

Suggestions for parents in the COVID-19 emergency - March 2020



At this particular moment, that we are all called to live with great responsibility, we want to support you and your children by giving you small educational and playful suggestions:

- maintain the daily routines and regular rhythms (maintain as much as possible the usual routines related to the time of waking up, meals, bedtime, etc.)
- build a calendar of the week through images to give greater predictability and plan routines and games (timers and hourglasses may be useful to quantify time)
- keep in mind that anything predictable is easier to accept
- try, as far as possible, to focus on the "here and now"
- involve your children as much as possible in the activities you are used to doing at home (setting the table, dividing the laundry by colour, hanging the laundry, kneading the pizza dough)

- encourage virtual contact with people connected to you and the child on an emotional level
- try to explain to the child, as far as possible, what is happening at this particular time
- establish a few rules to maintain during the day (with visual aids)
- intersperse moments of structured activity with the adult and moments of free play chosen by the child
- build games with inexpensive and easily available material in the home environment
- limit the time in front of the TV, Tablet and Smartphone (for children under 5 years old, it would be recommended not more than 1 hour per day)
- control the access to electronic devices
- seize and write down a positive moment/experience during the week that you can keep in order to remember it at a later time (for example you can use an empty jar to label as "THANK YOU jar" where you can collect on cards the most significant moment of the week)
- you can document the moments spent together through photos or videos that you can watch with your children and send to us by e-mail



With the hope that everything will be alright, we are near you even though far away!

Game proposals, divided by areas of development, for the children that we accompany in psychomotor therapy

Praxic motor area

- crawl
- jump
- roll
- play with the ball
- thread beads or pasta
- follow a track with the train
- experiment with various materials and textures
- use finger colours
- draw in salt or sand
- model the playdough
- make simple or wooden puzzles
- attach and detach
- roll up a ball of threads
- make simple constructions with Lego
- close and open containers
- unscrew
- play with cloths pegs
- cut fruit or soft things with a knife with a blunt blade
- listen to music (move/dance and stop when the music stops)
- sing or listen to songs associated with motor gestures



Area of Language and communication



Support the socio-communicative aspects during all the game activities.

Here are some examples:

- verbalize sounds (brum-brum, choo choo, toc-toc, bum)
- verbalize words or approximations of words associated with the playing context
- give simple commands to the child (give me, sit down, wait, come here, stop, no)
- flip through simple booklets (ask questions Who?, What?, Where?)
- make games with facial expressions
- encourage verbal understanding by handing over everyday objects (sponge, spoon, glass, pencil)
- make body part recognition games

Suggestions for the social-relational area



- take notes of games/activities or objects which are preferred by your child so that those can be presented to him in moments of relaxing and which will increase your child's attention towards you
- use social-sensorial routines (peek-a-boo, tickling, fly-fly, songs and nursery games, clap your hands) to increase smiles and laughter in your child
- take little breaks and wait for the clue/signal (signs, gesture, eye contact, vocalisations) which are inviting you to continue or terminate an activity
- favour face-to-face eye-contact putting yourself at the child's level
- emphasize your reactions, facial expressions and gestures
- imitate your child's gestures and adequate verbal productions (la-la-la, animal sounds, sounds)
- comment on your child's actions or activities in a simple language
- incentivise the gesture to point at things if your child needs something that you can place on a shelf that is visible but not reachable for the child
- favour the finger pointing to explicit the choice between two objects, two snacks or two drinks
- encourage the gesture of "give me" (open hand of the child to get something)
- focus the attention on little abilities and reinforce immediately successes
- understand the child's interests and focus on them

Area of playing



- make body games
- make games of sensorial perception (caress your child with different types of material: soft, hard, rough, smooth)
- propose structured games (fill and empty, associate colours, associate images, categorize objects, puzzles, games with alternation of turns)
- propose cause-effect games (e.g.: spinning top, musical toys)
- encourage functional games with objects on the child himself or on a doll (brush, spoon, cup, toothbrush, phone)
- favour symbolical games (Lego, Playmobil, different characters the child can impersonate)
- favour through the game the expression of emotions and lived experiences
- support the child in the construction and planification of game sequences
- diversify game sequences and game themes (pretend to be: policeman, fireman, superhero, doctor, princess, family games)
- board games with rules (memory, snakes and ladders, games with cards, Lottino, ludo)

Area of the Autonomies



- try as much as possible to maintain the things the child has learned in this period (dress, undress, brushing his teeth, washing his hands) attempt to let the child try and experiment on his own
- use images in sequence of the various steps of the activities to carry out
- maintain the routine of the autonomies

Area of the emotions

emotions



- accept and verbalise each one of your child's emotions
- understand together how to handle them the best
- read booklets related to the experienced emotions (if you have them at home or search for material on the Internet)
- verbalize also your emotions to make your child more aware of them
- do not worry if the child is bored, this often leads to creativity

As a parent, select between the described activities the ones, which you consider most useful and significant for your child, adapting them to the therapeutical plan that you have in your possession or asking advice to your child's therapist.

We will be available to the families for further support or for other questions. You can also contact your child's referring psychologist for psychological support.



Elaborated by:

Dott.ssa Aio Monica

Dott.ssa Solimine Giuseppina

RECOMMENDED LITERATURE:

- Sally J. Rogers, Geraldine Dawson & Laurie A. Vismara – An Early Start for Your Child with Autism: using everyday activities to help kids connect, communicate and learn, Guilford Press
- Articolo "Scuola e Famiglie in tempi di Coronavirus" dott.ssa Mammarella, Ordine degli Psicologi del Veneto
- C. Xaiz e E. Micheli - Gioco e Interazione sociale nell'autismo, Ed. Erickson
- R. Militerni – Lo sviluppo Neuropsichico Ed. Ildeson Gnocchi
- E. Berti, F. Comunello – Corpo e mente in Psicomotricità, Ed. Erikson
- C. Ambrosini, S. Pellegatta – Il gioco nello sviluppo e nella Terapia Psicomotoria Ed. Erikson
- P. Howlin, S. Baron- Cohen e Julie Hadwin – Teoria della mente e autismo Ed. Erikson

LINKS:

www.anupitnpee.it

www.metacom-symbole.de