Blue the Caring Cub and COVID-19
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Hi Friends!
My name is Blue, the Caring Cub, and these are my friends; Dart, Glide, Leap, and Swing.
Because of the coronavirus, or **COVID-19**, things have changed a lot. **COVID-19** is a new virus that doctors and scientists are still learning about.
COVID-19 enters people's bodies when it's on their hands and they touch their mouth, nose or eyes.
The COVID-19 virus can be shared in the air or by touch. This is why we all need to stay home and practice good handwashing.

Because COVID-19 spreads so easily and there are so many people that have the virus that it is a pandemic.

That means it has spread across the country and all over the world.
Blue and his friends have heard that everyone should be 6 feet apart at all times. This is called **social distancing**.
We have also been told we need to shelter in place.

That means that we have to stay at home and only go out when we really need something.
By **sheltering in place** and **practicing social distancing**, we are helping to make sure we don’t get the virus or give the virus to anyone else.
It also means a lot of stuff has been cancelled and we can’t be with friends right now.
There’s a lot we can still do!

I have been playing outside a lot, spending time with my family, helping with new fun snacks, and learning in different ways.
All of what we are doing at home is helping us to **stay healthy** and keep our mind and body **strong**!
Some days, I **draw** pictures on our sidewalks to let my friends know I miss them. I have also drawn things for them to **jump over**! Can you pretend to **jump over** the lines on the ground like mine?

How many lines did you jump over?
While we are **sheltering in place** we can still learn and have fun.

Can you count the number of shapes you see?

What color is the circle?

What color is the square?

What color is the heart?
In my backyard, I have been watching and moving like animals, bugs, and butterflies!

Some move fast. Some crawl low. Some fly high.
Can you **fly** high like a butterfly or bee?

Can you **creep** and **crawl** like little bug?

Can you **wiggle** low like a worm?
The other day, I wanted to show my friends I missed them, so I made bubbles for them. I dropped the bubbles off at their door with a note!
Blue knows his friends will **jump, clap, kick and stomp** to pop all the bubbles before the bubbles hit the ground.

Can you **clap, kick, jump, and stomp** like you are popping bubbles?
Sometimes I get bored at home, so the other day I found some boxes and decided to be creative.

How many boxes do you see?

What could you do with the boxes?
We may not be able to go to school, but we can still learn at home.

Today, we learned about clouds and I went outside, laid down on the ground, and looked up at the clouds.
Do you ever go outside and look up at the clouds?
Can you see what I see in my clouds?
Act out what you see!
Being at home so much, I am learning to make my own healthy snacks.

What is your favorite healthy snack?
I also planted a vegetable garden in my backyard.

It was a lot of hard work to dig the holes for each plant, but so much fun.

Can you pretend to dig a hole?
People in my neighborhood have bears in their windows.
So each afternoon, my family takes a walk to count the bears.
How many bears do you see?
When my parents go to pick-up groceries, they wear a mask.

At first, the mask scared me.

I now understand they wear a mask to keep everyone healthy.
Essential workers need to wear a mask.

Essential workers work in grocery stores, childcare centers and hospitals.
Essential workers in the hospitals are working very hard to help those who have the COVID-19 virus feel better.
I want to help too, so some days when I am outside, I play like I am **stomping** out the virus.

Whenever I see a weed on the ground, I **stomp** on it and pretend that it is the virus.

Can you move around and pretend to **stomp** on the virus?
When I come inside from playing, I remember to wash my hands. I make lots of bubbles with the soap on my hand as I count to 20. Then I rinse my hands in water.

Can you show me how you wash your hands?
At night, I go to bed thinking about my friends and family. I am happy knowing one day we will be able to go back to school and to play with our friends and see our family!
• While reading the story, talk about the characters emotions and feelings. Why is Blue feeling the way he is? How do you feel about what is going on?

• Practice early learning skills as you read. Count the objects on a page or talk about the sounds the letters make.

• Share tips, recipes and activities with families that they can share at home with their child.

• Discuss creativity.

• Discuss the importance of routines and consistency.

• Discuss family time and outdoor time.

