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tip|sheet 

Ideas and information about child development and early education for parents, professionals and the community-at-large.

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To access these Tip Sheets, please visit www.childcareresourcesinc.org or call Child Care Search at 704-348-2181 to speak with a Parent Counselor.

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On the Home Front with Your Preschooler

The home offers fun learning opportunities for children of all ages. Children can contribute to the family responsibilities by helping with household chores and family routines.

When children are encouraged to help with household tasks such as sweeping, laundry, and simple cooking they learn important skills and feel valuable. In addition to household chores, a wide variety of learning experiences can take place by using things found around the house. Boxes, cardboard tubes, cartons, containers, pots and pans, paper bags, junk mail, cotton balls, bottle caps, and many other items can be used for learning activities and provide an opportunity for you and your child to spend time together.

Parents are the primary educators of their children and these activities encourage your child to think, observe, and be creative. Most of all these activities allow you and your child to have fun and spend quality time together. They show examples of economical ways to spend time with your child and are the starting point for developing your own favorite games and activities. These activities are recommended for children between the ages of three and five years of age.



Play Dough

Purpose

- To develop fine motor skills
- To develop pre-math skills
- To learn about creative expression

Materials

- 4 cups of flour,
- 1 cup of iodized salt,
- 1 3/4 cups warm water
- food coloring
- optional: powdered drink mixes will add color and scent, glitter

Directions

Let the child assist with mixing the ingredients together and kneading for 10 minutes. Create shapes and figures. Use cookie cutters, plastic utensils, and objects to imprint and mold. Ask your child about the color and smell of the playdough or just ask how it feels to them. The playdough can be baked in the oven at 300° F or air dried for a few days until the dough is hard. The figures can be painted as a way to extend the activity. Store dough in a ziplock bag or airtight container.

Where Is It?

Purpose

- To develop thinking skills
- To develop listening skills
- To learn concept of near and far

Directions

Ask you child to select an object to hide such as a toy. Have your child leave the room. Hide the object when he/ she leaves. Upon returning, have your child search for the object. Give hints as he/she moves about. If they move nearer to the object say “nearer, nearer”.

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If they move away from the object say, “farther, farther”. When they are very near, say “There!” and let them find the object. Reverse roles and let your child hide the object.

Guess What I Am Thinking?

Purpose

- To develop listening skills
- To develop thinking skills

Directions

Describe an object in simple terms, one description at a time. See if your child can guess the name of the object, person or place. Some examples might include the grocery store, shoes, the family dog, etc. This activity can be done anywhere and anytime. It is a great activity for long road trips with your children.

Laundry Sort

Purpose

- To teach children to help with a household chore
- To develop sorting skills
- Color recognition

Materials

Collect all the dirty laundry from all over the house. Collect from the laundry baskets, the bottom of the laundry shoot, dirty towels from the bathrooms, etc. Ask for help from an adult on all the areas of the house to look.

Directions

Ask for help in starting the piles of dirty clothes and try to match the right colors. Sort all the laundry into piles such as all the clothes

that are white, all the clothes that are lightly colored, all the clothes that are black or very dark, all the towels, all the socks, etc.

My Family Poster

Purpose

- To promote a simple family activity that develops family history and communication between members
- To develop fine motor skills
- To promote creativity

Materials

- large piece of poster board
- photographs
- tissue paper (any color)
- magazines
- wrapping paper
- scissors
- glitter
- collage materials
- glue stick
- fabric pieces

Directions

Look through photographs or magazines for things that describe you and your family. Cut or tear them out and arrange them on the poster board in any way that you like. Put pictures on the poster board that make you and your family feel good, show the activities that your family likes to do, what you like to eat, family pets, and what you and your family feel is important. Someone in your family can write down important words that help to explain why the pictures were selected. Hang the poster on the wall in a place where everyone can see it.

