

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

All Children Deserve Great Childhoods!



A Message from Our Team

April is.....

National Child Abuse Prevention Month; it is a time to celebrate the good things our communities do to promote healthy child development. We all have a role to play in healthy child development, and our goal this April is to offer information, strategies, and resources to help support and strengthen families and promote the well-being of children and the great childhoods that all children deserve.

Now more than ever we need to work together to ensure the safety and well-being of all children in our community. To assist in this effort, we are happy to provide some resources and information for your use. Please feel free to forward to anyone you feel would benefit from these resources.



Activities, Ideas & Tips

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Talk to your child about the Coronavirus.

Visit npr.org and search:

Just For Kids:
A Comic Exploring
The New Coronavirus

Explain to your children:
here are some things
you can do to protect
yourself, family & friends
from getting sick.

Do....

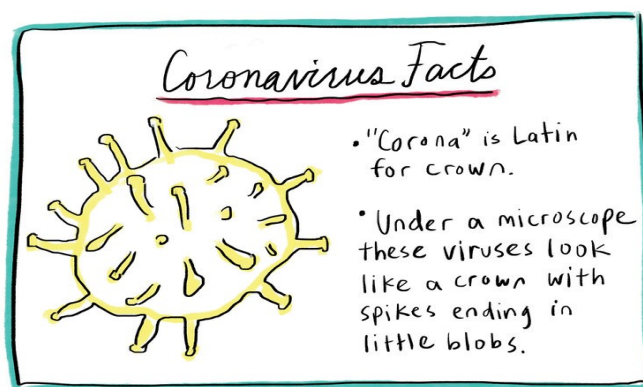
- ✓ Wash your hands often;
- ✓ Sneeze into your elbow;
- ✓ Avoid touching your face.

It's a word you might have heard
at school or online or on T.V.



This coronavirus is a newly discovered virus. It causes a disease called COVID-19.

In some parts of the world it has made lots of people sick.



Everyone Can Make Great Childhoods A Reality! Especially You...Especially Now!

Strategies to Provide Stability for Children During Unstable Times

- ❖ Maintain a schedule that promotes appropriate bedtimes, schoolwork, mealtimes, hygiene, exercise & family fun!
- ❖ Limit electronics, gaming & TV. Limit exposure to social media & news coverage. Teach your children how to stay safe on the Internet!
- ❖ While practicing social distancing, go outside, go for a walk, play catch or explore seasonal changes.
- ❖ If you feel yourself becoming frustrated or stressed, you're not alone. Take a time-out, practice self-care, contact a friend.
- ❖ Let children talk about what worries them. Share your coping skills with children. Ask your child what helps them feel better.
- ❖ Take this opportunity to teach your life skills to your children.

#GreatChildhoods
www.pcaky.org

Emotional well-being is most important.
Take care of yourself.

Keep in mind while areas such as school work are important, it is okay not to get everything done. Create a system that works for your family. Do the best you can with written or on-line work and look for opportunities for learning at home via activities such as cooking, music, reading and crafts.

Our Kids - Our Future



Together we can support
GREAT childhoods

Emotional Well-being is Key - 30 Actions You Can Take to Help Keep Calm

COPING CALENDAR: KEEP CALM. STAY WISE. BE KIND

30 actions to look after ourselves and each other as we face this global crisis together. Please use & share!

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|---|
| 1 Make a plan to help you keep calm and stay in contact | 2 Enjoy washing your hands. Remember all they do for you! | 3 Write down ten things you feel grateful for in life and why | 4 Stay hydrated, eat healthy food and boost your immune system | 5 Get active. Even if you're stuck indoors, move & stretch | 6 Contact a neighbour or friend and offer to help them | 7 Share what you are feeling and be willing to ask for help |
| 8 Take five minutes to sit still and breathe. Repeat regularly | 9 Call a loved one to catch up and really listen to them | 10 Get good sleep. No screens before bed or when waking up | 11 Notice five things that are beautiful in the world around you | 12 Immerse yourself in a new book, TV show or podcast | 13 Respond positively to everyone you interact with | 14 Play a game that you enjoyed when you were younger |
| 15 Make some progress on a project that matters to you | 16 Rediscover your favourite music that really lifts your spirits | 17 Learn something new or do something creative | 18 Find a fun way to do an extra 15 minutes of physical activity | 19 Do three acts of kindness to help others, however small | 20 Make time for self-care. Do something kind for yourself | 21 Send a letter or message to someone you can't be with |
| 22 Find positive stories in the news and share these with others | 23 Have a tech-free day. Stop scrolling and turn off the news | 24 Put your worries into perspective and try to let them go | 25 Look for the good in others and notice their strengths | 26 Take a small step towards an important goal | 27 Thank three people you're grateful to and tell them why | 28 Make a plan to meet up with others again later in the year |
| 29 Connect with nature. Breathe and notice life continuing | 30 Remember that all feelings and situations pass in time | <p>“Everything can be taken from us but one thing: the freedom to choose our attitude in any given set of circumstances” ~ Viktor Frankl</p> | | | | |

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



www.actionforhappiness.org

Find out more about the Ten Keys to Happier Living, including books, guides, posters and more here: www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys

The activities and information included in this packet are provided in partnership by:
Allegany Department of Social Services,
Cattaraugus County Department of Social Services,
Cattaraugus Community Action and
The Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center.



