

11 Simple Things You Can Do To Support Young Children's Social-Emotional Skills

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused months of stress, fear, and struggle for many families—and young and older children have felt the effects of these big changes just as much as their other family members. Paying close attention to the social-emotional development of children is so important. Below are some simple but effective things you can do to strengthen social-emotional skills and help children build confidence, cope with big emotions, and manage stress and worry. Read more at

<https://tinyurl.com/y6fzk5m2>

1. **Set small challenges for them**
2. **Use music to spark conversations about feelings**
3. **Communicate expectations clearly**
4. **Share appreciation at mealtimes**
5. **Use puppets to model good behavior**
6. **Read books about feelings together**
7. **Enlist peers as "coaches"**
8. **Give them a break**
9. **Try a relaxation exercise**
10. **Involve children as valued helpers**
11. **Have nighttime check-ins**



"When you can't control what's happening, challenge yourself to control the way you are responding to what is happening. That's where the power is."

Breastfeeding During COVID-19

We recommend talking with your healthcare provider or IBCLC about breastfeeding during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some information to consider:

- Breastfeeding has antibodies that protect infants from infection.
- Breastmilk is unlikely to give COVID-19 to infants.

If you or your child test positive for COVID-19, you can still meet your breastfeeding goals!

Additional recommendations can be found at:

- MDH: <https://tinyurl.com/y4l7nlcw>
- CDC: <https://tinyurl.com/uahnaoc>

In addition to your Public Health Nurse, WIC is a great resource for breastfeeding support. Outpatient lactation support may also be available through your clinic.

Lastly, remember that because of the danger of suffocation, masks should not be put on children younger than 2 years.



Free 24/7 support options to help quit nicotine, including smoking, vaping and chewing.
Available online, by phone, and by mail including:

- One-on-one coaching over the phone (available in over 200 languages)
- Text messaging
- Email support
- Quit medications - nicotine patches, gum, or lozenges - delivered to your door (ages 18+)

Quit Partner offers a **specialized program with extra support for pregnant and post-partum women**, in addition to programs for people living with mental illnesses or substance use disorders, American Indian communities (American Indian Quitline), and youth ages 13-17 (My Life, My Quit™).

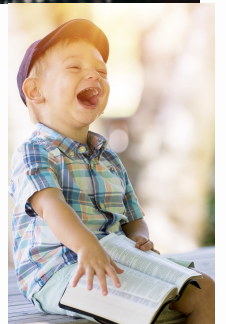
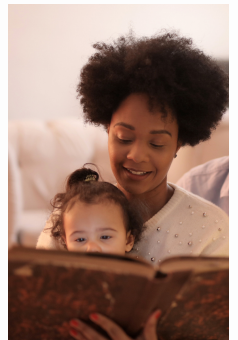
Using coaching and medication together can **more than double** a person's chance of successfully quitting.

For more information, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or visit www.QuitPartnerMN.com.

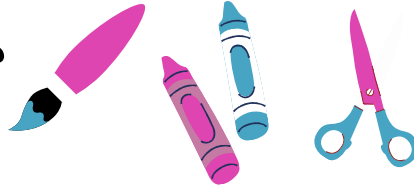
7 Tips to Make Story Time Fun for You and Your Little One

<https://tinyurl.com/y2qamhud>

- You don't have to follow the story exactly. Talk about the pictures, point out interesting shapes, or even make up your own ending. Just talking to your baby helps to develop their language skills
- Cuddle your child close. Make them feel safe and comfortable while you read together. Story time can be a great way to calm your child down and get them ready for bed.
- Be a little silly. Play around with different noises or use different voices while telling a story. This can help keep your child's attention and make story time more fun for everyone.
- Every little bit helps. Reading with your child is great for their development, whether it is for 10 minutes or an hour at a time.
- Follow along with the words. Help your child follow along with the story by pointing to each word you read from left to right.
- Let your child be the storyteller. Give them a shot at telling the story their own way, or take turns acting as different characters.
- Ask questions. Asking questions is a great way to see if your child understands what you read to them. Even if your child is too young to respond, questions are a good way to encourage two-way communication.



Craft Corner



My Love For You Will Never Melt

<https://tinyurl.com/y4ce6qZj>
Supplies: Paper, Paint, Marker

IDEA: You can make this activity into a card and send to family or friends during the holiday season



Winter in a Bag

<https://tinyurl.com/y2ydzkgz>

Supplies: Clear hair gel, glitter, plastic bag, marshmallows, beads, duct tape



Easy Sensory Play



A Little Pinch of Perfect.com



A Little Pinch of Perfect.com

IDEA: You can also pop the sensory bag in the fridge for a few minutes for a "cool hands" on experience!

Ice Sensory Bin

IDEA: Instead of coloring the water, make colorful ice cubes.

Red and blue ice cubes will melt and turn the water purple!



Supplies: large bowl or cake pan, slotted spoons, colander, food coloring, water/ice, measuring cups

<https://tinyurl.com/y344sxa7>



BECOMING FAMILY

We know change can be stressful – even changes related to becoming a parent or expanding a family.

Becoming Family – Free Online Support Groups for Parents

Family Wellness

Mondays, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Five sessions:

- Family dynamics and role changes
- Emotions and parenthood
- Self-care and stress management
- Highs and lows of parenthood
- Returning to work and the journey forward

Your Growing Baby

Thursdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Five sessions:

- Your child's job
- Learning about your baby
- Talking to your baby
- Your baby's brain
- A healthy home

Meet other parents,
get helpful resources –
without leaving
your home!



These two support groups are for parents of babies from the newborn stage up to 12 weeks of age. To register, call 320-656-7021.