L.S.S.E.

Leisure Services and Supplemental Education

Family Fun Resource Packet

Follow us on

https://www.facebook.com/AmherstLSSE/

Instagram @ amherst_lsse

WWW.LSSE.ORG

TOWN OF AMHERST
LSSE
Leisure Services and Supplemental Education

Family Fun with LSSE

Hello and greetings from Amherst Leisure Services and Supplemental Education (LSSE).
We are here to assist the Amherst and surrounding communities with resources, guides, projects and more, with the hope of making the disruption to your daily lives caused by the COVID 19 virus easier on families.

Sincerely,
Nicole Abelli
LSSE Camps, Outreach & Special Events Coordinator

In this packet you will find

- A Sample Daily Schedule (use as a guide to keep structure)
- Art Projects (using what you already have on hand)
- A list of Podcasts for kids and families
- Easy ways to play with your kids when you are busy
- Cooking Activities/Recipes
- Games
- Bath Time
- Imaginative play
- Sensory play
- At home fitness with the family!
- Sing Alongs

For Updates and New Content

Follow us on

https://www.facebook.com/AmherstLSSE/

Instagram @ amherst_lsse

WWW.LSSE.ORG

TOWN OF AMHERST
LSSE
Leisure Services and Supplemental Education

Weekly and Daily Posts Available on our LSSE Facebook Page

Weeks	Themes
• Week A (3/23-3/27)	Art Extravaganza
• Week B (3/30-4/3)	Super Fun week! How to have a spirit week at home!
• Week C (4/6-4/10)	Games Galore! Fun games for the whole family
• Week D (4/13-4/17)	Around the world ! Activities, Cooking/Curriculum
• Week E (4/20-4/24)	Music and Dance
• Week F (4/27-5/1)	Family Movie/Game Nights and Indoor picnics
• Week G (5/4-5/8)	Fun with History! Travel through time at home!
• Week H: (5/11-5/15)	Animals, Nature and Dinosaurs! Discover and Learn about Animals and Nature

If you have any suggestions of what you would like to see from LSSE in terms of activities/ideas etc.

Please email me, Nicole Abelli at Abellin@amherstma.gov

I would be happy to hear your requests to assist you and your families in the most effective ways possible .

Follow us on

https://www.facebook.com/AmherstLSSE/

Instagram @ amherst_lsse

WWW.LSSE.ORG

TOWN OF AMHERST
LSSE
Leisure Services and Supplemental Education

Sample Daily Schedule with LSSE

LSSE is here to help make your day with your family easier, educational and FUN!

Time	Activity	Description
7:30 am - 7:45 am	RISE AND SHINE !	Wake up as usual for school: Brush teeth, make the bed, change out of PJ's.
7:45 am - 8:15 am	BREAKFAST	Help with food prep and dishes.
8:15 am - 8:30 am	MORNING WALK	Walk around the house walking up and down stairs in the home/Alternative morning yoga.
8:30 am - 9:00 am	MORNING CIRCLE	Calendar, what the weather is like, and what today's plans will be.
9:00 am - 11:30 am	WORK CYCLE	Language/ Reading/Vocabulary/Math/ Geography A Puzzle.
11:30 am - 12:00pm	RECESS	Some Sort of Physical Activity: Indoors or Outdoors.
12:00 pm - 12:30 pm	LUNCH	Help with food prep, clean up.
12:30 pm - 2:30 pm	SPECIALS	Science /Culture/History/Art/Computer/ Drama (Alternate daily).
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	P.E.	Physical Exercise: Gross motor games/Indoor/Outdoor Active Play.
3:00 pm - 3:30 pm	SNACKTIME/TEA TIME	Have a Poetry Tea Party/Art show/ or Story Telling while you have a snack.
3:30 pm - 4:00 pm	MUSIC	Introduce your child to different musicians/types of music: Have a musician of the week.
4:00 pm - 4:30 pm	THEMED STUDY	Sensory Activities: Playdough/Clay/Painting or other fine motor activities.
4:30 pm - 5:00 pm	MINDFULNESS	Gratitude Basket: Write down what you are grateful for today. Instruct Meditation/Stretching/Yoga or Breathing Exercises.
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	OUTDOOR/FREE PLAY	If possible go on on Bike or Scooter Rides/Nature Walks/ Scavenger Hunts. Alternatively Indoor Scavenger Hunts.
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	DINNER	Help with Dinner, Clean up the table, Sweep the floor, help do the dishes.
7:00 pm - 7:30 pm	CREATIVE PLAY	Put some music on, offer creative journaling/drawing and other craft supplies. Play a board or card game or play with legos or blocks.
7:30 pm - 8:00 pm	SHOWER/ BATH	While kids are getting ready for bed, take a minute to wipe down light switches door handles etc
8:00 pm - 8:30 pm	READING/ STORY TIME	Read a book out loud to your children/sing a lullaby. Alternate have them read to you .
8:30 pm	BEDTIME	Lights off, Time for sleep

You are free to modify it which ever way you wish!!!

