

# Connection and Healthy Touch Activities

The following activities can be used by parents or caregivers with their children who may struggle with trust or attachment issues. These activities promote connection through healthy touch, eye contact, and trust building.



## The Hand Slap Game

The caregiver and child place hands together as the picture shows. Whoever's hands are on bottom tries to quickly move their hands to calmly "slap" the top of the other before the other hands are moved. This common game can be played with a connection purpose. Not only does this allow for touch between caregiver and child, it also forces face-to-face contact and self-control. This allows the caregiver to offer encouragement through eye contact, smiles, and verbal praises.

## Letters on the Back

The caregiver and child take turns writing letters, numbers, or words on each other's backs using the pointer finger. If a child has suffered abuse, or the attachment/trust issues are severe, this activity could also be done with the pointer finger on the hand or forearm (with the letter guesser not looking) instead of the back. This activity promotes trust and connection through healthy touch. It also gives opportunities for praises while "writing" letters.



## Face Painting

Typically, face painting is a fun event for children. This is something that can be done in the home with caregivers to promote connection through eye contact and touch. In this activity, a brush is doing the touch instead of a hand. This may be a good first step for some youth. Caregivers should allow children to paint their faces too! It is part of the fun, connection, and trust building. Caregivers should be aware of any allergies or sensory concerns. If your child does not like the way the paint or brush feels on his or her skin, it is best to try another activity.