Allegany
COUNTY
New York
www.alleganyco.com




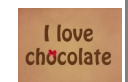






Every Child Deserves a Great Childhood!

April 2020

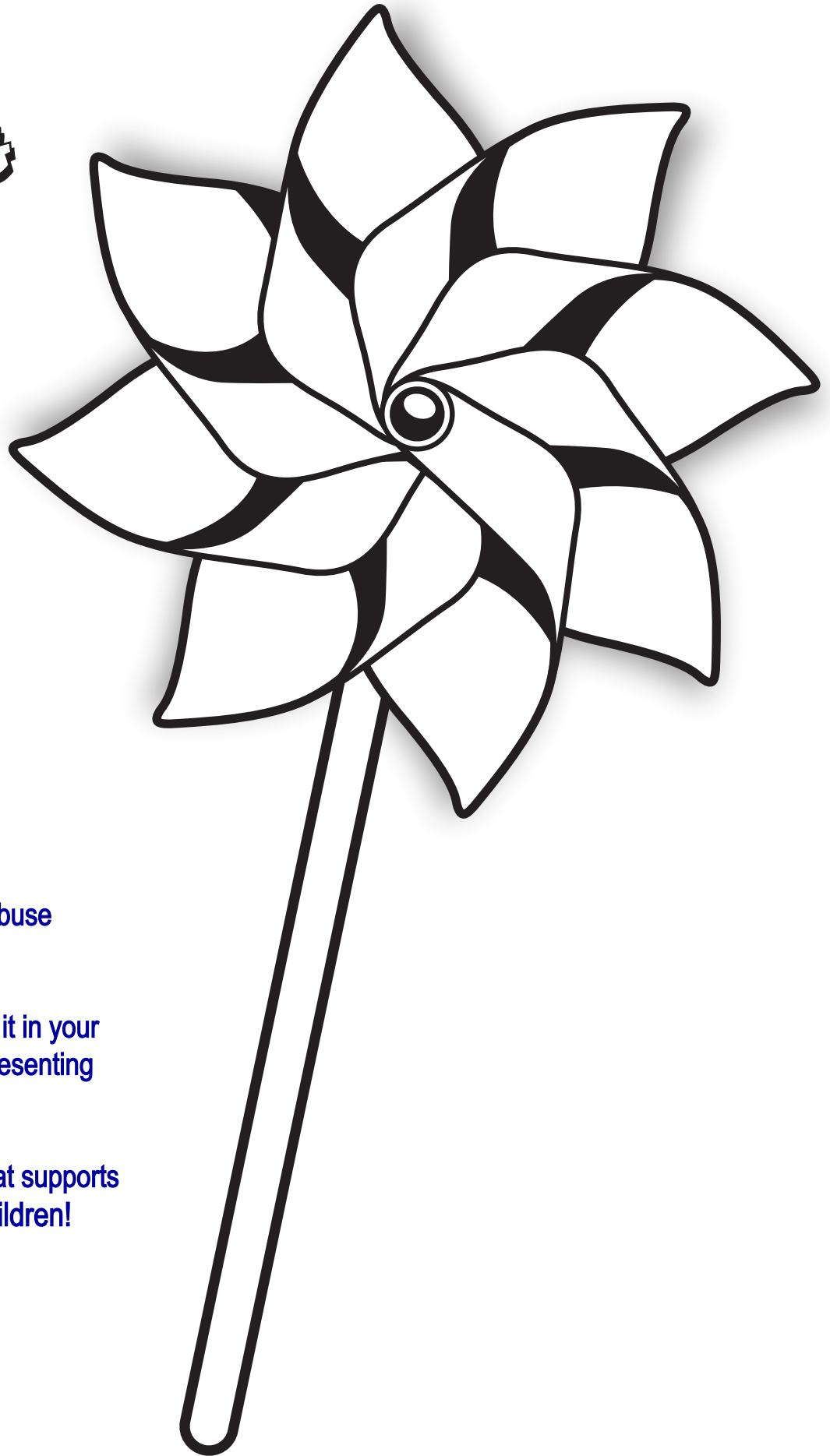
30 Ways to Promote "GREAT" Childhoods! During April National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Everyday Actions are What Make Great Childhoods a Reality!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat									
<p>Working together for our children</p> 			<p>1 BLUE LIGHT! Put blue lights in your outdoor light fixtures! Color and hang Pinwheel art in your window!</p> 	<p>2 Read a book with your child! Scholastic is offering free resources! Review Calendar Activity Sheet for username and password.</p>	<p>3 EVENT! GO BLUE! Wear a blue shirt to show that you stand against child abuse.</p>	<p>4 KEEP IT MOVING! Exercise with your kids. Refer to the Calendar Activity Sheets for exercises kids can do at home. For more ideas: https://www.gonoodle.com.</p>									
<p>5 DIY CRAFTS! Create a frog craft with your child. For ideas refer to the Calendar Activity Sheets or visit: www.dltk-kids.com</p>	<p>6 Make your favorite snack or make "ants on a log" For recipe refer to the Calendar Activity Sheets or visit: www.Allrecpies.com.</p>	<p>7 BIKE RIDE! Go for a bike ride with your children.</p> 	<p>8 Plan a brand new Easter tradition with your family.</p>	<p>9 Ask each member of your household to name one good thing that happened during their day.</p>	<p>10 Decorate Coloring Sheets. www.crayola.com Play Tic Tac Toe!</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1575 763 1701 876"> <tr> <td>X</td> <td>X</td> <td>O</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>O</td> </tr> <tr> <td>X</td> <td>X</td> <td>O</td> </tr> </table>	X	X	O			O	X	X	O	<p>11 CHOCOLATE SCAVENGER HUNT! Refer to the Calendar Activity Sheets for a treasure hunt clue sheet.</p> 
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<p>12 HAPPY EASTER! Carry out the Easter tradition you planned on Wednesday.</p> 	<p>13 Play a bowling game with empty plastic bottles. For a printable score sheet refer to Calendar Activity Sheets.</p>	<p>14 Take your children on a picnic in your front/back yard and discuss the different animals you might see.</p>	<p>15 PODCAST KIDS! Watch a podcast with your child. Refer to Calendar Activity Sheets for information and website links.</p>	<p>16 VIRTUAL TOUR! Take a virtual tour. Many zoos, parks, & museums are offering virtual tours via their website. Visit Mars or the San Diego Zoo!</p>	<p>17 Cloud gaze with your child, use cotton balls to create your own clouds.</p>	<p>18 DRESS UP RELAY! Refer to Calendar Activity Sheets for instructions. Visit: https://www.familyeducation.com/fun/family-games/dress-relay</p>									
<p>19 Allow your child to help prepare a meal by measuring, safely pouring, and/or stirring ingredients.</p>	<p>20 Host a family movie night.</p> 	<p>21 Host a board &/or card game party with your children.</p> 	<p>22 MAKE A LIST! Talk to your child about who they can talk to if they need help or if someone makes them uncomfortable.</p>	<p>23 Make an obstacle course with your children outside.</p>	<p>24 Host a sidewalk art show with chalk. Play a game of hop scotch!</p> 	<p>25 Talk to your children about online safety: Refer to Calendar Activity Sheets for information and visit: http://www.kidmartz.org/ http://www.nsteens.org/</p>									
<p>26 Build a creative fort in your home.</p>	<p>27 CHARADES! "Act out" a popular movie, book, person or saying.</p>	<p>28 Make your own bubbles/blow them outside. Refer to Calendar Activity Sheets for recipe.</p>	<p>29 Create your own family list of fun things you could do together in May!</p>	<p>30 Use objects around your home to make music.</p>		<p>95% of child abuse is preventable through education. For tips and information visit: www.D2L.org.</p>									

