

TEAMWORK:

JUNE 2020 / ISSUE 1

A MONTHLY CHILDREN'S CLINIC AND FLEX NEWSLETTER
FROM OUR TEAM TO YOURS



HELLO
I AM...
NEW

OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER!

In an attempt to remain connected during these times, the **Children's Clinic and Flex Teams** have decided to roll out our FIRST newsletter. The aim of the newsletter is to share updates and provide an array of resources for families.

In the newsletter, you'll find updates, tips and tricks to support well-being, activity ideas, and COVID specific resources.

In this Issue:

- Updates from the Children's Clinic + Flex Team
- Tips + Tricks for Wellbeing
- Activity Ideas!
- Resources

 Cutchins Programs
for Children & Families

UPDATES

Hi all,

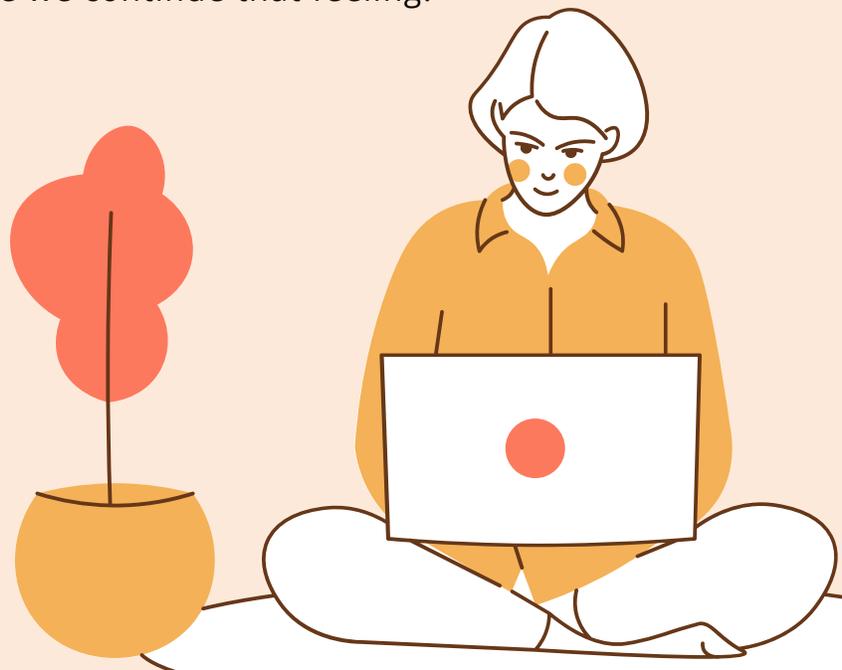
What a unique time this has been for us all. We are so pleased to be getting this newsletter out to you to help us feel more connected in this time where health and safety have us feeling perhaps a bit disconnected. At the Clinic we have been working hard to feel like a community, even when we are all working remotely. It took us a little longer than other programs to get up and running with telehealth, but we wanted to make sure we got it done right. Here are some important notes about the transition:

- Our Zoom platform is fully encrypted and HIPAA compliant
- Our telehealth consents are comprehensive and help lay out the benefits and potential risks of using technology in therapy
- Our staff also were provided with significant training in using telehealth prior to having sessions so that we can provide the best possible therapeutic experience
- We still have weekly staff meetings as a group and meet 1:1 for supervision to keep supporting our colleagues
- Our staff have done so much research and have been so creative in thinking of ways to have sessions feel as “normal” and fun as possible! We have done art projects, danced, gone on roller coasters, visited museums, written stories and had so much fun on Zoom!

We are in the beginning stages of making careful plans for reopening the Clinic at some point, but do not have any concrete plans as of this writing. When we get closer, we will work with each family to ensure the safety and comfort of all. The Clinic has always been a safe place, and it’s important to make sure we continue that feeling!

We hope that your family continues to feel supported and held by the Clinic through this time, and that even while we cannot be together in person (for now!) know that we are holding you all in our hearts and in our minds.

With warmth,
~Amanda Harrison, LMHC
Children’s Clinic Director





Caregiver Self-Care

Self-care? It's one buzzword that's easier said than done. Especially during a time when many of your typical coping resources (gym, anyone?) may be out of reach.

