Prevention During Covid-19: NJ Parent & Caregiver Guide

Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey™

Table of Contents

For Immediate Assistance 2

About Us 3

Protective Factors 4

Social Emotional Learning 5

Managing Behaviors 6

Indoor Activities 7

Parenting Support 8

Schedule vs. Routine 9

Activity Page 10

Additional Resources 11

For Immediate Assistance

NJ Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-572-7233

Child Abuse Hotline 1-877-652-2873

Children's System of Care 1-877-652-7624

NJ Mental Health Cares 1-866-202-4357

Crisis Text Line . . . . . Text NJ to 741741

2nd Floor Support for Youth 1-888-222-2228

For Immediate Emergency Assistance 911

About Us

Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey™

Prevent Child Abuse-New Jersey (PCA-NJ) promotes great childhoods, positive parenting and healthy child development. Founded in 1979, our evidence-based programs throughout NJ are designed to prevent child abuse and neglect in all forms for all New Jersey children. Annually, PCA-NJ's programs and services reach more than 50,000 children and families statewide. PCA-NJ is the New Jersey Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America, a network of chapters in all 50 states. Please join us and our nonprofit subsidiary, the Child Wellness Institute of New Jersey (ChildWIN), in our efforts to build a brighter future for all children.

PCA-NJ and ChildWIN are pleased to provide the following COVID-19 resources, information and tips for parents and caregivers. Information has been gathered from many valuable partners to create a guide that can assist during this stressful time.

For more information about PCA-NJ programs visit: www.preventchildabusenj.org

For more information about ChildWIN visit: www.childwellnessinstituteofnj.org

Protective Factors

WHAT ARE THE FIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS?

The Five Protective Factors are the foundation of the Strengthening Families approach. Extensive evidence supports the common sense notion that when these Protective Factors are present and robust in a family, the likelihood of abuse and neglect diminish. Research also shows that these are the factors that create healthy environments for the optimal development of all children.

1. PARENT RESILIENCE

No one can eliminate stress from parenting, but building parental resilience can affect how a parent deals with stress. Parental resilience is the ability to constructively cope with and bounce back from all types of challenges. It is about creatively solving problems, building trusting relationships, maintaining a positive attitude, and seeking help when it is needed.

Example: Take breaks from work and caregiving responsibilities: Even short periods of time spent on self-care (e.g., rest, exercise, mindfulness, reading, praying) can benefit the whole family.

2. KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Having accurate information about raising young children and appropriate expectations for their behavior help parents better understand and care for children. It is important that information is available when parents need it, that is, when it is relevant to their life and their child. Parents whose own families used harsh discipline techniques or parents of children with developmental or behavior problems or special needs require extra support in building this Protective Factor.

Example: Community agencies should provide resources to families on meaningful, age-appropriate ways to spend time with and talk to children during the pandemic.

3. SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN

A child's ability to interact positively with others, to self-regulate, and to effectively communicate his or her emotions has a great impact on the parent-child relationship. Children with challenging behaviors are more likely to be abused, so early identification and working with them helps keep their development on track and keeps them safe. Also, children who have experienced or witnessed violence need a safe environment that offers opportunities to develop normally.

Example: Emphasize the positive. Stories of hope and resilience (e.g., people helping each other or animals) provide an important counterbalance to negativity and fear about the pandemic. If books are unavailable at home, try accessing free online books for children and teens.

4. SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Friends, family members, neighbors, and other members of a community provide emotional support and concrete assistance to parents. Social connections help parents build networks of support that serve multiple purposes: they can help parents develop and reinforce community norms around childrearing, provide assistance in times of need, and serve as a resource for parenting information and problem solving. Because isolation is a common risk factor for abuse and neglect, parents who are isolated need support in building positive friendships.

Example: Spend virtual time regularly with extended family members and friends (e.g., online or by mail, depending on each family's resources).