Pinwheels for Prevention

**COLORING
SHEET**



Show your support of Child Abuse
Prevention Month in April!

Color this pinwheel and hang it in your
window (blue is the color representing
Child Abuse Prevention).

Show we are a community that supports
Great Childhoods for All Children!

MAKING YOUR OWN PINWHEEL

Here's a craft project that will allow children a chance to participate in your community's **Pinwheels for Prevention** activities. This activity can be used in schools, daycare centers, after-school programs, church groups, etc.

Materials

- a push pin
- a square piece of construction paper (about 8.5" x 8.5")
- a sharpened pencil with eraser
- scissors

Procedure

1. Lay the square paper flat on a table and draw a line diagonally from each corner to the opposite corner.
2. Mark the center of the square where the two lines cross and punch a small hole through it with the pencil tip.
3. Next, cut along each line stopping about an inch from the hole in the center of the square.
4. Take the pin and punch a hole in the top left corner of each of the four flaps. (No two holes should be next to each other.)
5. Pick-up a flap at a punched corner and carefully curve it over toward the center hole, securing it with the pin.
6. Repeat this for the other flaps.
7. When all four flaps are held by the pin, carefully lift the paper without letting the flaps unfurl.
8. Lay the pencil flat on a table and carefully push the point of the push pin into the side of the eraser.
9. Now your pinwheel is complete and ready to go. Pick-up the pinwheel near the pencil point and let it catch the wind.