This is just a guideline.

Please adjust and keep in mind Government and CDC Guidelines for social distancing and other safety precautions. Be well.

Twenty Fun Things to Freeze in Ice Blocks!

Ice is a fun, free, and awesome sensory play item. You can simply add ice blocks to a bowl, tub, or water table, or you can try this easy sensory play idea. The only thing you need for this activity is a little forward thinking, some containers, some water, and some fun things to freeze into ice blocks. Ask bigger kids to challenge to come up with a list of things you could freeze into ice blocks. They can spend the morning looking for small treasures you can freeze and writing lists.

Here is a list to get you started

- Sequins
- Glitter
- Flowers
- Leaves
- Glass/Plastic Gems
- Small plastic animals/dinosaurs
- Lego people or Lego Pieces
- Pipe cleaners
- Herbs – mint and rosemary smell nice
- Beads
- String
- Scraps of paper
- Lost marker lids
- Ribbon
- Grass clippings
- Fabric scraps
- Bottle caps
- Googly eyes
- Stones/Pebbles
- Use recycled yogurt containers and other small storage containers to freeze your treasures.
- Once they are all frozen you get to play!
- Dump your ice treasures into a big tub, add some scoops, eye droppers or small containers, and a little water to help get things melting.
- Your littles will love pouring water over the treasures and watching them slowly emerge from the ice.
- You could also add a hammer and screwdriver for bigger kids to chip away at the ice.
- **CAUTION:** Please be aware that some of these items are very small when they melt out of the ice blocks and may not be suitable for children who still put things in their mouths.

ART PROJECTS may require the use of small items not intended for children under 3 years old which could cause a choking hazard.

Making Mixed Media Portraits with Kids

What You'll Need

- Different collage items
- Old paintings/Magazines cut into different shapes
- Bits of tissue paper
- Yarn
- Stickers
- Paper
- Glue sticks
- Pencils, markers or crayons.
- Googly eyes- if it can be glued onto a piece of paper, use it!

This is the kind of project that can be done again and again simply by offering different materials.

Drawing on the walls?!

Okay, so we don't really want our kids drawing on the walls, but putting the portraits up on the wall and having your little artists create vertically has several benefits. First of all, novelty factor! Simply sticking these heads on the wall creates a whole different and exciting vibe. Secondly, working on a vertical surface employs a whole range of different muscles which are important to develop for writing. Thirdly, if you have a right-hander, place the materials on their left, or vice versa. This causes the mini maker to cross the midline (which is is a fancy way of saying that the child has to reach across their body). Crossing the midline is an important skill for young writers to practice and develop.

To Draw or Not to Draw

Draw the head in black marker onto a sheet of paper for children (who are 3-5y/o). This is done mainly so that you don't have to do too much explaining and can just let them jump into creating. If you have older children, you can encourage them to complete this step.

- If you have a mini maker who struggles to fill the whole paper when drawing, here's a trick. Fold the paper in half. Demonstrate how half the head has to fill the top half of the sheet, reaching all the way to the top edge. The bottom half is filled with the lower part of the head and neck. If you want to be a bit more precise, you could fold your paper into thirds.
- It's up to you what kind of creative brief you wish to provide.
- You could instruct your little artists to create a self-portrait, or a portrait of a loved one. In doing so, children would have to reflect upon what materials they could use to accurately depict their subject.
- Simply challenge your kids to make a face and they will have fun picking and choosing between materials.

Grid Art – An Easy Art Journal Idea for All Ages

(Grid art is exactly what it sounds like, making art from a grid of little squares)

It may sound kind of boring at first, but this simple art activity can have amazing results! One of the best things about this grid art prompt is that there is no right way to do it.You can use markers, or pencils, or paints or any art medium you like. You can color in random squares, or make patterns.
You can use the grid to make zentangle patterns, or mosaic like pictures.
The grid is just a prompt, a starting point, something to spark your creativity!

To have a go at some grid art you'll need

- Something to draw or color with
- A grid or graph paper

You could also use

- Colored pencils,
- Highlighter pens,
- A black marker,
- Watercolor pencils, or anything you like.

For younger children a larger 2 cm + grid is a good one to start with. It is quicker to fill in and easier for small hands to manage. Older kids can try a range of sizes, tiny 0.5 cm grids are fun for patterns, and bigger 1.5 cms grids work well with paint. What you do with the grids is totally up to you, but here are some fun ideas to try.

Easy Grid Art Ideas

Fill in the squares with random colors – use markers, pencils, paint or anything you like. Fill in the squares in a repeating pattern of colors – make lines of each color, or blocks of color. Make simple patterns by coloring in squares – repeat your four favorite colors over and over again. Use paint and see if you can mix enough colors to paint each square a different color or shade (best done on a larger grid). Draw a tiny picture in each square (best done on a large grid).
Or just let little ones color and explore the grids.