5. CONCRETE SUPPORT IN TIMES OF NEED

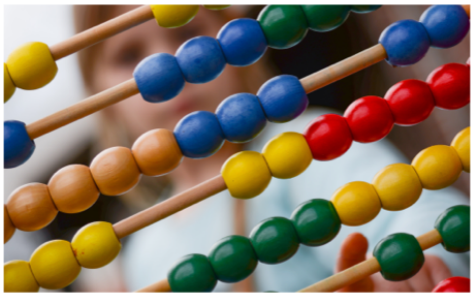
Parents need access to the types of concrete support and services that can minimize the stress of difficult situations, such as a family crisis, a condition such as substance abuse, or stress associated with lack of resources. Building this Protective Factor is about helping to ensure the basic needs of a family, such as food, clothing, and shelter, are met, and connecting parents and children to services, especially those that have a stigma associated with them, like domestic violence shelters or substance abuse counseling, in times of crisis.

Example: Identify helpful local services through a child's school, early care, or education program; or through local agency websites and hotlines, family resource centers, or community resource specialists (e.g., 211).

Information provided by: Strengthening Families, a project of the Center for the Study of Social Policy: www.strengtheningfamilies.net
US Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families/Strengthening Families and Communities Resource Guide: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs
Childtrends: Ways to Promote Children's Resilience to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Social Emotional Learning

Here are some tips that could help ensure Social Emotional Learning success.



BRAIN BREAK
Before each new lesson/subject practice a few calming deep breathes, stretches or yoga poses to reduce stress and recharge the brain. Sometimes children need a brain break to help them focus! You can use a site like www.gonoodle.com for free brain breaks and activities.

LISTEN
Be a good listener for your child. We often expect our children to be "good listeners" yet in this fast paced world we struggle to fully listen to our children. Try intentionally listening to your child by facing them, looking in their eyes, asking them questions and letting them know you are present and hear them. Avoid being on your phone/computer while doing this.

BUILD SELF ESTEEM
Catch the positive! When you see your child doing something you want to see MORE of offer them encouragement and comment on that action. (i.e. You set up your work area for homework so nicely. When you do that it helps you feel prepared and ready to learn!)

GROWTH MINDSET
The power of YET: when children feel overwhelmed they may say they cannot do something and give up. One way we can encourage a growth mindset is to say: "You do not know this part of math YET but with practice you will." Always remember, mistakes help us learn and challenges help us grow.

CONSISTENT ROUTINE
Support your child's learning at home by having a consistent routine. Have your child be a part of developing their "school day" at home by letting you know the order they usually have certain subjects! Writing the schedule on paper and putting it up can help younger children follow the day's expectations. If older children have items due on certain days, help them plan for when to get those assignments complete by building a calendar or discussing with them their plan for completing the work.

BUILD EMPATHY
Empathy is the ability to identify and respect the feelings of others. At all ages, we can talk to our children about another person's feelings or point of view. Even if you are watching a TV show or a sporting event, you can ask your child how each person feels during certain moments. Having children explore different "points of view " is valuable throughout life!

Dr.Joseph E Colford, Psychologist and ChildWIN board member, recently wrote an article for ChildWIN on Social Emotional Learning. In his article, Dr. Colford encouraged parents to incorporate some of the following SEL components while teaching at home.

- Self-control/Self-management
- Relationship-building
- Responsible behavior
- Interpersonal/Communication skills

To read the complete article written by Dr. Joseph E. Colford, feel free to visit:
https://childwellnessinstituteofnj.org/keeping-up-social-emotional-learning-sel-at-home/

Managing Behaviors

A child's behavior can be improved through reassuring responses from the adults in their lives. Here are some ways that caregivers can respond to certain behaviors.

	Child Behavior	Caregiver Response
Preschool Aged 3-5	• Fear of being alone, bad dream • Speech difficulties • Loss of bladder/bowel control, constipation, bed-wetting • Change in appetite • Increased tantrums or clinging behaviors	• Have patience and tolerance • Provide reassurance (verbal & physical) • Encourage expression through play or storytelling • Allow short-term changes in sleeping arrangements • Plan calming activities before bedtime • Maintain regular family routines • Avoid media exposure
School Aged 6-12	• Irritability, whining, aggressive behavior • Clinging, nightmares • Sleep/appetite disturbance • Physical symptoms (headaches, stomach aches) • Withdrawal from peers, loss of interest • Competition for parents' attention • Forgetfulness about chores and new information learned at school.	• Have patience and tolerance • Play sessions at home • Staying in touch with friends • Regular exercise and stretching • Engage in educational activities (workbooks, educational games) • Participate in structured household chores • Set gentle but firm limits • Discuss the current outbreak; encourage questions, and include what is being done in the family/community • Encourage expression through play and conversation • Help generate ideas for promoting health and maintain family routines
Teenage	• Physical symptoms (headaches, rashes, etc.) • Sleep/appetite disturbance • Agitation or decrease in energy; apathy • Ignoring health promotion behaviors • Isolating from peers and loved ones • Concerns about stigmas and injustices • Avoiding or cutting school/ avoiding schoolwork	• Have patience and tolerance • Encourage continuation of routines • Encourage discussion of outbreak with peers, family (but do not force) • Stay in touch with family and friends through phone, internet or video games • Participate in family routines, including chores.

