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**Paediatric Occupational Therapist**

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**SUMMER FUN!**  
**Water, Bubbles, Mud & Chalk**

**Water & Bubble play:**

**DIY Water Wall:** <https://tinkerlab.com/diy-water-wall/>

Items needed:

- Plastic bottles
- Screws and screwdriver (if you do not have a screwdriver, you can use nails and hammer)
- Scissors and/or knife

How to make:

- With the scissors or knife, cut a hole in the side of the bottle. The hole will be large enough for you to fit your hand into it so that you can easily position and drill in the screws.
- Using the knife, score an "X" on the side of a bottle and push a screw through the "X" from the inside. Repeat one more time so that you have two screws poking through the bottle.
- Screw the bottles to a fence or wooden board. Tilt them slightly downward to help the water pour through. You might have to shift the bottles around or cut the holes a bit more to make the water wall work properly. Test as you go.
- Test it out to make sure it works. Add a bucket at the bottom to catch the water, which can then be added to plants or returned to the top of the water wall.
- Some more ideas: <https://happyhooligans.ca/water-wall/>



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**DIY Bubble Solution:** <https://tinkerlab.com/how-to-make-a-one-minute-bubble-solution/>

Items needed:

- Dish soap
- Water
- Bubble wands
- Large tub or small pool



Steps to make:

- Squirt dish soap into the water table or bucket and then fill with a little bit of water. The ratio is approximately 1:5, but don't rely on this too heavily since it varies depending on the brand of soap you use — just add more soap or water to get it just right.
- Add a bubble wand (or a few) and you're good to go!
- Another idea: You can also use a flyswatter to make lots of bubbles. Have a look at the video: [https://youtu.be/WNm0FQ7BZ\\_U](https://youtu.be/WNm0FQ7BZ_U)



Make your own bubble wand/blower, if you don't have one:

- Use a sturdy cardboard roll (that holds foil or cling wrap) to blow bubbles. Simply pour in a couple of tbsp Dish soap in the bottom of a shallow bowl. Dip the end of the tube in, and blow to form the bubble.



- Another DIY bubble wand:

<https://nurturestore.co.uk/diy-shape-bubble-wands>

Make use of pipe cleaners, plastic beads (optional), tape and a BBQ stick. Bend a pipe cleaner to create a basic shape, leaving at least 2 inches on each end free. Twist the pipe cleaner at the base of the shape, and thread on a few pony beads for decoration. Then split the ends and twist tightly around a chopstick, which acts as a handle. You can reinforce with tape if they fall off.



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**DIY Bubble pipe:** <https://happyhooligans.ca/simple-homemade-bubble-pipe/>

Items needed:

- Straw
- Coffee filter
- Sellotape

How to make:

- To make your bubble pipe, simply tear off a small piece of the coffee filter. You know the size of a square of toilet paper? Probably about a quarter of that size.
- Place that piece of coffee filter over the end of the straw and twist the loose stuff snugly around the straw.
- Wrap a piece of tape around it a couple of times to hold everything in place.
- Press the straw in some dish soap and blow.



**Bubble towers:**

<https://happyhooligans.ca/bubble-blowing-activity-building-bubble-towers/>

Items needed:

- Straws
- cups or glasses (choose plastic if glass concerns you)
- water
- a few drops of liquid dish soap
- shallow pan to contain bubble overflows

Steps to make:

- This activity can be done inside or outside.
- Simply put a small amount of water in each cup and add a few drops of dish soap.
- Set the cups in your shallow pan, and hand out the drinking straws!
- Blow through the straw to make a bubble tower.



Before you begin, remind your children that they need to blow OUT and not suck IN, or they'll wind up with a mouthful of soapy water. You can have your children practice this first, if need be, by blowing through the straw to move a tissue or pompom across the floor or table top. Of course, if you think your child is too young to grasp the concept of blowing out through the straw, this activity is best left until he or she is a little older.

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**Painting with water:** <https://happyhooligans.ca/painting-letters-with-water/>

Items needed:

- Small bowl of water
- Paintbrush



Steps to play:

- Enjoy painting on the sidewalk or garden cement, using a paintbrush in water. They can even draw on the walls.
- Try to draw a man, letters, words and numbers.
- Another idea: Get out the paint rollers and large brushes. Fill the paint tray with water and let them 'paint' the water outside.