Pinwheels for
PREVENTION[®]

Prevent Child Abuse
America[®]

Read– out loud with your child

<https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/learnathome.html>

A promotional banner for Scholastic Learn at Home. The top half has a light green background with the text "Free Scholastic Magazine Access" in bold black font. Below this is a row of four small images: a brown bear, three children standing in front of a red door, a woman sitting on a large colorful block structure, and a close-up of a person's face. A blue bar below the images contains the text "Scholastic Learn at Home". The bottom half of the banner has a light green background with a white grid pattern on the left side, and the text "UN: Learning20" and "PW: Clifford" in bold black font.

Free Scholastic Magazine Access

Scholastic Learn at Home

UN: Learning20
PW: Clifford

Scholastic is offering several free resources and they are amazing, check them out. The articles are geared towards kids and are very interesting.

The username and password for the FREE digital resources are:
Username: Learning20;
Password: Clifford

Watch Astronauts Reading Stories from Space

If you need to mix up your bedtime story routine a little bit, the [Global Space Education Foundation](#) has just the thing for you: [Story Time in Space](#). It's exactly what it sounds like – astronauts on various missions in space read popular children's books while floating about, and the videos are edited and shared with kids way down on Earth.



Exercise!



Check out this guide for some exercises kids can do at home. Keep fit and keep moving! <https://www.womansday.com/health-fitness/g28326081/exercises-for-kids/?slide=12>

- Another fun resource to keep kids active is GoNoodle <https://www.gonoodle.com>
- Also, check out Cosmic Kids Yoga on YouTube [here](#).

Arts & Crafts!

Discover KiwiCo

This company provides some great resources including a Toolkit for Parents, Activities by Age and Daily DIY ideas for kids.

Here are some [great craft ideas for all those toilet paper rolls!](#)

For more at-home activities for kids of all ages click [here](#). You will find quick and easy projects curated for your kids abilities and divided into various age groups including 2 to 4, 5 to 8, 9 to 11 and age 12+.



Their Parent Toolkit provides some great ideas including:

- [Tips from Teachers](#) on how to transform your home into a classroom for your kids
- [A Learning Schedule for Kids at Home](#) (printable pdf)
- [The Science of Handwashing](#) Washing with soap can smash a virus into pieces and flush it safely away — all thanks to chemistry!

Create A Frog Craft!

Materials:

- a printer,
- glue,
- scissors,
- something to color with,
- a piece of paper.

Instructions:

- Print out the template of choice.
- Color (where appropriate).
- Cut out the template pieces (adult assistance may be required).
 - If you precut, you can put scotch tape on the back of the pieces and tape them to a piece of clean white paper while the children color the pieces.
- Glue on the head, mouth, eyes, arms, and legs.



Cooking Class!

Ants on a Log - <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/23953/ants-on-a-log/>



Ingredients:

- 5 stalks celery
- ½ cup peanut butter
- ¼ cup raisins

Directions:

Cut the celery in half. Spread with peanut butter. Sprinkle with raisins!

Chocolate Scavenger Hunt!

See attached - Treasure-Hunt-Clues-for-Kids

The 25 Best Podcasts for Kids

Here's one list, some of which are for older kids:

<https://www.common sense media.org/blog/the-best-podcasts-for-kids>

Here's one for the younger set (2-6):

<https://parenting.nytimes.com/culture/podcasts-for-kids>



Take a Virtual Tour

Even though amusement parks, zoos and museums are presently closed, everyone can still explore some new places. Check out this [link](#) to see some new sites and share with your friends, classmates, and family!

Dress-up Relay!

<https://www.familyeducation.com/fun/family-games/dress-relay>

Materials

- Two suitcases or boxes
- Dress-up clothes (hats, scarves, jackets, skirts, pants, boots, and so on)

Directions

1. Fill two suitcases or boxes with equal amounts of clothing. The clothes must be big enough to fit all the players.
2. Place the suitcases or boxes at one end of the room.
3. Divide the players into two equal teams. If there's an odd number of players, one player on the team with fewer players takes two turns.
4. Have the teams form two lines at the end of the room opposite the suitcases.
5. At the word go, the first player from each team runs to one of the suitcases or boxes and dons all the clothes in it over the clothes he's already wearing. Decide ahead of time whether buttons, zippers, and so on must be fastened.
6. When a player is completely dressed, he then quickly removes all the dress-up clothes, puts them back in the suitcase or box, and runs to the end of his team's line.
7. The next player then takes a turn and so on until everyone on the team has had a turn.
8. The first team to finish wins.