Source: The National Child Traumatic Stress Network www.nctsn.org

Indoor Activities

There are plenty of ways to have fun during a quarantine. Here are some activity examples that will help children learn through play.

Wellness Wednesday
Mindfulness and Yoga
Your children ages 3-11 will learn about the brain, breathing and ways to stay calm

For free videos visit:
www.tiny.cc/ChildWINYoutube

Treasure Hunt
Hide an item somewhere inside or out and write clues for your little pirates to find the loot. Maybe they need to crawl across the couch, slide like a snail under a bed, reach behind a stool, or, if they're outside, run to the pine tree, jump off a tree stump, dig into a hole, etc. Each clue can have words for older kids and pictures for younger ones.

Literacy skills used:
reading and following directions

Time My Move
Choose a move and see how long your child can perform it while another uses a timer to measure. How long can they balance on one foot? How long will it take to run up a hill? How long can they keep up a balloon?

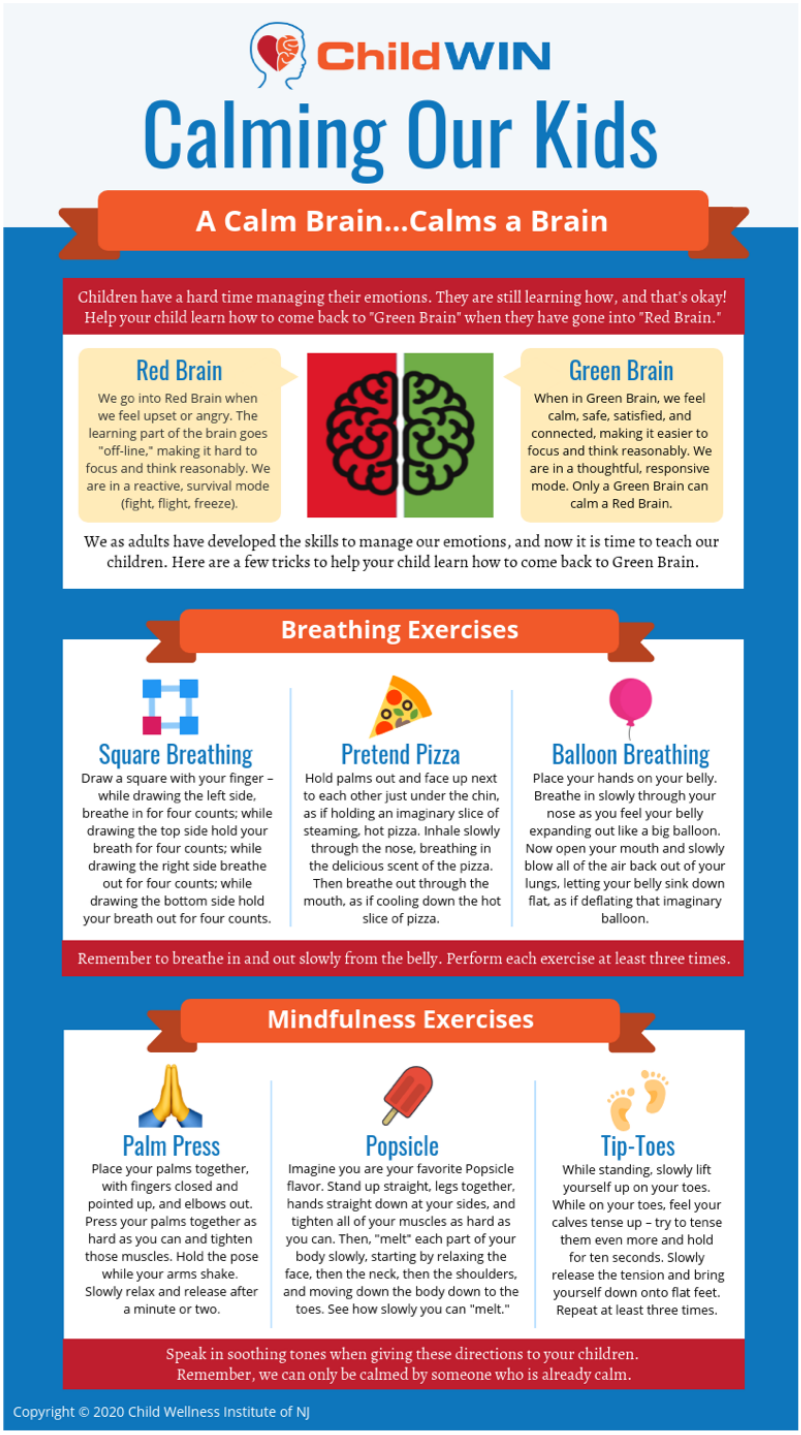
Math skills used: time

Roll to Win
Have your child toss two dice and add up the numbers that are rolled. Write down the total on a piece of paper. Reroll and keep adding up the numbers until you reach 100 (or a smaller number for younger kids).

Math skills used: addition

Balance Building
Pick uneven or unstable objects such as cards, paper cups, or rocks and challenge your kids to build as high as they can or in various shapes.

Science skills used:
problem-solving



Parenting Support

Although Covid-19 has affected us all, individuals with special needs are severely impacted by the challenges caused by these unprecedented times. Here are some resources that may offer information/support during this pandemic.

NJ Office of Special Education
Phone: (609) 376-9060
Website: https://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/

SPAN Parent Advocacy Network
Phone: (973) 642-8100
Website: www.spanadvocacy.org

ChildWIN
Phone: 732.246.8060
Website: www.childwellnessinstituteofnj.org

NJ Parent Link
Website: http://www.njparentlink.nj.gov/njparentlink/
The NJ Parent Link website highlights NJ State services and resources. Federal and community resources are also included.

RWJ Barnabas Health
Website: www.rwjbh.org/patients-visitors/what-you-need-to-know-about-covid-19/covid-19-parent-resources/

Association for Special Children & Families
Phone: 973-728-8744
Website: www.ascfamily.org

NJ Health
Perinatal Mood Disorders
Phone: 1-800-328-3838
Website: https://nj.gov/health/fhs/maternalchild/mentalhealth

