

Ideas for playing (and learning) at home

In addition to playing with the toys you have and sharing books together, here are some ideas to learn through play at home:

Mirror Play



- Position your child in front of the mirror so that they can see both their reflection and your reflection.
- Imitation - make funny faces in the mirror and see if they do the same (wrinkle nose, stick out tongue, widen eyes, etc). Copy their funny faces
- Point to your nose, hair, eyes, etc and name them. This helps to learn the names of body parts
- Put on glasses, hats, jewellery, make marks on face with make up or sauces

Resources: A mirror

Animal (or any small object) Tape Rescue



**ANIMAL
TAPE
RESCUE**



The goal is for the child to remove all the animals and the tape. It's a hard job and a tall order for fingers to do that kind of work!

Getting the tape pulled up, getting the object off the tape, and getting the tape off their fingers - it's a lot of steps.

Resources: Masking tape, small animals or figures or anything else hard, a table surface

Make Music



Get pans and big spoons and make a loud noise together.
Put a small bit of rice inside a clean yogurt pot and sellotape another pot to the top to make a shaker
Put on a favourite song and play along!

Resources - Pans, spoons, yogurt pots, rice, sellotape

Crawling Obstacle Course



Arrange tables and chairs and model crawling under and over them, in a circuit.

Resources: tables and chairs

Intensive Interaction



The child leads and directs, with you responding to and joining-in with the behaviour. Have enjoyable and relaxed interactions. The fundamentals of communication are gradually rehearsed and learnt in a free-flowing manner.

Resources: time

Music and movement



Put on some slow music to stretch to.

Choose some music that then makes you want to dance - sit and sway and clap along to the music. If you can - get up and dance or carry your child while you dance around the room.

Once you're all tired, put on some calm music to lie down, have a cuddle and relax.

Resources - Music, CD or youtube

Mark Making



Mark making can develop the desire to explore and experiment. They may enjoy the sensory and physical experience of mark making. This enhances their physical development by improving their fine motor skills and helps to develop their hand-eye coordination.

- String
- Sellotape
- Sticks
- Stones
- Leaves
- Egg boxes

And play and explore them

- stack them to build a tower
- line them up
- put them inside each other
- attach them together

This helps to develop an understanding of size, shape, balance, problem solving

Resources: Cardboard boxes and plastic containers

Bath time



Take in some extra things from the kitchen in to the bath - plastic tubs, spoons, colanders and explore pouring the water between them.

Or take in some plastic toys - people, animals, vehicles and give them a wash!

Or turn off the main light, turn on some party music and have a disco bath!

Resources: Bath, music, kitchen objects, small plastic toys

Massage



With low lighting, and calm music, slowly massage your child's body. You could use a cream or oil or just your hands. Take your time over each body part, listening to your child's cues about what they are enjoying.

Resources: Optional cream or oil

Playdough



Make playdough. You will need

- 8 tablespoons plain flour
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 60ml warm water
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Method

1. Mix the flour and salt in a large bowl. In a separate bowl mix together the water and the oil.
2. Pour the liquid into the flour mix and bring together with a spoon.
3. Dust a work surface with a little flour and turn out the dough. Knead together for a few minutes to form a smooth, pliable dough.
4. Store in a plastic sandwich bag (squeeze out the air) in the fridge to keep it fresh

Play with the playdough - squeeze, stretch, poke, flatten, make in to balls.

Use implements to change the shape - plastic or blunt cutlery, scissors, combs
Add things to it - leaves, small sticks, stones,

Resources: Flour, salt, water, oil, cutlery, scissors, leaves, sticks, stones

Wrestle!



Get some duvets and pillows and play fight! Wrestle around on the bed and tickle!

Resources: Pillows, bed

Hide and Seek



Hide little bits of fruit, or raisins or crisps or a favourite toy under or inside different containers and encourage your child to find them. This helps develop problem solving skills and to learn that things are still there even when we can't see them.

Resources: Tubs and containers, motivating toy or food