Trickier Grid Art Ideas (perfect for older kids, and adults!)

Make pixel art – Search Google for perler bead patterns for some ideas or come up with your own. Use the grid as a base for zentangling – searching for 'easy zentangle squares' will give you lots of ideas. Create a complex repeating pattern. Draw a simple picture on your grid paper, then color in the picture sections in one set of colors and the rest in a different set.

Epically Cool Stacked Cardboard Sculptures For Kids

Here's what you'll need to make your own stacked cardboard sculptures:

- Lots of cardboard
- Scissors
- Glue – hot glue guns are good, but PVA/craft glue works as well
- Paint

How to Make a Stacked Cardboard Sculpture

- The first thing you need to do is cut lots of random shapes out of the cardboard. Cut circles, squares, and triangles, but you can cut any shapes you like. Random wiggly shapes would be just as interesting as more geometric shapes. It's good to have shapes in a variety of sizes, ranging from big to tiny. Depending on how thick the cardboard is, cutting the shapes may be a bit tricky and may require some adult assistance for younger kids.You will also need to cut out some 'base plates'. Just cut squares or rectangles of cardboard that are a little bigger than your biggest shapes to become the base of your sculpture.
  Once you have a whole lot of shapes you are ready to build your cardboard sculptures.

Building your cardboard sculptures is easy!

- Just choose some shapes and start stacking! Arranged shapes in a stack first, without gluing, to make sure it looks the way you want it to look, then start gluing.You only need a small amount of glue to attach each level of your sculpture. Keep adding layers and building your stack as high as you can, to make cool sculptures!

- Once the glue has dried (which is pretty much instantly if you use a glue gun) you can add some color! Try pouring and dripping paint onto your sculptures. Use regular liquitemp kid's paints, with lots of water added to make them very runny. Dribble spoonfuls of paint over the cardboard stacks, or just pour the paint right over them.

- Building these stacked cardboard sculptures is quick, fun and easy. It is well worth cutting out all those shapes, and pouring and dripping paint over them is epically cool and fun! Making these cool sculptures is not even a little bit boring!

Ten Awesome Podcasts for Children

Tumble – Science Podcast For Kids
This podcasts was recommended by lots of people, and it's great. They cover lots of 'science in action' topics in a fun, interesting and family-friendly way.
Great for kids aged 5+

Shabam – The Show that Explodes Your brain!
Another great science podcast! This one combines science with crazy funny stories, cool sound effects, and quite a few jokes.
Great for kids aged 9+

Pants On Fire – The game show for human children!
This is super fun podcast, but it's also an interesting lesson in critical thinking. Each episode features a kid interviewing two people, one is a real expert, the other is lying and the interviewer (and you) try to figure out which is which. **Great for kids aged 7+**

Cool Facts About Animals – a podcast by kids, for kids
If your kids love animals they will love this podcast filled with interesting facts about all kinds of animals. It's hosted by a Mom and her three kids and they share lots of interesting, kid-friendly facts about animals. You can even send in suggestions for which animals they should cover in future episodes.
Great for kids aged 4+

Smash Boom Best – A debate show for kids and families.
Each episode takes two things, offers lots of opinions and information about them and then a guest judge gets to decide which one is best. They've covered topics such as pizza vs tacos, books vs movies and bats vs owls! Interesting topics, great info, and lots of inspiration for working on your critical thinking and debating skills! **Great for kids aged 5+**

ExtraBLURT – a shout-it-out game show
You'll find yourself shouting out answers to all the crazy questions and riddles on this podcast. There is not a huge amount of episodes on the free platforms but it's well worth checking out.
Great for kids aged 4+

Bedtime Explorers – a meditation podcast, designed specifically for little ones
This is a relaxation podcast for young children. Each episode features a story and sounds that teach simple meditation techniques to help kids relax before sleep.
Great for kids aged 3-6

Earth Rangers – for everyone who loves to explore the mysteries of nature.
This podcast is hosted by a wildlife biologist and covers all things nature – the environment, sustainability, animals and more.
Great for kids aged 5+

Goodnight Stories For Rebel Girls – based on the bestselling book series.
This podcast is based on the awesome books Goodnight Stories for Rebel Girls and is full of the same stories about women who inspire us. This podcast is not just for girls! The whole family will enjoy these interesting, well told stories. **Great for kids aged 9+**

Fierce Girls Podcast – Girls with guts and spirit.
This is an Australian podcast about adventurous aussie girls who dare to do things differently. There are stories about athletes, aviators, scientists, spies and loads more. Again, this is not just for girls! **Great for kids aged 9+**

SEARCH YOUR PREFERRED PODCAST PLATFORMS FOR THESE PODCASTS: iTunes,Spotify, etc.

Easy Ways to Play with your Kids: Even When you are Busy Part1)

"Mom! Mom! Dad! Dad! Come and see what I built!"

