

Two–Minute Tips

COVID-19 Edition: Daily Activities

The new guidelines will require some changes in child care program routines and daily activities. It is important to talk to children, especially those who dislike changes in routines or activities, about what, why, and how these changes will be implemented throughout the day.

Practice Tips

Limit Sharing of Materials

For small group or individual planned work, staff should distribute materials for children.

Encourage children to keep their materials separate by using individual trays, mats, or sectioning off their work spaces ahead of time.



More Free Play, Less Whole Group

Reduce whole or large group activities and maximize free play and small group. Plan small groups while other children are doing free play to allow more physical distancing.

Many providers already limit the number of children in each free choice center. If you aren't already, consider using signs to limit the number of children in each center and/or outline the space using painter's tape.

Sand/water table is back!

Sand trays, outdoor sandboxes, water tables, and sensory tables are now allowed. Children are required to wash their hands before and after use.

Water tables must be drained, cleaned, and sanitized between uses by a stable group, as they become dirty, and at least daily. Sensory tables must be washed between stable groups.

Another option is to fill individual-sized trays or buckets with water and toys for personal sensory play. Be sure to replace the water and sanitize toys and containers before use by another child.



More Outside Time

Add additional daily outside time to the classroom schedule, weather permitting. To support outside time, ask parents or caregivers to bring in extra clothing that is appropriate for the weather.¹

Rotate Materials More Often

In order to minimize the number of toys and materials needing to be cleaned daily, try limiting the number of items out in the classroom for children. Instead, rotate them more often. If your classroom has been switching out materials once a month, try doing it twice a month or even weekly.

Clean/Sanitize/Disinfect

Continue with your normal cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting procedures throughout the day, but with increased frequency.

To avoid the cost of increased use of paper towels, consider using a washcloth for single use. Just remember to wash them at the end of the day.

Be sure to have a designated place for used or mouthed items, such as a bin labeled “To Be Cleaned.”

Consider using another bin of clean materials that is easily replenished throughout the day.



Additional Resources

Here are some ideas on [social activities](#) that children can engage in while maintaining safe physical distancing.

Tips in Action!

Watch [this video](#)* for an example of engaging children in individualized activities while facilitating high-quality language modeling.

Here is the [same video](#) with Spanish subtitles.

*Disclaimer: Linked media was filmed before COVID-19. Please follow the necessary guidelines to make these tips helpful and safe for your program.

References

¹Caring for Our Children (CFOC). (2020). [Chapter 3: Health promotion and protection](#). National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. (<https://bit.ly/2Q77sNN>)

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