

The Friendship Circle of Cleveland's  
Guide to  
**Remote  
Programming**



# To our Friendship Circle Families

It is a difficult time for all of us as we try to stay healthy and keep kids engaged at home. The Friendship Circle staff looks forward to serving your family again soon. Until then, please enjoy our guide to programming at home. May this be a time to spend together, making memories.

With support,

The Friendship Circle of Cleveland Program Team





# At-Home Activity Guide

The activities listed here were vetted by Friendship Circle staff, meaning that they were chosen with your child in mind. We hope you'll be able to find something fun to do together!

Please find activities sorted by type, using materials you are likely to have at home.

## Section 1: Activities with Tech

2: Reading

3: Arts & Crafts

4: STEM & Sensory

5: Cooking

6: Fun & Games

7: Recommendations



# Section 1: Tech-Based Activities

## ★ Send an eCard

Many sites offer free electronic greeting cards. No stamp required to send a “hello” to a loved one.

[123 Greetings](#)

[Punchbowl eCards](#)

[Greetings Island](#)

[World Wildlife Fund Animal eCards](#)

## ★ Send an eCard...for a really good cause

Nationwide Children’s Hospital lets you design your own message to send to a child staying in the hospital.

## ★ Learn the basics of American Sign Language

Imagine learning the foundation of a language you can use to connect with new friends! One *million* people use American Sign Language (ASL) as their main communication method.

### ★ Check out the Signing Savvy app for a video Sign of the Day:

[Download for iPhone](#)

[Download for Android](#)

[Visit the Signing Savvy Website](#)

### ★ Watch videos on YouTube:

[25 Basic ASL Signs For Beginners | Learn ASL American Sign Language](#)

[Sign the Alphabet](#)

[Learn American Sign Language: Beginner conversation](#)

[Learn Sign Language: Lesson 01 \(ASL\)](#)

[How to learn sign language: 9 apps and resources to teach yourself ASL](#)



- ★ Ask each child to choose a topic they want to learn more about. Help them to research the topic for 15 minutes each day.
- ★ Answer pet-themed questions to earn kibble for pets in need: [FreeKibble.com](https://FreeKibble.com)
- ★ Offer games with educational value. Check out a comprehensive list of FREE educational websites [here](#).
- ★ Take a virtual trip.
  - [Tour Incredible Museums](#)
  - [Visit the Rainforest](#)
  - [See Yellowstone National Park](#)
  - [Travel to Paris](#)
  - [Go on an African Safari](#)
  - [Walk San Diego Zoo](#)
  - [Ride a Roller Coaster](#)
- ★ Try mindfulness. There are many guided meditation videos made for kids (like [these](#)). Mindfulness is a great downtime activity (especially before nap or bedtime!)
- ★ Get moving! YouTube search your child's favorite characters and the key words "dance" or "fitness." Here are some kid-approved videos:
  - [Disney's FROZEN: Make Your Move](#)
  - [Disney's FROZEN: Yoga Adventure](#)
  - [Disney's MOANA: Yoga Adventure](#)
  - [Disney's TROLLS: Can't Stop the Feeling Dance](#)
- ★ Make a free [GoNoodle account](#) and follow along to all their fun movement-based videos!



## Section 2: Reading

- ★ Challenge your family to gather (and read) every book in the house!
- ★ Then decide whether it's time to donate any forgotten books to [Kids' Book Bank](#), a [Little Free Library](#), or your local library.
- ★ Make a Reading Cave--set up a 'tent' with chairs and blankets. Include flashlights, books, and pillows!
- ★ Pick a theme each day or week and read as many books on the topic as you can! You can even do related crafts and cooking. Here are some themes to get you thinking:
  - [Spring Celebration](#)
  - [All Things Dr. Seuss](#)
  - [Duck Storytime](#)
  - [Colors and Rainbows](#)
  - [STEM Books](#)
- ★ Even children who can read independently enjoy being read to. Choose a book (or series) the family can take turns reading aloud, like [these](#).
- ★ Though libraries are restricting hours and locations, their digital services are available around the clock:
  - [Flipster](#) – Download digital versions of your favorite magazines.
  - [Hoopla](#) – Stream or download 200,000+ commercial-free albums.
  - [Kanopy](#) – 30,000+ streaming videos, including documentaries, film fest favorites, classics and The Great Courses.
  - [Kanopy Kids](#) – Watch Sesame Street, Daniel Tiger and storytime books.
  - [OverDrive Prime Picks](#) – Your most-wanted eBook titles with no holds and no renewals.
  - [TumbleBooks](#) – Animated, talking picture books



