

Parents = the Difference

****News Flash — Number 3****

Are you still breathing? Breathe more! What I am hearing from you is the first week the kids seemed to be doing okay, but now as we enter **week 3** boredom and restlessness are taking their tolls. I'm digging deep to come up with fun and engaging ways for you to pass time and teach at the same time. Remember hand clapping games? I've resurrected eleven of them. Depending on where you grew up, you may be familiar with them. If not try them. They can be a lot of fun. Your teachers will send out the parent/child activity calendar for April. I put it together with our environmental restrictions in mind. I'll also be putting together video about the value of the activity calendar soon. Stayed tuned! *Barbara Biermann, Early Childhood Social Worker (bbierma@schools.nyc.gov)*

The Fine Print (you may have missed)

When you signed up for parenting, I'm guessing you didn't read the fine print. **WARNING**—In 2020 parental duties will be intensified! Play therapist will be added to the list.

Your child's brain hasn't developed enough to comprehend the scope of what's happening in their world. What they know is they can't go to school; they can only see their teacher and friends on the computer; they can't go to the playground; everyone keeps washing their hands; and adults are nervous all the time!

How does your child make sense of this? **Play**. Play is the natural language of children and toys are their words. As a parent you can help your child begin to understand the changes by getting down on the floor and playing with them. Just 10 -15 minutes a day. Here is a template (as outlined by NYU Parent Corps):

F — follow their lead

U — you do what they do

N — narrate or say what you see and hear

When you follow your child's lead you play his way. You enter his world. Try to refrain from asking questions or offering ideas (really hard). Let your child be the guide. Giving him control over the direction of the play is empowering and builds mastery.

Narrating your child's play is a simple technique that might

feel awkward at first. As an example, narrating what you see—*"We are racing the cars. Yours is faster than mine."* Repeating what she says, *"Daddy, you are going to be the unicorn."* *"OK. I'm going to be the unicorn."* It is that simple. It's a play therapy technique known as 'tracking.' You are 'tracking' what she says and does. When you track, your child feels both heard and important. When you play with your child you create a safe place for them to figure out their complicated world.

And yet, doesn't it feel strange that as everything feels more complicated, the world seems to be slowing down. During this time of social isolation I'm beginning to feel I've been thrown out on a prairie or a desert island somewhere. Sure, we have the internet, Netflix, Disney channel, but technology by itself can't take away the sting of social isolation.

As a child, did you ever read *Little House on the Prairie*?

<https://youtu.be/90DGdtMnLOE>

Or *Swiss Family Robinson*?

https://www.littlefox.com/en/readers/contents_list/DP000586

Try watching these videos with your child. Both are tales of resilient children who not only survive, but thrive making the best of a world out of control.



Bring the sounds of your childhood to the living room. (click on the link)

Clapping Games

Clapping games may have part of your childhood. They continue to be very popular around the world, especially in the United Kingdom, Australia and Africa. Playing hand clapping games improves executive functioning (memory) and fine motor skills. So, slide back to your childhood and teach your child your favorites. Here is a list of a few I thought 4 and 5-year-olds could master with PRACTICE. They are listed in order of difficulty.



Pat-a-cake

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbVUfupbDyQ>

Nursery Rhymes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMeqJsEcF60>

Clapping Rhythm Lead by a Teacher

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ooQyCsV8xcM>

Clap-Clap Song with Paper

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HByXWgkMwk>

Barney's Clapping Game (TV show)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14SABodqXC8>

Peas Porridge Hot

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rQT2JiPBCK>

Mr. Roger and Ella Jenkins (TV show)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3xS5Q4RE_E

Miss Mary Mack

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hP9V0S51GVo>

Miss Mary Mack, Mack, Mack

All dressed in black, black, black

With silver buttons, buttons, buttons

All down her back, back, back.

She asked her mother, mother, mother

for fifty (or 15) cents, cents, cents

To see the elephants, elephants, elephants

Jump the fence, fence, fence.

They jumped so high, high, high

they reached the sky, sky, sky

And didn't (or never) come back, back, back

Till the 4th of July ly ly.

She asked her mother, mother, mother

For 5 cents more, more, more

To see the elephants, elephants, elephants

Jump the door, door, door.

