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Kindness Rocks!

Marcia Drover, Child & Youth Care Practitioner, HRCE SchoolsPlus

Brighten someone's day with a kindness rock. You will need to go on an adventure to find the coolest rock that you can paint. Then paint a base colour, you may need 2 coats to make it bright. When it dries, paint a picture or design and write a kind message, such as "You're Awesome" "Hope", "Be You", "Smile", etc.. Then go on another great adventure walk to find the perfect spot for your rock. When people walk by it they will smile!



Ways for Kids to Connect with Friends While Staying the Blazes Home!

Karen Spurr, Community Outreach Worker, HRCE SchoolsPlus

While kids are physically apart, how can they stay close in spirit?

- 1) **Arrange a virtual playtime.** Even young children can benefit from seeing their friends onscreen. It might look like show-and-tell, where they show their pets, favourite toys, or things they made at home. Each child may even play in their own home, and pop back to the screen to talk from time to time. It may be brief, or longer, and that's OK.
- 2) **Remember pen pals?** Children love sending and receiving letters. Or drawings. Or paper crafts. These can re-connect kids to the friends and relatives they can't be with right now. (And if your child wants to save every item forever... photos can be saved in a scrapbook or a time capsule, to look back on later.)
- 3) **Movie night, reading party, or games time.** With so many free apps, websites, and services to choose from, connecting online has never been easier. Kids can interact socially like they might in a school setting. And they can learn valuable skills when they plan activities, play games over Google Meet, and negotiate screen-time rules with parents.

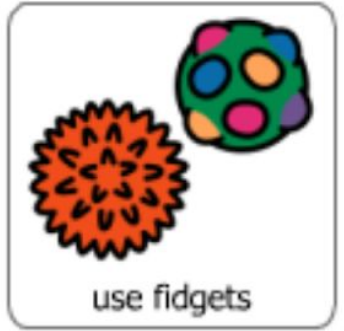
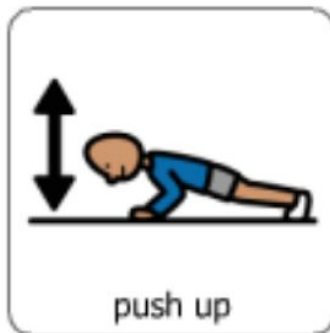


These ideas might be welcomed by our children, or they may be reluctant. Tell kids in advance to let them warm up to the idea, or set a schedule to give them something to look forward to ("we'll video call Aiden on Tuesdays and Bella on Thursdays"). And model what you would like them to do; most children are more likely to write a letter if they see you writing and mailing one. Whichever you choose, connections made and maintained during isolation will be valued by your children for years to come.

Adapted from <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/parenting/a31910863/coronavirus-help-kids-connect-to-friends/>

GET BACK TO GREEN!

Feeling down? Frustrated? Tired? Angry? Sad? Silly?
Use these activities to get back to green!*



Blue Zone: Sad, Sick, Tired, Bored

Green Zone: Happy, Calm, Focused

Yellow Zone: Excited, Worried, Frustrated

Red Zone: Angry, Out of control, Yelling

*"Get back to green" refers to using strategies to get back to being calm, focused, happy and ready to learn



I am not at school, but I need a place to breathe!

Carla Chambers, Child & Youth Care Practitioner, HRCE SchoolsPlus

Most classrooms across HRM provide a quiet place for students to go, to take a breath, to calm their minds, to settle their anger, to self-regulate. This spot looks different in every classroom but is the most important part of the classroom. It's where a child can go and determine whatever *they* need in that moment. Now, because of COVID-19, their home is their school, their play place, *and* their home. **If your child is struggling to cope with their feelings, having a space to go when they are frustrated can be a big help.**

Some ideas to make this happen at home:

- 1) **Talk to your children about what they want in their space.** They are familiar with “calm-down areas” and “quiet places” in their classrooms. They know what their teachers have put in these spaces. Some examples: stress ball, mindfulness bottle, play dough, a balloon, a Rubix cube, fidget toys, a stuffy, their favourite book, noise cancelling headphones, a colouring book.
- 2) **Make a fort:** Find an area of the house or apartment where the child will not be disturbed. Old sheets, pillows, and blankets are perfect for this. Make it cozy and let your child create it with you.
- 3) **Tell your child that this is a place to come when they are struggling with what might be going on in their lives right now.** School is not on, they're not seeing their friends, they may not want to do school work at home - or anything else. Whatever the struggle may be, this spot is for them to go and take a bit of time to breathe and relax, so they're better equipped to deal with the challenges of the day.