## Section 3: Arts & Crafts

- ★ Designate an “art studio” with an old tablecloth, paper towels, and wipes for impromptu creativity.
- ★ Make greeting cards for friends and family.
- ★ Or make cards for people who could use some cheer:  
[cardsforhospitalizedkids.com](http://cardsforhospitalizedkids.com)  
[Cardsforkidz.com](http://Cardsforkidz.com)  
[SendASmileToday.com](http://SendASmileToday.com)  
[lettersproject.org](http://lettersproject.org)
- ★ Sew a fidget quilt like [this](#). Younger kids can choose the items to use on the blanket; older kids can learn how to sew themselves!
- ★ Decorate a duffel bag for a child in foster care:  
[TogetherWeRise.com](http://TogetherWeRise.com)
- ★ Make puppets out of brown paper bags or mismatched socks and put on a puppet show!
- ★ Paint a picture using edible paints from your very own fridge! While messy, painting with condiments, [yogurt](#) or whipped topping is a great alternative for kids that often put inedible items in their mouth.
- ★ Log onto [Pinterest](#) and search for your child’s developmental stage and specific skills you want to target. Thousands of projects will appear at your fingertips.



## Section 4: STEM & Sensory

### ★ Exploring Colors with Baking Soda and Vinegar

#### Materials

- ☐ Tray
- ☐ Baking soda
- ☐ White vinegar
- ☐ Containers to hold the colored vinegar (like ice cube trays.)
- ☐ Pipettes, droppers, or even teaspoons
- ☐ Liquid watercolors or food coloring

1. Find a rimmed cookie sheet or similar tray.
2. Fill the tray with baking soda.
3. Fill an ice cube tray (or other container) with vinegar. Add food coloring to cups so there are a variety of colors.
4. Use a pipette or dropper to place a few drops of the colored vinegar onto the tray of baking soda. Watch what happens!

### ★ Painting with Colored Shaving Cream

#### Materials

- ☐ Muffin Tin or small bowls
  - ☐ Shaving Cream
  - ☐ Food coloring or liquid watercolors
  - ☐ Paint brush (optional. It's always fun to finger paint!)
1. Spray shaving cream into each spot of the muffin tin or into small bowls.
  2. Add 1-2 drops of food coloring to each section and mix well.
  3. Use your new paints to paint a masterpiece!
  4. You can paint on paper or, for extra fun, in the bathtub! (The shaving cream will rinse right off.)



## ★ Make Your Own Play-Doh

### Materials

- ☐ Large mixing bowl
- ☐ 1 cup water
- ☐ 4 cups flour
- ☐ 2 to 4 tablespoons cooking oil
- ☐ 1 1/2 cups salt
- ☐ Food coloring
- ☐ Glitter (optional)

1. Pour the water into a large mixing bowl.
2. Add the food coloring and stir well.
3. Add the flour and salt.
4. Add 2 to 4 tablespoons of oil. Add more oil if the mix seems dry.
5. Add glitter, if using.
6. Knead the ingredients together until a soft dough is formed.

To store the dough, use plastic bags or a plastic container.

## ★ Sensory Bottle

### Materials

- ☐ An empty water bottle
- ☐ Clear Elmer's glue or shampoo or corn syrup
- ☐ Room temperature water
- ☐ Beads, sequins, glitter, stickers, or other lightweight add-ins

1. Remove the label and clean the inside or outside of the bottle.
2. Fill the bottle about 3/4 of the way up with room temperature water.
3. Slowly pour the glue, shampoo, or syrup into the bottle. Close the lid and shake.
4. Add your mix-ins and shake it up!



5. When you're happy with your bottle, drizzle glue inside the cap and seal the bottle shut.

## Simple Slime

### Materials

- ☐ (4-ounce) bottles washable school glue, such as Elmer's
  - ☐ 1 to 2 drops. liquid food coloring (optional)
  - ☐ glitter (optional)
  - ☐ baking soda
  - ☐ 2 to 3 tablespoons. saline solution (i.e., contact lens solution)
1. Color the glue (optional): Pour the glue into a medium bowl. Stir in the food coloring and glitter, if desired.
  2. Add the baking soda to the glue mixture and stir until smooth.
  3. Pour in 2 tablespoons of the contact lens solution and stir slowly. The mixture should begin to harden, becoming stringy.
  4. Continue mixing slowly until a ball of slime forms.
  5. Knead until smooth. If the slime is too slimy, work in another 1/2 tablespoon of contact lens solution as needed. Once mixed, you can play with the slime immediately or store for future play.

### Add more fun to your slime:

*Polka-Dot Slime:* Fold 10 to 15 soft pom-poms into clear slime (no coloring, no glitter)

*Fluffy Slime:* Mix shaving cream into the recipe.