- Another idea: give the children paint brushes and small bowls of water. They can paint the window with the water and then stick non-adhesive foam animals onto the window to make a picture. These are easily removable. This can also be done indoors with a mirror. <https://happyhooligans.ca/window-art-foam-shapes-water/>

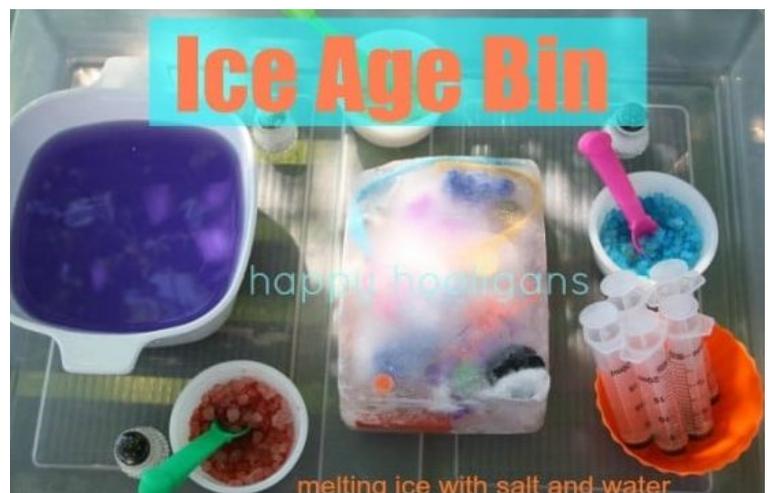


**Ice Age activity:**

<https://happyhooligans.ca/ice-age-bin/>

Items needed:

- Lots of small random plastic toys
- Small salt shakers (if available)
- Some coloured coarse salt (add few drops of food colouring to it)
- Bowl of coloured water
- Plastic syringes



**LIZELLE KEYSER**  
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How to make:

- Place all the smaller random plastic toys in a container and fill it up with water. Freeze, until it is solid (day before play)
- Place the ice block with toys on a tray, with the rest of the items: bowls of coloured coarse salt (and spoons), salt shakers, syringes, bowl of coloured water.
- The aim of the game is for the children to use the water and salt to melt the ice block, to discover the toys. Great summer fun.



- Another idea: Dino Dig - place lots of different dinosaurs and stones in a tub and freeze solid. Use the above ideas to rescue them.

<https://happyhooligans.ca/melting-ice-with-salt-and-water/>



- Another idea: Melting Elsa's Frozen fingers - fill a rubber glove with beads, buttons and craft foam shapes, tinsel garland, metallic pipe cleaners and Curling ribbon & water. Freeze. Use as in above activity to melt.

<https://happyhooligans.ca/melting-elsas-frozen-hands-activity/>



**Perfume factory:**

<https://happyhooligans.ca/pretend-play-perfume-factory-activity/>

Items needed:

- unique glass jars and bottles (look for these at the second hand shops or even your recycling)
- shampoo and soap pump-bottles filled with water and a drop of dish soap
- turkey basters

**LIZELLE KEYSER**  
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- plastic medicine syringes (from Boots or Pharmacy)
- safety scissors
- tongs
- plastic test tubes
- wooden stir sticks
- several containers of coloured water (dyed sparingly with food colouring)
- various other bowls, cups and containers for pouring and mixing and
- water-jug



**How to make:**

- Set out everything on a small table outside. Set out the coloured water and all of the jars and tools and instruments for the children to experiment and concoct with.
- They began by gathering ingredients from the garden. There are so many colours and textures to explore in a garden! They get an opportunity to cut and experiment with scissors.
- They filled their jars with the sudsy water in the pump bottles, and by transferring coloured water into their jars with the turkey basters. They then cut the plants they found into the containers.



Another idea: Give them a large bowl of water, flowers, spoons and child-safe scissors. Let them cut the flowers and some grass to make a garden soup.

<https://happyhooligans.ca/garden-soup/>



Another Idea: Colour laboratory - Put out similar items as the perfume factory with lots of plastic recycle bottles and bowls. Provide the

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children with bowls of coloured water (water with few drops of food colouring). You can even add a few drops of dish wash to give bubbles. They can then play and experiment with different coloured water combined and different containers; squeezing and pouring.

<https://happyhooligans.ca/colour-laboratory/>

Or make fairy soup - <https://happyhooligans.ca/fairy-soup/>.



