



Taunton Deane
Partnership College

Play Based Activities

We have put these activities together for you to use individually or with groups of children that may be accessing your school provision during lockdown. At the end they are sorted into touch and non-touch to support your planning. We hope they are useful.

Make your own Play-Doh; 1 cup of flour, salt, water, 2 teaspoons cream tartar, 1 tablespoon oil, a few drops of food colouring.

Microwave Method: - Add everything into a bowl and heat. Stir occasionally until mixture combines to form dough. Remove from bowl, being careful it's not hot, and kneed.

Play-Doh Squeeze or Prints; Place a ball of Play-doh between the child's hands and say 'squeeze!' This firm pressure can help organize a dysregulated child. You can also use Play-Doh to make finger, hand and footprints.

Cornflour and Water; put cornflour into a tray/bowl. Allow the child to add water a little at a time, mix using their hands. Children love the feel of the texture and the resistance from the ingredients. Food colouring and essence such as lavender can be added.

Jar, Nature Walk; Child and adult take a jar/plastic tub on their walk. Fill your jar with interesting things you discover. Back in the classroom/home discuss your findings and create a picture.

Indoor/Outdoor Gardens; Paper plate/container gardens are also great fun, child can forage outside for things to make their garden.

Calming Glitter Bottle; Using a small plastic drinks bottle, add an inch of clear glue. Fill the bottle using 3 parts warm water to dissolve the glue. Add the glitter before topping up the bottle with cold water. Ensure you glue inside the lid before securing.

Hand Breathing Model; Hold up one hand with fingers apart. Using you index finger on your other hand, draw individually around your raised hand fingers. When you use upwards motion take a deep breath in, when coming down the inside of the finger slowly breath out. This is a great activity to support self-regulation.

Lego Build; Follow the other person Lego construction.

Stress Balloons; stretch a balloon by blowing it up and deflating it several times. Insert a small funnel into the balloon and add flour. (use the unsharpened end of a pencil to push the flour through). Once filled, tie the balloon securely. You can use sharpie pens to draw family members, pets, things that you enjoy, feelings emoji's etc!

Lego Tower using Bricks and Dice; each player has the same amount, design and colour bricks. Each player takes it in turns to roll the dice (each player can have their own dice) and add the number of bricks shown. Keep going until each player runs out of bricks.

Pop the Bubble; Blow bubbles and get child to pop the bubble with a particular body part, for example, finger, toe, elbow, shoulder or ear. Bubbles readily capture the interest of young children and can be used as an engaging activity.

Try bubble tennis by blowing bubbles between you and the child.

Drawing Hands, Feet, or Body; Make a picture of the child's hand or foot by drawing it on a piece of paper.

Full body drawings - maintain verbal contact with the child as you draw, for example; 'I'm coming to your ankle; I'm coming to the tickle spot under your arm.' When drawing inside the legs always stop at the knees, ask the child to move away, then free draw the remainder section of the upper legs.

Hand/Feet Massage and Prints; using baby lotion massage child's hands/feet. After, sprinkle with talcum powder to make prints onto black paper. (these make great ghosts at Halloween).

Measuring; Measure the child's height, length of arms, legs, feet, hands, and so forth. Keep a record for later comparisons.

Mirroring; Face the child, move your arms, face, or other body parts and ask child to move in the same way. For a very active child you can use slow motion or vary the tempo. Take turns being the leader.

Stack of Hands; Put your hands palm down in front of child, have the child put his hands-on top; alternate hands to make a stack. Take turns moving the hand on the bottom to the top. You can also move from top to bottom.

Eye Signals; Hold hands and stand facing each other. Use eye signals to indicate direction and number of steps to take. For example, when you wink your left eye two times, both you and the child takes two side steps to the left and right. To make it more challenging, you can add signals for forward and backward movement as well (head back for backward, head forward for forward).

Messy Play; (older children love this too) -a plastic tray/box that could hold: dirt/mud (could make wonderful dinosaur land, or rain forest etc), sand, cornflakes, rice crispies, spaghetti (cooked and add oil and glitter for extra fun), cornflour/water/food colouring), paint, water, etc...whatever can be messy, can be fun!

Water/Sand Play, use tray with raised sides, plastic bowl, animal litter tray (new ones are relatively cheap to buy).

Paper Mache; put torn up paper and diluted PVA glue into a bowl/tray ... leave to soak for several minutes before covering boxes,

plastic bottles, balloons etc. Once dry and hard, decorate to your choosing!

Musical Instruments; shakers made from plastic bottles, yoghurt pots, plastic cups ... fill with rice, beads, buttons, small stones or pasta. Different shape boxes and elastic bands can make great guitars.

Paper Plate Masks; You could think of a theme such as: dinosaurs, animals, people, monsters, etc.

Salt Dough; In a bowl, mix together flour, salt, and water to make your dough. Mould the dough to create play foods, dinosaurs, animals, people etc. Leave to dry out overnight before decorating.

Dressing up; role play ... create a story. This can be fiction or factual.

Small world; dolls house, garage, cars, Lego, Duplo, Play Mobil, building blocks.

Painting; -free painting or linked to a theme, on paper, hands, fingers or feet, where ever is safe and fun.

Junk Modelling; (love the phrase 'anything can be anything' and it's especially true with junk) Be creative ... have fun!

