

May is Speech and Hearing Month!



Preschool Hotline Newsletter

Spring 2018 Edition

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• Hello Spring! HELLO Spring! • Can you hear us?

• As we eagerly await the real arrival of spring, have you been stuck inside too long and you don't know what to do with your little one? Do you feel that your toddler or preschooler is spending a bit too much time with electronic devices?

• Our electronic world continues to grow and the exposure and opportunity with electronic media is almost a guarantee for our little ones. So how can we make the most of this electronic world? Look ahead on our article on how to make the most of screen time. We even include some popular apps that you can play with your child.

• And don't underestimate the importance of parents in play. You are essential in their skill development and we give you

a few reasons just how you are so important.

And if you are looking for some screen-free ideas, screenfree.org has a list of 101 screen-free activities. We included a condensed version for you.

Remember to connect with your local Speech Language Pathologist if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's speech or language development. Or look for us under Public Health at www.northernhealth.ca

Cheers,

Your NH Community Speech & Language Team


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Making the Most of Screen Time

Screens are everywhere we look: libraries, schools and homes, and online media activities, are quite literally, at our fingertips all day long. Whether we like it or not, screens are a part of daily life. Here are some tips on how you can make the most out of your child's screen time.

1. Pick "Educational" Movies, Games, Shows and Apps

- Check Out: www.commonsensemedia.org to find independently rated educational content, organized by age range.
- Decide for yourself if a program or app is educational. Educational programming is typically: Slower paced (if the show is making you dizzy just watching it, then it's probably not educational), Encourages interaction (think of Sesame Street characters who tell the viewer to 'sing along' with them), Uses child friendly language that is repetitive and enticing to your child

2. Make a show, video or movie interactive, by talking with your child about what they are watching. Make comments and ask your child questions while they're watching.

- "What are you watching?"
- "Who's in this show?"
- "That salamander looks sad."
- "Where are they?"
- "Uh-oh, what happened?"
- What do you like about this show?

3. Use Apps with your child and talk about what you are doing

- Share the screen with your child.
- Take turns participating
- Narrate what it is you're doing.

Check out these Apps with your toddler: My Very Hungry Caterpillar, BusyShapes2, Metamorphabet, MyPlayHome

Try these Apps with your preschooler: TocaKitchen2, TocaNature, TocaLife: Farm



64 Screen Free Activities

At Home _____

1. Listen to the radio.
2. Paint a picture, a mural or a room.
3. Read a book. Read to someone else.
4. Write a letter to a friend or relative.
5. Make cookies, bread or jam and share with a neighbor.
6. Read magazines or newspapers. Swap them with friends.
7. Play cards.
8. Make crafts to give as gifts. Try a new craft.
9. Teach a child some of your favorite childhood games.
10. Make cards for holidays or birthdays.
11. Play chess, bridge, or checkers.
12. Have a cup of coffee and a conversation.
13. Repair or refinish a piece of furniture.
14. Wake up early and make pancakes.
15. Read a favorite poem. Read poems by poets new to you

Outdoors _____

16. Learn about native trees and flowers in your area.
17. Plan a picnic or barbecue.
18. Go bird watching. Learn the names of local birds.
19. Walk the dog. Wash the dog.
20. Plant a garden. Work in your garden.
21. Take a nature hike.

22. Feed fish or birds.
23. Watch the night sky through binoculars and identify different constellations. Observe the moon.
24. Learn to use a compass.
25. Take photographs and then organize them into an album.
26. Do yard work.
27. Go camping.
28. Climb a tree.
29. Watch a sunset; watch the sunrise with a friend.

Around Town _____

30. Visit the library. Borrow some books.
31. Visit a local bookstore.
32. Visit the zoo.
33. Attend a religious service.
34. Walk to work or school.
35. Attend a live sports event.
36. Look for treasures at a yard sale.
37. Try out for a play. Attend a play.
38. Collect recycling and drop it off at a recycling center.
39. Learn to play a musical instrument.

On the Move _____

40. Go swimming. Join a community swim team.
41. Start a community group that walks, runs or bikes.
42. Organize a game of touch football, baseball, or softball in the local park.
43. Go for a bicycle ride.
44. Play soccer, softball or volleyball.

45. Play Frisbee.

46. Workout.

With the Kids _____

47. Make paper bag costumes and have a parade.
48. Design a poster for Screen-Free Week.
49. Draw family portraits.
50. Build a fort in the living room and camp out.
51. Research your family history. Make a family tree.
52. Make a sign to tape across the TV during Screen-Free Week.
53. Play hopscotch, hide & seek, or freeze-tag.
54. Organize a neighborhood scavenger hunt.
55. Clean up or redecorate your room.
56. Write a play with friends. Perform it at a nursing home.
57. Go on a family trip or historical excursion.
58. Shoot hoops with friends. Play a round of H.O.R.S.E.
59. Make a friendship bracelet.
60. Create a cookbook with all your favorite recipes.
61. Bake cakes or cookies and invite friends for a tea party.
62. Construct a miniature boat and float it on water.
63. Write a letter to your grandparents. Make a special card.
64. Create sidewalk art with chalk.

The Power of Parents in Play



“Play with me Mommy?” Parents may answer this request with a “Maybe later” or “How about you turn on a show?” Parents lead busy lives with work, bill payments, laundry, dinner preparation etc. Finding time to play with your child can be difficult. Play may seem like “child’s work”, but when parents play with their children they can help develop many skills including:

- **Turn taking** – Having a conversation requires the ability to take turns. Play helps a child practise this skill. Parents can teach turn taking through activities such as building a tower together or taking turns driving a car down a ramp.
- **Learning new words** – As parents play with their children, they can model new words including concepts, action words and nouns. Parents can talk about what is happening and this provides children with a language-rich play environment.
- **Recognizing and labeling emotions** – Play creates an excellent environment to practice and act out emotions. By first practicing these emotions with their parents, a child is better prepared to respond to different emotions with their peers.
- **Introducing new ways to play** – Left to their own, a child may get “stuck” in a play routine. A parent can help by following their child’s lead and adding a new step to the play. For example, if a child is putting pretend food in a pot and stirring – a parent can show their child a new step of feeding the food to a doll or a stuffed animal.
- **Making Choices** – The ability to make choices helps children be independent. Through play, parents can model choices and encourage their child to respond. For example, “Should the car drive over the bridge or through the tunnel?”

There are many educational shows and apps dedicated to entertain and teach children, but there is no replacement for the power of parent interaction in play.