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# Shelter and Role Play

**Project Design & Implementation: Online Resource**

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# Role Play Activities

1. **Grocery Store** - early childhood, teacher/therapist to virtually support parent/family member to directly engage child w/ siblings
2. **Restaurant** - early elementary, teacher/therapist to virtually support parent/family member to directly engage child w/ siblings
3. **Barista** - early elementary, teacher/therapist to virtually support parent/family member to directly engage child with siblings
4. **Clean Up** - middle school, teacher/therapist to virtually support parent/family member to directly engage one-on-one with child
5. **Cooking Show** - high school, teacher/therapist to virtually support parent/family member to directly engage child with peers via the Internet

# Grocery Store Role Play



## Age Group of Participants:

Developmental early childhood

## Target Audience:

Teacher/Therapist to virtually support parent/family member to directly engage child w/ siblings



## Restocking the Shelves:

Parents do all the shopping and cooking, but the children can help with putting the groceries away!

Materials: an apron, name tag, groceries, hat or bag, grocery categories visual

- (1) Have the children decide who plays the role of the customer and the grocery store worker
- (2) The grocery store worker will put on the apron and nametag
- (3) The customer will bring the groceries in and lay everything out
- (4) Put all the grocery categories into a hat or bag and have the customer pick a card at random
- (5) Put up the "Let's put away \_\_\_\_" visual
- (6) Put away the groceries one category at a time, placing the card in the blank on the visual

*Example: alphabet sounds: put away everything that starts with the /a/ sound- apples, almonds, ... /b/ sound- banana, butter, broccoli*









# Visual Supports

Let's put away the \_\_\_\_\_!

- Verbal prompt
- Grocery categories: can change the images according to developmental age or how groceries are organized in the individual's home

Scaffolding:

-these can be modified according to developmental age of participants

<p>Frozen Foods</p> 	<p>Fruits</p> 	<p>Vegetables</p> 	<p>Canned Foods <input type="checkbox"/></p> 
<p>Snacks</p> 	<p>Breads</p> 	<p>Color</p> 	<p>Alphabet Sounds</p> 

# Restaurant Role Play

## Setting the table

- Target child can take the role of the manager or the helper
  - Manager: instructs siblings what dishes & silverware need to be placed on the table
    - Supports: Direct Verbal Prompts - "Tell them each person needs one fork and one knife."
  - Helper: asks the "manager" (a sibling) what needs to be placed on the table

## Taking orders

- Target child goes around the table & asks each patron (family member) what they would like to eat/drink
  - Additional opportunities for socialization include reading off the specials, asking about any food allergies, etc.
  - Tells the chef (parent/caregiver) the orders & serves each dish with as much support as necessary

### Age Group of Participants:







Developmental early elementary

### Target Audience:






Teacher/Therapist to virtually support parent/family member to directly engage child w/ siblings



# Visual Supports

Plate 	Bowl 	Cup 
Spoon 	Fork 	Knife 

- Dishware & silverware visual support can be customized to include pictures of what is available in each home
- Menu visual support can be customized to include food being served at mealtime
  - Food/drink items can be created to be manipulatives: images can be taken on/off with Velcro

<u>Restaurant</u>	
 Hamburger	\$3.00
 Hot Dog	\$2.00
 Steak	\$6.00
 Watermelon	\$1.00
 Lemonade	\$2.00

# Barista Role Play

Inspired by Cassie D'Souza's model at Stevenson Elementary School

- Making a menu
  - Can include drinks like coffee, hot chocolate, tea, milk, and water
  - Can be customized by size, flavor, or toppings
- Getting drink order and taking "payment"
  - Walking around the place you are located, asking what each person would like to order
  - May involve counting the "payment" (if developmentally appropriate)
- Assisting in making drinks
  - Will require the help of an adult or older sibling to make the drinks as ordered
- Delivering the drinks
  - Carrying the drink in a spill-proof container to the person who ordered it

## **Age Group of Participants:**

Developmental early  
elementary

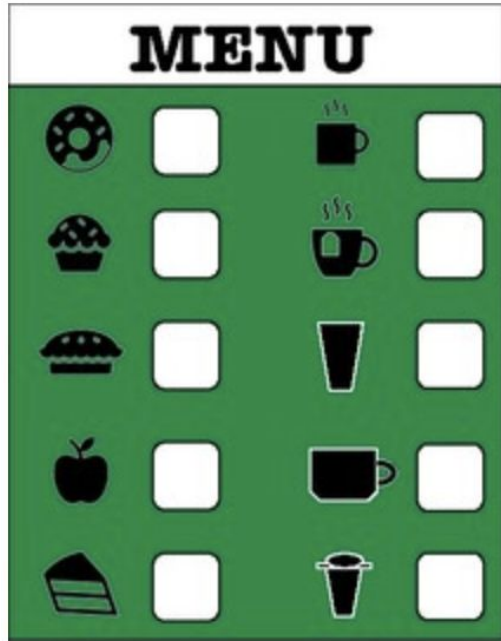
## **Target Audience:**

Teacher/Therapist to virtually  
support parent/family  
member to directly engage  
child with siblings

Type text here



# Visual Supports



- Menu visual support can be customized to include food being served at mealtime
  - Food/drink items can be created to be manipulatives: images can be taken on/off with Velcro
- Can also utilize pretend food to increase the selection





