



The Autism Clinic at Hope-O'Fallon

Ideas of Activities during Break

It is clinically recommended to spend a minimum of 10 minutes (or more) a day engaged in play with your child. While playing with your child, narrate what he or she is doing with the toys, imitate their play, and show them new ways to play with the same items. Some examples of narrating play could be if your child is popping bubbles, you could say “pop” or “popping bubbles”. If your child is bouncing a ball, you can say “bounce” or “bouncing ball”. We often recommend narrating with 1 word above how many words your child uses to communicate.

As much as possible, keeping a routine and schedule throughout your child’s day (scheduled mealtimes, designated play activities, nap time when appropriate, etc) help make your child’s days predictable, consistent, and make the transition back to their regular routine that much easier for them!

- **Family PlayDoh party:** Make homemade PlayDoh (recipe below) together, a lot of kids like to help make simple recipes like this! You can also use PlayDoh you already have at home and make different animals, foods, shapes, and other objects together.

Ingredients

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup water
- 2 tsp cream of tartar
- 1/3 cup salt
- 1 TBS vegetable oil
- gel food coloring



Instructions

1. Mix together all the ingredients, except the food coloring, in a medium saucepan.
2. Cook over low/medium heat, stirring. Once it begins to thicken, add the food coloring.
3. Continue stirring until the mixture is much thicker and begins to gather around the spoon.
4. Once the dough is not wet, remove and put onto wax paper or a plate to cool.
5. After cooling (30 minutes) knead playdough for a few seconds. PLAY!

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6. Store in an airtight container in the fridge!
 7. **Recipe Notes:**The above will make you ONE large ball of playdough. I usually make it repeatedly for however many colors I want (so if you want 6 big balls, know that you will need 6 times the ingredients listed above, but you need to make them separately)
- **Water play:** This can be done with a water table outside, a small bucket, or in the bathtub. Give your child a cup or containers and encourage them to scoop and pour the water. You can add color to the water, bubbles, and give toys a “bath”. Try adding toys and props to the water (plastic tubes, straws, squeeze bottles, corks, strainers, funnels, basters, floating toys)



- **Homemade slime:** A lot of the kids that come into the clinic like to make and play with slime. It is a simple and fun recipe that kids of a variety of ages enjoy.
 1. Pour 1 cup of glue into bowl
 2. Add 1 tablespoon of baking soda
 3. Add 3 drops of food coloring or your or your child's choice (optional)
 4. Add 1 tablespoon of contact lens solution
 5. Mix well. Continue to add a tablespoon of contact lens solution and mixing until you get a nice consistency.
- **Ice painting:** This is a fun craft and science activity all in one. If you don't have the paint, you can also use Kool-Aid or Jell-O powder.
 - What you need:
 - 1 cup of water
 - Red, yellow, green, blue food coloring
 - Short popsicle sticks





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- Ice Cube Tray
- **DIY Volcano** - This is a simple cause and effect science experiment the kids love at the clinic!
 - What you need
 - Baking soda
 - Vinegar
 - Food coloring (optional)
 - Glitter (optional)
 - A container to hold everything and avoid a mess
 - Paper towels - in case the mess happens!
 - What to do
 - Place some baking soda in the container
 - Add food coloring and glitter to the vinegar
 - Pour the vinegar over the baking soda and watch the eruption!
- **Read a book together:** While reading the book stop and ask them to point to an image on the page (ex: "Point to the dog"). If your child does not have this skill yet you can either model pointing or just require them to point to the book in general. Also after reading a page, point to certain things on the page and label them. To work on fine motor skills have your child be in charge of turning the page.
- **Doing simple puzzles together:** This is a great opportunity to work on problem solving and taking turns. Give your child half of the pieces and take turns putting the pieces together. This also gives your child the opportunity to ask for pieces you may have to finish the puzzle.
- **Snack/meal routines:** Having your child sit at the table with the family for snack and meal routines can make your child's routine consistent with clinic and classroom routines.
- **Music time and Go Noodle:** Look for videos that encourage your child to imitate certain dance moves (i.e., Baby Shark, Wheels on the Bus). This is a great opportunity to work on imitation goals and attending skills.



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- **Writing letter or simple words (if appropriate):** Writing letters of the alphabet, simple words (i.e., cat, dog, child's name) together can help promote and maintain pre-academic skills of writing and imitation skills.
- **Drawing pictures together:** Draw with your child and create opportunities for your child to request certain colors or for help with drawing something difficult. Draw alongside your child to create the opportunity for your child to imitate certain shapes or items that you draw.
- **Simple cooking recipes:** Give your child the easier steps of cooking, such as scooping any flour or other ingredients you may need. Pouring ingredients into a bowl and mixing it up. Simple one step instructions is a great way to work on listener responding skills.
- **Playing dress up:** This is a great way to encourage pretend play and work on independent dressing skills. You can present your child with any clothing, it doesn't have to be a costume. These kids love to dress up in mom and dad's clothes!
- **Homemade Bubble Solution:** Bubbles are usually a good choice for entertaining young children. Toddlers especially love to watch them float, to chase them, and pop them!
- **Makes 5 cups-**
 - ½ cup liquid dish soap
 - 2 tablespoons glycerin or light corn syrup
 - 5 cups of water.