

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- Engagement activities create purpose and lead to relaxation and satisfaction.
- The activities stimulate the brain and help keep the cells communicating with one another.
- Connecting with another person during an activity creates moments of joy.
- When choosing an activity, match interest with capability.
- Discontinue an activity if it leads to confusion or frustration.
- If an activity has multiple steps, provide guidance as needed, one step at a time. Listening to a series of things to do then trying to remember and perform them can be challenging.
- Think creatively and do not be afraid to try new things.

ACTIVITIES AT HOME

Creative

- Color with large crayons
- Chalk pastels
- Watercolors
- Paint-by-number
- Paint with water

Crafts

- Cut pictures out of magazines
- Create shapes and mosaics with different colored papers
- Magnetic letters or shapes on a metal tray
- Do needlepoint with large, plastic needle and large-hole canvas
- Arrange flowers, real or artificial
- Thread beads or pasta on string or shoelace

Fun

- Puzzles with larger pieces
- Large LEGO/DUPLO blocks
- Bake cookies
- Knead dough
- Playdough
- Clay
- Pattern blocks and boards

Games

- Large tic-tac-toe
- Ring toss
- Cornhole
- Simple board games
- Matching games
- Bingo with animals or instruments

Technology

- Simple games on the iPad such as popping balloons or bubbles
- Live cams at zoos and aquariums
- Explore favorite places, cities, museums, etc. using internet sites
- Scroll through google images of a favorite subject like Golden Retrievers, daffodils or Paris

Career-focused

- Consider career or hobbies and simplify skills associated with it, such as:
 - Stuffing envelopes or folding paper
 - Typing or using an adding machine
 - Changing a baby doll's clothes or folding clothes
 - Drawing with a ruler and pencils

Homemaking

- Help set the table, dry dishes, and prepare food as able (e.g., pour pre-measured ingredients into a bowl and stir).
- Shake cream in a jar to make butter
- Repetitive tasks, such as folding washcloths or balling socks (large quantities can be purchased for a low cost at dollar stores)
- Sort coins, buttons, colored pom-poms, clothespins, colored plastic silverware, or keys using a sectioned tackle box or multiple containers
- Assemble large nuts and bolts together
- Fit PVC pipes together
- Untie large loose knots in rope
- Tinker board or busy apron

Music

- Rhythm is in the right side of the brain and it is typically intact for a long time.
 - Listen to favorite songs
 - Engage members of the care team by asking them to create playlists
 - Use a simple music player
 - Purchase simple musical instruments, such as rhythm sticks or bells (or make a shaker by putting rice in a container)
 - Clap hands in rhythm with the song
 - Dance

Physical activities

- Go for a walk in the neighborhood or on a nearby track
- Yoga or T'ai chi classes
- Chair exercises
- Garden
- Weed

- Water plants
- Feed the birds
- Sweep
- Rake leaves
- Relax outdoors, observe the sights and sounds of nature
- Have a picnic (indoors or out)
- Going for a drive
- Attend a sporting event
- Play catch with a large beach ball
- Play volleyball with balloons

Doll or pet therapy

- Help care for a family pet, including walking, feeding, and brushing
- Purchase a stuffed animal dog or cat (especially mechanical ones that make them appear more lifelike)
- Watch fish in a tank or birds in a cage
- Care for a doll

Relaxation

- Spa day
 - Schedule an appointment or create a home spa with foot soak, pedicure, manicure, and massage.
- Look at old pictures and reminisce
- Watch family videos
- Watch reruns of a favorite sports team, including a Super Bowl or World Series
- Look at memorabilia or favorite treasured trinkets
- Watch favorite movies
- Read from a favorite book or poem
- Look through vintage magazines or catalogues



- Make photo books or a life story book
- Recite favorite spiritual verses, inspiring quotes, prayers, or songs
- Participate in religious services (in person or online)

Volunteer

- Visit website for Hands On Charlotte for volunteer activities.

Outings

- Visit website for Charlotte's Got a Lot or Charlotte on the Cheap.
- Check the local newspaper or neighborhood publication for updated calendar of events.
- Check the local library or senior center for upcoming activities.