"Mom… Dad…..play cars with me!"

"Mom, Dad, what can I play?"

"Mooom…Daaad….. pwease pway with me!"

Do you ever have those days when all your kids want is to do something fun with you? All they want is for you to play with them, but you really don't feel like it.We all have days where we are not feeling well, or when we did't get any sleep, but our kids still needed us, and we still needed to engage them in something.

Days when you are so busy, or stretched so thin that just the thought of taking time out to play tea parties makes you feel overwhelmed and exhausted, but the guilt of not interacting with your kids threatens to swallows you.

Days when you just need to get dinner made without the kids tearing the house apart or trying to climb up your leg while you drain the pasta.

You could turn on the TV, or handed over your ipad, and let's be honest, some days that happens, and that's okay. But even screen time won't always save you from a nagging child who just wants you to get up and play!

Below is a list of easy ways to play with your kids, even when you don't feel like it, or don't have the time, or just don't want to! A list that will totally save your sanity, and have a great time !

Some activities require more adult interaction than others

Some need you to be nearby to supervise, but you can do that laying down resting or while you do something else.

How much supervision is needed will depend on the age of your children and on individual kids personalities, but most of these activities are aimed at 2+ year olds.

Easy Ways to Play with your Kids, Even When You are busy (Part2)

Audiobooks and podcasts

Audiobooks and story podcasts are great when you just can't face reading another story, and there are loads of other great kids podcasts that will keep the kids interested.

Building Challenge

Dump out a construction set (try combining two different sets like wooden blocks and magnet blocks or Legos) will keep kids busy. You can lie on the couch and shout out a challenge, set your phone timer for 10 minutes, and snooze till they are done!

Go Outside

If the weather is good and you can muster up the energy to find shoes and hats, once you get outside you can lay on a rug on the grass and watch the kids play. Bring out some spoons and plastic bowls if you have a sandpit, or offer a few buckets or containers with a little bit of water in them. Even play dough can be easy outside, because you don't have to worry about sweeping up the mess!

Individual, Challenging, Fiddly Toys

You know, those toys that have little fiddly bits, that require a fair bit of concentration. I know it sounds counterintuitive to get out something with little pieces when you are feeling less than enthusiastic, but these kind of individual activities engage kids, quietly, on their own, for quite a while. They are great for preschoolers, and work well if you need to take care of a younger sibling. Make sure it is a challenge for your child, but not too hard for them to do on their own, and that you have a complete set for each child. And hide these toys away for most of the time, only get them out when you need something special!

Floor Drawing

Roll out a length of paper on the floor and dump out the crayons. With the paper on the floor everyone can reach, no one argues over chairs, or crawls onto the table trying to get the green crayon, and you can lay on the couch, or fold the laundry near by with only a quick reminder for the toddler not to draw on the floor.

Drawing Prompts

Print off some printable drawing prompts, and grab pencils or markers. These are great for a variety of ages.

Quick and Easy Small World Play

Grab a green rug or towel, some stones or wooden blocks, a couple of twigs or leaves from the garden, and some animal figurines, or dinosaurs, or fairies. Dump it all in the middle of the floor, or on the table, and let the kids do the rest.

Dance

Put on some groovy kid-friendly music and dance! This works great if you can dance along while cooking dinner or doing another task, and it can lift your mood too. If you are not up for dancing yourself, Mini Groov3 dance workouts are great, their 'Freeze Dance' video is also good. You can find more great Youtube dance and movement channels for kids there, or search 'just dance kids' on YouTube and you'll find lots of great dance videos – Gummy Bear is a favorite amongst many,

Cooking with Kids – Tips, Tricks and Recipe Ideas

Why Cook with Kids?

Apart from all the developmental skills kids practice while cooking (math, science, language, fine motor skills and more), it's also lots of fun! Kids are learning lots of life skills too, and as your kids get older you can put all the skills they have learned to good use and have them cook dinner once a week. Taking responsibility for making food for themselves or others is so empowering, and that's one less night you have to cook!

Tips for Cooking with Kids

Including your kids while cooking is going to be harder, and take more time than doing it without them, so make sure you acknowledge that before you say yes and you'll avoid a lot of frustration for everyone! **Start with easy, quick, low mess recipes.**
Fruit salad is perfect for beginners. It's low mess, and each child can make their own bowl of fruit salad so there's no waiting, or sharing. There is no tricky measuring, or cooking, and you get to eat your creation straight away! No-cook recipes are also great for kids, or even helping with some steps in making dinner, rather than attempting a special recipe.

Here are some more tips and tricks to make cooking with kids run smoothly:

- A bowl with a handle to hold makes mixing things much easier for small hands.
- A butter knife or serrated plastic knife (even a disposable one) will cut lots of things but won't cut little fingers.
- Washing hands and wearing an apron is important, so is tying up long hair so it doesn't hang in the cake mix!
- Kids are going to want to taste things along the way. If you don't want fingers in the cake mix, be prepared with some spoons for testing.
- Helping to cook dinner when you are in a hurry won't end well, get them to help on a night when you are not so rushed.
- For little people a good, stable, step to stand on so they are at the right height is essential.
- It's going to be messy, accept that and prepare for it. Get the kids to help clean up.

