

LIZELLE KEYSER
Paediatric Occupational Therapist

Dear Parents,

Your child learns by exploring through their senses. These activities have been developed for you to do at home with your child, with resources which you most likely might have within your home. You can choose from the activities, which best suit your child. The week schedule has an overview of all the activities.

Movement:

Hit the balloon:

Materials needed: Balloons, string, rolled up newspaper or cardboard roll

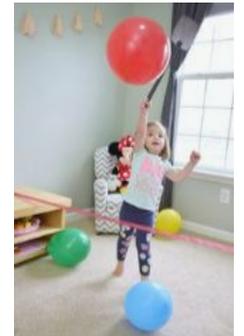
Steps to play:

Preparation:

- Tie up the balloon with some string or wool, hanging. You can tape the string to the ceiling or somethin high.

Play:

- Give the child a rolled up newspaper (taped around) or a cardboard tube.
- They can hit the balloon as hard as they can. Can they hit it again, when it returns.
- Also try: Try to kick the balloon.
- Also try: Place some ribbon across between two chairs, so that it is about hip height for the child. They need to hit a loose balloon (not hanging) over the ribbon.



Don't touch the lava:

Materials needed: paper, tape or placemats

Steps to play:

Preparation:

- Scatter placemats on the floor, with enough space between them to step or jump from the one to the other. You can also use paper and tape it to the floor.

Play:

- Step or jump from the one piece of paper to the next, without touching the 'lava'.
- Alternative: Place toys, sight words, numbers or letters to rescue on the floor. They need to rescue these without touching the floor.



Indoor snowball fight:

Materials needed: Lots of rolled up socks

Steps to play:

- Divide the rolled up socks between everyone playing.



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- Stand a few meters apart.
- Try to hit the other person with the sock snowball.

Go-go-go-chair:

Materials needed: two chairs

Steps to play:

Two people – one big and one small – are running around two small chairs and shouting go-go-go. When you get tired, just shout SIT and you both need to sit down as fast as you can. Then you need to count together aloud to ten and then it's time for go-go-go again.



Tactile stimulation:

Sensory bags:

Materials needed: Zip-lock food bag, tape, shaving foam and paint or food colouring (two colours if have)

Steps to play:

Preparation: Put two colours of food colouring or paint inside the bag. Place a different colour in each corner.

- Put a squirt of shaving foam in the bag.
- Let all the air out of the bag by pressing lightly on the bag, before sealing/closing it.
- Use tape (Sellotape) to seal up the bag opening, to prevent leakages.

Play: <https://besttoys4toddlers.com/shaving-cream-color-mixing-sensory-bag/>

- Your child can explore it by squeezing the bag to mix the paint and shaving foam, without their hands getting messy.



Dry textured play:

Today, we will look at making coloured shredded paper.

Materials needed: Two bags, shredded paper, food colouring, water, large box or container (to dry paper in)

Steps to play:

Preparation: <https://www.theotttoolbox.com/valentines-day-sensory-binand-dying/>

- Place the one bag into the other bag. Place the shredded paper in a bag. The two bags are used to help contain any possible mess.
- Place about 10 drops of food colouring on paper. The amount of food colouring would depend on how much paper you are colouring.
- Add a few drops of water also on the paper.
- Close the inside bag with a tight knot and then the outside bag with another tight knot.



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- Let your child help you to shake the bag, until the colouring has coloured all the paper.
- Place the wet shredded paper in a box or large container, spread out.
- Let it dry in a safe space for a few days.

Play:

- Some children love shredded paper, especially to throw it in the air and watching it drop to the ground.
- Use the plain or coloured shredded paper for sensory play.
- Place the coloured shredded paper in a large container with different objects which hide inside e.g. make red shredded paper with heart cookie cutters and heart objects; use blue shredded paper (as if the sea) with fish and sea creatures hiding or green shredded paper (as the grass) with farm animals hiding.
- Give to your child to play.

- Extra ideas:



Messy play:

Materials needed: Paint, paint brushes, egg carton and larger container

Steps to play:

Presentation:

- Put different colours of paint in each of the egg carton holders.
- Place this in a large container or box with a flat surface.

Play:

- The child can paint on the bottom of the container by using the paint brushes or their fingers.
- You can also give them some shaving foam to “paint” with on the outside of a window. They can then use a spray bottle to spray it with water and clean it up at the end. Lots of mess, but fun.



Messy play with food:

Today we will be making rainbow spaghetti!

Materials needed: Spaghetti, oil, food colouring

Steps to play:



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Preparation: <https://littlelearningclub.com/rainbow-spaghetti-sensory-activity/>

- Cook the spaghetti as indicated on the packet.
- When cooked rinse in cool water to keep it from sticking together.
- Once drained and cooled, add a small amount (few drops) of oil and toss.
- Add a few drops of food colouring and mix well.
- Lay the spaghetti on some parchment paper to dry (for about an hour).
- Cleaning hack: Put an old or cheap shower curtain down, where they will play. Afterwards, you can collect the shower curtain and funnel the spaghetti back in the container. Keep in the fridge to use again.