• Talk about limiting screen time to two hours a day, but mention the appropriateness during this time to allow additional screen time uses such as playdates, activity videos, and education.
Definitions

- **COVID-19 or Coronavirus** - COVID-19 is the short name for “coronavirus disease 2019.” It is a new virus. Doctors and scientists are still learning about it.

- **Shelter in Place** - to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 residents are required to stay inside and can go out only for necessities.

- **Social Distancing** - keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home; 6 feet is the suggested spacing.

- **Essential Workers** - employee that performs work involving the safety of human life and the protection of property (ex. Medical personnel, first responders, child care providers, grocery store staff, etc)
**Movement Activity**

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**Stomp Out COVID-19!**

**Materials:** Balloons, pantyhose

**Age:** Preschoolers and older

**Directions:** Blow up as many balloons as you have. Scatter the balloons around the house or room. Pretend that the balloons are the COVID-19 virus and your feet are the cure. Call out a color and allow the children to stomp and pop (eliminate) any balloon (COVID-19) of that color. Once all the balloons (COVID-19) are popped (eliminated), have the child/children pick up the popped balloons (eliminated virus) and place them in the trash.

**Modification:** Every different color can be a different stage to cure. Put balloons into pantyhose before blowing up, blow up and seal pantyhose to reduce contact with latex and reduce risk of putting broken pieces in mouth.

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**Coronavirus SMASH**

**Materials:** Balloon/beach ball, stick, decorative materials, string

**Age:** Preschool

**Directions:**
1. Decorate a balloon/beach ball to look like the coronavirus cell.
2. Use string to suspend your coronavirus cell from a high place.
3. Use your “cure wand” (stick) to strike the “coronavirus cell” (balloon/beach ball)
4. Continue until it is knocked off the string or smashed.

**Possible Modifications:**
- Fill the balloon with different items
- Vary the height of the balloon/beach ball/container
- Hang multiple balloons or objects

Please feel free to modify: make more appropriate, etc.
Swing’s Orange Shake

**Ingredients:** 1/4 cup orange juice concentrate, 1 cup low fat milk, 2 tsp sugar, 1 ripe banana

**Directions:** In a blender, combine all ingredients and blend until smooth. Makes two cups.

**Modification:** Substitute sugar with honey, Stevia, or other fruits. Combine pineapple concentrate or use only pineapple concentrate.

Good Source of Vitamin C

Little Pizzas

**Ingredients:** 1/2 of an English muffin, 2 tbsp. pizza sauce, 1 Tbsp. shredded lowfat mozzarella cheese, sliced vegetables

**Directions:** Preheat oven at 425 degrees. Spread pizza sauce on muffin and top with cheese. Arrange vegetables on top in a fun design. Heat in oven for about five minutes or until cheese is melted.

** Modification:** Add other toppings to expand childrens tastes. Some easy starters include pineapple and grilled chicken.
Additional Resources:

Answering Your Young Child’s Questions About Coronavirus —
https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3265-answering-your-young-child-s-questions-about-coronavirus

Helping Children Cope with Frightening News —
https://childmind.org/article/helping-children-cope-frightening-news/

What to Say to Your Child About the Coronavirus —

How to Help Children Manage Fears —
https://childmind.org/article/help-children-manage-fears/

Tips for Calming Anxious Kids —
https://childmind.org/article/tips-calming-anxious-kids/

Anger, Sadness, Fear: Showing Our Emotions to Our Kids —
https://www.janetlansbury.com/2020/03/anger-sadness-fear-showing-our-emotions-to-our-kids/

Free downloadable picture book explaining coronavirus to kids and answering their questions —
https://nosycrowcoronavirus.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/Coronavirus_ABookForChildren.pdf

Kids Video Explaining Corona Virus —
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVvVTdhGqaA&vl=en

Sesame Street Townhall with CNN —
Be Active Kids is an award-winning program. This innovative, interactive health program for children ages birth to five is available to adults working in child care centers, child care homes, and schools across North Carolina. Its evidence-based and evidence-informed messages are carried out through five cuddly and adventurous characters including Blue the caring cub, Glide the bird, Swing the monkey, Leap the rabbit and Dart the dog. Using these characters as their guides, children can engage in playful experiences, interact with a story, explore their natural surroundings, and much more.

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