Pancake Pockets

Prep time: 5 mins
Total time: 15-20 mins
Serves: 12

Ingredients

- 1 cup self raising flour
- 1 cup plain flour
- 2-4 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp Vanilla extract
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups of milk of your choice (plus extra)
- 2 tbs Butter or Oil of choice

Fruit and fillings

- Cooked apples
- Berries
- Banana slices
- Chocolate chips
- Pineapple
- Coconut etc

Instructions

In a large bowl combine the plain flour and self raising flour and the sugar. (Use more or less sugar depending on how sweet you like your pancakes).
Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and add the eggs and a splash of milk. Beat the eggs and milk gently with a whisk, slowly combining with the dry ingredients, adding more milk as you go until you have a smooth mixture.You want your mixture quite runny, so feel free to add a little more milk if needed.
Heat a fry pan over a medium heat and brush generously with butter/oil.

Pour 1/4 of a cup of mixture into the center of the pan, allowing it to spread out into a large circle. Once the surface is covered in lots of bubbles, carefully spoon a little of your filling onto one half of the pancake. Carefully flip half the pancake over to trap the filling in a pocket. Continue to cook for a little while then carefully flip your pocket over to cook on the other side until both sides are golden brown.
Enjoy!

Deliciously Easy Apple Streusel Muffin Recipe

Prep time: 10 mins
Cook time: 30 mins
Total time: 40 mins
Serves: 15 muffins

Homemade Muffin Mix Ingredients

- 6 cups of plain flour
- 2 cups of wholemeal flour (if you don't have, just add 2 cups plain)
- 3 cups of sugar
- 3 tbsp baking powder

To Make the Muffin Mix

- In a very large bowl, combine all the dry ingredients and whisk/combine well.
- Store the muffin mix in a sealed container.
- This quantity of mix is enough to make approximately four batches of muffins.

Apple Streusel Muffin Ingredients

- 2 and 3/4 cups of homemade muffin mix (recipe above)
- 1 cup of milk
- 1/4 cup of oil
- 2 eggs
- 2 medium apples, grated.
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 cup plain flour
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 tbsp cold butter
- 2 tsp cinnamon

Instructions

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and grease or line a muffin tray. Add the dry muffin mix plus the cinnamon to a large bowl, make a well in the centre and add the eggs and oil, mixing well. Slowly combine the wet with the dry ingredients, adding the milk a little at a time as you go, mix well. Grate two medium sized apples, leave the skin on if you like. Prepare the streusel mixture by chopping the cold butter finely and adding it to the flour, sugar and cinnamon, Rub or cut the butter into the dry ingredients until a fine crumb forms. Fill each muffin tin a little less than half with mixture, then add some grated apple and a spoonful of streusel mixture. Add some more muffin mixture until the muffin tin is 3/4s full and the apple and streusel is covered. Top with another spoonful of streusel mixture, be generous, you have plenty. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until a skewer comes out clean.

Kid-made Chili

Prep time: 15 mins
Cook time: 1 hour
Total time: 1 hour 15 mins
Serves: 4-6

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 lb of Ground beef (or protein of choice: Ground Chicken/Turkey or Meat alternative
- 2 cans of beans of your choice
- 1 can tomatoes
- 2 Bell peppers chopped (red and/or green)
- 1 small onion chopped
- 1/2 tin of canned corn or 1 cup frozen corn
- Half a packet of taco mix and salt and pepper to taste

- Optional – other veggies such as grated zucchini, finely diced spinach, grated carrots etc

Instructions

The quantities above make a single dinner's worth of chilli, double or triple the recipe to make a large batch to freeze. Feel free to vary the quantities of ingredients and substitute for other ingredients as suits. Add some chilli powder if you like things spicy. In a large saucepan heat the olive oil over a medium heat then add the beef, chicken or protein of choice. Cook the protein until it is well browned. Add the peppers, onions, corn, and any other veggies and mix. Add the tomatoes, beans and taco seasoning and stir well. Cook over a low heat, with the mixture is just bubbling slightly for approximately 45 minutes (or more, the longer the better!) stirring occasionally. Freeze in air tight containers or serve right away.

Chili And Chips

Serve the chili over some steamed rice with cheese, sour cream and guacamole. As an added bonus, you could put some corn chips in a heatproof tray, sprinkle with a little grated cheese and heat in the oven till the cheese has melted to make very basic nachos to dip into your chilli.

