

THINGS TO DO

A weekly newsletter from SEND Supported



ISSUE 6

27th April 2020

I hope everyone is keeping safe and well.

With all the tragic things that are happening in the world as a result of COVID-19, now might seem like an unusual time to talk about being positive. Yet staying positive is a core ingredient in the recipe for coping successfully in a crisis. Now, more than ever, is the time for us to be proactive about creating small moments of happiness in our day, given the findings in psychology research that positive emotions help us to undo the negative effects of stress. Here are a few practical things you can do to foster positive emotions:- notice and savour the moments of calm; strengthen your connections within family; look for the good in each other. They will help build up your energy stores and resilience so that you can better cope with the other aspects of your day that have been made more difficult.

If you would like to connect with other families of children or young people with SEND, please email enquiries@sensupported.com to join the weekly, online Parent 'Drop-ins' running daytime and evenings.

Take care, Joanna and team



EMOTIONAL WELLBEING - Kate Griffiths

[SEBDA](#) have some excellent ideas and resources available to both members and non-members on their website.

They currently have an excellent book available to [download on Kindle](#) for £1.99 with all profits being donated to the NHS. Dr Rob Long is the author of lots of books around SEMH which I constantly refer to and this is another one to add to the library! Whether you are a parent at home all day with your children or you are seeing very little of them due to being a key worker it offers lots of reassurance and ideas to try out.

In SEBDAs list of ideas and resources was a [Family Scrapbook](#). As they pointed out it is too easy for these difficult times to be remembered only for negative reasons. And we are over biased to remember bad news. So, it would be good to acknowledge and record positive events. During this time your children will be developing, learning new skills and changing. Recording the positive things you do will capture these changes;

- ✚ Keep a diary or make a scrap book with your children. Take some photos to include. Keep their drawings/paintings or things they made.



When we reflect on these times it will be really good to be able to say to your children, "yes it was a difficult time, but look at some of the good things we achieved, what happy memories we made together as a family 'in lockdown'."



AUTISM - Jules McLean

Colourful comic strips plus easy read communication boards and social stories using Widgit symbols to share with your children such as handwashing, being at home, feelings, school is different, why is school closed. Download from Jules' folder in [THINGS TO DO Issue 6- RESOURCES](#).

[Top 10 Tips](#) to Support Autism Families during the Pandemic plus excellent advice from Temple Grandin, PhD and Debra Moore, PhD, on managing your family during quarantine and how to best prepare for childcare in the event a parent suddenly becomes ill.

We all understand how play is an important element of child development but for those with an autism spectrum condition this can be challenging for many reasons. Here are some [general guidelines](#) to foster a successful outcome with any social play situation whilst at home.



LEARNING - Clair Cole

In this week's issue, I am returning to those important foundation skills and continuing to think in particular about memory.

Skill 3. Visual Memory

In Issue 3, I discussed the difficulties many children experience with remembering information that they hear. However, frequently the children I work with have good visual memory skills – they find it easier to remember what they see. Teachers and parents often describe their children as visual learners. So, let's make the most of these visual strengths to help compensate for any difficulties with remembering verbal information.

What you can do:

- Try out the 'Visualisation – objects in a room' strategy. This can really work well for some children to help them learn those sequences of facts that they find so hard eg: times tables and tricky spellings or maybe a timeline in History, the water cycle in Geography.
- It works by making visual links – children will need to associate the facts that they need to learn with familiar items (in this case objects in a room in the house).
- Play games to make those visual memory skills even better. For example, Kim's game, Pairs, Complete the picture, Grid patterns.

For detailed instructions about 'Visualisation – objects in a room' and more information about the games you can play, download Clair's folder from [THINGS TO DO Issue 6 - RESOURCES](#)



FAMILY & CHILDREN AT HOME - Clare Viney

In this edition of the [Family Information Newsletter](#) you will find more fun challenges for children provided by Family Learning, information on new wellness support for foster carers, safety tips on domestic abuse, advice for parents regarding medical appointments and treatments and much more.

Discovery education [Espresso's Daily Challenges](#) are available on social media channels!

[JKP Blog](#) explains Coronavirus to children accessibly, with text supported by stick figures to aid their understanding.'

Also see a [comic book](#) for children explaining what coronavirus is and how to remain safe through simple precautionary steps. Together with this [Children's Guide to Coronavirus](#) which aims to answer children's questions about COVID-19, tell children how to stay safe and protect other people and how to help them make the best of their time at home.



'[Future-learn](#) have highlighted 50 fun, free ways to keep busy during the lockdown here.'

For ideas promoting talk at home and in the garden look in Clare's folder in [THINGS TO DO Issue 6 - RESOURCES](#).

Are you ready for a challenge? [Dyson engineers](#) have designed these [downloadable challenge cards](#) specifically for children. Ideal for home or in the classroom, they encourage inquisitive young minds to get excited about engineering. Can you create a colourful underwater volcano or push a wooden skewer through a balloon without popping it to create a 'balloon kebab'? What happens when you plug a clock into a potato?



Heart-warming good news stories

Some of you may know the game Hungry Hippos, and the staff and residents at Bryn Celyn care home in Wales have been playing a life size version to help get through the outbreak! Watch the whole video [here](#).



Also, sports clothing company Rapha have teamed up with Ambitious about Autism, to raise money that they would usually receive through fundraising events. The challenge to cycle up your local hill 26 times (either solo or in a group) is open until the 3rd of May. Set up a fundraising page [here](#) or donate directly to [AaA](#), then share your story to @AmbitiousAutism and @rapha_uk using the hashtag #26ClimbsChallenge.

And finally...

We continue to welcome photos of the things you and your children have been doing at home (no children's faces in the photos please). Please email your photos to enquiries@sendsupported.com



Eden created her very own Sensory Garden. She planted 3 different bulbs in the crate & tall pots, she has a large lavender plant & a mini herb garden with mint & parsley.



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