



Norwood

Child and Family Resource Centre

ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT



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Portraits from Natural Loose Parts

Outcome: Setting up opportunities for children to play with interesting materials like loose parts provides children a chance to explore, invent, and imagine in all kinds of ways. This creative play experience focuses on the process of creating something instead of an end product. While product-based art focuses on how the result should look, process-based art values the experience of creating a unique piece of art, exploring materials, and trying different techniques.

Materials Needed:

1. Natural loose parts picked up during a nature walk.
2. Other loose parts like bottle caps, yarn/ribbons, beads, fabrics, and straws from home, if desired.
3. A mirror, if doing a self-portrait.

How:

- Take a bag or a container and go on a nature walk with your child.
- Collect items like rocks, sticks, leaves, and pinecones.
- Use what you collect to create a self-portrait, an animal portrait, a family portrait, or a portrait of any object.
- You can give your child a mirror to see their faces if they decide to do a self-portrait. They can also place the loose parts on the mirror while creating their portrait.

Playdough Play

Outcome: Creating with playdough is an easy open-ended activity for young children: there is no right or wrong way or need to worry about an end result. This encourages critical thinking and helps them express feelings. Close-ended activities, such as coloring pages and adult-designed crafts—in which children have to follow certain rules—can limit children’s imagination and lead to stressful thinking such as, “What if I do it wrong?”

Materials Needed:

- Playdough
- Tools: a roller, cookie cutters or anything that can be used as a mold, sticks, buttons, beads, glitter, etc.

How:

- Set the playdough and tools on a clean table.
- Let your child use their imagination to create something with the materials.
- Encourage your child talk about their work and express their feelings.

Play 'Who am I?'

Outcome: When children are supported to make choices, they think differently with innovative ideas. Making their own choices will spark their imagination and creativity as well as being comfortable expressing themselves without judgement.

Materials Needed: Clothes, hats, cardboard boxes, props, fabrics, bags, additional materials of your child's choice.

How:

- Set up a dramatic play area with your child; have your child take the lead in choosing the materials.
- Encourage your child to add some clothes, bags, cardboard boxes, hats or whatever else they decide on.
 - The props help your child pretend to be any character they want (made up or already existing).
- You, as the parent or caregiver, are the assistant in this activity! Help your child think of different characters; encourage them to dress up and have you guess: "Who am I?"

Play 'Follow the Leader'

Outcome: Children who are encouraged to take the lead in their play discover new information about the world around them. They can fully unleash their creativity and imagination, make decisions, and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings. Taking the lead builds confidence.

Materials Needed: Pans, saucepan lids, scarves ribbons and music.

How:

- Give your child a variety of pans, lids, wooden spoons, etc., to use as a drum kit or whatever else they think of.
- Add some scarves and ribbons.
- Ask your child what favorite song they would like to play.
- Encourage your child to come up with some new dance moves or actions, and follow their lead. For example, ask your child what you should do with the pan and follow the instructions they give you.
- If your child tells you to attach a ribbon on your forehead and a scarf on your shirt, follow their lead!
- For non-verbal or younger children with limited vocabulary, copy their actions; for example, if your child puts a pan on their head, claps their hands, and starts marching, do the same.

Make and Play with Sock Puppets

Outcome: This activity stimulates self-expression as children create their own puppets, stories, and imaginary adventures. Children choose which materials to use to create the puppets' features, name their puppet, and think of things that their puppets can do (like singing, dancing, cooking, reading, etc.).

Materials Needed: Socks, googly eyes or buttons*, markers, pieces of string or yarn, glue.

How:

- Gather the socks, craft supplies and glue and let your child* make the puppet(s).
- Let your child take the lead on what they want their puppet to look like. Even if their puppet starts looking a bit abstract, go with it. Since this craft is all about exploring creativity, there's no right or wrong way to piece together a puppet.
- Once the puppet (or puppets) is ready, ask your child to put on a puppet show, act out their favorite book, or sing and dance along to their favorite songs with their puppet(s).

*You can also help your child sew their chosen pieces to the puppet if you like.