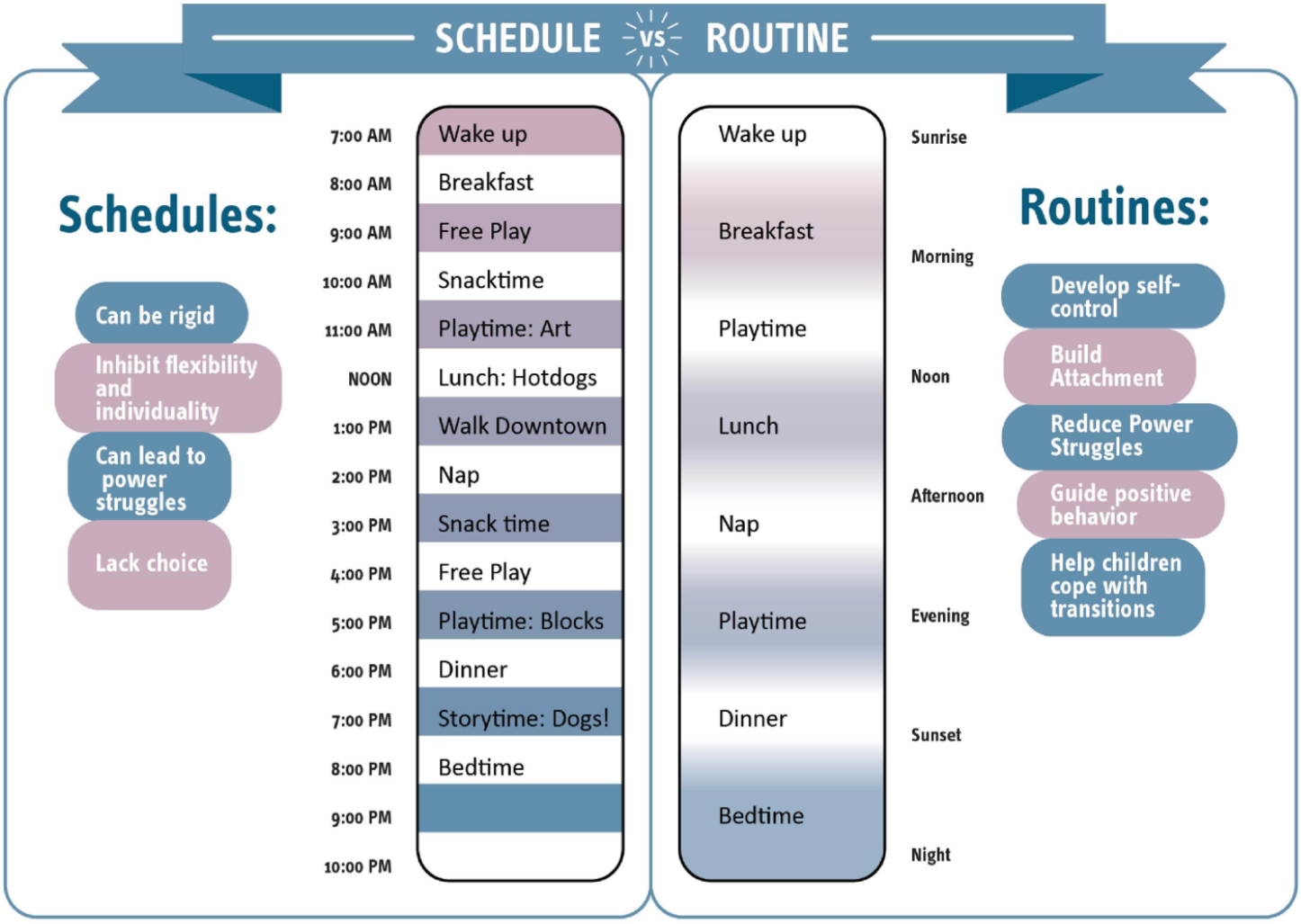
Mom2Mom
Phone: 1-877-914-MOM2 (6662)
Website: www.mom2momnj.com

The Arc of the United States
Phone: 202-534-3700
Toll-Free: 800-433-5255
Website: www.thearc.org

Department of Human Services
Division of Developmental Disabilities
Phone: 609.633.1482
Toll-Free: 800.832.9173
Website: www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/home/