Noodle and Veggie Stir Fry

Prep time: 5 mins
Cook time: 10 mins
Total time: 15 mins
Serves: 4-6

Ingredients

- 1/2 lb of your protein of choice: Tofu, Shrimp, Chicken, Beef etc.
  Prepped: sliced or chopped
- 2 tsp oil
- 1 Onion sliced
- 1 Bell Pepper: Red, Yellow, Green or Orange cut into thin strips
- A big handful of snow peas, cut into thin strips
  Alternatives:
  Broccoli or fine sliced cabbage
- 3 tbsp soy sauce or tamari
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 1 lb box of spaghetti, linguini or rice noodles
- Optional: 2 chopped garlic cloves, 1 tbsp grated ginger,
- Top with sesame seeds (optional)

Instructions

Cook your noodles according to package instructions, drain and set aside.
Heat a frying pan or wok over a high heat, once hot add the oil and swirl around to coat the cooking surface.
Stir fry your choice of protein until browned, then transfer it to a plate and set aside. Next stir fry the onion for 2 minutes or until softened.
Add the bell pepper and snow peas/other veggies and stir fry for 2 minutes or until the veggies are tender.
Return your protein of choice to the pan and add the soy sauce/tamari, sugar, sesame oil and vinegar, mixing well until everything is combined. Serve and Enjoy!

Pita Chips 2 Ways

Prep time: 5 -10 MINUTES
Cook time: 7 MINUTES
Total time: 12 -15 MINUTES
Makes 24 servings

Savory Ingredients

- 6 Pita breads
- 1/4 cup Olive oil
- Mixed dried herbs
- Salt

Sweet Ingredients

- 6 Pita breads
- 1/4 cup Butter or coconut oil melted
- Cinnamon
- sugar

Instructions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
Cut each pita bread into 8 triangles.
Place triangles on lined cookie sheet.
In a small bowl, combine the oil, salt, and other desired spices.
Brush each triangle with oil mixture.
For sweet pita chips brush with butter or coconut oil and sprinkle with cinnamon sugar
Bake in the preheated oven for about 7 minutes, or until lightly browned and crispy.
Watch carefully, as they tend to burn easily!
Serve savory pita chips with hummus or guacamole.
Serve sweet pita chips with yogurt and fruit.

Or you can always just snack on them as is they are that good!

Pineapple and Raspberry Frozen Fruit Whip

Makes : 4 Servings

Prep time: 5 MINUTES

Total time: 5 MINUTES

Ingredients

- 2 cups frozen pineapple pieces
- 1 cup frozen raspberries
- 1-2 tablespoons of pineapple juice or water

Instructions

1. Put the frozen fruit into an ice crushing blender or food processor and whizz until they are well blended.
2. Add a tablespoon or two of water or juice and blend until the mixture melts a little and becomes smooth life ice cream.
3. Serve immediately.

Please feel free to change up the fruits in this recipe to meet your families pallet /dietary needs.

picklebums.com

Homemade Ice Pops

4 different ways

Lime Pineapple Ice Pops

- 1 (3.5 oz) packet of Lime Jello powder mixed with the amount of water as instructed on the box. Cool the mixture but do not let it set, then add chunks of pineapple. (This recipe can be made with other Jello flavors and fruits to your liking)

Berry Ice Pops

- 2 cups of juice (cranberry, apple, grape)
- 1/2 cup frozen berries

Strawberry Swirl Yogurt Ice Pops

- 1 cup plain greek yogurt
- 2 tbsp strawberry jam

Cookies and Cream Yogurt Ice Pop

- 1 cup plain greek yogurt
- 1-2 tsp powdered sugar – to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 2-4 Chocolate sandwich cookies broken into chunks

To make your Ice Pops

Put all of the ingredients into a bowl, mix and then pour/scoop into your ice pop molds. It is best to place the chunks of fruit into your molds and then fill around them. Pop them in the freezer and freeze overnight.

You could use traditional ice pop molds, or even plastic cups and with popsicle sticks or spoons. You could also use ice cube trays and toothpicks for sticks would be fun too!

This is a great cooking activity for the kids to do themselves, from start to finish, and a great way for them to explore flavors and learn how to write and tweak their own recipes.

LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

Below are a list of some classic games to play with your children and family

Freeze Dance

Choose one person to be in charge of the music. When the music starts, everyone else dances, the crazier the better. When the music stops, the dancers must freeze in their position. Anyone caught moving after that is out. Play continues until there is one person left, the winner.

Simon Says

This game can be played anywhere, even in a car or other small space. One person is Simon and starts by saying, "Simon says, '<insert action here>.'" Everyone must then do the action. However, if Simon makes an action request without saying, "Simon says" to begin the request, anyone who does that action is out. The last person still playing in the end will be Simon for the next round.

Heads Up, Seven Up

Dating back to at least the 1950s, this game is one most of us played in elementary school. Usually done in the classroom with everyone at their desk. To start the game, seven players go to the front and the teacher says, "Heads down, thumbs up!" Everyone still at their desk puts their head down, extends an arm and stucks their thumb up. The seven kids that were at the front go around and each press one person's thumb down. Then they all go back to the front of the room and the teacher says, "Heads up, seven up!" The players at the desks raise their heads and the seven whose thumbs were pressed down stand up. Each in turn names the person they think pressed down their thumb. If they are correct, they change places with the presser. Then the game can start again.

