



Family Relay Drawing Guide (Family Version)

A Non-Verbal Art Activity for Families to See, Connect, and Heal

IAETDAA | International Arts Education & Therapy Development Academic Association

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1. Preparation

One large sheet of white paper (A3 or larger; taped printer paper works as well)

One different colored pen or marker per person (colors should be distinct so each person's marks are identifiable)

Undisturbed time (15–25 minutes)

Core rule: No talking, no discussion. Each person draws only **one stroke** per turn.

2. How to Play

Step 1: Decide who goes first

By age, by drawing lots, or "the person who has felt best lately" goes first.

Step 2: Begin the relay

Each person draws **one stroke** per turn (one stroke = from pen down to pen up – a single line or a dot counts)

Take turns. After each stroke, pass the paper immediately to the next person

No talking, no pointing, no gesturing or facial expressions

Step 3: Continue for 5–8 rounds

2–3 person family: each person draws 8–10 rounds

4+ person family: each person draws 5–6 rounds

The last person may draw one extra stroke to "finish" the drawing

Step 4: Look at the drawing together

Place the finished drawing on the table. The whole family looks at it in silence for 30 seconds before beginning the discussion.

3. Discussion (The Most Important Part)

Each person takes a turn answering the four questions below. No interrupting. No criticizing others' answers.

1. Give this drawing a title.
2. What do you see in this drawing?
3. Which part of the drawing do you like the most? Why?
4. If you could change one thing, what would you change?

💡 If a child does not want to speak, do not force them. Parents may start by sharing their own answers first.

4. Common Family Patterns – Observation Table

What appears in the drawing	Possible family interaction pattern
Someone repeatedly draws over or covers others' marks	Someone is used to controlling and trusts others little
Someone draws only in a corner, very small marks	This person may feel "not very important"
Everyone draws their own part; nothing connects	Family members are busy with their own lives and lack collaboration
The drawing looks harmonious; colors match well	Family communication is relatively smooth
Turns flow smoothly; everyone waits for others to finish	Family is relatively democratic and equal
Someone rushes to draw; someone always draws last	There is a clear power difference

Note: These are not judgments of "good" or "bad." They are simply mirrors to help you see your usual patterns. **Seeing is already the beginning of healing.**

5. What If a Child Is Unwilling or Bored?

Option 1: Emoji Relay

Each person draws one small emoji per turn (smile, cry, blank face, etc.) to create a "family emotion map."

Option 2: Story Relay

Each person writes 1–2 words per turn to form a sentence or a short story.

Option 3: Set a fun theme

Examples: "Our family's alien adventure," "If I were a superhero," "The whole family turns into animals."

Option 4: Lower the barrier

The youngest child may draw "one dot" per turn – participation matters, not artistic skill.

6. Advanced Version: Role-Switch Relay

(For families willing to go deeper)

Rule change:

1. Family members take turns being the "director."
2. The director turns their back to the paper and directs others verbally (e.g., "Draw a circle in the top left corner").
3. The others must follow the instructions exactly – no questions, no objections.

Discussion after the activity:

When you were the director, did others understand you? How did that feel?

When you were the drawer, did you want to follow instructions? Did you feel like drawing something on your own?

This version directly reveals "who usually makes the decisions" and "whether others are willing to follow." It is recommended only for families with a certain level of trust.

7. One Time Is Enough? Here's a Suggestion

First time: Free drawing – no expectations.

One week later: Do it again. Notice whether the drawing style has changed.

One month later: Third drawing. Compare the three drawings and see whether your family's "interaction patterns" have quietly shifted.

If the drawings look similar each time and everyone feels uncomfortable, it may be worth considering whether this pattern needs to change.

8. The Most Important Sentence

This drawing has no "right" or "wrong." It is not a competition of who draws better.

Its meaning lies in this: **it allows you to see each other's presence without speaking.**

When a child sees that their line has been picked up by a parent... when a spouse notices that their partner has filled in the part they missed in the corner...

Those moments hold more healing power than any explanation.

Wishing you a joyful and engaged time together.

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Healing begins with seeing.#