Play:

- Place in a large container for kids to play with.
- Some children love to play with messy play, throwing it in the air and watching it move and fall to the ground. These are ideal for children who find messy play activities calming.
- Some more ideas:



As this is edible, they can place it in the mouth without concern.

Oral motor:

Blowing gloves:

Materials needed: gloves (surgical or washing up gloves), elastic band, paper cup and straw

Steps to play: <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/556335360214107800/>

Preparation:

- Make a hole near the bottom edge of the cup with a pen or something sharp.
- Put the straw inside the hole.
- Place the sleeve of the glove over the cup and place an elastic band over it, to hold it in place.

Play:

- The child blows on the straw and the hand of the glove pops up.
- The child can draw a face on the glove.



Drinking from a sports bottle:

Materials needed: Drinking from a sports bottle

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Steps to play:

- Instead of giving a drink in a cup, provide a drink with a straw or with a sports bottle, to encourage sucking. This increases oral motor stimulation in the mouth and helps to organise a child internally.



Blowing party blower and other ideas:

Materials needed: Party blower, scissors, pencils and paper

Steps to play:

Presentation:

- Draw or print an elephant. Cut out the nose as a circle.
- Feed the party blower through the circle.

Play:

- The child blows the party blower, for the elephant to blow his trunk.
- Oral motor activities can be calming and organising for children, especially when they seek out oral motor stimulation such as chewing on objects.



Other oral motor ideas: <https://yourkidstable.com/oral-motor-exercises/>

- Use a vibrating toothbrush to brush teeth.
- Place yogurt, applesauce or pudding on the corners of their mouth and tell them to lick it off.
- Blow raspberries
- Lick popsicles or ice lollies on the outside of the mouth.
- Drinking through a straw. Try thicker liquids such as milkshakes or pudding through a shorter straw.
- Chew with back of mouth on chewy foods such as dried mango strip, beef jerky or licorice.
- Chew on crunchy snacks such as celery or carrot sticks.

Blow the boat:

Materials needed: Milk bottle lid, Blu-tack, toothpick, paper

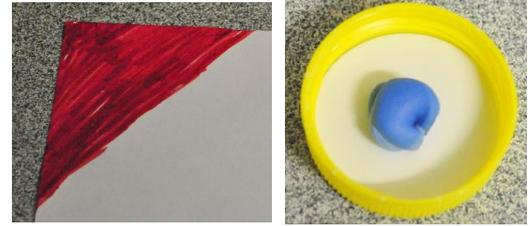
Steps to play:

Preparation:



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- Place a ball of Blu-tack on the inside of the milk bottle lid. Use as little blu-tack as possible to make it float.
- Draw a sail by colouring in a corner of a paper.
- Tread the paper sail into the toothpick and press the mast into the blu-tack.



Play:

- Blow the boat from one end of the bowl to the other side.



<http://www.beafunmum.com/2012/01/its-raining-today-we-are-sailing-away/>

Auditory:

Hanging hoola:

Materials needed: hoola hoop, string, ribbons

Steps to play:

- Tie ribbons to a hula hoop and hang it from the ceiling of a calming corner.
- You can add bells to the ribbons and strings of beads, to add the element of noise, when touched.



Musical Shakers:

Materials needed: Empty milk bottle with handle, string, plenty of milk bottle lids, screwdriver

Steps to play:

Preparation:

- Cut off the handle part of the milk bottle as in the picture.
- Press holes in the plastic, all around the edge of the milk bottle handle.
- Press holes in the milk bottle lids you want to use.



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- Tie each lid with a piece of string securely to the milk bottle. Make sure it is secure with a double knot.

Play:

- Your child can give it a shake to hear the rattle and feel the colorful lids move.

Taxing noises for noise sensitivities:

Taxing noises: Use an easy-to-use recorder such as a microphone app. Record sounds that your child is sensitive to or cannot tolerate. Play the sounds back throughout the day at a reduced volume as a way of desensitizing.

Best noise cancelling headphones:

<https://www.techradar.com/uk/news/audio/portable-audio/best-noise-cancelling-headphones-1280490>

Apps:

Noisli: is a free app that allows users to create their own personalised background noise by mixing different sounds to help drown out distracting noises or to help focus on a task. Sounds is a useful tool for those who find auditory input calming.

<https://www.noisli.com/?fbclid=IwAR3LoJLE5pVfkwWTVHYN1nJZ9FGt1V1HSETWuEk9KIB0-tmkaPj4FUkiAaq>

Dances:

Gonoodle Youtube channel encourages kids to get moving!

