



## AT-HOME ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AGES 5 -10

During unexpected events such as illness and death of someone important, natural disasters, and school closings, children need reassurance from a caring adult. They also require patience and attention, as well as someone to guide them as many may feel scared, overwhelmed, or restless with the sudden change in routines.

Here are some activities designed to keep children engaged, learning, and calm when they are at home from school. Make time to review the activity, ensure children have the materials they need, and gently encourage them to do it on their own after a certain amount of time has transpired with your help. Older children may not need as much guidance, but given the uncertainty of the situation, you may want to check in on them and ask them to show you what they've done.

Your child may look back on this time as a positive experience because of the time and attention they received from you.

**1. Read a funny book together.** Laughter is helpful and healthy. Have your child write a different ending or make a picture of a scene from the book. While it's best to have interactions with physical books and an attentive adult, reading a short children's book online during the day can be helpful. Some online programs will help with reading for younger children. Many books are available online from the library; if you don't have a library card, ask a relative or neighbor to borrow a book so your child has something new to read and enjoy.

**2. Write jokes, then try them out on others.** Nothing breaks down tension like a funny story, joke or riddle. Keep a book of the jokes so you can build your own collection.

**3. Draw a picture** - your own comic book or graphic novel, or a picture of something treasured by the family. For older children, create a Zentangle pattern. This link has some examples: <https://craftwhack.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/zentangleideas-1.pdf>

**4. Color!** Coloring can be very soothing to the mind and body and has been recognized as helpful as meditation. Use crayons, color pencils, or markers.

**5. Set up a treasure hunt.** Hide some items or notes in different places with hints about where to find the next item. These items don't have to be new, in fact, finding everyday items or toys can give new adventures to them. Then give a reward for finding all the items (rewards can be fruit, a new pen, or something else other than candy).

**6. Take a walk in nature.** Fresh air is healthy for the lungs, and being in nature reduces stress and is pleasing to our senses. Have children find things in different colors, shapes, sizes (twigs, leaves, pebbles, etc.) and create a collection. Take a small bag with you that you can sort through once you get home, and find a small box in which to store them.

**7. Count your way though the house.** Have children find 10 items of something (e.g., spoons), then 9 items, then 8 items, all the way to 1 item. Then have them add up all the items. Encourage children to create new groupings or categories (e.g., by color, by size, texture, etc.).

**Uplift Center for Grieving Children**  
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### Other Ideas:

- Prepare meals together
- Speak another language
- Practice spelling, geography, or math
- Do simple chores together
- Play a board game
- Write letters or cards to others