



# Fun Summer Time Activities and Games

The school year will be ending soon and your child will have a lot of extra time and energy for play and activities. Be prepared to prevent summer boredom by keeping little hands and minds busy with a variety of fun and interesting activities. Here are some suggestions of summer activities that your child might enjoy.

## ■ Plant a Summer Flower or Vegetable Garden

This could be a small garden by itself or a small portion of your family garden. Let your child help select the seeds and plant them. As the plants grow, help him/her water, weed, and care for the garden.

## ■ Make a Mr. Green Grass

Have your child draw a face on a plain paper or Styrofoam cup. Fill the cup two-thirds full with soil and add enough water to make the soil wet. Generously sprinkle grass seed on top of the soil and cover the seeds with another thin layer of soil. Place the cup by a sunny window and wait for Mr. Green grass's hair (the grass) to grow.

## ■ Magic Paint

For outdoor fun, take old paint brushes and coffee cans filled with water out to the play area. Let your child paint on the cement sidewalks, porches, or walls with their magic paint.

## ■ Enjoy Cloud Watching Together

On a nice sunny day when the sky is full of beautiful, fluffy, white clouds, lie down with your child on the ground and gaze up at the sky. Together imagine they are animals, creatures, people, or monsters. Have fun as you try to decide what the clouds look like.

## ■ Make a Teepee

Give your child an old sheet which can be colorfully decorated with markers, fabric crayons or fabric paint. Let the sheet dry and then drape it over a card table for an instant teepee. Help your child make an Indian head dress out of construction paper and feathers.

## ■ Blowing Big Bubbles

Blowing bubbles can be a great source of self amusement. Shape a large homemade wand from a wire coat hanger, making sure to wind any stray ends around the main wire and to bind any sharp points with electrical or duct tape. Have your child dip the wand in a large container filled with bubble soap (recipe provided below) and wave in the air to make big bubbles. Plastic flyswatters with holes can also be used as bubble wands. **Bubble recipe:** Mix 1 cup of dish detergent dishwashing liquid, 8 cups water and 1 cup of corn syrup. The bubble solution keeps well. Store the unused portion in a closed container.

### ■ Plan a Scavenger Hunt

This can be an inside or an outside game. Make up a list of fun items you want your child to find such as a small rock, a bird feather, a twig, etc. If your child cannot read, draw pictures of the items and write the name underneath them. Go over the list so the child understands what to look for and where to look. Give your child a small bag or basket to put the collected treasures in. Be sure to plan a special treat or surprise for when the hunt is over.

### ■ Chalk Drawing

Provide a variety of colored sidewalk chalk and allow your children to express their creativity by drawing on the driveway, sidewalk, or concrete patio.

Be sure to take a look at and compliment the masterpieces designed by the young artist. Either you can wait for the rain to wash the chalk away or you can provide a water hose or a pail of water for clean up. On a warm day, cleaning up with a water hose may be just as much fun as drawing!

### ■ Create Colorful Windsocks

For each windsock, cut a 2 x 16 inch strip of heavy paper or poster board. Glue long 1-inch wide strips of fabric or ribbon along the lower edge of the paper. Staple the ends of the paper or poster board strip together to form a circle.

Punch a small hole on each side of the circle and attach a piece of yarn or string through it and tie. This is what you will hang the windsock with. Hang the windsock outdoors and watch it dance in the wind.

### ■ Straw Painting

Provide a piece of construction paper with a small blob of watered down tempera paint placed in the middle.

Give your child a plastic drinking straw (may be cut in half to make shorter). Instruct them to blow through the straw and move the paint around to make a design. You may add more colors of paint if the child wants.

### ■ Making Paper Hats

Place two pages from a newspaper on top of the child's head (cris-cross the pages). Press the paper down around the top of the child's head to form the top of the hat. Have the child or someone else hold the paper in place while you put a strip of masking tape around the formed hat just above the child's ears. Now let your child be creative and roll or fold the edges to form a fancy or funny hat. You may need to secure the rolled edges with tape. The hat can also be painted and a feather or bright colored ribbon can be added for a decorative touch.

### ■ Items That Might Spark Interest

Put together a collection of items that will spark your child's interest and creativity. Some items might include: prisms, magnets of different sizes, rulers, yardsticks, tape measures, thermometers, scales, kaleidoscopes, flashlights, magnifying glasses, measuring spoons and cups, old clock, construction paper, scissors, glue, washable markers, modeling clay and cookie cutters.

**Check with your local library for books and other resources on summer activities for children. The library may also offer special summer programs for school age children.**

---

Sources: Time Out Together, Jan Brennan, 1990.

Beautiful Junk, Creative Uses for Recyclable Materials, Karen Brackett and Rosie Manley, 1990.

Author Kathy L. Jelley, Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences, Brown County

Edited by: Elaine Collins, Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences/Community Development, Adams County

Rose Fisher Merkowitz, Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences/Community Development, Highland County

Carol Ford Arkin, Extension Specialist, Human Development, Ohio State University

All educational programs conducted by Ohio State University Extension are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender, age, disability or Vietnam-era veteran status.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Keith L. Smith, Director, Ohio State University Extension.

TDD # 1 (800) 589-8292 (Ohio only) or (614) 292-1868

11/97—200—des