



# TANTRUM

## Tantrum Youth Arts Creative Resource: **Pen Pals**

**Suggested age range: 5-12**  
**Involvement from parents: Some**

## Introduction:

Even with technology, there's still nothing quite like receiving a handwritten letter. And while it may be some time before we can travel and meet people living in different parts of the world, who said we can't travel in our minds?

### Instructions:

For young people:

**Tantrum is excited to tell you that you've been matched with your very own Pen Pal!**

They're exactly the same age as you but they live far away. This may be somewhere in Australia or even overseas.\*

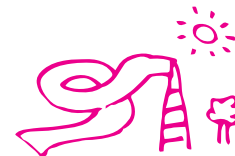
1. **Write your first letter using or copying the template below.** Tell your Pen Pal a little bit about yourself. What do you enjoy doing the most? What are your brothers or sisters or pets like? What's something in your house that you treasure?

~~dear pen pal.~~

Dear Pen Pal. Last night I put spaghetti on a sandwich. It was amazing!

2. **You might also like to include a drawing.** Using only your favourite colour, draw your parents or your backyard or your dream fun park - how many loops would your rollercoaster have?

this is a drawing of the water slide in my backyard



3. **End your letter with a question for your Pen Pal.** What do you want to find out about them? What might be the same or different about where they live? What's their imagination like? Remember, the best kind of questions are the ones that can't just be answered with a "yes" or a "no".

WHAT'S YOUR  
BEST FRIEND LIKE?

What would your special  
power be if you were a  
superhero?

4. **Give your letter to your parent to post and wait for a response.** Long-distance mail takes time. It will definitely be a while, so kick back, relax and look forward to whenever your Pen Pal writes back.
5. **Decorate your mailbox while you wait and make your local postie smile!** Draw your design on a piece of paper and show your parents. Once they give you the 'thumbs up', bring your design to life by using arts and craft materials or anything else you find around the house.

\*Your Pen Pal will be the creation of your parent / guardian's imagination. This doesn't make them any less real.

For parents:

It's pretty tough being a parent right now. That's why **Tantrum is giving you the chance to pretend to be a child again!**

1. **Play the role of your child's Pen Pal by coming up with your own kid alter-ego.**  
They are exactly the same age as your child. They live far away in a place that you've visited or lived in before (so you can speak from experience). They are similar to what you were like as a child but they're also different in some ways. Exactly how is up to you!
2. **Once your child has written their first letter, your kid alter-ego will write them a reply.** Have fun with this! Use handwriting and draw in a way that reflects the age of your alter-ego. Write your letter when your child is asleep or not looking to keep up the magic. And remember, long-distance mail is slow so take as many days as you like to respond.
3. **Once you've written your letter, put it in an envelope and secretly place it in your mailbox for your child to find.**
4. Now that you're Pen Pals, **it's up to you and your child how many letters you write** to each other and how long you keep it up. Get creative with your prompts. Your questions can be about the real world or more imaginative. What can be drawn? What small things can be sent with the letter? Don't hesitate to get in touch with Tantrum if you'd like some inspiration.

**Beyond having fun, this activity may give you another option for communicating with your child, helping them to document this strange time and how they feel about it.**



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supported by

Hunter  
**PRIMARYCARE**

 **headspace**  
Newcastle

## TANTRUM

**Dear Pen Pal,**

[illegible]

Draw something for your Pen Pal HERE

**From**