*Scented Slime:* Mix in vanilla extract, essential oils, or even Kool-Aid powder for a delicious scent.

*Cut-and-Measure Slime:* Provide your kids with a metal or plastic ruler and kid-safe scissors. See who can stretch their slime the furthest. Or practice counting and cut the slime into 1 inch pieces.



*Hidden Figures:* Fold small figures or cars into the slime and ask your children to find them.

- ★ Make your own sensory bin--all you need is a big container and some [ideas](#).

## Section 5: Cooking

- ★ Choose an all-day activity, like making bread or preparing cutout cookies. Let the kids guess what steps come next in the recipe.
- ★ Cut up a variety of fresh fruit and veggies and encourage kids to make artwork on their plates:



- ★ Have a pizza party--use frozen pizza or make your own dough (sliced bagels, English muffins, or French bread also works!). Everyone can spread sauce on their crust, sprinkle cheese, and choose their own toppings.
- ★ Find a ready-made product (i.e., a box mix or “just add water” recipe). Even the youngest kids can make it “all by themselves!”
- ★ Choose an assortment of rarely-used ingredients from your kitchen and challenge your kids to make something delicious.



- ★ Make smoothies! All you need is a blender, some ice, bananas, and juice or milk. Add in favorite fruits, chocolate chips, sprinkles, or even sneak some veggies in (lettuce, carrots, and kale blend well).
- ★ Make sherbert--follow the smoothie guidelines above, but omit the liquid and use more ice. It will be the texture of soft-serve ice cream!
- ★ Turn fruit into a sweet treat! Make [apple dippers](#), [banana pops](#), or [fruit donuts](#).
- ★ For easier prep, just make a tray of [frozen yogurt bark](#).
- ★ Or keep it simple and serve food a different way: freeze grapes on a cookie sheet, thread fruit and veggies on a [skewer](#), or use fancy dishes for serving.

★ Kid-Friendly Ice Cream

Materials

- ☐ One gallon sized baggie
  - ☐ One quart or sandwich sized baggie
  - ☐ Ice
  - ☐ 1/2 cup rock salt
  - ☐ 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream or milk
  - ☐ 1 tablespoon sugar
  - ☐ Flavor: a few drops of vanilla or a squirt of chocolate sauce (optional)
1. Place the cream, sugar, and any flavoring you're using into the smaller baggie. Seal it tightly and be sure there are no leaks.
  2. Fill the large baggie about a third of the way with ice and pour in the salt.
  3. Place the smaller baggie inside the larger one. Add a bit more ice (so the bag is about 2/3 full), and seal the large baggie with both the small baggie and ice inside.
  4. Use your hands to move the baggie around continuously. Check the ingredients occasionally to see if the mixture resembles ice cream.



5. Your ice cream should be done in about 20-25 minutes. Enjoy!

## Section 6: Fun & Games

- ★ Start with the classics: hide and seek, iSpy, Duck Duck Goose, red light/green light, Simon Says, and Follow the Leader.
- ★ Have lots of races (running, skipping, jumping, hopping on one foot, crabwalk, walking backwards, etc.)
- ★ Have a dance party with your child's favorite music or make up a fun dance with your child to their favorite song
- ★ Play get-to-know you games as a family:

### Would You Rather

Players take turns posing a this-or-that question to the group; each person gives their answer. It can be as silly (*"Would you rather be able to jump like a kangaroo or hold your breath like a whale?"*) or as serious (*"Would you rather have lots of okay friends or one best friend?"*) as you want. (If you need some help coming up with questions, find a list like [this](#).)

### Never Have I Ever

Hold out 5 fingers (well, 4 and your thumb) Go around the circle and one at a time, each person announces something that they have never done, beginning the sentence with the phrase "Never have I ever..." (example: "Never have I ever been to California.") For each statement that is said, all the other players drop a finger if they have done that statement. (So, if three other people have been to California, those three people must put down a finger, leaving them with 4 fingers.) The goal is to stay in the game the longest (to be the last person with fingers remaining).

### Two Truths And A Tale



Each person must make three statements about themselves, one of which isn't true. (*For example: My teacher's name is Mrs. Brown, my favorite color is yellow, and my favorite food is pizza.*) Once one person makes their statements, the rest of the group must guess, or vote on, which statement is the tale.

- ★ Play every board game in the house--then vote on your favorites and donate the rest.
- ★ Gather any cardboard boxes you have in the house and line them up. Kids can create a 'clubhouse' for hours of fun.
- ★ Turn off all the lights and have a Shadow Show with a flashlight. How many shapes can you make with your hands?



