

# ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR LITTLE ONES AT HOME

## Activities using food colouring:

-water colour painting: add a few drops to small containers of water and use with cotton buds (sit containers in a tray to catch any spills)

-eyedropper painting: fill up eyedroppers with coloured water and drop over paper (absorbent paper towel sheets work especially well)

-wash over crayon drawing (try white crayons for mystery reveal effect)

-ice-cube painting: freeze coloured water in ice cube trays resting a toothpick in each for a handle (see photo)



-colour icing when decorating arrowroot biscuits or cupcakes

-add to home-made playdough (see recipe below). Divide dough into batches of different colours and kids can see colours gradually mix as they play. Playdough ideas: use with teaset, cookie cutters, little plastic animals, or make playdough birthday cakes with buttons and popsticks or old crayons as candles

## Easy no-cook playdough recipe:

(double or triple recipe according to your family size)

1 cup flour

½ cup salt

2 tbs cream of tartar (available at supermarket in baking section)

1 tbs oil

1 cup boiling water

food colouring (you choose how much!)

Mix all ingredients in a big bowl until it all sticks together and allow to cool slightly before kneading with your hands on a floured surface (kids could be involved if you can handle a bit of mess) until smooth and non-sticky. Add a bit more oil or flour if necessary. Store in airtight container in fridge.

## Activities using pantry items:

-thread tubular pasta (you could add things like cut-up straws, large buttons/beads or some hole punched paper shapes) onto cord or thick string to make necklaces (or as an *occasional* activity buy cereal rings (such as frootloops/cheerios) and make edible necklaces)

-make insects, aliens, animals, etc, out of raw half-length spaghetti sticks and playdough/plasticine, or even more elaborate towers, frames or prism-like structures with full-length spaghetti sticks and balls of plasticine/blue tac as the joiners (see photo)



-decorating biscuits (use choc-chips, sprinkles, lollies, etc. for decoration)

-for healthier option- have kids make funny food faces on a plate (or on a rice cake base spread with cream cheese/avocado), using pre-cut fruit or vege sticks, cheese, crackers, etc. then eat!

## Other things you could use and do:

-balloons- make a soft bat to hit a balloon by stretching an old stocking over a wire coathanger bent into an oval-like shape, with the hook bent into a handle. Wrap layers of masking tape around the hook handle so it's safe to hold (see photo)



-swinging ball: put a small ball (tennis ball or similar) into the bottom of an old stocking and hang from a tree or another appropriate place where kids could safely hit it with a bat (or swing and catch)

-adhesive contact: cut a large sheet of contact and peel off the backing carefully. Attach to table sticky-side facing up (securing sides with masking tape) Let kids have fun placing all sorts of small objects such as buttons, ribbon, paper shapes, cellophane pieces, etc., onto the sticky surface. Another idea is pre-cut pictures from cards, or toy catalogues

-paper plates: for making simple animal masks (google ideas)

-plastic spoons: for making little people puppets (draw faces on the round end) and use pipecleaners if available to make arms by twisting around handle

-paddle pop sticks: to make an easy stick puppets (attach a picture to cardboard, cut around and tape to a stick)

-paper bags: for making hand puppets (google ideas)

-empty food packet/tissue/toothpaste boxes (or similar) and masking tape: for creating towers, robots, spaceships, etc.

## Other ideas for outside (including some messy ones):

- drawing on path, wooden fence or concrete surfaces using pavement chalk
- use old house paint brushes with buckets of water to 'paint' surfaces outside (smooth, dark surfaces work best- try fences, rocks, cement)
- ice play: drop some small plastic dinosaurs/animals or similar objects into water-filled ice-cream containers overnight. Next day empty ice into a large dish or container and give kids a cup with warmish water and paintbrush or eyedropper or small sponge. Kids can retrieve the objects frozen in ice by brushing warm water over the ice or squeezing water out of eyedroppers/sponges (takes a long time 😊)
- shaving cream (homebrand variety) sensory activity (prepare for mess) - squirt cream all over table covered with a plastic cloth and kids can spread it around and draw patterns in it. Hose down when finished for easy clean up
- empty plastic bottles and containers (with lids): use funnels or scoops to fill with things such as rice, pasta, seeds, sand, beads, buttons, stones, etc., and secure lids tightly to use as shakers

## Clean up tips for craft and messy activities:

- before activity, lay plastic cloth or mat over the table for easy wipe down, or use layers of newspaper
- have kids wear apron/ old clothes
- have wet-wipes handy or container of soapy water and face washers/hand towel close by
- egg cartons/yoghurt containers make great poster paint holders you can dispose of after use and used cotton buds can be thrown out (instead of washing brushes)
- water colour containers could be placed in a larger tray to catch any accidental spills