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2YBT7HYqCbbvzu3kKZ3wnw>

Proprioceptive/calming:

Towelling: Put lots of cream on your child's hand and forearm. Firmly massage the forearm and hand; then rub it with a dry face cloth in the direction from the elbow to the fingertips. If this is done firmly, it gives a deep pressure feeling; which can be quite calming.

Jumping on a trampet/trampoline:

Materials needed: Trampoline or trampet



Steps to play: Your child will find great benefit, if they have access to a trampoline in the back garden or a trampet indoors. Jumping on the trampoline will get rid of all the excess energy they have, helping them to self regulation.

Outdoor play:

Some outdoor activity ideas for 'heavy work' calming activities:

- Carry a bucket of water or sand
- Dig in a sandbox, using scoopers & hunting for buried toys
- Dig in the dirt/garden
- Pour sand or water back and forth between two or more containers
- Play tug of war



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- Do a outside obstacle course
- Push someone on a swing
- Go for a hike that involves some light climbing

Sausage roll:

Materials needed: Large blanket

Steps to play: https://youtu.be/YbWTuB_7MpA

Listen to the Youtube video for instructions and demonstration of the activity.



Wall or table push ups:

Steps to play:

- Wall push ups: Stand in front of the wall. Step one step back and place your hands on the wall. Push the wall away as hard as you can. It might help to place paper hands on the wall, to give your child and visual cue on where to put their hands to push.
- Table push ups: Stand in front of the table. Step one step back and place your hands on the table. Push down on the table, as if you are pushing it into the ground.



Visual motor skills:

Find the clown nose:

Materials needed: Large shoe box, markers, plastic balls (such as a few ball pool balls)

Steps to play:

Preparation:

- Draw a clown face on the inside of a shoe box, as in the picture.
- Make sure you draw a nose, slightly larger than the balls you want to use.
- Cut out the nose in a large circle.
- Place the balls inside of the box.

Play:

- The child needs to move the box, for the balls to roll around.
- Try and let the ball fall through the clowns nose.
- Also try: Use a shoe box, with a hole on the top and side; to post balls into.



Hit the cups:

Materials needed: Box, string, paper cups, balls (or rolled up socks), screwdriver, tape



Steps to make:

Preparation:

- With a large box on it's side, hang the cups from the top so they dangle and swing when hit.
- You can make a hole in the bottom of each of the cups with a screwdriver.
- Then tie a knot in the string and feed it through the hole in the cup.
- Fasten it to the box by tape.

Play:

- Then let your child toss rolled up socks or plastic balls at the cups.
- The balls will hit the back of the box and roll out, ready for another throw.
- Add a layer of learning to the game by putting letters, shapes, or numbers on each cup, then calling out which one they need to try and hit!

Put in the balls:

Materials needed: different coloured balls or small toys, muffin pan



How to make:

- The child puts the balls in the holes of the muffin pan.
- If you want to add a matching element to the game, you can place coloured paper at the bottom for them to match the balls with the colour.

Apps:

Fluidity HD (free)

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/fluidity-hd/id399403909>

Another app is Big Bang Patterns

<http://www.inclusive.co.uk/apps/big-bang-patterns#>

(note: It is quite expensive, but received some good reviews)



Fine motor skills:

Taped Toys:

Materials needed: Tape

Steps to play:

Preparation:

- Place masking tape down the radiator.
- You can draw a coloured line on the masking tape, to make it more prominent.



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Play:

- The child needs to take the tape off the radiator.

Drop the toy:

Materials needed: Pom poms, toilet or cardboard tubes, tape

Steps to play:

Preparation:

- Tape the cardboard tube to the wall.
- You can either tape only one or two, to drop pom poms in; or tape a maze or path of tubes (see below).
- Place a bowl or box below the tubes on the floor, to catch them.

Play:

- The child posts the pom poms into the tubes, to roll out the bottom. This is a lovely cause and effect activity.
- Also try: You can use water bottles, by cutting off the top and bottom of the bottle. This provides a see through element to the game.
- Also try: You can add an element of colour matching, by colouring the tubes. The child then posts the correct colour into the tube.



What is in the foil?:

Materials needed: Foil and toys

Steps to play:

Preparation:

- Lightly wrap toys with foil.

Play:

- The child unwraps the toys from the foil.
- They can then form a ball with the foil, after they unwrapped it.
- Throw the ball to a target or through the tubes above.



Put in tubes:

Materials needed: large box, cardboard tubes, scissors and markers

Steps to play:

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Preparation:

- Cut circles in the box, for the tubes to fit into.
- If you do not have cardboard tubes, you can make some with cardboard or firm paper, by rolling it up and fastening with tape. You can also use rolled up newspaper, which is taped on the ends, to keep it in a roll.
- If you want to add a colour matching element to the activity, you can mark the tubes and box with similar colours, to match.

Play:

- The child puts the tubes into the correct coloured holes.



Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further advice or have questions.

Kind regards,

Lizelle Keyser

Independent Occupational Therapist