It can be really hard to take care of others when self-care has taken a backseat. We've got your back with these simple tips for showing yourself a little care...



5 SELF-CARE ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO IN ONE MINUTE

1. Pour yourself a glass of water. Take a whole minute to drink it. Fill the minute by drinking it slowly. As you do this, try noticing the weight of the glass in your hand, the temperature of the water, and any smells or sounds you encounter around you.

2. Create a personal mantra to nurture, motivate, or inspire you. Write it on a post-it note and place it somewhere that you'll see it throughout the day like the bathroom mirror, or the fridge door.

3. Put some lotion on your hands with a scent that you enjoy.

4. Try out "rectangle breathing". Picture a horizontal rectangle in your mind. Take a breath in through your nose, imagining that you are tracing one side of the rectangle. Next, breathe out through your mouth, imagining that you're tracing the top of the rectangle. Keep taking deep breaths in this way, tracing the rectangle for as long as you need.

5. Dance like no one's watching! Or dance when no one is watching. Take a minute to move your body in a way that is fun, expressive, or freeing for *you*.



COVID-19 2020 TIME CAPSULE

Creating a time capsule can encourage kids to reflect on the significance of what they are experiencing in the present time and place, and the feelings that come along with this.



WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Small-medium cardboard box (shoe box size works well)
- Paper + writing utensils
- Craft supplies of your choice. Fun stickers, markers, paint, colored paper, scissors, glue, and collage materials, etc.
- List of questions for your child to answer about this time.
- Objects to include in the time capsule

This activity was adapted from the work of **Natalie Long** of **LONG CREATIONS**

[click here for her FREE COVID-19 time capsule workbook](#)

WHAT TO DO

- Help your child gather up a collection of objects specific to this time in their life.

Examples: Front page of the current newspaper, photographs, drawings or projects they've made at home, a worksheet from virtual school, etc.

- Decorate the box with the craft supplies
- Help your child to document the important details about this time, using the list of questions you've created or the COVID-19 time capsule workbook.





SENSORY SCAVENGER HUNT

Practice mindfulness with this simple activity where you'll have fun searching for, sharing, and exploring different objects with all five senses.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Regular household or nature-found objects
- Sensory exploration questions
- Paper + writing instruments of choice



HOW TO PLAY

Create your scavenger hunt list

- Choose up to 10 different sensory exploration questions to start
- See the list there for ideas --->

Establish ground rules

- If your child will be looking for the objects on their own, make sure they are clear on the rules about what is safe to choose and what is off-limits
- By coming up with these rules together, you can make sure you are on the same page

Seek + Share

- Go off on the adventure of finding the items on your scavenger hunt list, checking them off as you go
- After you've found them all, come back together and explore the chosen items with your senses

SENSORY EXPLORATION QUESTIONS

- Find something beautiful to look at
- Find something that feels soft
- Find something that sounds calming
- Find something that tastes delicious
- Find something that smells like home
- Find an object for each of the colors of the rainbow
- Find something that makes a loud noise
- Find something that feels squishy
- Find something that tastes spicy
- Find something that has a rough texture
- Find something that smells fresh



RESOURCES A monthly round-up of links that we've found helpful lately

The Body Language of Dogs

Animals are part of our family. What are our dogs trying to tell us? A short video on reading the body language of dogs.

The Dad Lab

The Dad Lab is a Youtube channel dedicated to providing families with easy and fun ideas to stay busy. This page includes science experiments, outdoor summer activities, art, and educational videos. This is a particularly good channel for kiddos who like to build things, experiment, and get hands on with a project!

The Benefits of Fort Building

An article that examines the psychological benefits of fort building throughout childhood and into adolescence. Explores how this tool can be particularly useful during this unique and stressful time.

Western Mass Housing First

The current pandemic has impacted so many aspects of our lives and left many struggling to maintain housing, among other basic needs. This is a link to a compiled resource list to help direct folks to the proper channels to support any housing related and financial challenges they may be facing.

Resources for Talking to Children About Race and Racism.

Though we as a Clinic have always valued diversity and have been honored to help children process race and racism, it seems more important to do so now than ever. Here is a list of books families may choose to read and discuss in your homes to help your children think about these complex issues.