Supporting Your Preschooler During School Closure

Sample Home Learning Preschool Schedule

8:30-9:00 - Breakfast and conversation
9:00-9:30 - Read with your child
9:30-10:00 - Learning Activities - see activity suggestion below
10:00-10:45 - Outside time - nature walk, move your body
10:45-11:30 - Children can help cook/clean/or help in general around the home
11:30-12:00 - Lunch time
12:00-1:00 - Quiet / rest time
1:00-2:00 - Creative Learning Time - Art, Music, Sensory Play, Free Time

Parent Resources

PBS KIDS has a new daily newsletter that parents can sign up to receive. This newsletter allows parents to search for activities based on a child’s age. This is a very helpful resource for families. https://www.pbs.org/parents

Literacy Activities

Read a Book, Ask a Question – Make reading interactive, ask questions about the book that can be answered verbally or nonverbally.
Rhyme Time – Introduce rhyming words by reciting a rhyme or reading a rhyming book.
Picture Book – Create a picture book using magazine pictures, your children’s drawings or family photos. Encourage your child to share their ideas about the pictures and write down their words. Share the book and ask questions as you read together.
I Can Read Words – Have your child look through a collection of environmental print (cereal boxes, wrappers, toy labels, logos from familiar restaurants) and choose an item that contains a word they recognize. Ask your child to read to you the words they recognize and encourage them to talk about the print.

Math Activities

Bake something together - You can’t help but use math when you’re baking. Doubling recipes requires multiplying, halving a recipe requires dividing, and measuring a ¼ cup or a ⅛ teaspoon gets you working with easy fractions. At a more basic level, kids love counting out chocolate chips or other ingredients.
Ask your child: How many chocolate chips do you think it will take to fill one cup? How many for 1/2 cup? Count together and see how close you came to the right answer!
Measure, count, and record - Most kids love stopwatches and watching the seconds tick by gives them opportunities to practice counting. All smartphones have stopwatches. Measure distances and heights. Count jumping jacks, push-ups, or consecutive kicks of a ball.
Ask your child: How far can you throw a ball? Take a guess, then throw the ball as far as you can and measure the distance. How many jumps can you do in a minute?
Build something together - Big or small, any project that involves measuring includes counting, adding, and multiplying. Blocks and other building toys are wonderful tools for incorporating both numbers and spatial thinking into playtime.
Ask your child: How high can you build that stack of blocks? How many blocks do you need to stack to reach as high as the coffee table? Can you make a square? A rectangle? Talk about the shapes of whatever your child has created.

Tips for Talking With Preschool Children During Stressful Times

Very young children may express anxiety and stress by going back to thumb sucking or wetting the bed at night. They may fear sickness, strangers, darkness, or monsters. It is fairly common for preschool children to become clingy with a parent, caregiver, or teacher or to want to stay in a place where they feel safe. They may express their understanding of the outbreak repeatedly in their play or tell exaggerated stories about it. Some children’s eating and sleeping habits may change. They also may have aches and pains that cannot be explained.

- Infants and Toddlers, 0–2 years old, cannot understand that something bad in the world is happening, but they know when their caregiver is upset. They may start to show the same emotions as their caregivers, or they may act differently, like crying for no reason or withdrawing from people and not playing with their toys.

- Children, 3–5 years old, may be able to understand the effects of an outbreak. If they are very upset by news of the outbreak, they may have trouble adjusting to change and loss. They may depend on the adults around them to help them feel better.

- Give 3-5 year old’s a lot of emotional and verbal support.
- Get down to their eye level and speak in a calm, gentle voice using words they can understand.
- Tell them that you always care for them and will continue to take care of them, so they feel safe.
- Keep normal routines, such as eating dinner together and having a consistent bedtime.

A NOTE OF CAUTION! Be careful not to pressure children to talk about an outbreak or join in expressive activities. While most children will easily talk about the outbreak, some may become frightened. Some may even feel more anxiety and stress if they talk about it, listen to others talk about it, or look at artwork related to the outbreak. Allow children to remove themselves from these activities and monitor them for signs of distress.