olympics

With restrictions on social activities in the past few weeks, some families have been inspired to make their own fun despite being in quarantine. You may have seen the trending topics #QuarantineOlympics and #FamilyOlympics on social media recently. One of the ways you can encourage your whole family to practice good physical wellness habits is to create your own family competitions that involve kids and adults of every age!

Here are some articles with physical game ideas for your own Family Olympics:

- [Host a Family Olympics \(PBS Kids\)](#)
- [Backyard Games to Get Kids Active \(Parents magazine\)](#)

In addition to physical games, here could be many other “Olympics” ideas. What about a Hydration Challenge, with designated checkpoints during the day when kids or teens can get a point for pausing to drink some water? Even resting could be an Olympic sport, with events like Cloud Watching (make the longest list of cloud shapes) or a Relaxation Challenge (use pillows, beanbags, and other soft objects to create the most comfy corner ever, then vote on the most relaxing way to sit or lie in it). What ideas can your family come up with?



Note: For younger children, you may choose to focus on cooperation rather than competition—for example, rather than individual scoring, all points scored by each family member will add to the overall family score. For team events, you can ensure fairness by assigning family members to teams so that each team has a mix of ages and abilities.

  
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*GAP-C Families &  
Children with Special Medical Needs*

ISSUE 7 | 5/29/2020

## Physical Wellbeing



This issue of our newsletter is focused on physical wellbeing, specifically related to sleep and movement. I have included an article from a website that was discussed last issue, but unfortunately the link wasn't included. The website has a wealth of information and I encourage you all to explore it, if you aren't already aware of it. This article focuses on strategies for improving sleep for children with special needs and breaks down factors that impact a good night's sleep. The rest of the newsletter offers additional activities that you can use to create a bedtime routine or to get moving throughout the day to help with sleep. Good luck!

Check out the article here: <http://articles.complexchild.com/sept2010/00233.html>

Last issue's missing link: <https://complexchild.org/editions/covid-info/>

  
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## Kids Path Connections Resources

### How to Explain COVID-19 to Children

- **Talking to Children about COVID-19 (novel coronavirus)**  
<https://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid19>
- **Talking to Kids about the Coronavirus**  
<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>
- **How to Talk To Your Kids about COVID-19**  
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/kids-covid-19/art-20482508>
- **Helping Children Cope With Changes Resulting From COVID-19**  
[https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource)

### Resources for Food and Other Assistance

- **Phone Call regarding resources/food:** Dial 211
- **United Way:** resources including regarding food, housing  
Burlington, Greensboro, Orange Co.
- **Texting tool for students who are on free/reduced lunch for info:** Text FOODNC to 877-877

### Emotional Health Resources

- **The Kellin Foundation – A Variety of Resources**  
Builds resilient children, families, and adults through behavioral health services, victim advocacy, and community outreach.  
<http://www.kellinfoundation.org/covid-19-resources.html>
- **Now's a Good Time to Teach Your Kids to Play on Their Own**  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/03/parenting/kids-independent-play-coronavirus-quarantine.html>
- **If Your Kid Keeps Asking 'Why,' Give Them an Answer**  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/27/parenting/kids-asking-questions-development.html>



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- **4 Ways to Help Your Anxious Kid**  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/parenting/coronavirus-help-anxious-kid.html>
- **You and your Kids Can't Stand Each Other – Now What? – The New York Times**  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/09/well/family/coronavirus-quarantine-conflict-family-meeting.html>
- **The Heartbreaking Reality of Parenting in the Coronavirus Pandemic**  
[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/parenting-social-distancing-coronavirus\\_n\\_5e6fb52ac5b6eab7793a0c4d](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/parenting-social-distancing-coronavirus_n_5e6fb52ac5b6eab7793a0c4d)
- **Guide to Living with Worry and Anxiety Amidst Global Uncertainty**  
[https://www.psychologytools.com/assets/covid-19/guide\\_to\\_living\\_with\\_worry\\_and\\_anxiety\\_amidst\\_global\\_uncertainty\\_en-us.pdf](https://www.psychologytools.com/assets/covid-19/guide_to_living_with_worry_and_anxiety_amidst_global_uncertainty_en-us.pdf)
- **Teaching Our Kids (and Ourselves) Mindfulness to Get Us Through the Coronavirus Anxiety – The Washington Post**  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2020/03/20/teaching-our-kids-ourselves-mindfulness-get-us-through-cononavirus-anxiety/>

## Educational Resources

- **Teachers Share Their Favorite Free Learning Websites and Apps for Kids**  
[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/free-online-learning-activities-for-kids\\_l\\_5e73848dc5b63c3b648bc968](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/free-online-learning-activities-for-kids_l_5e73848dc5b63c3b648bc968)
- **Veteran Home-Schoolers Share Tips for Parents during Coronavirus Closures**  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2020/03/18/veteran-homeschoolers-share-tips-parents-during-coronavirus-school-closures/>
- **Khan Academy**  
A nonprofit with the mission to provide a free, world-class education for anyone, anywhere.  
<https://www.khanacademy.org>
- **Scholastic Learn from Home**  
Day-by-day projects to keep kids reading, thinking and growing  
<https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/learnathome.html>
- **TED-Ed**  
Free daily lessons, activities and challenges to support student, parents and teachers  
<https://ed.ted.com/>
- **Duolingo**  
The world's best way to learn a language  
<https://www.duolingo.com/>

## Fun Activities

- **18 At-Home Ideas to Keep Kids Busy and Entertained During the Coronavirus Outbreak**  
<https://apple.news/A5MpYtgBZTfajPmUofqJ9Dg>
- **Video Games to Play with Your Kids That Won't Drive You Crazy**  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/03/arts/video-games-kids-parents-covid-virus-coronavirus.html>