- ★ Turn household tasks into competitions: who can wash the most dishes in ten seconds? Who can fold the neatest stack of laundry? Matching socks can be a game of Memory (where in the pile is that striped one?!).
- ★ Place a long line of tape on the floor and challenge kids to walk it like a balance beam.
- ★ Set up ten empty water bottles or soda cans and "bowl" with a tennis ball.
- ★ Have a sock toss! This is like basketball inside the house, except you use socks instead of a ball and clothes hamper instead of the basket.



- ★ Host a fashion show, with music and a photographer (Mom or Dad with a cell phone!). Kids can model outfits from their closet and box up any outgrown clothes for charity.

## Section 7: Tools & Recommendations

This can be an unsettling time for children as their routine is interrupted for unprecedented reasons. Try reading a [social story](#) to explain the changes. It's also helpful to uphold routine and keep things consistent for your child. They may feel better when presented with a daily schedule, like this one:

Before 9:00am	Wake up	Eat breakfast, make your bed, get dressed, put PJ's in laundry
9:00-10:00	Morning walk	Family walk with the dog Yoga if it's raining
10:00-11:00	Academic time	NO ELECTRONICS Sudoku books, flash cards, study guide, Journal
11:00-12:00	Creative time	Legos, magnatiles, drawing, crafting, play music, cook or bake, etc
12:00	Lunch	
12:30PM	Chore time	A - wipe all kitchen table and chairs. B - wipe all door handles, light switches, and desk tops. C - Wipe both bathrooms - sinks and toilets
1:00-2:30	Quiet time	Reading, puzzles, nap
2:30-4:00	Academic time	ELECTRONICS OK Ipad games, Prodigy, Educational show
4:00-5:00	Afternoon fresh air	Bikes, Walk the dog, play outside
5:00-6:00	Dinner	
6:00-8:00	Free TV time	Kid showers x3
8:00	Bedtime	All kids
9:00PM	Bedtime	All kids who follow the daily schedule & don't fight





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- Create Routines

Our children thrive on routine. Consider keeping their regular bedtime and morning routines, sitting down for lunch at the same time as they do at school, and writing out a daily schedule so that they know the plan for the day. Keeping these small things consistent can help our kids to feel regulated, calm and make a potentially scary situation feel much more predictable.

- Request Work from Classroom Teachers

Some teachers will be sending home classwork to keep children engaged while they are out of the classroom. Make sure to request passwords to online learning sites used at school, have access to books at an appropriate reading level, and ask about sites that provide printable worksheets.

- Schedule Recess/Playtime

While home is often seen as a place to relax and have fun, scheduling recess or play/downtime may help kids to feel like there is more of a routine. An average day at elementary schools fluctuates between time spent on learning, time to process and reflect, and time to have some fun. With an extended stay at home, it may help to touch on all of these activities. Scheduled recess allows for a child to predict when they will have a break to move their bodies and decompress.

- Use Screens Wisely

Many parents will no doubt be working from home and have significant to-do lists of their own. While watching movies and favorite TV shows is likely an inevitable – and in many ways beneficial – tool to pass the time,



consider exploring some more educational screen-based options as part of your child's day. Resources such as National Geographic Kids, [PBSKIDS.org](http://PBSKIDS.org), [ScienceDaily.com](http://ScienceDaily.com), [educationworld.com](http://educationworld.com), TIME For Kids, Smithsonian Tween Tribune, among others can help to provide more academic content, including Social Studies, Science, Current Events and more. [Commonsensemedia.org](http://Commonsensemedia.org) is also a great resource for finding age appropriate options.

- Move Your Body

While getting outside for some fresh air is the ideal way for children to move their bodies, this may not be an option. Thankfully, there are some creative ways to make sure our kids get in time for gross motor movement. Consider options such as GoNoodle.com, Cosmickids.com and Gaia.com for whole body movement and yoga videos. If you are looking for options other than video-based activities, consider building a pillow fort, keeping balloons off of the ground, having a dance party or setting up a home-made obstacle course.

- Bolster Life Skills Education

Consider spending this time teaching some skills in the home: have kids help with the process of doing a whole load of laundry from start to finish, work through a recipe for dinner together or clean surfaces around the house while explaining how to safely use different cleaning products. All of these experiences help a child to understand their future role as independent adults.

- Work on the Broader Executive Functioning (EF) Skills

EF includes skills such as problem solving, time management, goal setting and organization. Provide sorting activities, have a child create their own schedule, set a daily goal, practice telling time or play some problem-solving games such as Heads-up, Charades or Guess Who.