



# CHOOSE TO BE NICE

## BOREDOM BUSTERS FOR FAMILIES

Below are a variety of activities you can do even while practicing social distancing due to COVID-19. Despite the challenges we face, we have also been given a unique opportunity to create new routines and norms, even if temporary, so have fun with it!! We would love to see what you are all doing, so please post your pictures, videos, drawings, etc., and tag us on social media #choosetobenice.

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**CTBN BULLETIN BOARD:** Dedicate a space in your home (it can be a bulletin board, a wall space, or your refrigerator) and hang any artwork your family creates using our activities.

**CREATE A COZY NICE NOOK:** Create a special spot in your house where anyone can go when they need a break, or to read and relax. It can also be used as a place for reflection. It doesn't need to be a separate room - it can be a corner of a room, or even a designated chair. Challenge your kids to think of creative ways to make a Cozy Nice Nook without spending money. Share a picture of your Nice Nook on social media using #cozynicenook or on social media #choosetobenice!!

**CHOOSE TO BE NICE MOMENTS:** Brainstorm with your family about ways everyone can reinforce the Choose To Be Nice values at home. For example, everyone chipping in to wash the dishes shows teamwork, listening to directions shows respect, and doing chores shows responsibility, etc.

**MINDFULNESS:** Build a few minutes of mindfulness into the start of each day, together as a family. This time can be an opportunity to relax, regulate emotions, and prepare for the day.

**DAILY REFLECTIONS:** At the end of each day, ask family members to take a moment to reflect on their interactions with one another and how those interactions made everyone feel. If needed, you can discuss how those interactions could be improved. You can say them aloud or write them on a piece of paper.

**JOURNALING:** Set aside time to journal each day, even if it's only a few words or a couple of sentences about how you're feeling that day. The act of writing down our thoughts (happy, sad, afraid, worried, hopeful) can help us focus and relieve stress.

**STAY FIT:** Exercise is so important to our mental well being. Take a walk outside, ensuring to keep your distance from others. Try a free online fitness class. Set an exercise challenge with your kids doing a set number of push ups, jumping jacks, running in place, etc. Try a free online yoga class.

**THE DAILY NICE:** Follow our Daily Nice on social media. Try coming up with a weekly list that works for your family (it can include quotes, actions, and other ways to Choose To Be Nice and think of others). Display your list on the refrigerator for all to see and start each morning with your Daily Nice. This is a great way to start the day!

## **BOREDOM BUSTERS FOR FAMILIES**, *continued*

**OPEN MIC NIGHT:** Have children write a story, a poem, or a song. It can be about anything of their choosing. Stuck for ideas? Use the nine Choose To Be Nice values as a starting point. Parents can join too! Plan a Family Open Mic Night and have family members share aloud.

**CHOOSE TO BE NICE PAPER CHAIN:** Come up with a list of “50 Ways To Choose To Be Nice” and write each one on a strip of paper (plain or colored). When someone in the family completes a challenge, add it to the chain. Hang the chain somewhere visible in the home, and see how long it gets and how quickly you can complete it.

**CREATE A KINDNESS WALL:** Using sticky notes (or squares of copy paper) keep track of the helpful or kind acts your family members are doing for one another or members of the community. Post the notes on a wall or your refrigerator for the whole family to see.

**SPRING CLEAN & REFRESH:** Use this time to organize your closets, bedrooms, basements, garages, and drawers. Donate what you no longer need. You could even rearrange the furniture!

**COMMUNITY CHECK:** Reach out to your elderly neighbors by phone. They will be grateful to know someone cares and a chat may be just what they need. Giving to others boosts your own morale too! You can also reach out to your local elderly housing committee, local food pantry, or local homeless shelters to ask what sort of assistance they need at this time. Making online donations or ordering supplies online could be helpful.

**GAME TIME:** play board games, do a puzzle, play cards. You can even play “Remember when we...” or ask your children to make up a story. See how creative you can get! You might be surprised.

**CREATE A PHOTO BOOK:** Go out in the yard and take pictures. You’d be amazed at how many things you can photograph (a pretty flower, a blade of grass, a section of fence, a bird, squirrel or other small animal, parts of your house you never noticed, trees and bushes, etc.) Make it a game. Then come inside and create a photo book online.

**TREASURE HUNT:** Make a list of 15-20 small household items and hide them around the house (this can be done inside or outside). Give your children the list, set a timer and see how many things they can find. Then ask them to do the same for you!

**VIDEO CHATS:** set a time each week to video chat with special friends or family. Get creative and make a funny backdrop (digitally or by hand) for them to see.

**LEARN A NEW SKILL:** Get online and learn a new skill. It could be a new subject, an art technique, play an instrument you long forgot you had, a foreign language, etc. Many companies are offering services for free!

**READ OR LISTEN:** Read a book, magazine or comic book, or listen to the audiobook version. (Audible.com is offering books online for free.) Read aloud to your children and ask your children to read aloud to you. Or listen to a podcast. There are so many podcasts for a variety of ages and interests!

## BOREDOM BUSTERS FOR FAMILIES, *continued*

**FAMILY INCENTIVES:** Offer fun rewards (breakfast for dinner, a special treat, “parent” for a day (be careful with this one :)) when someone does something nice for another family member, does a chore even when not asked, or practices any of the nine Choose To Be Nice values on a regular basis, etc.

**ART CHALLENGE:** Have children draw (adults can join too) pictures that focus on messages of hope, support, and kindness. You could also have them draw pictures of each of the Nine Nice Values. Hang artwork up in your house for all to see or hang in your windows to brighten the days of those walking by! Share your art with us on social media #ChooseToBeNice

**COOKING CHALLENGE:** Create a daily/weekly menu and involve your children. Or ask them to cook a meal with you - it will help them with their reading and math skills! Bake a favorite treat once a week for various family members. Have a bake-off and do a family taste test.

**REVIEW THE PROMISE:** If your children are having a hard time remembering the CTBN values, review the promise they made with you and ask them if they would like to renew their promise.

**MAKE FORTS:** Have your kids make a fort using pillows, blankets and sheets. If you are lucky, maybe they will invite you in!! Better yet, surprise your kids and make them a fort. You can use it as a reading nook, a spot to take a nap, or a place to let them have a special snack.

**FAMILY NIGHT:** Designate a few nights a week as family night and join your children! Play a board game, their favorite video game, a card game, or watch a movie.

**FUN WITH SCIENCE:** Follow “Bill Nye the Science Guy” for lots of great science related information and simple kid experiments.

**LOCAL ANIMAL FUN:** On your daily walk, have your children look for small animals in their community (ie squirrels, chipmunks, maybe you have alligators!) and ask them to research the animals online. They can share what they’ve learned at the dinner table. You might be surprised by what you learn!

**FEED THE BIRDS:** Create homemade bird feeders for birds and hummingbirds. There are lots of great online resources to show you how to make inexpensive feeders. See what birds come to the feeder and see if you can identify them. Go online to your local Conservation website for information on local birds.

**FAMILY CHATS:** Set aside time each week to connect as a family. Not sure what to ask or say? Try asking everyone to choose a “rose” and a “thorn” (ie a high and a low for the day or week) that happened that week. You can also use the CTBN Discussion Questions to get started. Give each family member a chance to participate and respond.

**COUNT YOUR COINS:** Do you have a jar of coins that need to be counted? Enlist your children to help count them! Younger children can separate them by size and color. Older children can separate and add the total. They can even help roll them into coin sleeves from the bank.