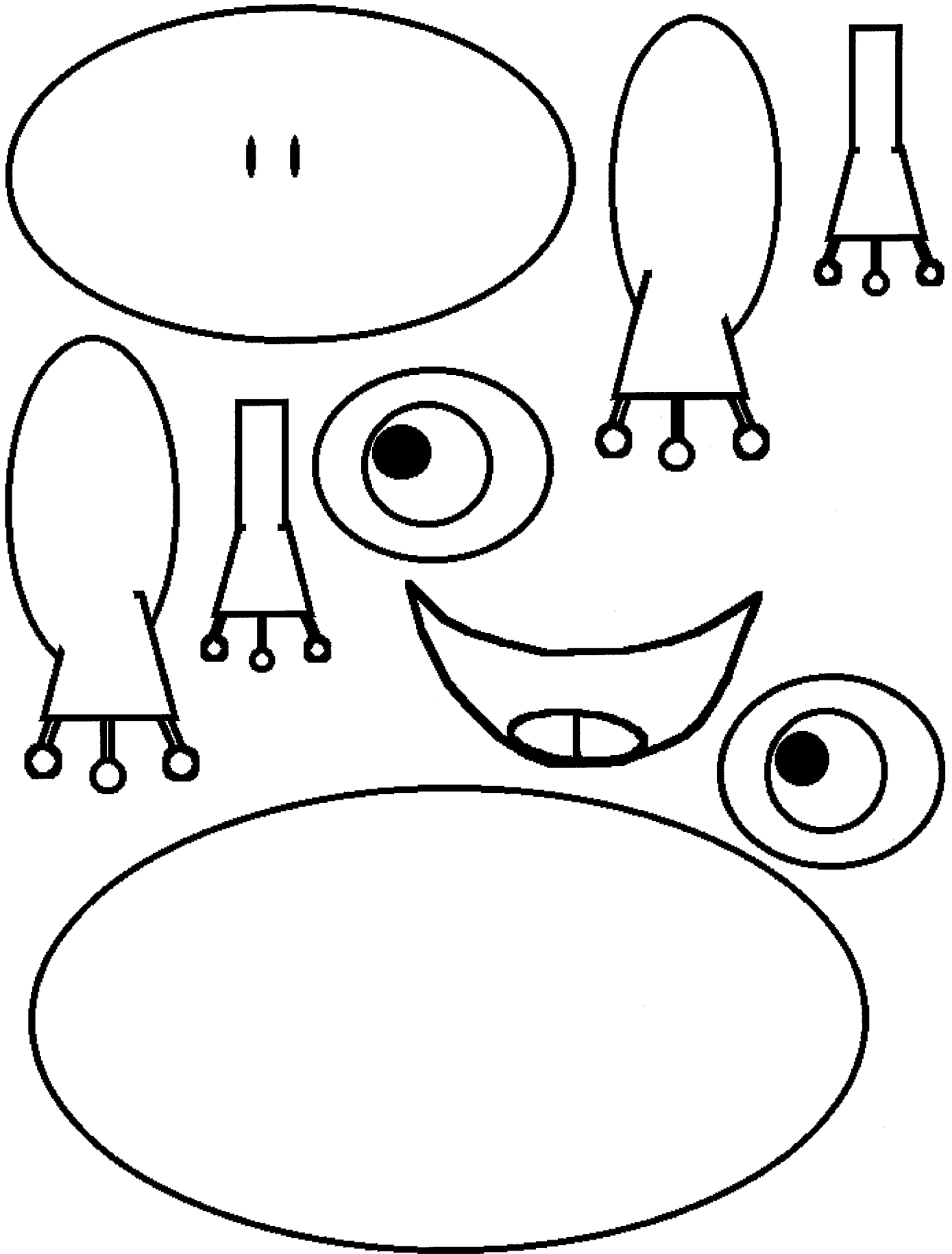
Make Your Own Bubbles!

Materials

- Large cup
- 1/2 cup dish soap
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- Bubble Wands

Instructions

1. Get a large cup.
2. Pour 1/2 cup of dish soap into the cup.
3. Add 1 1/2 cups of water.
4. Measure 2 teaspoons of sugar and add it to the water/soap mixture.
5. Gently stir your mixture.
6. Go outside and blow bubbles!



Getting the first clue will be a joy. Look for it where you would put your toy.

Now that you are playing the game, look in the place where we keep your picture in a frame.

If you want to find more clues, look in the place where you put your shoes.

Get up now and walk on your feet, you will find the next clue under your favorite seat.

You are finding clues and feeling bold, now go to the place that keeps foods really cold.

The next clue is easily seen if you go to the place where you to go get clean.

This isn't a wild goose chase if you go to the place where you can see your own face.

While you are up walking around, go to the place where you go to lay down.

When you look for the next clue you might plug your nose, its hiding in the place you store your dirty clothes.

You have worked hard to get every clue, to find the last one go where the coffee does brew.



Dear Friend,

During this unprecedented and challenging time of social distancing amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) remains committed to its mission to find missing children, reduce exploitation and prevent victimization.