Schedule vs. Routine

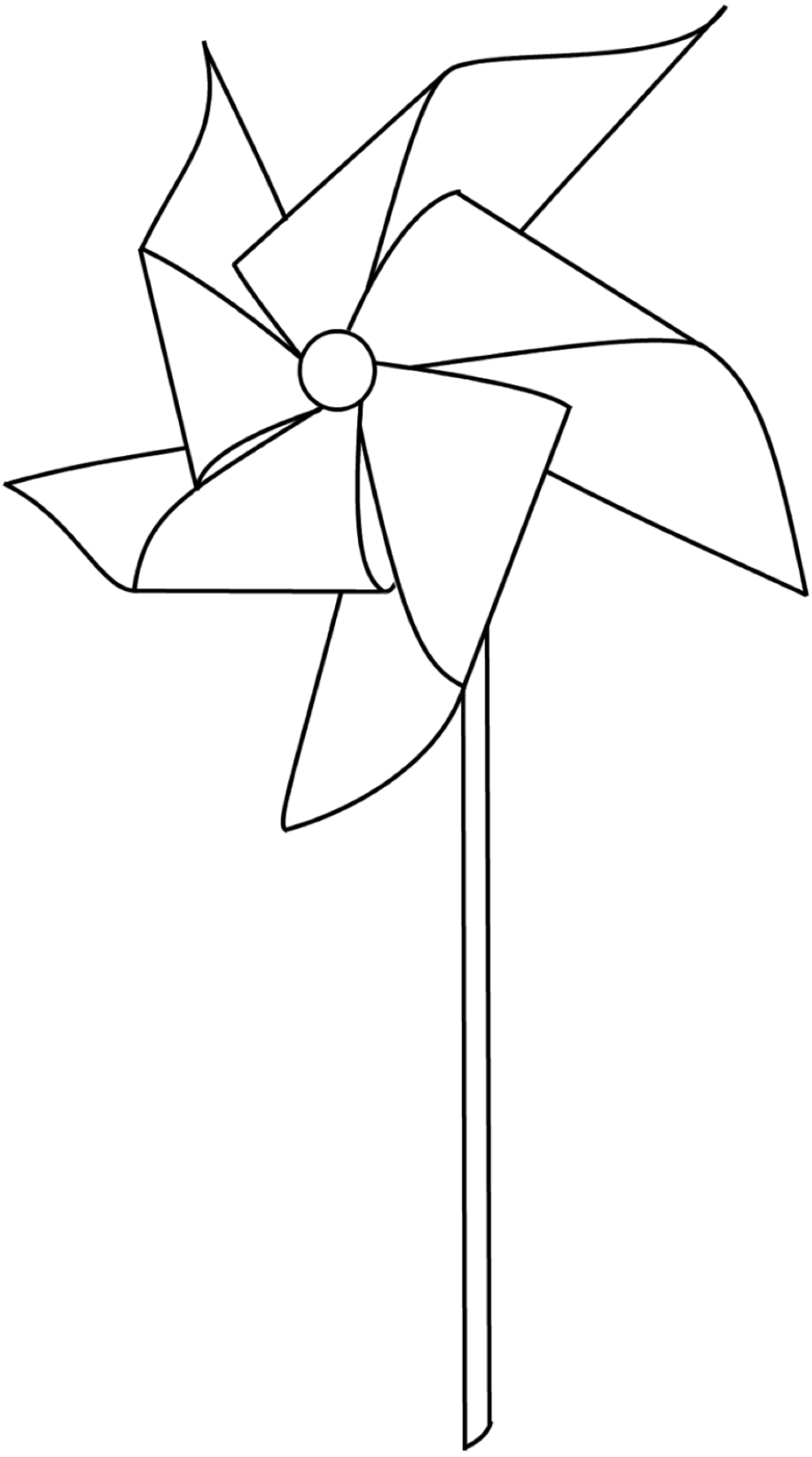
During these unprecedented times, many children are learning from home. It is important to create a daily routine that will keep children on a path to success. The chart below will show you the differences between a schedule and a routine. Schedules can be rigid whereas routines can develop self-control. Be sure to find a balance of keeping structure while allowing space for flexibility.



Source: https://cppr-institute-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/modules/resources/web/crr/resources/Schedule-vs-Routine.pdf

PINWHEEL COLORING SHEET

Instructions: In each section of this pinwheel, write something that makes you feel safe and secure during this time at home.



Additional Resources

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
Division of Family Development
Phone: 609-588-2000
Website: www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dfd/wfnjws.html

Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline
Phone: 877-NJ ABUSE (652-2873)
Calls may be made at any time. Any person with a reasonable belief that a child is being abused or neglected is required to make a report to the hotline.

N.J. 211
Phone: 211 Alternative Phone: 1-800-HELP555 (435-7555)
Website: www.nj211.org
N.J. 211 provides information and assistance to all NJ residents, whether or not in situations of crisis, in the areas of health, human services, community resources and government assistance programs.

Division of Mental Health Services (DMHS)
New Jersey Department of Human Services
Phone: 1-800-382-6717
Website: www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhs

Division of Addiction Services
Substance Abuse
Department of Human Services
Hotline: 1-800-238-2333
Website: www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dfd/drug-alcohol.html

Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
Department of Health and Senior Services
Phone: 609-292-9560
Toll-Free: 866-44 NJ WIC (446-5942)
Website: www.nj.gov/health/fhs/wic/index.shtml

NJ Family Care
Phone: 1-800-701-0710
Website: www.njfamilycare.org/index.html

Unemployment Benefits
New Jersey Labor and Workforce Development
Phone: 1-888-795-6672
Website: https://myunemployment.nj.gov

New Jersey Domestic Violence Hotline
Phone: 1 (800) 572-SAFE (7233)
24 hours a day/7 days a week
The New Jersey Domestic Violence Hotline provides confidential access to domestic violence information and services, including crisis intervention, referral, and advocacy. Bilingual and accessible to the deaf and hearing impaired.

Autism NJ
Phone: 609.588.8200
Toll-Free Helpline: 800.4.AUTISM
Website: www.autismnnj.org