Ask your child if they'd like to make...

A stress ball: You will need 2 balloons and a handful of playdough. Cut one balloon at the neck of the balloon and then put the playdough in it. Cut the next balloon, but this time, leave *some* of the neck. Put the playdough-filled balloon in the empty balloon, and tie it off.

Mindfulness bottles:

Take any empty clear bottle (preferably a plastic one). Add any glitter you have or little items that may fit in the bottle - plastic beads, buttons, small rocks, etc. Then add some water and food coloring. And then you have it - a mindfulness bottle to call your own and help calm your mind.

Fidget toys: You may already have a fidget spinner, or you can make one. A key chain with beads on it works, or take a pipe cleaner and add beads. Some random items & pieces of toys can make great fidget toys, too... such as a small spring, velcro, silly putty, dinky cars, a smooth stone.



In our Community



Does your child love nature, building stuff, or figuring out how things work?

The **Discovery Centre** is your ticket to great online activities! Check out their new hands-on video workshops for grades primary to 9. There are livestream workshops, and also lots of videos of previous workshops. Each activity has a materials list (regular household supplies) so students can come to the activity prepared.

If you add to the fun by showing off your science on Flipgrid or social media, you will be entered to win a fabulous “Science at Home” prize pack! You can find all the science excitement at [Discovery at Home](#) or on the Discovery Centre’s Facebook page.



The virtual Big Sing is led by the dynamic, down-to-Earth crew of Jack Bennet, Caitlin Bowers and Racheal Delano. These Haligonians create beautiful harmonies and invite you to this singalong experience. There are now over nine hours of virtual sing-a-longs available, where they will teach harmonies and invite you to sing “wrong and strong” from the comfort of your own home, as they cover a collection of well-loved tunes. Join in the song at [The Big Sing Virtual Singalong Facebook page](#).

Did you know?

Research shows that singing is good for your mental and physical health.



The MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning empowers youth between the ages of 12-19 by connecting passion with purpose through the arts. Located in downtown Dartmouth, the MacPhee Centre has moved its programming online during COVID-19 and continues to enable youth to come together to experience some fantastic programming. Here are just some examples...

Painting, Let’s Sprout Clubhouse, Dungeons and Dragons, Reel Focus Filmmaking (Age 16-19), Creative Sketchbooking, Musical Theatre Singing, Spoken Word, AMP’d, Unity Charity, Homework Drop-in, Comedy & Improv and GSA.

Check out [MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning website](#) or [Facebook page](#) for all the details.

Community Health Teams (IWK and NSHA) are offering online wellness sessions via Zoom. Topics include *Mental Wellness, Food, Nutrition and Weight Management, Physical Activity and Parenting*. Check out the list of the many sessions available, and registration information on the [Community Health Teams'](#) website.



Nova Scotia has expanded the list of **COVID-19** symptoms.

If you have any ONE of the following symptoms, visit <https://811.novascotia.ca> to determine if you should call 811 for further assessment:

- fever (i.e. chills, sweats)
- cough or worsening of a previous cough
- sore throat
- headache
- shortness of breath
- muscle aches
- Sneezing
- nasal congestion/runny nose
- hoarse voice
- Diarrhea
- unusual fatigue
- loss of sense of smell or taste
- red, purple or blueish lesions on the feet, toes or fingers without clear cause

Warm Weather plus Sidewalk Chalk = Big Fun

Melissa Caines, Community Outreach Worker, HRCE SchoolsPlus

Thankfully the weather is finally getting warmer and we're able to get outside more often to play. It reminds me of the summers of my childhood when I spent countless perfectly happy days playing with nothing more than a patch of pavement and a few pieces of sidewalk chalk. If you have some chalk at home or can get to your local dollar store for a few pieces, then your children can share in the hours of fun. Just heading out and drawing with chalk (dry or wet) is enjoyable and there are many ways you can get creative. Make a self portrait by having someone trace you, and then filling yourself in. Create a family mural, or write inspirational or cheerful messages for your friends and neighbors. Many people are familiar with common sidewalk chalk games, such as [Hopscotch](#), [Four Square](#), and [Corners](#)... Recently some kids in HRM created a hopscotch with 400 squares! It stretched for two city blocks. There are also many lesser-known chalk games, such as:



Alphabet Hop is a great game to help younger children with literacy. Draw twenty-six squares or circles fairly close to one another, then add a letter of the alphabet to each. Kids take turns being the “caller” and call out letters for the others to jump to. For older children, call out a word, and have them spell it out.

