

Dear Families,

Recently, our school made the difficult decision to temporarily close. Rest assured, however, that our commitment to your child's development, learning, health, and safety remains unchanged. As you work to make appropriate preparations for your family, including decisions around how best to support your child during this time, please know I am here to help.

What you can do at home with your child:

Encourage conversations about what's happening.

Your child likely has questions about what's going on, why she isn't going to school, or even why the news suddenly sounds scary. It's important to encourage her to ask questions and provide enough detail to make her feel informed, reassured, and safe. I recommend asking your child daily how she's feeling and encourage you to validate her feelings while providing reassurance. Remember that children often express themselves better when talking about story characters or creating art than they do through direct questioning, so be on the lookout for all kinds of messages your child may send.

Build and maintain routine and structure.

Each day your child walks into my classroom and feels confident that he knows what the daily schedule and routine will be. Consistent routines and structures offer comfort and security for children by helping them take ownership of their experiences, which in turn leads to gains in their learning and development. You can find a sample schedule of a typical day here. I encourage you to think about ways you might mimic some of these times of day in your home. How might you best provide a sense of structure and normalcy to your child right now?

Find authentic opportunities for meaningful learning.

Young children learn best through meaningful play. Your child has opportunities for deep and meaningful learning through everyday, authentic experiences. For example, as you begin to cook dinner, involve your child in measuring ingredients, reading the recipe, and talking about the flavors and smells. As you get dressed for the day, compare the size of your shoes to hers. Discuss which one is bigger, which one is smaller, and make a game out of lining up all the shoes in your house from smallest to biggest. Then try categorizing the shoes by different attributes, such as color or brand.

Focus on having fun and bonding as a family.

Talk to your child about the things you enjoyed most as a young child—and then do them together! Singing and dancing, snuggling up to share a favorite children's book or movie, playing with dress-up clothes, or building a fort from couch cushions have been popular activities with generations of children for a reason. Quite simply, they're fun, they're easy, and they are sure to spark your child's imagination.

I look forward to sharing additional strategies to support you and your child during this time. I also encourage you to follow our partner, Teaching Strategies, on their social media pages for even more tips, ideas, and strategies.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Miller, Mrs. Jackson, Mrs. Howard and Mrs. Davis



You can find suggested activity ideas at ReadyRosie's *Healthy at Home* page:

<https://readyrosie.com/healthyathome/>