Musical Chairs

In a circle, arrange chairs facing outward to total one fewer than the number of players. An additional player needs to be in charge of the music. When the music starts, the players walk around the chairs. When the music stops, players sit down in the nearest chair as soon as they can. The one player who does not have a chair is out. One of the chairs is then removed, and the game continues in this manner. The player that sits in the final chair is the winner. This game is traditionally played inside, but it can also be played outside with outdoor furniture and a portable music player.

Telephone

This game is one in which most people end up laughing quite a bit, so if you're in the mood for silliness, give it a go. Players sit in a circle. One person thinks up a sentence or phrase and whispers it to the next person. That person repeats it to the person on their other side. This continues around the circle. When it finally reaches the last person, that person says the sentence out loud. Hilarity ensues. The ending sentence is usually quite changed from the beginning sentence, since errors tend to compound as they go around the circle.

Some games may be adjusted to accomodate the number of members in your household.

Four Bubbletastic Ways to Make Bath Time Fun

Crazy Bubbles

By far the quickest and easiest way to get a kid into the bath is to add bubbles. If plain old white bubbles are boring, add a little natural food coloring or liquid watercolors to a squirt bottle of water and spray paint them!

Frozen Soap

A fun way to get your kid to wash with soap is to make some frozen soap melts. Just add a little water, natural food colouring and a squirt of kids bubble bath into ice cube trays and freeze. When you pop them into a warm bath they melt their colors into the water and as the kids play with them they are getting clean without noticing it!

Bubble Snakes

You could blow bubbles with your hands (link) or you could blow bubble snakes! To make a bubble snake blower just cut the end off a plastic bottle and secure a piece of towel or flannel over the end with an elastic band. Dip the fabric end into a mixture of watered down kids' bubble bath and blow.

Bubble Dough

Play dough that you can put in the bath? Cool!
This recipe for soap dough is quick and easy to make and lots of fun to play with, or to use in place of soap.

- 1/4 cup kids bubble bath
- 1 tsp of oil (coconut or olive oil or baby oil)
- Natural food coloring
- 1/2 – 3/4 cups corn flour (corn starch)
-

Mix together the bubble bath, oil and coloring. Add 1/2 cup corn flour and mix well, kneading with your hands and adding a little more corn flour if needed.

A House for a Tiger – Imaginative Play

You can go all out setting up an amazing small world play scene, or you can keep it simple and whip up an easy imaginative play activity in a few minutes.

Imaginative play can be a great sanity saver. You can set up a little small world play scene in just a few minutes and if you stick with a theme your child is interested in, it might just keep them happily playing for a nice chunk of time.

A House for a Tiger

Adding some kind of house to an imaginative play setting is always a hit with kids. Having a little spot to tuck away a character or animal seems to have universal appeal, but it doesn't have to be something elaborate or special.

Here's what you can use to make this easy small world play scene

- A piece of green material
- A piece of blue paper
- A small cardboard box (shoebox or a couple of cereal boxes)
- Scissors
- Rocks
- Sticks and branches
- Sprigs of grass
- Animals or your choice (if you do not have any plastic animal toys you can have your child draw animals on paper then cut them out, or print out animals online, make sure to back these pictures on construction paper or card board using glue to ensure sturdiness)

Another thing kids love to have as part of small world play like this, is something to feed their characters. So you can add a small bowl and add chopped up grass and leaves or rip up pieces of recycled paper as food for the wild cats.

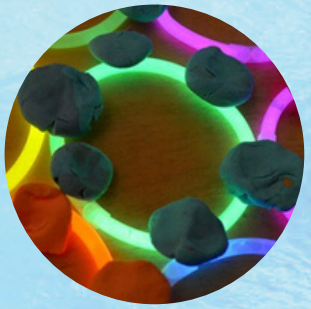
Easy Sensory Play Ideas

We all use our senses to explore and make sense of the world around us. For children sensory play offers specific experiences that are designed to encourage this exploration. Sensory play is an holistic activity – that means that it offers lots of opportunities for children to practice and develop a whole range of skills while playing with the one activity. Sensory play can help develop complex thinking skills, language skills, fine and gross motor skills, social skills and creativity. But best of all, sensory play is lots of fun!

Water

Water is the easiest sensory play item, and it can be used in so many ways! You only need a couple of inches of water in the bottom of a tub to have fun and keep the mess to a minimum, or set it up outside!
Get the kids to wash the dishes.
Set up a little frog pond in a bowl.
Freeze some cool things into ice blocks for extra water play fun.

