



Norwood

Child and Family Resource Centre

ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT



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Create Tape and Paint Designs

Outcome: This activity will help your child develop fine motor skills such as control, pincher grasp (using fingers), palmer grasp (using the whole hand), dexterity, manipulation, and hand-eye coordination by sticking and peeling tape, holding the paintbrush and moving their hand around the paper while they paint.

Materials Needed: Construction or plain white paper, painter's tape, multiple paint colors, paint brushes. *Optional Extension Materials:* Q-tips, toothbrushes, combs, hair rollers, etc.

How:

- Encourage your child to place multiple pieces of tape onto their paper.
- Have them paint one or more colours—however many they like—over the tape and onto the paper. Allow your child to create any design they want!
- Let the paint dry.
- Help your child remove the tape to reveal their work of art!

Extension: You can extend this activity by using different tools such as q-tips, toothbrushes, combs, hair rollers, etc, to paint. Using different materials allow your child to play with various sized items and strengthen the small and large muscles in their hands and fingers.

Create with Playdough

Outcome: Children develop their fine motor skills (small muscles in their fingers and hands) by rolling, squishing, patting, poking, and grasping playdough. This activity helps children increase control when cutting (using scissors), and strengthens their pincer grasp for holding a pencil.

Materials Needed: Playdough (store bought or you can make your own) and popsicle sticks.

How:

Help your child create different objects and shapes with playdough and popsicle sticks:

- Show your child how to roll and squish the playdough, and how to poke the popsicle sticks into it.
- Encourage them to create different things they like: ice cream, a birthday cake, animals, people, trees, etc.

Extension: You can add different materials such as beads, sticks, rocks, pinecones, combs, forks and any other materials you may have around the house that will add texture to the playdough and further increase your child's manipulation and dexterity.

Pool Noodle Play

Outcome: As your child picks up and places the pool noodles on top of each other, they are strengthening the small muscles in their hands. They are also developing hand-eye coordination and hand dexterity as they stack the pieces on each other.

Materials Needed: Pool noodles and scissors.

Optional Extension Materials: *Pom-poms and a ball.*

How:

Cut the pool noodles into small pieces and allow your child to stack, knock down, and play with the pieces.

If your child is an infant:

Explore the noodles in different ways:

- Roll them on the ground.
- Stack them and help your child knock them over.
- Lay your infant down on their stomach, put a noodle just out of reach, and encourage them to reach for it.

If your child is a toddler:

- Practice stacking up and knocking over the pool noodles together.
- How tall can you stack them before they fall over?

Extension: Stack the pool noodles and roll a ball to knock them over, or stick pom-poms inside the hole of the noodle and ask your child to get the pom-pom out. You can also try exploring and stacking the pool noodles in the water! Does this make it easier or harder?

Squirt Bottle Painting

Outcome: Your child develops the small muscles in their hands and fingers and gains hand dexterity (control) as they use different pressures to squirt a bottle of paint onto paper to create their own work of art.

Materials Needed: Two different colours of paint or food colouring watered down, paper, squirt bottle, and a cardboard box or container.

Optional Extension Materials: Markers.

How to play:

- Put a piece of paper inside a cardboard box. (Any container will do if you do not have a box—you can even use a garbage bag.)
- Water down some paint and have your child help you pour it into a squirt bottle. You can also use food colouring mixed with water.
- Give your child the squirt bottle and have them squirt the paint onto the paper to create their design.
- Help them make observations:
 - What happens when they apply soft or hard pressure to the bottle?
 - Does this make it look different?
 - What about when they are close or far away?
 - How does this create different patterns?



Tripod Grasp

Extension: Allow your child to use markers to add further detail to their creations. By doing this, they are developing their tripod grasp.

Let's Go to the Playground

Outcome: Spending time at the park playing with your child is a fantastic way to promote physical well-being and overall health! Playing on playground equipment helps children develop body awareness, muscle coordination, balance, and flexibility.

Materials Needed: No materials required as you will use the playground equipment—but you may want to bring along a snack, water, and hand sanitizer.

How to Play:

- Invite your child or children to the community park.
- Walk there, if possible.
- With supervision, allow your child(ren) to: climb, swing, run, walk, jump, predict, reason, and make decisions* while playing on and around the playground equipment.

* **For example:** Your child may want to jump from one piece of play equipment to another, but the space between is quite large. Ask your child questions to help them consider the jump: "Do you think you can make it?" and offer your support, "Do you want me to help you the first time?" Then let them try if they want to, or climb down if that's their decision.

Pose as Your Favourite Animals

Outcome: This activity helps children strengthen their large muscles, improve coordination, control their body movements, and maintain physical balance.

Materials Needed: None.

Optional Extension Materials: Flashcards or picture of animals.

How:

- Get your children moving by suggesting they pose or move as some of their favourite animals.
- Start by asking them to name a few of their favourite animals and ask them to move or pose like them. If your child can't think of any, show them pictures or name some animals for them. For example:

Walk like a crab.

(Crawl with your hands and feet behind your back while lifting your hips.)

Jump like a starfish.

(Do jumping jacks.)

Walk like a bear.

(Crawl with hands and feet on the floor and hips up.)

Shuffle like a gorilla.

(In a squatting position, put your hands/fists on the floor. Use your arms to help you shuffle around.)

Stand like a flamingo.

(Stand with one foot off the floor and your hands together above your head.)

Jump like a frog.

(Squat low and jump up high.)

Walk the Line

Outcome: This activity increases children's upper and lower body strength as they walk the line. Walking with one foot in front of the other enhances their balancing skills, while running will help strengthen their muscles, maintain a healthy weight, and improve their coordination.

Materials Needed: Painter's tape for inside surfaces or sidewalk chalk for outdoors.

How:

Make lines on the floor and have your children walk the lines!

- Using painter's tape or sidewalk chalk, create lines on the floor.
- Make some lines straight, some curvy, diagonal, parallel, and zig-zag. You can also use different colours for each type of line to make it more interesting and enjoyable.
- Have your child "walk the line," placing one foot in front of the other to practice balancing.
- Give them a variety of movements to do, such as hopping, jumping, and running while they walk the lines.

Run an Obstacle Course

Outcome: Climbing, crawling and jumping all help strengthen the large muscle groups in children's arms, legs, and core. This activity also improves their gross motor skills and increases their self-confidence.

Materials Needed: Items from around your house, including furniture.

How to Play:

- Using furniture or other items around your house create an obstacle course for your child that encourages them to climb, crawl, jump and get active.
- Set up something steady children can step on, **for example:** a stool, a big wooden block, or anything in your home you feel comfortable letting your child climb like a couch.
- Set up something children can crawl under, **for example:** a table or big box.
- Set up something children can jump over, **for example:** tape lines on the floor, construction paper, pillows, pots and pans.
- Let your children play until they get tired!