Considering the measures to reduce the spread of the virus, youth will be spending more of the day online - learning and filling idle time. We encourage parents to continue to engage their families with prevention messages and stay up to date on the issues. The following are resources that can help.

For Adults

- Find videos, articles, tip sheets, and activities on our prevention platforms. Link to our NetSmartz and KidSmartz safety resources at <https://www.missingkids.org/education>.
- NCMEC CONNECT is your virtual gateway to on-demand trainings, resources and best practices related to missing and exploited children. Access our learning platform to build your knowledge set around these issues to better protect children in your community. To make your connection, please visit: <https://ncmec.elevate.commpartners.com/>.
- NCMEC/NY Educators are available to present programs that are usually offered in-person to groups via Zoom video conferencing.
- Keep up to date with issues and trends at our blog: <https://www.missingkids.org/blog>.

For Elementary Children

- At www.kidmartz.org children can
 - watch age appropriate videos around the four KidSmartz Rules of Safety.
 - Sing and dance along to the Safety Dance music video.
 - Download printable activities.
- At www.netsmartzkids.org Children can:
 - Watch videos, including the new Into the Cloud video series on digital citizenship.
 - Play games like Cloud Chaos.
 - Read E-books and download printable activities.

For Middle/High School Teens

- Tweens and teens can watch videos, play games, read interactive web comics, and other activities on Internet Safety at www.nsteens.org.
- Older teens can also read more about the issues at our blog: <https://www.missingkids.org/blog>.

Please know that the NCMEC 24/Hour Hotline, 1-800-THE-LOST (1800-843-5678), remains open and available to public to report a child missing. Reports of online child exploitation can also be reported to the hotline or at www.cybertip.org.

Should you have any questions or would like to schedule a virtual program for a group you belong to, please reach out to me via email or at 585-252-7056.

Debra Ortiz-Pardi
NCMEC/NY Outreach Manager

Tips on How to Talk to Your Kids About Online Interactions

- **Let's face it, there are some conversations that are just going to be uncomfortable to have with your child. When you open the door to talk with your child or teen about online interactions, start with, "I remember being a kid. But I've never been a mom/dad of a kid your age before. So please recognize that I just want to keep you safe in every way possible. That's why I wanted to talk about _____ for a minute. Are you OK with that?"**
- **Use everyday experiences as prompts for conversations. Let's say your child tells you about a decision another kid made online that got him/her into trouble. You can respond with "Remember when we talked about choosing how we react to situations? This is a good example of how you can decide what *you'll* do when that kind of thing happens to you. What do you think he/she could have done to make this turn out better?"**
- **Stay calm and check your emotions at the door. It's best to approach your child with a calm demeanor and maintain it throughout the interaction. Overreaction on your part will impact them; they may react with a guarded response, or shut down completely.**
- **Body language is important. Position yourself in a comfortable, friendly posture with the child, rather than a confrontive or antagonistic stance.**
 - ➔ Ask for their permission to talk.
 - ➔ Ask for their attention: "Can we turn this game/television off for a minute?"
 - ➔ Sit side by side instead of standing over them.
- **Recognize that this will be an ongoing series of conversations. Once is not enough. If their attention wanders, ask "Can we talk about this again sometime?"**
- **Be aware of what they aren't saying. They may test the waters and only tell you a part of the story to see how you respond. If you remain calm and interested, they may choose to tell you the rest.**

Body language is important. Position yourself in a comfortable, friendly posture with the child, rather than a confrontive or antagonistic stance.



- It may take a few days for everything to come out. Be patient. Don't say "Why didn't you tell me this the other day?" Let them unfold the incident as they are comfortable talking about it with you.¹ Over a period of time and with repeated interactions, they'll learn that they can tell you anything at all and you'll react in a calm and rational way. Refrain from rushing to judgment or becoming alarmist;

avoid statements like:


- That was crazy! Why did you/they do that?
- Are you kidding? Where was your teacher/coach when this happened?
- That's so dangerous! I can't believe anyone would do that!
- You should never have done that! Can't you see how bad that was? What's wrong with you?
- Next time you need to...

Tips from a Teen: Since kids today are growing up in the digital age, they may be better at identifying fake profiles and predatory behavior than you might think. In fact, they might have already rejected the advances of predators before. It might be helpful to acknowledge this possibility before you jump into a conversation about what they should or should not do on the Internet.

Instead, listen and respond with open-ended comments:

- That must have been scary. How did you feel?
- How did you handle it when they...?
- What happened when you did/said that?
- Did anyone else try to help/get involved/stop it?
- What could you have done differently to maybe get a different outcome?

- Use every opportunity to affirm their decisions and choices. When they tell you about how they successfully handled a difficulty, respond with "That was really good thinking on your part! I can see that you're smart about how you act when things like this happen!"
- *But do not go over-the-top with unfounded or indistinct praise, such as, "Wow, you're so incredible! Do you realize how wonderful you are?"* A child needs sincere affirmation and specific feedback. Give them the truthful input they deserve, and want to hear, as a response to their actions.