Other Water Sensory Bin ideas:

Items needed: (as above activities)

- Shallow flat container with soapy coloured water
- Various spoons, containers, recycled bottles (to squeeze), turkey baster etc.
- As above, you can add any toys to give a theme to the sensory bin

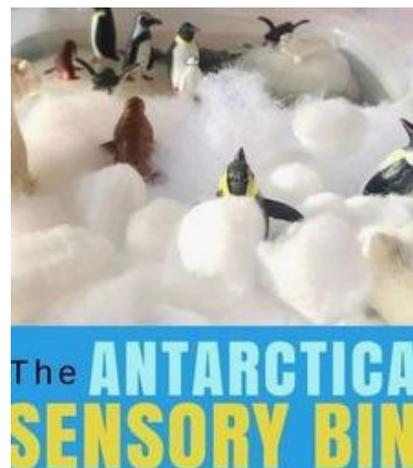
The ocean:



Dinosaurs:



Penguins:



**Baby Bath station:** <https://happyhooligans.ca/baby-bath-station/>

Items needed:

- Shallow container as the baby bath

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**Paediatric Occupational Therapist**

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- sponges, baby washcloths and hand towels, toothbrushes, spray bottles, a soap pump (filled with soapy water) and a couple of travel shampoo containers filled with watered down shampoo and conditioner
- Old hard bodied doll

How to make:

- Filled the basin with warm, soapy water and sprinkled it with a few drops of food colouring just to make it a little more interesting.
- Place the other toys and bottles next to it and let the kids play. They can squeeze the bottles to wash the dolls. Brush the teeth etc. Lots of fun.



- Other ideas:

Wash the farm animals:



Wash the dishes:



Car wash:



**Mud Play:** <https://happyhooligans.ca/category/outdoor-play/mud-play/>

**Muddy car wash:** <https://happyhooligans.ca/muddy-car-wash/>

Items needed:

- Table or plastic box used as a table
- Container to make a mud pit
- Potting soil

**LIZELLE KEYSER**  
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- Sand from sand pit
- Water
- Shallower container with soapy water
- Small cars
- Plastic car track or longer plastic sheet for ramp

How to make:

- First, make your mud pit, by taking a large container and mixing up some: potting soil, several scoops of sandbox sand, and a bucketful of water.
- Next, I filled a large, shallow plastic container with soapy water, and placed it on the ground, several feet away from the mud pit.
- Then connect several pieces of Hot Wheels Tracks or toy car plastic tracks and stuck one end in the mud pit and the other in the bin of soapy water. If you do not have tracks, you can cut any recycled sturdy plastic into longer lengths to form a track. You can place a box under the track to keep it sturdy. It needs to form a ramp.
- Set a table up next to the mud pit and put a few cars on the table.
- The kids can come and play. Driving the cars into the mud pit, down the ramp track, into the soapy water.



**Gourmet Mud Pies:**

<https://happyhooligans.ca/mud-kitchen-activity/>

Items needed:

- Mud: use the recipe in the above activity to make mud
- Example supplies for your mud kitchen: this is just an example, thus you can choose supplies you have for this. Also remember that you can use things you used in other sensory boxes and messy play again; do not throw them away after each play.



**LIZELLE KEYSER**  
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- Things such as: lentils, rice, pasta and corn kernels (from our stash of sensory bin supplies), shaker jars filled with oatmeal and dried dill, meatball scoops, biscuit cutters, meatball scoops, spoons/lifter/scoops, pie plates, tart tins and small bowls, large bowl for mud, water jug

How to make:

- Set the mud out with all the kitchen tools and let the kids start “baking”.



**Flower shop:** <https://happyhooligans.ca/dramatic-play-flower-shop/>

Items needed:

- artificial flowers (or fresh garden ones if you have)
- dried coffee grounds (save and dry for several days before-hand from your filter coffee; this gives a lovely smell during play)
- small stones
- dried lentils
- jars and containers
- small tongs and kid-friendly tweezers
- scoops/spoons
- small watering can (without water)

How to make:

- Set everything up on a low table and introduce the children to the materials using words like potting soil, vase, flowerpot, stem, petals, bouquet, floral arrangement.
- The children can measure, scoop and pour to fill the containers with layers of lentils, stones and coffee grounds and then they can push the flower stems into this “soil” mixture to plant their flowers.
- If you have small watering cans, they can pretend to water their flowers too.

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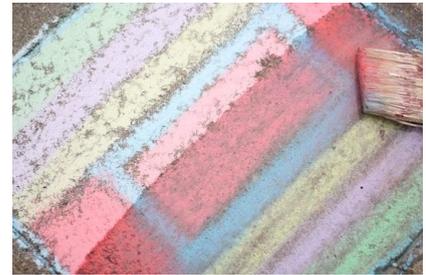
**Chalk drawings:**

<https://happyhooligans.ca/sidewalk-chalk-water-painting-activity/>

Items needed:

- Different coloured chalk
- Water
- Large paint brushes

Note: If your child tends to eat chalk, you might want to consider buying edible chalk online.



Steps to make:

- This can work on any outside surface e.g. the driveway, pavement, patio stones or slabs etc.
- The kids draw a picture with the chalk, using lots of colours.
- Add water over the drawing with a large paint brush. The chalk will flow together like a soft watercolouring.

