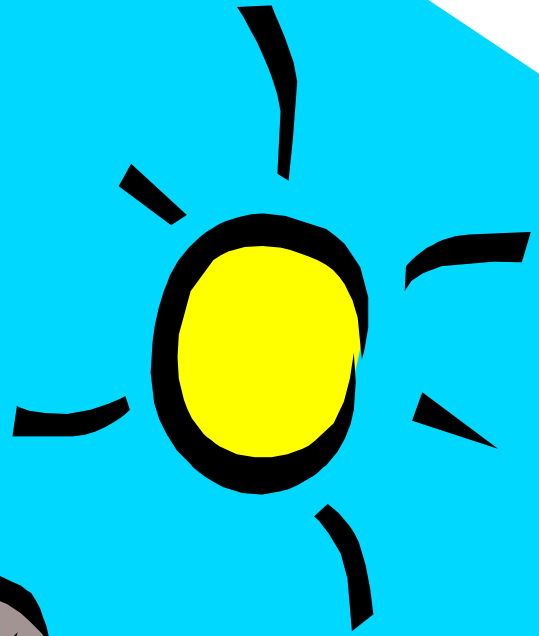


**Community
Connection
for
Child Care**



**Summer
Activities
for
Children**



The Water Table

We have created a water table out of a plastic sweater container. This is a cool summer activity that allows children to explore with water in a variety of different ways. This activity is great for all ages and can be placed under a tree in some shade or on a porch out of the sun on a hot summer day. When working with water though, it is important to remember that children always need to be closely supervised.

Stages of Play

- ☀ Toddlers and preschoolers love to scoop and pour.
- ☀ Four and Five Year Olds may enjoy using the turkey basters and squirt bottles.
- ☀ Older children may enjoy having squirt bottle races with homemade boats or making designs on the sidewalk or a nearby tree with paintbrushes or by using the squirt bottles.

Toys

Sponges, measuring cups, basters, funnels, squirt bottles, paint brushes and other fun water toys.

Variations

To mix this activity up a little bit, all you need to do is add a little dish soap. Children love bubbles, but they will also enjoy washing dishes, doll clothes or plastic toys. Older children (6 and 7 year olds) may enjoy playing “scientist” by mixing the soap and water together. Provide them with empty shampoo or bubble bath containers. There are a lot of fun things you can do with water, but always remember to closely supervise children during all activities that involve water.

The Sand Table

Also using a sweater container, we have created a sand table. This is another summer fun activity that children of all ages enjoy. The great thing about using the sweater boxes for these activities is the safety aspect. These containers came with tight-fitting lids, and it is especially important to cover sand.

Stages of Play

- ☀ Infants and toddlers love to dig, scoop and run their fingers through the sand.
- ☀ Four and Five Year Olds can use sand toys to measure and mold the sand into structures.

Toys

We have used everyday items to create our sand toys, such as measuring cups, strawberry baskets, strainer, funnel and cups. We have also created sand combs out of cardboard boxes, by cutting different shapes and patterns at the bottom.

Variations

To try some different textures, you can fill the container with birdseed, cotton balls, or corn meal. Try hiding toys or objects in the sandbox for children to find. Children learn through sensory experiences and love exploring with textures. This is another fun activity you can do in the hot summer months, but one where close supervision of children is always very important.





Simple Science Activities

Here are a couple of simple summer science activities that children really enjoy!

Ice Block Drip

All you need for this activity is a block of ice, rock salt, food coloring and eyedroppers. Working with the cold ice is not only a sensory experience for children, but it allows them the opportunity to use their small motor skills as well. Children can drop the colors onto the ice and watch them change the ice and change colors as they mix together. Blocks of ice can be made by filling bowls or milk cartons $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water and freezing them.

Ice Cube Painting

Another fun activity to do with ice on a hot day is ice cube painting. Freeze your ice cubes on a popsicle stick or drinking straw for a “handle”. Frozen ice cubes can be used to “paint” on the sidewalk or freeze water and food coloring to “paint” paper.

Feely Bags

These are always a favorite. Children not only enjoy the visual and textural experience, but they enjoy the process of making these as well. You can make bags filled with Jell-O, Karo syrup or shaving cream. Children can choose what things they want to put inside their bags. You might try putting the feely bags in the refrigerator to make them slightly cold.

One of the safety aspects we want to point out is to use heavy tape to seal the bags. Some of the contents are not edible and contain small objects that could pose a choking hazard. We also recommend using freezer bags, which are usually more sturdy than storage bags.

Stages of Play

Toddlers will enjoy the cold touch and the visual experience the feely bags provide.

Older children love to explore with cause and effect and movement of the ingredients inside the bag. You can also use water bottles instead of the bag. Make sure to glue the cap shut.

Toys

You can include confetti, pom poms, glitter, sequins, beads, straws, sponges, string, foam and any other objects that are not sharp.





Bubbles

Kids love bubbles. There are so many things you can do with bubbles, such as using bubble blowers or bubble wands. Bubbles are inexpensive and always a fun outside summer activity. Put your bubble mixture in a dish bin or a small blow-up wading pool. You can buy bubble solutions or make your own. A simple recipe follows.

Bubble blowers can be made using a Styrofoam cup and a drinking straw. Poke the straw through the cup near the top of the rim. You want the straw to go all the way down to the bottom of the cup. Add a little bubble mixture to the cup. Have the children blow into the straw. This activity works best with older children. The young ones still tend to suck in on the straw and drink the bubble mixture.

Bubble wands can be created by cutting shapes out of paper plates or using a strawberry basket. Make giant bubbles by creating a wand out of two straws and some yarn. Thread the yarn through the two straws and tie the ends together. Using the straws as handles, dip the straws and string into the bubble mixture. Carefully lift it out the bubble mixture and the large bubble will form.

Bubble Recipe

Ingredients

1 quart of water,
8 tablespoons of dishwashing liquid
8 tablespoons of glycerin or Karo syrup

Shake mixture together and enjoy!

**You may want to adjust or halve this recipe depending upon your individual use,
as it generally does not last more than a day.**