You know the kids in your life best, so we encourage you to use your best judgment as you talk through difficult topics.

¹ Jenson, Kristen. "Protect Young Minds Blogs." *Protect Young Minds*, Glen Cove Press, May 2016, www.protectyoungminds.org/

Tips for Monitoring Kids Online

If your children are always on their phones or on the Internet, what can you do to keep them safe?

- **GET INTERNET SAFETY TIPS FROM PROFESSIONALS SUCH AS BARK.**¹ Start early, when they first begin using devices, and be sure they understand you are only protecting them, not robbing them of their fun.
- **IF THEY'RE ONLINE** make sure the computer they are using is in a shared space in your home where you can see what they're viewing/doing. Stay involved. Check their browsing history regularly.
- **TALK WITH YOUR KIDS!** Discuss with them safe social media practices, the dangers of starting a conversation with someone they don't know (or only *think* they know), and why sharing too much personal information can be dangerous. (They should be warned about sharing locations, daily schedules and routines, addresses, names of school/church/clubs, bus routes.)
- **CHECK THEIR MOBILE DEVICES AND LAPTOPS REGULARLY.** Establish guidelines about checking with you before loading new apps. Interact with them to get an explanation of any new apps they want to load and discuss how to use them safely.
- **BE AWARE OF PRIVACY SETTINGS AND CHECK THE SETTINGS ON THEIR DEVICES REGULARLY.** New apps are prolific so set regular calendar reminders for yourself to look at any electronic device your child uses that connects to the Internet. (Pay special attention to online or video games, social media, and apps for music, pictures, connecting, or sharing.)
- **DISCUSS BEDROOM ETIQUETTE IN YOUR HOME.** If visitors of the opposite sex aren't allowed into their room, then live chat with an online visitor should be treated in the same manner. Remind them that showing something to someone online is the same as inviting that stranger into their bedroom. *Would you go to the door and greet a guest in your underwear?* No, of course not. So don't FaceTime or send photos while wearing only underwear, or even pajamas.
- **DO NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILDREN TO HAVE DEVICES AT NIGHT,** which is essentially "leaving a front door open" while you're sleeping.

- **DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD THE TACTICS USED BY PREDATORS** and explain to them why it's safer if you collect electronic devices at bedtime and put them all on chargers in another room.

If you hear about kids sending inappropriate pictures to one another, recognize that this is not just a normal part of growing up. Teach your children that:

- **SEXTING IS VERY DANGEROUS,** because on the Internet those photos *never* go away.
- **YOU CAN NEVER KNOW WHO WILL SEE THAT PHOTO** so don't send something you don't want everyone to see.
- **YOU MAY LIKE THE BOY/GIRLFRIEND TODAY** but not like them next week. You don't want someone to have a photo of you that's very private.
- **UNDERAGE SEXTING IS ILLEGAL** and if you are caught, even though you are underage yourself, you could be charged with possession and distribution of child pornography.
- **IT'S NEVER APPROPRIATE** to send a photo of yourself unclothed, to anyone. *Ever.*



HELP THEM UNDERSTAND:

- That cute 15-year-old guy who reached out on Instagram may actually be a 37-year-old man wanting to meet you.
 - The person who offers to help you win a game, and offers to share tips and give you free upgrades, etc., may not really be a nice person.
 - If you don't know them in person – where they live/go to school – don't let them be your online “friend” because they could be anyone.
 - A person may say they live in Panama and just want to get acquainted with an American teen, but you don't know who they really are.
 - Ask your safe adult if you want to friend someone, and ask for the adult's oversight to be sure you stay safe.
- If anything makes you uncomfortable online:
 - immediately stop the conversation
 - exit the app but don't delete anything
 - tell your safe adult about the incident
 - the adult will investigate and alert the proper authorities if someone appears to be an online predator. (Clues that the person you're interacting with could be an online predator include asking for nude/compromising photos, requesting personal information, asking to meet with you, wanting to share a secret with you, asking you to keep a secret). Approaching a minor sexually is illegal, so the police will investigate.

As your children get older, they may resent your interference in their lives. How can you make them feel good about talking to you?

- **TALK OPENLY WITH YOUR KIDS**, in a non-judgmental way, especially about relationships and healthy boundaries.
 - **TEACH THEM HOW TO RESPOND** to various threatening situations, including online threats.
 - **TEACH THEM THAT YOU WILL ALWAYS LISTEN.** Put away your phone or set aside other distractions, make eye contact, and be present no matter what they want to talk about.
 - **TEACH THEM NOT TO KEEP SECRETS** and to tell you immediately if someone tells them *not* to tell.
 - **SHOW** them Shared Hope's *Chosen* documentary. Sometimes they will listen to someone else.
- **CREATE A “SAFE WORD”** that they can use on the phone with you if they're ever feeling unsafe (for instance: “I'm hungry for pepperoni pizza”). Let them know you'll immediately come pick them up without repercussions if they aren't where they were supposed to be. Always give them an out, and the confidence that you will be their ally. When you pick them up, don't be angry, but instead ask:
 - How can we make sure you're safe next time?
 - Tell me why you think this could have been dangerous (drugs or alcohol offered, no adults present, no one knew where I was).





