

Device-free Ways to Occupy your Kids in Waiting Rooms & Restaurants

We've all been there – for those times when you need some back-up support....

BOOKS! Great for all ages! Get your family members in the habit of grabbing a book (or bag of books) before heading out the door. Keep some in the car.

For Toddlers and Pre-schoolers: Make a “restaurant bag” of miscellaneous objects that you never unpack and always have by the door. Some ideas include:

1. Wikki Stix - wax sticks that kids can sculpt into shapes
2. Paper and markers in a ziplock bag
3. [Plus Plus toys](#)
4. Picture books
5. [A retractable sewing measuring tape](#) (child can pull out tape, push button to retract, and repeat tirelessly! Amazing on airplanes for toddlers)
6. [Melissa and Doug's On the Go Water Wow](#) (Vibrant colors appear by painting with water. Erases when dry; reusable over and over.)

For the Elementary Years -- Make a “restaurant bag” of miscellaneous objects that you never unpack and always have by the door. Some ideas include:

1. [Paint by Sticker Kids](#)
2. [Plus Plus toys](#)
3. A collection of tiny random figures/objects in a small bag. Play a memory game where you spill the contents on the table, then take away one object, and see who in your family can figure out which object was taken away.
4. [Melissa and Doug's On the Go Water Wow](#) (Vibrant colors appear by painting with water. Erases when dry; reusable over and over.)
5. Transportable family games (tried-and-true ways to both pass the time and enjoy each other's company if you have a group of 2+)
 - Uno cards
 - [Toss Up!](#) (a personal favorite - so simple, really fun, and fits in your pocket)
 - Spot It! (there are many versions of this matching game)
 - [Tenzi](#)
 - [Slapzi](#) (by the makers of Tenzi)
 - [Zeus on the Loose](#)

In Middle School & Beyond

1. Play together: card games, Uno, Slapzi, Tenzi, Toss Up! (see above).
 - [Exploding Kittens card game](#)
2. Look up “mindfulness coloring books” or “coloring books for teens” to find many age-appropriate coloring books. Invest in some fine markers. Multiple people can participate in this activity together.

Visit our website for an online version of this handout that includes hyperlinks.