# Clean-Up Time Role Play

Cleaning is typically not the activity of choice for anyone, but it can be fun! Complete the following steps: (1) Put on your favorite song, (2) set your timer for 10-minutes, (3) spin the arrow and complete the activity pointer lands on with your parent, if the task has already been completed spin again! Options include:

**Developmental Age Group:** Middle school

**Target Audience:** Teacher/Therapist to virtually support parent/family member to directly engage one-on-one with child



# Clean-Up Visual Support

## LOADING THE DISHWASHER



Open the dishwasher



Rinse dishes, cups,  
bowls and utensils until  
all of the food is off



Load the dishwasher:  
Plates, bowls go on the bottom  
Cups and Tupperware go on the top  
Utensils go into the utensil basket



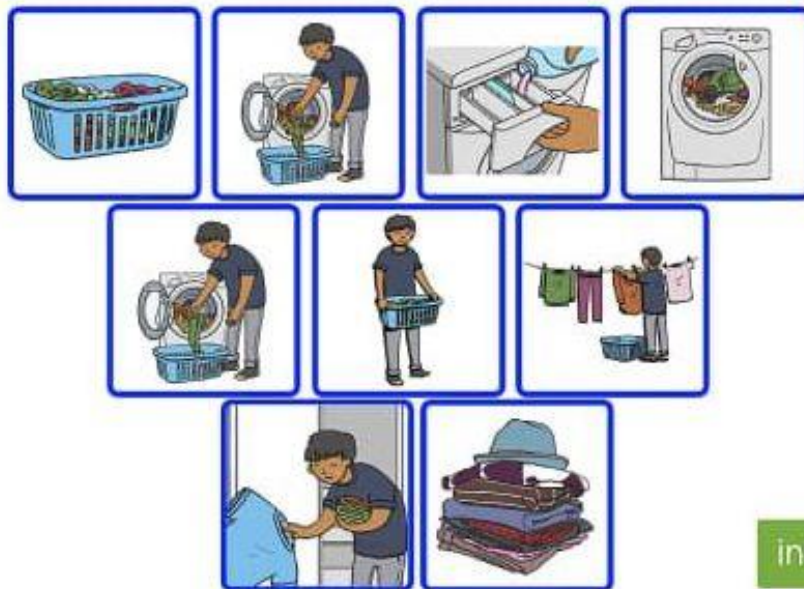
Get the dish soap



Fill dishwasher soap dish



Close the dishwasher &  
*press start*



# Cooking Show Role Play

## Create a cooking show:

**Developmental Age Group of Participants:** High school

**Target Audience:** Teacher/Therapist to virtually support parent/family member to directly engage child with peers via the Internet

1. Prep ingredients for the recipe
  - Ask your peers what they would like you to make ahead of time
  - Measure out ingredients and organize cooking items on counter-ask family members for help
2. Pick out your chef attire
  - Design your own apron and make a chef hat to get into character for your show
3. Make a script
  - Create a short script with family members or peers to determine what you could say
  - Family members or peers can narrate or play the role of your assistant while you cook
4. Set up recording device (camera, phone, or computer)
  - Set up your recording device to play for your peers on the internet later
  - Alternatively, have a live show for your peers via the internet
5. Lights, camera, action!
  - Have your family members ready to help when it's time for your show. If it's a live show, be sure your peers (audience) can see you on the computer or phone.
  - Make your recipe from start to finish and show off your recording to your peers later by sharing your screen or emailing it to them to look at later.



# Visual Supports


## Mac and Cheese Recipe



1. get bowl and spoon  

2. add 2/3 cup water  

3. add macaroni 

4. microwave for 3:30 

5. add cheese sauce 

6. mix with spoon  

Hi my name is chef \_\_\_\_\_ and welcome to my cooking show! Today I'm going to cook \_\_\_\_\_.



# Summary

Many parents have now also taken on the role of classroom teacher, therapists, etc., it is easy for them to feel overwhelmed with the tasks and responsibilities. I recently interviewed a mother of a 9-year-old on the spectrum about how she is managing with the COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders and she shared,

*"I have to be his special ed teacher, speech therapist, occupational therapist, AAC specialist, ABA therapist...There is no way I can do all that and be his mom. I'm overwhelmed and worried that he will digress as the teletherapy is not working for him. He does not interact with his therapist over the video, so I end up having to sit through the sessions and I am the one who implements the therapy."*

While parents may not be able to provide the same services, learners on the autism spectrum can learn and grow in their communication and socialization through **role playing** at home with their families or online with their friends.

Research has shown that, "for some students on the spectrum, especially those who are not receptive to a top-down approach (e.g., learning the rules of communication), the use of role can act as a conduit for expression while providing clear expectations and boundaries for behavior" (McDonough, 2020, p. 4).

Role playing is a powerful tool for learners on the spectrum, especially when the activities incorporate the individual's **special interest areas**.

# Reflection



- Given our current state of emergency, our project centered on role play activities aimed to combine socialization therapy with the new everyday demands of household tasks in a fun and interactive way. The hope is that while children are encouraged to let their imagination run wild, parents and caregivers can receive added support in ADLs given the extended Shelter in Place order.
- Potential challenges include: spotty Internet connections, reluctant family members who may not want to participate, et cetera. Communication through a screen poses a number of challenges as it is, so instructing therapy techniques virtually is already not ideal. However, given the inherent versatility of role play activities, we are optimistic that with appropriate scaffolding techniques and supports tailored to each target child, therapists and parents will eventually find what works best for their own situations.

# References

McDonough, L. (2020). *The power of role play with students on the spectrum.*

