



## Parenting from a Distance

### Ideas for Separated Families from Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance

Make a chain out of construction paper with your child. Each loop in the chain will represent one day or week. Send your child the strips of paper and have them start attaching them to chain. You can write personal messages on the strips of paper. Keep sending the strips of paper until you are able to be with your child again.

Start a joint family history project. Have relatives send stories or information to your child about their childhood. Have your child organize all the stories and information in a three-ring binder. When you are able to return home, you will be able to share a family history together.

Suggest to your child to make a kite. Ask your child write on the kite all of the wonderful things you will do together when you are with them again. Then, the child can fly the kite and let the words float to you on the wind.

Have your child plant a seed in a pot so that she/he can watch it grow. As the plant grows, so do the days pass. When you get back with your child you will both have a beautiful flower or vegetable to share.

Ask a friend or relative to buy Hershey kisses. Each night before the child goes to bed, they can have a kiss from you.

Make a "Bumps and Bruises" package to be opened when your child is injured. It might include a note saying you care, a band-aid and a lollipop or, a care package for when a child is ill. Included in the package might be a can of chicken noodle soup, a get-well card, a coloring book and crayons.

Every night for a week, write down 5 things you appreciate about your child. By the end of the week you will have written 35 things. Send the list to your child.

Circle the spot on your letter that you kissed.

Send a "Heart Attack." Cut out heart shaped pieces of paper and write on them the things you appreciate about your child. (If you can't cut out the hearts, draw them on a piece of paper). Place all the hearts in an envelope and send them to your child.

Have someone fill a jar with the exact number of M&M's as days that are left until you see each other. Instruct your child to eat one a day until you are together again.

Have a friend or a relative buy a package of valentines. Have the person write special messages to your child from you on each one of them. Send them to the child for Valentine's Day,

At Thanksgiving, send a "thank you note" thanking your child for all the things he/she has done for you. Also, include your favorite memories of Thanksgiving and any holiday traditions you had as a child..

Ask your child what his/her New Year's resolutions are. Find ways to help him/her accomplish the new goals.