Soap and Bubbles



If your kids are big enough to understand not to put soapy hands in their eyes, then soap and bubbly stuff is great for easy sensory play. Shaving cream is a little messy, but cheap and instant. Try a shaving cream and bubble wrap activity. Give the kids some soap water and sponges and they can make a tub of bubbles.

Sand and Dirt

Digging, scooping, building and playing with sand or dirt, or other mediums is great fun. You can set up a sandpit (sandbox) outside or just offer your kids a patch of dirt to dig in. Or bring it inside in a tub or tray. Build a river in the sandpit, or garden.A thin layer of sand on a tray or in a tub means you can bring sand play inside easily.If you don't have sand or dirt, try a tub full of seeds or rice, or other grains

Playdough

Good old playdough, it's easy to make, or cheap to buy and you can do so many things with it! If the mess bothers you, set it up in a shallow tub or on a tray to contain the 'crumbs' or play outside.
Set up some jungle play dough.
Add some glow sticks to the playdough and play in the dark!

Water Beads

You'll have to order some water beads, so they are not all that easy to get your hands on, but they don't cost much, they are reusable, and they are awesome! Just chuck them in a tub and add a bit of water!
Add some scoops and containers for fine motor play and sorting.
Add some spoons and bowls for some pretend cooking.
Or pop a plastic marble run into the tub and race the water beads!

Fun Ways to get Active With your Kids

Make an Activity Jar

Ask your kids to come up with a list of activities you can do together. Their ideas have to involve activity, but apart from that, it is up to them.

- It could be things to do inside or outside: activities for at home, or whatever they could think of!
- Kids being kids will come up some kinda crazy ideas, you are not going to be climbing Mount Everest any time soon, but here is a list to get you started just write out or print out their ideas, cut up and put in a jar.

Have a Treasure Hunt

- Make a list of items around to find and race to be the first to find everything on the list.

Have a Dance Competition

- Break out the Wii dance or look up **Just Dance** on **YouTube**.

Play Balloon Tennis

- Use kitchen spatulas as rackets!

Play Chair Soccer

- If you can't get outside clear a space, find a soft ball

(or even scrunched up paper taped into a ball shape) and allocate everyone a chair. The aim of the game is to kick the ball between the legs of another person's chair to score a goal while not letting anyone score a goal on your chair!

Find a Zumba or Aerobics Routine on YouTube

- Older kids will pick up adult a basic adult Zumba or aerobics routine easily, but there are lots of kid-friendly options for small kids like this one, or just search 'zumba kids' on youtube.

Sock Wrestle!

- This game is a simple roughhousing activity that will get everyone's blood pumping – just set some safety ground rules before you start. Clear a space and make sure everyone is wearing two socks, no shoes. The aim of the game is to get the other people's socks off without losing your own!

Try Some Yoga

- Cosmic kids is a great YouTube channel for little kids and there's loads of other Yoga Videos on YouTube to try out.

Make an Obstacle course

- Outside or inside... get creative and add cards with crazy instructions like "run backwards around the tree twice before moving on".

Fun Songs to Sing Along to

I Had a Little Turtle

I had a little turtle
He lived in a box
He swam in the water
And he climbed on the rocks
He snapped at a minnow (Clap)
He snapped at a flea (Clap)
He snapped at a mosquito (Clap)
And he snapped at me (3 Claps)
He caught the minnow (Clap)
He caught the flea (Clap)
He caught the mosquito (Clap)
But he didn't catch me!

A TOOTY TA TA

A chorus separates each verse.

For example:
The first verse is simply
"Thumbs Up!"
Then the second verse is
"Thumbs Up! Elbows back!"
The third verse is
"Thumbs up! Elbows back! Feet apart!"
They continue with the lyrics below and there is a chorus between each verse.

Chorus
A Tooty Ta, A Tooty Ta, A Tooty Ta, Ta!

Verses
Thumbs Up!
Elbows back!
Feet apart!
Bottoms up!
Tongue out!
Eyes shut!
Turn Around!

Boom Chicka Boom!
(repeat each line after song leader)

I said a Boom Chicka Boom
I said a Boom Chicka Boom
I said a Boom Chicka Rocka Chicka Rocka Chicka Boom
Uh huh
Oh yeah
One more time * _____ style.

***Valley Girl Style:**
I said like boom chicka boom
I said a totally boom chicka boom
I said like boom chicka like rocka chicka like gag me with a spoon

***Barn-yard Style:**
I said a moo chicka moo
I said a moo chicka moo
I said a moo chicka watch your step, don't track it in the room.

***Astronaut Style:**
I said a moon shoot the moon
I said a moon shoot the moon
I said a moon blast-me shoot-me blast-me shoot-me-to-the-moon

***Surfer Style:**
I said a dude chicka dude
I said a dude chicka dude
I said a dude chicka wipe out chicka WHOA chicka dude

***Star Wars Style:**
I said a zoom chicka zoom
I said a zoom chicka zoom
I said a Luke I am your father Join the Dark Side chicka zoom.