



HELLO PARENTS,

Play is essential to a child's growth and development. When children engage in play, they learn. There are many types of play, including: sensory play, pretend play etc. When your child is actively involved in a fun activity which engages their interests, they learn about themselves, and make connections to the environment around them. Play allows children to better understand concepts, socialize, and expand their knowledge. In this newsletter, you will be provided with activities that will engage your child in several types of play, and will prompt your child to thrive.

ACTIVITIES

INFANTS (3 – 18 MONTHS)

SOLITARY PLAY WITH OPEN ENDED MATERIALS

SOLITARY PLAY: As your infant starts to play with toys and explore objects, they may do so by interacting with you at times, and at other times, they may play alone. Solitary play is often first seen in children ages 0–2 years old, before they start interacting and playing with other children.

MATERIALS:

- Open-ended materials, that your child is interested in. This may include bright, colourful cups, textured scarves, teething objects etc.

DIRECTIONS:

- Place these items in front of your child, and let them explore!
- Follow your child's lead. For example: if your child begins to tap the cups together, you may say: "You are tapping the cups! Tap, tap, tap!"
- Allow your child the space to play alone, as they engage in this play-based learning activity.

[Click here](#) to play stacking cups with your child!

TODDLERS (19 MONTHS – 2.5 YEARS)

SENSORY BOARD

SENSORY PLAY: includes any activity that stimulates your child's senses: touch, smell, taste, movement, balance, sight and hearing. Sensory activities facilitate exploration and naturally encourage children to use scientific processes while they play, create, investigate, and explore.

MATERIALS:

- Large piece of cardboard
- Hot glue gun
- Materials with various textures and bright colours. For example: bubble packaging wrap, soft fabric, a sponge, ribbon, yarn, cotton balls etc.

DIRECTIONS:

- Ensure that the piece of cardboard is the shape of a rectangle, or square.
- You may hot glue patches of the various materials onto the cardboard.
- Now, it is time for your child to explore their senses! Encourage your child to touch the many different types of materials, and observe the bright colours!

[Click here](#) to learn how to make a squishy sensory bag!

PRESCHOOLERS (2.5 – 5 YEARS)

DETECTIVE – WHO ARE YOU?

PRETEND PLAY: Pretend play has many names. Some of these names are: imaginative play, creative play, make-believe play, fantasy play, dramatic play. When children are pretending, they are playing "as if" something or someone is real.

MATERIALS:

- Hat
- Various items used to dress up.

DIRECTIONS:

- During this game, one child will be the detective. This child may wear a detective hat.
- Another player will use the dress-up items or costumes to "pretend" to be a character. For example: firefighter, doctor, baby, teacher etc.
- The detective will look for clues as the roles are being acted out.
- The detective will guess the character that the player is pretending to be.
- Allow for each family member to be the detective, and act out roles. Enjoy this imaginative play activity!

[Click here](#) to learn how to make superhero cuffs!

JK/SK (4 – 6 YEARS)

FREEZE TAG, YOU ARE "IT"!

PHYSICAL PLAY: includes activities that use physical movements to allow children to use their energy, while also giving children the chance to develop gross motor skills.

DIRECTIONS:

- Designate one person who is "it".
- The person who is it will attempt to "tag" or tap other players in the game.
- The object of the game is for the players to avoid being tagged. The other players will run away from the person who is "it".
- If a player is tagged, they cannot move, and they are frozen.
- The frozen players can become unfrozen, if a player who is not frozen touches them.
- The game ends once all of the players are frozen.

[Click here](#) to learn how to play paper plate ice-skating!

SCHOOL-AGERS (6 – 12 YEARS)

MAKING A QUILT

COOPERATIVE PLAY: Cooperative play involves children playing and working with others towards a common goal or purpose.

MATERIALS:

- Several square patches of fabric, equal sizes.
- Needle and thread
- Writing materials. For example: pencils, markers, coloured pencils etc.

DIRECTIONS:

- Decide how many patches of fabric will make up your quilt. You may want to plan for how you will arrange these patches, to make a quilt.
- Now it is time to decorate the patches. Each family member can decorate at least one patch of fabric. Draw on your patch, and create a patch that reflects you. Have fun, and be creative!
- Once all of the patches of fabric are decorated, sew the perimeters of the patches together, creating a large quilt. You may need assistance from a parent, or someone who can sew for this part!
- Once you are finished, you will have created a family quilt! Discuss each of the patches, which create one large quilt.

[Click here](#) to learn how to make a board game!



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and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

A TIP FOR TODAY

- When children play, they are developing skills in all areas of development: cognitive, physical, communication, and social/emotional.
- Play promotes healthy habits by actively engaging children in the world around them.
- Play allows children to test out new ideas and make connections between their previous experiences and their active investigations.
- Children make their own decisions during play; they begin to make connections between their choices and the natural consequences of those choices.
- Play supports the development of self-control which is critical for success later in life.
- The spontaneity of play [promotes risk-taking](#) as children interact with materials and their environment.
- Play helps children develop mindfulness as well as feel safe and secure to try new ideas and experiment. During play, children become fully present in the task at hand.