

# PARENTING IN A PANDEMIC

• MARCH 2021 •



## SELF COMPASSION IN CHALLENGING TIMES

A weave of mindfulness and compassion can transform our relationship with our fears and worry, and help us work towards inner calm, which then in turn lights the way for others. The meditation practice, RAIN, directly applies mindfulness to our fears.

**R for RECOGNIZE:** We name the emotion; fear, worry, agitation, etc.

**A for ALLOW:** We allow the emotion to be for right now without trying to fix, judge, or ignore.

**I for INVESTIGATE:** Bring a gentle, curious attention to the physical signs your body is telling you. This lays the groundwork for the "N".

**N for NURTURING:** By investigating, in the prior step, we really tune into our vulnerability, and by doing so we open up a natural tenderness and compassion for ourselves. From this place of tenderness we are able to nurture our inner selves. Natural questions will arise within us, "what do you need right now?", "how do you want me to be with you?". We may utter specific phrases that really speak to our vulnerability, for me, saying to myself "It's okay, I am here", is really helpful.

By doing this, we now longer feel like a separate, scared self, but rather a sense of belonging, that is so healing.



## Open Ended Play Materials to Keep on Hand

Open-ended play materials allow children to make choices, express their creativity and, supports their independence.

Imaginative Play: Keep shawls, scarves, sheets, old clothes, blankets, etc. in your dress up bin.

Tinker Boxes: recycled items you might normally throw out (paper rolls, plastic bottles, cardboard boxes, etc.), recycled items from the tip or second hand shops (plastic plumbing tubes, old cables) and your necessary gear (scissors, tape, saw, glue gun, etc.)..

In your own backyard you could bring pots and pans from inside, or their play kitchen toys, and see what unfolds!

Sensory Play: play doh, shaving cream, sand, water, etc. Beads, buttons, spatulas, cups, straws, jewels, etc. can all add another layer to the exploring and creativity!



## HAVE A FAMILY PIZZA NIGHT!

A family pizza night is one easy way to involve the kids in the kitchen. The hands on sensory experience of making pizza, will keep the kids entertained!

### Ingredients:

- 4 cups of flour
- 2 tsp of salt
- 1 tsp instant yeast
- 2 cups lukewarm water
- \*or you can buy prepackaged dough!
- large bowl
- measuring cups
- spoons
- toppings; options: olive oil, tomato sauce, mozzarella, veggies, pepperoni, sausage (whatever you'd like!)

### Directions:

If making the dough follow add this step first:

With the kids, measure the water, flour, yeast, and salt and pour into a large bowl and mix together. If too much flour gets displaced during mixing just add more flour until it looks right.

1. Preheat the oven to 475 degree. Let the kids dust the counter top, liberally, with flour where they will be working. While they are doing this, separate the dough into individual balls for each child/adult.
2. On a floured surface, let the kids flour their dough and work on stretching their dough out. Remind them to work from the middle and work carefully.
3. When finished, move their pizza dough to a baking sheet. Let them put sauce and whatever toppings they want on their pizza.
4. Bake the pizza at 475 degree for 10-15 minutes. Enjoy!



## Get those wiggles out!

Visit [our page](#) for some ideas for burning that Winter energy! Minimal preparation required!



## RAY OF LIGHT EASTER EGG HUNT

MARCH 14TH, 20TH, 21ST, 27TH, & 28TH  
11 A.M.-2 P.M.

STOP FOR CANDY FILLED EGGS ALONG OUR ENCHANTED BUNNY TRAIL. SEE LIVE ANIMALS, FARM FRIENDLY CHARACTERS AND EASTER BUNNIES GALORE AS YOU DRIVE THRU IN THE SAFETY AND COMFORT OF YOUR OWN CAR.

\$5/PERSON. RESERVATIONS REQUIRED.

VISIT [RAYOFLIGHTFARM.ORG](http://RAYOFLIGHTFARM.ORG) TO RESERVE TICKETS!



This Month's Parenting in a  
Pandemic Google Meets:

**Thursdays at 12 pm:**  
**March 4th**  
**March 18th**

Let us know you're coming!  
[kristeng@wyfs.org](mailto:kristeng@wyfs.org)  
860.399.9239 ext. 112

Brought to you by Westbrook Youth and Family Services and the  
Westbrook Early Childhood Council