**Matching the shapes:**

<https://twinmomrefreshed.com/outdoor-preschool-shape-activity/>

Items needed: Chalk

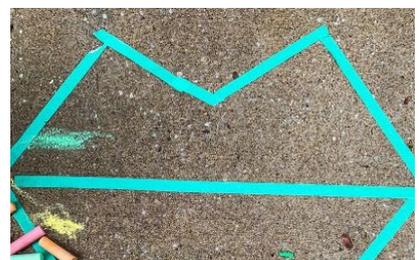
Steps to make:

- Draw different shapes on the pavement. Two of each, but not together. If your child is able to draw shapes, let them draw them.
- The child needs to match up the same shapes.
- Talk about the shape names, colours and elements of the shape e.g. square has four corners and 4 sides.



**Mosaic Drawings:**

[www.lorenaylennox.com/toddlerhood/mosaic-heart-chalk-activity-for-preschoolers](http://www.lorenaylennox.com/toddlerhood/mosaic-heart-chalk-activity-for-preschoolers)



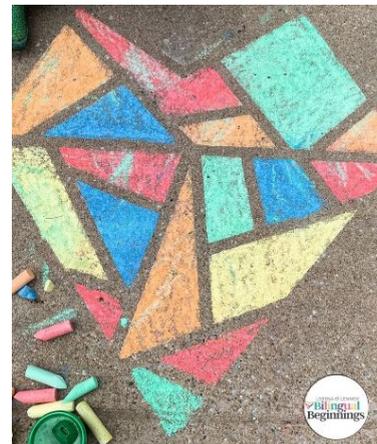
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**Paediatric Occupational Therapist**

Items needed:

- Different colours chalk
- Masking tape

Steps to make:

- Take two equal lengths of tape (mine were about 24 inches each) and form a V.
- Then, take two 12 inch pieces of tape and place them at about a 100-degree angle to form the top part of the heart.
- Lastly, take two 8 inch pieces of tape and form the center of the point of the heart.

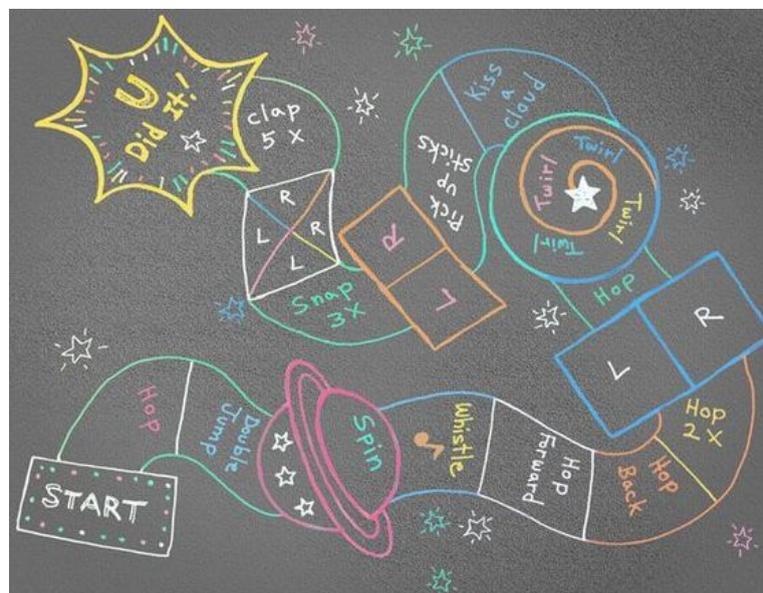


- Colour in the heart with different colours of chalk.
- Take off the masking tape, after you've finished colouring in.

**Sidewalk chalk games:**

Items needed: Chalk

How to make: Draw the actions on the pavement or cement in a path. These are some ideas.



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Some other chalk activities:



<https://activeforlife.com/8-active-chalk-games/>

Hopscotch:

This is an oldie (as in kids have been playing it for over 300 years) but a definite goodie. The rules are simple and kids can either draw their own course with the chalk or have a parent help. Use your imagination and draw the boxes to be jumped in in various colours and shapes. Use the chalk as the marker or find stones, beanbags, buttons or small plastic toys. Once your children have conquered hopping the course, see if they can double hop on each box or use varying feet for hopping on the way up and the way back the course.



[https://activeforlife.com/content/uploads/2013/11/LP\\_Hop\\_3.3\\_hoop\\_hop\\_hopscotch.pdf](https://activeforlife.com/content/uploads/2013/11/LP_Hop_3.3_hoop_hop_hopscotch.pdf)

Avoid the Shark

With different colours of chalk, draw "beaches" various distances apart. Use blue chalk to draw water and shark fins between the beaches and have kids jump from beach to beach to avoid the "sharks" in the "water."