

PARENT TALK

Tips of the week from Judge Baker Children's Center

We hear you. Getting through the week without school and our usual routines is just as tough for parents as it is for kids. **Judge Baker Children's Center** is here for you with helpful advice from our expert clinicians...and you, our parents!

Tip of the Week from our Clinician

“ Children need one hour of physical activity per day, which can enhance their mood, concentration, and self-esteem!

Consider taking 5-10-minute movement breaks throughout the day with your child. Crab walks, jumping jacks, bear crawls, hopscotch, and hula hooping are just a few ideas.”



Heather Halko, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Fellow

This is a challenging time for everyone. Please know that you don't need to do it alone. If you or your child is struggling, we encourage you to schedule an appointment or join a parent support group at our Center for Effective Child Therapy. Contact us [here](#).

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

STAYING ACTIVE DURING QUARANTINE

THE IMPORTANCE OF MOVEMENT

 Make being active a part of daily life	 Being active together makes exercise fun	 Physical activity helps maintain mental health	 Using energy increases your child's ability to focus and sit still later
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CREATIVE WAYS TO BE MORE ACTIVE

 Bubble Wrap Attack Lay bubble wrap on the floor and jump!	 Freeze Dance	 Animal Races Hop like a bunny, waddle like a duck	 Keep the Balloon Up Blow up some balloons and have your child keep it from touching the floor as long as possible	 Hot Potato Using a rolled up sock or soft ball, toss them around as fast as you can
 Follow the Leader Your child has to do whatever the leader does - get creative!	 Duck, Duck, Goose	 Hula Hooping	 Fly a Kite	 Tickle Tag Chase your child. When you catch them, it's tickle time!

Parent Tip of the Week

Caitlin C. is mom to 8-year-old Timothy. As an elementary school teacher, Caitlin is very creative when it comes to making sure Timothy is adjusting to this period at home. During an interview with *Parent Talk*, she emphasized the importance of unstructured play and creative learning throughout the day. "We are focusing on nature and outside time. We have collected **rocks and shells** and are **watching the birds**, and researching what we find." Caitlin said that outside time is currently Timothy's favorite activity. She really tries to find the fun in the day: from **playing family board games**, to bringing out the **tent** to the living room floor for **sleepover movie nights**.

Caitlin says she takes time to check in on Timothy's feelings. "We sit cross-legged on his floor, face to face and just talk. I ask him how he's doing, and remind him that it's OK to feel angry or upset. Then we hug and move on. In my opinion, **creating that space where kids can say what they feel** to their parents/caregivers is really important. Sometimes they aren't ready to talk, but we need to be there when they are ready or even just to **offer a hug**."

To keep up morale, Caitlin suggests creating a list of positive affirmations with your child and making a daily routine of reading three affirmations aloud together.

[Here are examples of positive affirmation lists for children!](#)

Thank you for these thoughtful tips, Caitlin!



build a tent



collect shells



bird watch

The best tips are the ones that work! We'd love to hear from you about what is working for your child and family. Please email your ideas to [Cassie Poirier](#) so we can share them with other parents and caregivers.

Resource Highlight

Please visit our [COVID-19 Resource Page for Families](#) for a list of articles, helpful tips and activities, and suggestions on how to talk to your child about COVID. Here's a resource tip for this week!

Tip of the week

Imaginative playtime can often be overlooked in chaotic or stressful times, but is great for reducing stress for kids and parents alike. It may be useful to encourage your children to use their imagination during unstructured play, and to encourage playfulness in moments that are otherwise mundane! Can we make chore time fun?

[Read this article from the American Psychological Association on the importance of playtime.](#)