Jewellery Making; using junk, pasta, clay (rolled, dried and painted) or old jewellery

Red Light, Green Light; Ask child to do something, such as run, jump, and move arms. Green light means go, red light means stop.

Follow the Leader; All participants stand and form a line holding on to the waist of the person in front of them. The first person chooses a particular way to move and all others copy. The leader goes to the back of the line and the new leader demonstrates a different way to

move around the room. This can also be done sitting in a circle and moving only the arms, head, and shoulders.

Funny Ways to Enter or Cross the Room; Make up different ways to cross a room, for example, hopping, tiptoeing, crawling or walking backwards. The adult and child can go across the room together if child cannot manage alone.

Hokey Cokey; Everyone stands in a circle and sings; "You put your right foot in / You put your right foot out etc!

Simon Says; Adult says 'Simon Says' and gives instructions.

Beep and Honk Variation; Make a special noise when you touch a specific face or body part. For example, elephant trumpeting when you touch your knee. Try to remember which noises go with the part when you do a series of touches.

Foil Prints; Shape a piece of foil around the child's elbow, hand, foot, face, ear or other body part then get a parent to come into the room and guess which shape/foil print goes with which body part.

Hide and Find the Objects; The hider gives the instructions 'hotter, colder, warm' etc.

Counting Fingers and Knuckles; Count from one to five on one hand and then start with ten on the other hand and count down. Have fun with the child - they have 11 fingers! You can also count all the knuckles on both hands. Children are often surprised to learn they have twenty-eight knuckles.

Hand of Support/Friendships; Draw around the child's hand or hands. In each finger, write the names they feel are supportive adults and/or their peer friendships.

Mask Making; provide a range of art and craft materials.

Create a Special Handshake; Make up a special handshake together.

Hand Clapping Games; Make sure you first rehearse the clapping pattern slowly so that you can easily get into a satisfying pattern before you add a rhyme such as 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes'.

Passing Funny Faces; Each person in a circle makes a funny face which is passed in turn to the next person around the circle. Each has a turn to create a funny face.

Progressive Pass Around; Sitting in a circle, one person passes a gentle touch to the next person (such as a pat on the back). The second person passes that touch to the third person plus one of their own. Each person adds a new touch.

Cotton Ball or Feather Guess; First demonstrate by touching the child's hand with a cotton ball and a feather; ask the child to notice the difference between the two sensations. Then ask the child to close their eyes and guess whether you are touching their hand with a feather or cotton ball.

Measure the Child's Jump, Hop, Leap, Stride etc; Record the distance using masking tape. Encourage the child whilst jumping etc.

You Choose; Give two choices: - stand by the door if you like carrots or by the window if you prefer peas. Stand by the cupboard if you like dogs or by the table if you prefer cats etc.

Puppets; Paper plates or paper bags make great puppets (animal, monster, people) puppets, or role play with bought ones. Use puppets to encourage communication and interaction. Also, great for developing child's imagination. Make your own puppets then use them to tell a story.

Pass A Squeeze or Touch Around; Pass a squeeze, to the next person around the circle.

Back Massage-Weather Report; Everyone in the circle turns to the right and puts his hands on the back of the person in front of them. The leader describes the weather and each person rubs the back of the next person to match the weather. For example, a warm sunny day could be a large circle, rain could be light finger tapping and lightning could be big zig-zags across the back.

Back Massage-Pizza Making; create a pizza with toppings of the child's choosing. Use massage movements with your hands on the child's back.

Balloon Tennis; Keep the balloon in the air as long as you can. You can use specified body parts to keep the balloon up, for example, only your hand or only your head.

Feather Blow and Catch; blow the feather to and from each other.

Straight Face Challenge; Child has to keep a straight face while you try and make them laugh by making funny faces.

Activities that Don't Require Touch:

- Make own Play- Doh.
- Cornflour and Water.
- Jar, Nature Walk.
- Indoor/Outdoor Gardens.
- Calming Glitter Bottle.
- Lego Build.
- Stress Balloons.
- Lego Tower using Bricks and Dice.
- Mirroring.

- Eye Signals.
- Messy Play.
- Water/Sand Play.
- Paper Mache.
- Musical Instruments.
- Paper Plate Masks.
- Salt Dough.
- Dressing up.
- Small world.
- Painting.
- Junk Modelling.
- Jewellery Making.
- Red Light, Green Light.
- Follow the Leader.
- Funny Ways to Enter or Cross the Room.
- Hokey Cokey.
- Simon Says.
- Beep and Honk Variation.
- Mask Making.
- Hand Clapping Games.
- Passing Funny Faces.
- Measure the Childs Jump, Hop, Leap, Stride etc.
- You Choose.
- Puppets.
- Straight Face Challenge.

Activities that Involve Touch

- Play-Doh Squeeze or Prints.
- Pop the Bubble
- Drawing Hands, Feet, or Body.
- Hand/Feet Massage and Prints.
- Measuring.

- Stack of Hands.
- Foil Prints.
- Hide and Find the Objects.
- Counting Fingers and Knuckles.
- Hand of Support/Friendships.
- Create a Special Handshake.
- Progressive Pass Around.
- Cotton Ball or Feather Guess.
- Pass A Squeeze or Touch Around.
- Back Massage-Weather Report.
- Back Massage-Pizza Making.
- Feather Blow and Catch; Balloon Tennis.