Target Practice is simple to set up. Kids draw concentric circles with different colours of chalk on the pavement, adding point values to each circle. Find 5 small stones and toss those at the target. Try to get the highest score or reach a pre-set goal (hint: kids will be practicing their adding skills and not even know it!).

And of course everyone loves the classic game of **Twister**, so draw the Twister board on the pavement with at least four colours and shapes. Have someone call out instructions as to where children should place their right hands, right feet, left hands and left feet - while trying not to fall over. You can also add your own rules: Players must trumpet like elephants on blue squares, sing a song on yellow circles, or talk about someone you love on green squiggles.

There are so many great ways to play with sidewalk chalk. Give one or more of these a shot, or Google “sidewalk chalk games” for more ideas. Most importantly, have fun!

Do you have questions about COVID-19?

 @PublicHealthCZ
 www.facebook.com/HBEG.PH/

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 www.facebook.com/HBEG.PH/

We can help.
call: 902-481-5821
Toll Free: 1-800-430-9557
7 Days a week.

Are you unable to access food support from a food bank or meal program?

Feed Nova Scotia's COVID-19 Food Box program is a short-term initiative to provide home delivery of food to Nova Scotians who lack the means to access any other form of food support, largely because they can't leave their home and they don't have the funds, friends or family to help get food.

This program will launch on Monday, May 25.

If this sounds like your situation, please call 211 on weekdays between 8am and 8pm, starting on Monday, May 25, and they'll help determine if this program is a good fit.

Don't forget, most food banks and meal programs are still open with processes in place to safely serve Nova Scotians. 211 is there 24/7 to help you find a food bank or meal program.



HRCE SchoolsPlus offers:

- Confidential support for families and students
- Help with services & agencies
- Strategies for managing at home

*Parents & students can self-refer by text, phone, or email,
12 months a year.*

Auburn Family of Schools: Emma Pringle Boutilier
902 476 7651 | epringleboutilier@hrce.ca

Citadel Family of Schools: c/o Maura Donovan
902-471-6535 | mdonovan@hrce.ca

Cole Harbour Family of Schools: Jennifer Fougere
902-483-8367 | jfougere@hrce.ca

CP Allen Family of Schools: Melissa Puddicombe
902-471-2445 | mpuddicombe@hrce.ca

Dartmouth High Family of Schools: Bernice Arthur
902-497-3163 | barthur@hrce.ca

Duncan MacMillan School: Kylie Hicklenton
902-399-8321 | khicklenton@hrce.ca

Eastern Shore Family of Schools: Emma Pringle Boutilier
902 476 7651 | epringleboutilier@hrce.ca

Halifax West Family of Schools: Bonnie Pero
902-399-8314 | bpero@hrce.ca

Island View Family of Schools: Jennifer Fougere
902-483-8367 | jfougere@hrce.ca

J.L. Ilsley Family of Schools: Alicia Barrett
902-399-8317 | alicia.barrett@hrce.ca

Lockview Family of Schools: Kylie Hicklenton
902-399-8321 | khicklenton@hrce.ca

Millwood Family of Schools: Cathy Kasper
902-240-1148 | ckasper@hrce.ca

Musquodoboit Rural Family of Schools: Kylie Hicklenton
902-399-8321 | khicklenton@hrce.ca

Prince Andrew Family of Schools: Raytia Turney
902-399-8325 | rturney@hrce.ca

Sackville High Family of Schools: Cathy Kasper
902-240-1148 | ckasper@hrce.ca

Sir John A. Family of Schools: Melissa Puddicombe
902-471-2445 | mpuddicombe@hrce.ca

HRCE SchoolsPlus Leader: Maura Donovan
mdonovan@hrce.ca
902-471-6535



You don't have to do this alone.