



10 key points to care for and entertain children by playing during quarantine

María Costa and Miriam Morante, *Childhood and Play Experts, AIJU.*
Marie Eve Rougeot, *CEO Famosa.*

This is a guide to support families during the current period, when they are to remain at home. A document with some recommendations to help children (and even their parents or caregivers) to live this experience in the best possible way, based on the premise that play is essential for their mental and physical well-being.



**Understanding helps
to be more relaxed**

Explain through playing.

- When things are better understood, anxiety is lowered. We should explain to the children what is happening, adapting the message to the age.
- It would be better to prevent them from seeing alarming news, filtering the information for them.
- Through play and with toys, you can help explain the situation. For example, with action figures, dolls, stuffed animals or puppets, the reality of what are living can be represented in a way that explains and represents why we are home and why we cannot go out, which is a temporary thing, that the doctors and nurses are helping many people, et cetera.

- Children are used to having a routine, something that helps them better understand their day to day. Having a similar structure every day helps to achieve a certain degree of peace of mind.
- This strategy helps both children and adults to reduce their frustration, as they won't create expectations or wishes that will not be fulfilled.
- For young children, visual routine images can be created.
- When determining activity routines, there should be a combination of active activities with other more sedentary ones, avoiding, for example, spending too much time in front of a screen.
- It is important to prioritize play time, most of a child's day to day should be focused on playing in any of its modalities (as a family, alone, ...), with or without toys.

Create a routine

*Play, the main
activity of the
daily routine.*





3

Offer some control and certain responsibilities

We choose and the tasks become games.

- In a situation where there is so much uncertainty, children will feel better if they have some control. We should let them be able to choose certain things.
- Depending on the age of the child, assemblies can be held (like in school!), in which they can decide what activities are carried out within the established routine.
- It is positive for children to have certain responsibilities, appropriate to their age. For example, setting the table, tidying up their room, etc. These tasks can be presented as games. For example, to propose competitions (to see who picks everything up first).
- Think about everything they can do on their own: prepare some food such as their own snacks, choose their clothes (they can be fancy and funny if they like!), etc.

- Not neglecting daily hygiene is relevant.
- We must teach them to take precautionary measures: wash their hands well, sneeze into their elbow, etc. Toys can be used to explain what and how to do it. For example, washing the hands of a doll while saying goodbye to viruses.
- Hygiene moments can also be playful moments. For example, brushing their teeth while listening to a song, the bathtub, and even the shower, offers a differential entertainment area that will be beneficial to them from different perspectives.

4



Hygiene and well-being

Being clean is also fun.

Novelty

5

The new attracts and entertains a while longer.



- Children will get bored with their toys (and everything). The type of games they play every day can be varied.
- One strategy is to keep toys away, and take them out little by little, rotating them, so that they do not always have the same things within reach.
- Make a special purchase for toys (on-line). Perhaps a toy they receive during these dates may even have a special meaning for the rest of their lives.
- Make a specific change in routines. For example, "Today is a costume party!".
- Change activities from one room to another. For example, have a small food picnic, or snack on the balcony or terrace, or if you do not have one, even in a room where you do not usually eat.
- Use household furniture to generate changing play scenarios with which to use toys.
- Carry out various activities on a terrace or even a balcony, go outside in these areas as much as possible.



6

Release energy

Playing on the move is essential.

- Children need to be active and move every day.
- Determine moments, during the daily routine, for physical exercise. For example, playing music and dancing, jumping, stretching, gymnastic tables, yoga, etc.
- Doing these exercises with the whole family together will be beneficial for everyone.
- If you have poufs, large inflatable toys or pillows, play crashing, or allow children to hit them hard. Many kids need this type of strong physical contact to vent energy.
- Drag them or encourage them to drag things.

- Performing activities that provide sensory stimulation will help children feel better.
- Use games and toys with textures to promote the tactile sense. For example, finding toys inside a container full of rice, walking barefoot on various textures, guessing the food you put in their mouth with their eyes closed,...
- Play games based on smelling things.
- Play music and musical instruments. Make rhythms with household objects.

Get sensory stimulation

Playing activating the senses.

7



Continue their education

Enhance learning and creativity through play.

8

- Even if there is no school, they can still learn things every day.
- Have them read and read to them.
- Through any type of play children learn certain concepts and skills. We can determine games to enhance age-specific learning objectives. For example, games in which they have to count, organize by colors, the game of 'I Spy' from different windows of the house, etc.
- Boost children's innate creativity by offering homemade materials, packaging, scraps, bottles, etc. with which they can do things. You have to be creative looking for options around us inside the house.



Sense unity and gratitude

Be thankful and feeling united is fun.

- This is an incredible occasion to show children actions of gratitude.
- Depending on the age of the child, we can explain how we are becoming more united as a country and even as citizens of the world, or how we are sacrificing part of our liberties for the common good.
- The sense of unity can be fostered through cooperative games, in which siblings or even the whole family plays pursuing the same goals.
- Participate with the children in common actions that are being organized through social networks: draw a picture to show it all at once through the window at a specific hour, applaud the efforts of doctors and nurses, play instruments when people agree to make music, etc.

10

Socialize digitally

We like to talk to our loved ones.

- Adults are in contact with other people through social networks, but for children contact with other family and friends has disappeared.
- It is important for children to continue to have some kind of contact with their loved ones.
- Schedule video conferences with family, school friends, etc.
- Share play moments. For example, having two cousins who are in different houses carry out the same activity, such as skipping rope while watching each other.
- Carry out projects and actions that can later be shown and shared with friends and family by e-mail, WhatsApp, etc.



During these days playing is the best ally of families!

#I Stay At Home