## Activities to Remember Your Loved One

- **The Dougy Center**  
The national center for grieving children and families  
<https://www.dougy.org>

## Behavioral Health

Mental Health, Bereavement Care, Substance Abuse, Suicide Intervention, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- **The Kellin Foundation – A Variety of Resources**  
Builds resilient children, families, and adults through behavioral health services, victim advocacy, and community outreach  
<http://www.kellinfoundation.org/covid-19-resources.html>
- **Alamance County Crisis Care: RHA Walk-In Crisis Center** (behavioral health and/or substance abuse)
  - Walk-in between 8 am and 3 pm M-W-F
  - “Crisis Hour” between 8am and 8pm Monday - Friday
  - Payment based on a sliding scale to those living in Alamance Co., no charge if unemployed
  - 2732 Anne Elizabeth Dr.
  - Burlington NC 27215
  - **336-229-5905**
  - 336-229-5906 - FAX #
- **Cardinal Innovations**
  - Includes 24 hr/7 day a week crisis and mobile crisis team
  - Only serves the following counties – Alamance, Caswell, Person, Orange and Chatham
  - **1-800-939-5911**
- **Open Door Clinic**
  - For those not eligible for Medicaid or stat funding
  - **336-570-9800**
- **AuthoraCare Collective and Kids Path**
  - Adult/Child Bereavement/Grief Counseling
  - **336-532-0100**
- **Children’s Developmental Services Agency (CDSA)**
  - Children under 3 years
  - 336-334-5601

- **Residential Treatment Services of Alamance**
  - Detoxification & Crisis Stabilization
  - Offers recovery programs that are invaluable to those struggling to overcome alcoholism, addiction and/or mental illness.
  - **336-227-7417**
- **Crisis Intervention Team**
  - If **911** is called, Alamance Co. does have law enforcement members trained to handle calls related to mental health or substance abuse.
  - Prefer that the above is used instead of CIT
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (Also Veterans Crisis Line)**
  - **1-800-273-8255**
  - Call will begin with a recording, follow prompts
- **Suicide Prevention Lifeline Web chat**
  - <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat>
  - Texting option: text HOME to **741741** (Not a part of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, but you are connected to qualified professionals who can help)
- **Mobile Crisis Team** (by phone or home visit)
  - Provided by Psychotherapeutic Services
  - 24-7, 365 days a year
  - **336-538-6990**
  - 336-538-6991 - FAX #
- **Mobile Crisis Services—other Counties**
  - **Caswell Co.**
    - Provided by Psychotherapeutic Services
    - 24-7, 365 days a year
    - **336-538-6990**
    - 336-538-6991 - FAX #
  - **Orange and Person Co.**
    - Freedom House
    - Offers residential recovery services for adults who are alcohol or drug addicted and those who are dually diagnosed with a mental illness
    - **1-877-967-8844**
  - **Durham Co.**
    - Alliance Behavioral Healthcare
    - Serves people in Durham, Wake, Cumberland and Johnston counties
    - Offers treatment and support for mental illness, substance use disorders, and intellectual/developmental disabilities
    - **1-800-510-9132**
    - Call will begin with a recording, follow prompts

## Activity Links from Past Kids Path Connections Newsletters

### Children

- Ninja Focus: To help engage your kids with healthy content while they're home from school (Free from 4/1/2020 – 7/1/2020). Download the app on Google Play or the App Store.
- Getting Children Outside While Social Distancing for COVID-19  
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chest-lungs/Pages/Getting-Children-Outside.aspx>
- Hand In Hand: How to make the most of special time with your child  
<https://www.handinhandparenting.org/2014/11/make-special-time-child-checklist/>
- Breathe, Think, Do! In challenging situations, taking slow deep breaths can help children calm down and solve problems.  
<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/activities/breathe-think-do/>

### Tweens and Teens

- What is Mindfulness? The benefit of mindfulness and examples of how to practice it.
- <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/what-is-mindfulness.pdf>
- Relaxation Techniques to help you cope with emotions
- <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/relaxation-techniques.pdf>
- Resources for Connecting with Nature
- NATGEO@HOME - [https://www.nationalgeographic.com/family/at-home-education-resources?cmpid=int\\_org=ngp::int\\_mc=website::int\\_src=ngp::int\\_cmp=natgeoathomeglobal::int\\_\\_add=natgeoathomeglobal](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/family/at-home-education-resources?cmpid=int_org=ngp::int_mc=website::int_src=ngp::int_cmp=natgeoathomeglobal::int__add=natgeoathomeglobal)
- National Aquarium- <https://www.aqua.org/>
- Houston Zoo - <https://www.houstonzoo.org/explore/webcams/>
- North Carolina Zoo - <https://www.nczoo.org/virtual-visit>
- Frederick Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park - <https://www.meijergardens.org/virtual-visits/>
- Common Sense Media: Reviews for what your kids want to watch (before they watch it)  
<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>
- Find Peace Anywhere: Check in with how you're feeling, and try short activities tuned to your emotions
- <https://www.stopbreathethink.com/>

### Adults

- Being Well: Being on Your Own Side – focuses on the importance of self-compassion
- <https://www.rickhanson.net/well-podcast-side/>
- Visit Dr. Hansen's website for more podcasts
- <https://www.rickhanson.net/>
- Live Nature Cams: Hundreds of live nature cams:  
<https://explore.org/livecams>
- Podcast: Authentic Parenting; Parenting from the Heart
  - Parenting through Quarantine <https://authenticparenting.com/podcast>
- Download the UCLA MindfulApp for IOS (App Store) and Android (Google Play)
- With this easy-to-use app, you can practice mindfulness meditation anywhere, anytime with the guidance of the [UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center](https://www.ucla.edu/centers-and-programs/center-for-mindfulness/).