

Connection Zoo Play-Based Learning Helps Kids Feel Well, Do Well and Be Well

New Social and Emotional Learning Game Empowers Children to Thrive in Everyday Social Situations

MINNEAPOLIS, MN, USA, February 20, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Parents want their kids to be happy and healthy. As rising rates of childhood stress and anxiety impact even the youngest kids, a new play-based learning toolkit offers hope. Designed by a mother-and-son team to help kids effectively manage big emotions and anxiety, build strong relationships and feel better, Connection Zoo® offers screen-free fun and connected learning through conversation and play.

Rising technology use drastically impacts human connectedness, especially among youth. A recent study links youth screen time of more than one hour per day to progressively lower psychological well-being, with high users of screens more than twice as likely to be diagnosed with depression or anxiety.* When not addressed, these issues create lasting effects on development and academic success.



Joined here by some of their Connection Zoo animal friends, mother-and-son team Kjirsten and Taylor Mickesh created Connection Zoo to empower people to form meaningful connections that improve their well-being and performance.

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Our culture is experiencing a social and emotional crisis. Connection Zoo offers a screen-free way to teach kids the social and emotional skills they need to feel well, do well and be well.”

Kjirsten Mickesh, Co-Founder of ConnectHuman

“Our culture is experiencing a social and emotional crisis” said Kjirsten Mickesh, co-founder and CEO of ConnectHuman, maker of Connection Zoo. “Our brains are wired for human connection, and yet, the rise of digital media is eroding our emotional connection. Connection Zoo offers a screen-free way to teach kids the social and emotional skills they need to feel well, do well and be well.”

How Connection Zoo Works

Connection Zoo can be used as conversation cards or played as a game. It’s fun, easy and portable. Connection Zoo uses animal images and fun facts to create

associations between the animals and the social and emotional experience. The animal associations give kids the words they need to talk about what they’re feeling and thinking, the courage to ask for help, and the confidence and skills to engage in everyday social situations. With Connection Zoo, kids are zookeepers, responsible for knowing their animals, talking about their animals, taking care of their animals, and inviting supportive people to their zoo.

"Connection Zoo helps kids thrive, not just survive." says Mickesh, "It can be challenging to communicate with kids about anxiety and stress, especially when they don't have the words to talk about what they are feeling and thinking. Connection Zoo uses conversation and play to create connections, develop awareness and teach critical life skills."

"Socializing with those around me contributes to my happiness and creativity," adds Connection Zoo Designer Taylor Mickesh. "I would love for everyone to feel comfortable in social situations, and know there are people in their lives they can lean on when they need support. We hope Connection Zoo will help by teaching kids social and emotional skills at a young age, enabling them to better manage stress and anxiety."

Connection Zoo offers [both family game kits and educator kits](#) at shop.connectionzoo.com, with expansion packs and services launching later this year. Free resources also can be accessed at connectionzoo.com.

About ConnectHuman
Minneapolis-based ConnectHuman was founded by mother-and-son team, Kjirsten and Taylor Mickesh, to help people form the connections essential for a happy and healthy life. Connection Zoo is used by families, educators and therapists and can be ordered at shop.connectionzoo.com.

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*sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2211335518301827#f0010

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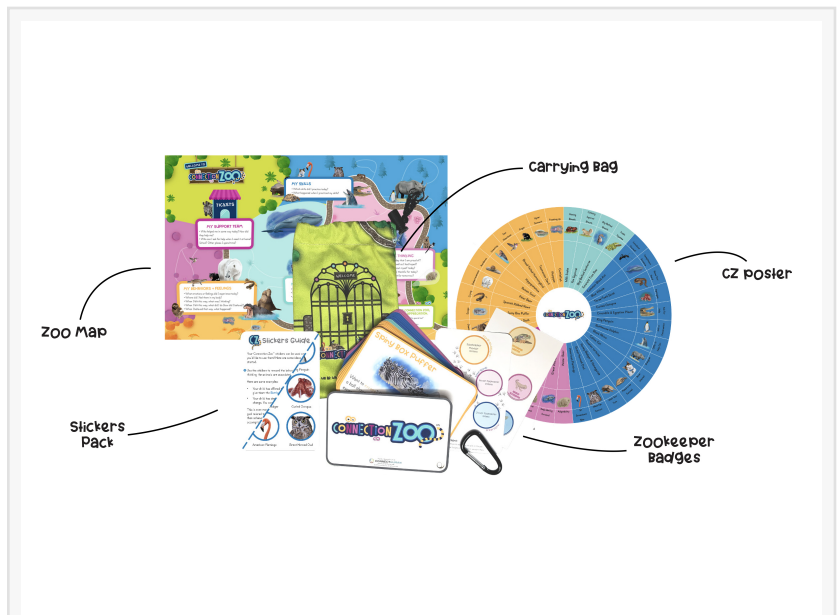
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Connection Zoo Family Game Kit contains animal cards for conversation starters or gameplay, zoo map, online printable activities, stickers and goal sheets, and zookeeper progress badges. Educator kits include teaching guides and SEL tools. Therapists may use either kit.



Connection Zoo provides families with a fun, easy way to connect, play and learn together. Connection Zoo cards can be used as conversation cards, or played as a game.

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