

*With remote learning in session, many parents are searching for after school activity ideas. Below are a few helpful links to keep kids entertained outside of their school lessons.*

- [www.montereybayaquarium.org](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org)
- [zoo.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams](http://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams)
- [www.neaq.org/visit/at-home-events-and-activities/](http://www.neaq.org/visit/at-home-events-and-activities/)
- [Outdoorfamiliesonline.com/free-outdoor-learning-kid-activities/](http://Outdoorfamiliesonline.com/free-outdoor-learning-kid-activities/)
- [Totallythebomb.com/12-fun-art-classes-your-kids-can-take-for-free-from-the-comfort-of-your-home](http://Totallythebomb.com/12-fun-art-classes-your-kids-can-take-for-free-from-the-comfort-of-your-home)
- [Int.org/indoor-nature-activities-for-kids/](http://Int.org/indoor-nature-activities-for-kids/)

Although a variety of activities is best, an important piece of your child's day is physical activity. With daily exercise, they will use excess energy, release stress, have fun and sleep better!

*Ask Your Child: What would you like to learn more about?*

## Activities



*Like physical activity, quality sleep is important for kids. This becomes even more important for children with autism. Over half of children with autism have one or more chronic sleep problems. Below are a few tips to help promote good sleep hygiene.*

## Sleep

1. **Sleep environment:** Your child's bedroom should be dark, quiet and cool. Since children with ASD might be sensitive to noises or have sensory issues, adjust the environment to make your child is as comfortable as possible.
2. **Bedtime routine:** Limit your child's routine to 30 minutes and include relaxing activities, such as reading or listening to quiet music. Electronics can stimulate your child making it difficult to fall asleep, so avoid using TV, computer, video games, etc.
3. **Sleep schedule:** Your child's schedule should be regular on weekdays and weekends.
4. **Exercise:** Daytime exercise can make it easier to fall asleep and enable a deeper sleep. Avoid exercise too close to bedtime.
5. **Avoid caffeine:** Your child should avoid caffeine particularly close to bedtime. Common foods with caffeine include coffee, tea, chocolate and some sodas.
6. **Naps are helpful for preschool children.** Plan naps early in the day to not interfere with bedtime.



*Ask your child: What is your favorite part of your bedtime routine?*



# SPAULDING FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Spaulding School Newsletter • Edition 2 • April 2020

**Celebrating Earth Day!** *Our planet is an amazing place, but it needs our help to thrive. That's why each year on April 22, more than a billion people celebrate Earth Day!*

Here are three ways you and your child can help:

1. Turn off the faucet when you brush your teeth. With this tip, one person can conserve up to eight gallons of water a day.
2. Turn off the light. If we use less electricity, then we can limit production and use of natural resources.
3. Pick up trash. Volunteer together to pick up trash at a nearby park or playground.

*Ask your child: Which tip above do you think would be most useful?*

April 22<sup>nd</sup> 



## Earth Day Pine Cone Bird Feeder

### Materials

- Pine cone
- Peanut butter
- Birdseed
- String or yarn

### Instructions

1. Find a pine cone outside
2. Roll it in peanut butter
3. Roll it in birdseed
4. Hang outside

*Ask your child: What was your favorite part of this craft?*

## Simple Crafts



**Earth Day Jello!** *This Earth Day Jello recipe is a mix between holiday celebration, science experiment and sweet treat!*

### Ingredients

- Blue jello
- Green jello
- Water (and ice for speed set)

### Directions

1. Follow directions on each jello package in separate bowls.
2. Once jello begins to firm, mix the contents of the two bowls together!
3. Refrigerate your creation to finish setting.
4. The result is a nice flavor combination of blue raspberry and lime.

*Ask your child: Which flavor do you like best: blue raspberry, lime or the combination?*

## Easy Recipes





# SPAULDING FAMILY CONNECTIONS

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## COVID-19 Updates and Resources

A lot of information is available about the new coronavirus COVID-19. I urge you to verify your sources before making any decisions for your family. Official Spaulding updates are available at [SpauldingYouthCenter.org/Families](https://SpauldingYouthCenter.org/Families). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) is another excellent source of accurate information. The most important recommendations are to practice social distancing and wash your hands.

If you have questions or concerns about Spaulding's

COVID-19 updates or if you need a resource as a result of the pandemic, please call me at 286-8901 ext. 205. I am full of resources and ideas and am here to help you, as our students' families. In the meantime, below are a few tips you can use at home right now.

Thank you and keep each other safe and healthy.

## COVID-19



## Supporting Your Kids During This Stressful Time

The recent coronavirus developments have already affected your child in many ways. Their school has transitioned to remote learning. They are unable to enjoy social connections with friends. As a result, they may be feeling vulnerable and scared. Below are a few tips to nurture and protect your child during this stressful time.

### **Maintain daily routines**

The experts agree that setting and sticking to a regular schedule is key, even when you're at home all day. Kids should get up, eat and go to bed at their normal times. Consistency and structure are calming during times of stress. By knowing what's going to happen and when, your child will feel more secure.

### **Check in with little kids**

Young children may not understand the situation. Yet, they will feel unsettled by the changes in routine and observe others worry or concern. Check in with younger children and give them the chance to process any worries they may have. Pick a calm, undistracted time and gently ask how they're feeling. If your child is feeling anxious, they may act defiant or misbehave. Respond to these outbursts in a calm, consistent, comforting way.

### **Keep it positive**

To most children, the words "School's closed" are cause for celebration. Yet parents can panic. Instead, validate that feeling of excitement and use it as a springboard to help kids stay calm and happy.

### **Make plans**

In the face of events that are scary and out of our control, it's important to be proactive about what you can control. Making plans helps you visualize the near future. How can your kids have virtual play dates? What can your family do that would be fun outside? What are favorite foods you can cook during this time? Let your child help you make this list of plans. Problem solving in response to a crisis can be both instructive and reassuring for your child.

### **Manage your own anxiety**

It's completely understandable to be anxious right now (how could we not be?) but how we manage that anxiety has a big impact on our kids. If you are able to manage your concerns, this uncertain situation will be easier for your whole family to navigate.

### **Limit news consumption**

Staying informed is important. Consider news and social media feeds and avoid those that increase your anxiety. Plan time away from the TV and radio. Mute or unfollow friends or co-workers who are prone to sharing panic-inducing posts.

### **Stay in touch virtually**

Keep your support network strong, even when you're only able to call or text friends and family. Socializing plays an important role to regulate your mood and help you stay grounded. This interaction is also critical for your children.

### **Accept and ask for help**

If you have a partner at home, agree that you'll trade off when it comes to childcare. Especially if one or both of you are working from home and have younger children. The goal is to find a balance that works for the whole family while staying safe.

Everyone in the home that can help should have an age appropriate job. For example, teens might be able to help mind younger siblings when both parents have to work. Most children can set the table, help keep communal spaces clean, do dishes or take out the trash. Even toddlers can learn to pick up their own toys.