They jumped to the flow flow flow

they stubbed their toe toe toe

and that was the end end end

of the elephant show show show.

Down, Down Baby (Sesame Street TV show)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5K-FpmUUc7U>

Down, down, baby

Down, down the roller coaster (*accompanied by the hand making a horizontal wave motion*)

Sweet, sweet, baby (*accompanied by both arms crossing the chest*)

I'll never let you go

Shimmy, Shimmy cocoa bop

Shimmy, Shimmy pow

Shimmy, Shimmy cocoa bop

Shimmy, Shimmy pow

Grandma, grandma sick in bed

She called the doctor and the doctor said

Let's get the rhythm of the head, ding dong (*rock the head to each side once in time with "ding-dong"*)

Let's get the rhythm of the head, ding dong (*rock the head to each side once in time with "ding-dong"*)

Let's get the rhythm of the hands (*followed by two hand claps*)

Let's get the rhythm of the hands (*followed by two hand claps*)

Let's get the rhythm of the feet (*stomp the right foot, then the left*)

Let's get the rhythm of the feet (*stomp the right foot, then the left*)

Let's get the rhythm of the hot dog (*place hands on hips and twirl*)

Let's get the rhythm of the hot dog (*place hands on hips and twirl*)

Put it all together and what do you get?

Ding dong (*accompanied by head rock*), (*followed by two claps*), (*followed by two stomps*), hot dog (*accompanied by hip twirl*)

Put it all backwards and what do you get?

Hot dog (*accompanied by hip twirl*), (*followed by two stomps*), (*followed by two claps*), ding dong (*accompanied by head rock*)

A terrific hand clapping game kids will love
but some parents might find a bit dark toward the end.

Sally Is A Baby

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAQAI-W--DQ>

Sally was a baby, a baby, a baby,
Sally was a baby, she went like this:
Wah wah!

Sally was a toddler, a toddler, a toddler,
Sally was a toddler, she went like this:
Wah Wah!
Suck My Thumb!

Sally was a child, a child, a child,
Sally was a child, she went like this:
Wah Wah!
Suck my Thumb!
Give me a piece of chewing gum!

Sally was a teenager, a teenager, a teenager,
Sally was a teenager, she went like this:
Wah Wah!
Suck my Thumb!
Give me a piece of chewing gum!
HUSH UP I'm on the phone!

Sally was a mother, a mother, a mother,
Sally was a mother, she went like this:
Wah Wah!
Suck my Thumb!
Give me a piece of chewing gum!
HUSH UP I'm on the phone!
Do this, do that!

Sally was a grandmother, a grandmother, a grand-
mother,
Sally was a grandmother, she went like this:
Wah Wah!
Suck my Thumb!
Give me a piece of chewing gum!
HUSH UP I'm on the phone!
Do this, do that!
Oh! My aching back!

Sally was dead, dead, dead,
Sally was dead, she went like this:
Wah Wah!
Suck my Thumb!
Give me a piece of chewing gum!
HUSH UP I'm on the phone!
Do this, do that!
Oh! My aching back!
kkkhhh

Sally was an angel, an angel, an angel,
Sally was an angel, she went like this:
Wah Wah!
Suck my Thumb!
Give me a piece of chewing gum!
HUSH UP I'm on the phone!
Do this, do that!
Oh! My aching back!
kkkhhh
Laaaaaaaaa!

Sally was a devil, a devil, a devil,
Sally was a devil, she went like this:
Wah Wah!
Suck my Thumb!
Give me a piece of chewing gum!
HUSH UP I'm on the phone!
Do this, do that!
Oh! My aching back!
kkkhhh
Laaaaaaaaa!
Rrrrrrr!

O Mochi Japanese clapping game

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3Y6olrKJ9I>

O-mochi
O tsuk-i-masho,
O-mochi
O tsuk-i-masho.

Pet-an-ko
Pet-an-ko,
Pet-an
Pet-an Pet-an
Pet-an-ko.

Ko-ne-te,
Ko-ne-te
Ko-ne-te
Ko-ne-te.

Ton ton ton,
Ton ton ton,
Ton ton ton ton ton ton ton.

(Omochio Tsukimash—we are going to make smashed rice.
Mochi—smashed rice
Petanko—sound of patting
Konete—sound of flattening
Ton ton ton—just a sound)

