



Creative Activities Parents Can Do with Their Children During Remote Supervised Visitation Services*

***Release Date: August 20, 2020.** The information known about COVID-19 is rapidly evolving. Please be advised that new information is being released to the public very rapidly, and updates to these considerations may need to be taken into account.

As supervised visitation centers respond to the realities of working with families during COVID-19, providing remote supervised visitation services requires creativity, flexibility, and a reliable assessment of safety and well-being for child and adult survivors of family violence.

It's important to utilize the same skills you use during in-person visits to get to know each family you serve and determine their unique needs. Remember also that there is no "one size fits all" solution for remote visitation activities. Children and youth, as well as their survivor parent, often have emotional safety needs that can vary even within one family; an activity that feels fun and lighthearted to one child may feel overwhelming and stressful to another. You can think about shorter or separate visiting times for each child based on their specific developmental needs.

For additional information on how to support children and youth accessing supervised visitation with trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate approaches, please download "[How to Support Children Youth During Remote Supervised Visitation](#)" posted on Inspire Action for Social Change's website: <http://www.inspireactionforsocialchange.org/covid-19svsupport>



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Just like with in-person visits, centering the safety and well-being of adult and child survivors takes precedence. Below are a few points to consider as you move to remote visits.

Safety Considerations for Activities that Involve Streaming, Apps, and Virtual Meeting Platforms:

- Practice with any web-based tool you will be using before you introduce it to families for remote visits.
- Screen all apps for private chat and video connection capability - you must ensure that private conversations CANNOT take place between the child and visiting parent (during the visit and after).
- When using online games, ensure screen sharing is only launched and controlled via the staff connection, with staff as the host.

General Tips for Remote Visits:

1. Limit distractions on both ends of the call.
2. Ask everyone to sit in a well-lit spot and look right into the camera rather than the screen, so the children feel like they are making eye contact.
3. Plan for and expect technical difficulties.
4. Keep expectations reasonable.

Parents may want some ideas for how to engage with their child(ren) during remote supervised visitation. If so, below are some suggestions of what they could do together.



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Activity Ideas for Infants and Toddlers:

- Sing to the child.
- Make funny faces with the child.
- Read stories aloud and show the pictures on the screen or use puppets or stuffed animals to tell the story.
- Hold up a stuffed animal and talk about the animal or act as if that animal is talking to the child.
- Engage in dialogue with the child (e.g., what is the sound a cat makes?).
- Play games like Simon Says, Where's Your Nose? and Peek-a-boo.
- Use songs/fingerplays such as "Itsy Bitsy Spider," "Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed," and "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star."
- Play music or dance.

Activity Ideas for Three- to Five-Year-Olds:

- Make silly faces together.
- Sing together.
- Counting games (for example, "How many fingers am I holding up?" or "Let's count to 10 as fast we can together.")
- Ask what sound do these animals make, e.g. cow, duck...
- Read a story out loud and narrate the pictures in the story.
- Listen to music and dance together.
- Draw pictures of the same things and show or describe them to each other.
- Tell stories of favorite holiday memories, if safe & appropriate.
- Have a virtual puppet show.
- Play "What am I?"



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- Create clay or Playdough creations together and show each other what you have created.

Activity Ideas for School-Aged Children:

- Build a story together (adult and children take turns going back and forth to build an imaginative tale).
- Storytime with developmentally appropriate books (chapter books can be used over time and during in-person visits). Parent and child could take turns reading.
- Have a dance party.
- Sing songs together.
- Take turns telling each other what to draw.
- Play charades.
- Play adapted games such as silly Simon Says or Red Light/Green Light.
- Play a sound effect game (“guess the sound I’m making”).
- Listen to music together.
- Watch an age-appropriate show together.
- Play Pictionary.
- Play 20 Questions.
- Play Battleship.
- Do virtual science experiments.
- Have a Lego challenge or virtually build with Legos.
- Do a virtual craft project together.
- Play games that both the visiting parent and child(ren) have available to them, such as Battleship, Hedbanz, or Pictionary.



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Activity Ideas for Teens:

- Play “Two Truths and a Fib.” Parent and child take turns telling the other person two truths and one fib about their day and ask the other person to guess which descriptions were true and which one was made up.
- Play “Would you Rather.” Give the child two options to choose between. For example, “Would you rather eat a peanut butter pickle sandwich or ketchup on popcorn?”
- Guess movie lines. Share a line from a movie and ask the other person to guess the movie.
- Play charades.
- Engage in “conversation starter” questions. Some possible starter questions include:
 1. What was the funniest/best/most heartwarming thing that happened today?
 2. If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
 3. Tell me a joke, and I'll share one with you.
 4. What's something you recently learned?
 5. What is your favorite movie, and why? Or what movies have you watched recently?
 6. What has been the thing you like to do the most lately?
 7. What are a few things you have really wanted to try or learn more about?
- Play a modified game of “Catch Phrase.”