INTERNET PROVIDER PARENTAL CONTROLS

You may make sure your kid's phone has privacy settings on. Is that enough?

- There are ways to hack into information that can easily bypass standard privacy settings.
- Research online sources like [netsmartz.org](https://www.netsmartz.org) for easy access to parental controls.
- Listen to the Shared Hope Internet Safety Video Series ([sharedhope.org/internetsafety](https://www.sharedhope.org/internetsafety)).
- Establish as a general rule for your child/teen that they never post anything they don't want everyone to see/know. Encourage them to think about who will know private information about you, like where you go and what you do, if you post this information.

MONITORING DEVICES

Monitoring your kids' online devices is a challenge. We understand how difficult it can be to keep up with today's ever-changing technology, along with doing just the requirements of everyday parenting and managing all of life's other responsibilities. But we know your child's safety is your first concern, so this resource is intended to give you easily understood tools and information to support your efforts.

To help you get started, here are some tips:

- Guard your kids at the location level. Keep internet devices out of the bedroom as much as possible. Have a bedtime "turn in" time when you have the devices lined up on a power strip charging in a different room.
- Talk to parents of friends where your kids spend time (it's worth the awkward conversation). Ask at school

SET UP A SAFE PASSWORD WITH YOUR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES²

If anyone ever tells them they're supposed to come with them ("Your mom has been hit by a car and she sent me to bring you to the hospital"), your child is to ask, "What is the password?" If that person doesn't provide it correctly, the child knows to run and yell for help and not to go with them, no matter who it is.

- Keep passwords very simple (for instance, the color blue), but change it periodically.
- Make it a special occasion when you create the password so they remember it, such as on Mom's birthday.
- Tell them this password is not to be shared with anyone but the immediate family. Assure them that you (the parent) will give it to anyone they send to pick them up.

and church about wireless access points, and be sure you're satisfied with their answers about monitoring web activity, etc.

- Guard your router/network signal. Is it filtered? Do you worry about kids or babysitters surfing your WiFi for inappropriate content? [Check out these easy instructions how to filter your signal.](#)
- Guard the device. Predators can communicate with your children through iPhones, Chromebooks, MacBooks, iPads, and laptops. [Here is a simple go-to guide to monitor and filter all of these devices.](#) Although many parents don't realize it, predators can also communicate with children via Xbox/Playstation consoles. [Here is a simple guide to filter Xbox/Playstation consoles.](#)

MONITORING DEVICES (CONTINUED)

- Understand and monitor social media. Social media is an integral part of our children and teenagers' world. It's important for parents to understand the various platforms, how they work, and how to talk to your children about being smart when using social media. [Here is a handy overview document of various social media platforms.](#) You'll also find [this guide](#) helpful: Parenting the Internet Generation: A Blueprint for Teaching Digital Discernment. Instagram and Snapchat in particular are some of the most popular social media platforms.

Check out [Instagram's Tips for Parents](#)

and [ConnectSafely's Parent's Guide to Instagram.](#)

For Snapchat, check out their Safety Center and [ConnectSafely's Parent's Guide to Snapchat.](#)

- At present, chat and web play features on gaming consoles can be turned on or off, but there is no parental control platform that will prevent a child from re-enabling these features once they've become reasonably savvy about navigating the software.
- The chat logs on games can be monitored, but the means by which they are recovered is far too complicated for the average parent.
- Still, you can take a number of measures³ to protect your kids, including online protection tools and good old-fashioned monitoring. Parental control options vary by console.

We recommend internetmatters.org as a resource to access step-by-step instructions on how to set-up parental controls.

In short, devices need parental controls — period. Compare it to driving a car. You would prepare a child to get their driver's license before you handed over the keys to the car. You control access to the vehicle, practice with them, quiz them, and remain in control until you're ready to let them drive independently. But even then, you want to know where they are going, with whom, and when they will be back. Internet access is no different and can be just as dangerous as an unmonitored teen behind the wheel.

¹<https://www.bark.us>

²Shared Hope International. "Women's Discussion Guide — Faith in Action Kit." *Shared Hope International*, 2016, sharedhope.org/product/faith-action-kit/

³<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/net-safety.html>

⁴"Change Your Child's Xbox Privacy and Online Safety Settings." Support.microsoft.com, Microsoft, 14 Feb. 2019, support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/4026796/microsoft-account-change-childs-xbox-privacy-online-safety-settings