

Activities & play ideas

Role-Playing

Stimulating kids' creativity is easier than you think! Role-playing for kids can be as simple or elaborate as you'd like, using items you likely already have lying around the house. (If not, "making do" is great for young minds, too.)

Some ideas include:

- ❖ Zookeeper: Overturn some laundry baskets over stuffed animals, with a bowl for some rubber duckies, food and water bowls, etc. Or let the kids be the animals!
- ❖ Grocery store: Grab some stickers, non-perishables, and some coins or fake money.
- ❖ Airplane with pilot: Pull some chairs into two lines to look like an airplane cabin—or just enough chairs to look like a cockpit. Let the kids do the rest.
- ❖ Band: Make instruments out of household items and recyclable containers. Have a Showtime!
- ❖ Act out your favorite fairy tale or children's book.

Learning, Playing and Interacting!

Babies and young children are powerful learners, reaching out into the world and making sense of their experiences with other people, objects and events. As they explore and learn, children are naturally drawn to play.

The adult is such a vital part of the enabling environment in the early years. Without the role of the adult, children may not have carefully thought out play environments in which to play, be safe, become involved, learn and thrive.



Messy play

Home-made slime

Did you know you can make your own slime or "goop" for a fun learning and play activity? kids can learn about valuable scientific principles while they create, play with and explore. This recipe for Oobleck makes some very odd goo indeed. Move your hands through it slowly or pour it, and it's a slimy liquid. But squish or squash it together, or hit it, and it's solid. Make it and your little ones will love it!

You will need:

- 300g cornflour
- 225ml water
- A few drops of green food colouring

Directions:

- Put the cornflour in a bowl and pour over the water and food colouring.
- Mix until there are no lumps – you'll have to mix slowly so it stays liquid!



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Cooking together

Fish Cakes

“Making your own fish cakes is so quick and easy – these ones taste great with tuna, too.”

Ingredients:

- 500g mashed potatoes (leave chunky)
- 500g cooked fish, flaked (cod/salmon, haddock)
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 tablespoon grated lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- salt and pepper to taste
- plain flour for dusting
- olive oil for frying

Method:

Prep:15min › Cook:20min › Ready in:35min

In a bowl, combine all ingredients except for the flour and olive oil. Flour a clean work surface. Take 1 heaping tablespoon of the fish cake mixture, roll into a ball, then pat down into a flat patty. Dust lightly with flour. Heat olive oil in a large frying pan. Shallow fry the cakes until brown and crispy on both sides.

Let us get moving

Our kids model our behaviour. Their attitudes and actions toward everything from nutrition to exercise are shaped by our own actions and behaviours. If we want our kids to eat well, we need to eat well. If we want them to exercise, we need to exercise. Exercising as a family is not only a fun way to improve fitness, it's a way to cultivate the culture of wellness and develop positive exercise habits at a young age.

Why not create your own obstacle course or boot camp style workout with various exercises. Or how about simply holding your own dance party where you can work up a sweat dancing all around the house.

Sometimes the simplest solution is the best, so how about incorporating regular walks, bike rides, or nature trails. You can also encourage more movement by creating an environment that invites climbing, jumping, hopping and general physical play.



“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood”

Stories, Songs & Rhymes

Making A Song Bag

This is a fun way of choosing songs to sing with children of all ages. It can also improve children's interest in group singing time.

Fill a draw string bag with a variety of objects relating to different songs, such as a small doll for Miss Polly, a sheep for ba ba black sheep, a duck for five little ducks etc. During singing time allow the children to take it in turns to put their hand into the bag and pull out an object, then sing the song relating to that object. The children can hold onto their object until the end of the singing activity when they can place them back in the bag.

Useful links

<https://www.sebright.hackney.sch.uk/childrens-centre>

<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/about-change4life>

<https://www.learningtrust.co.uk/content/your-childs-journey-birth-five>