

Early Learning
Coalition of
Northwest
Florida^{Inc.}



PRESENTS

ELC Staff Activity Pack

Our amazing staff has come together to compile some of their favorite activities to do with kids. Take a look inside for some crafts for young children and suggested activities for families to do together!



Sponsored by the Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida and the State of Florida, Division of Early Learning.



Alyssa Gray, Help Me Grow Program Manager

CHROMATOGRAPHY FLOWERS



SUPPLIES:

COFFEE FILTERS

MARKERS

CUP OF WATER

PIPE CLEANERS

INSTRUCTIONS:

STEP 1. Use the markers to color on the coffee filter. You can experiment with different colors, different designs - start by drawing close to the center of the filter working outward.

STEP 2. Fold the coffee filter in half a few times so it becomes wedge-shaped. This will create a point where the center of the coffee filter is.

STEP 3. Place the coffee filter into the cup with a small amount of water at the bottom. Wait 5-10 minutes for the water to spread the marker ink. Note: only a small amount of water is needed.

STEP 4. Lay flat to dry. Once dry fold it again as you did to put it in the water. Pinch the middle of the filter and wrap a green pipe cleaner around it to make a stem. Fluff out the “petals” as you like.

Family Scrapbooking

WITH KIDS



I love that my kids ask questions about their relatives

With my cell phone being the main camera for our family, almost all of our family photos are stored digitally. I can go months, even an entire year before I think to myself - perhaps I should print out some photos. I have made it a goal of mine to select some family photos from the past year and place them into a scrapbook.

But the best part - I have decided to let my kids help me make the family scrapbook! They have so much fun doing the arts and crafts part, but I also love when they ask me questions about the family members who are in the photos. We take the time to talk about family and the adventures we have been on.



Julie Weber

Communications and
Outreach Specialist



PAINTING WITH TOYS

SUPPLIES:

Paint

Paper

Toys like:

- **dinosaurs**
- **cars**
- **balls**

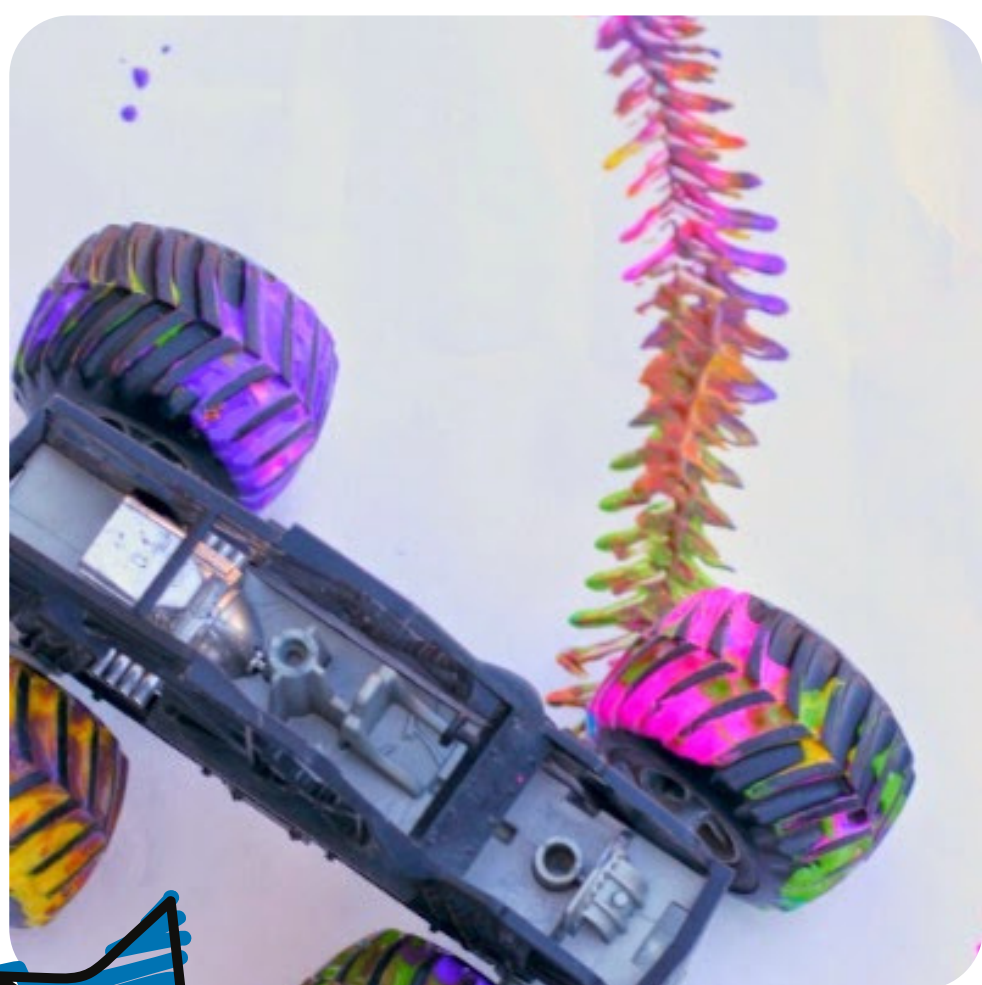


INSTRUCTIONS:

STEP 1. Place paint drops on the paper, or dip the toys in paint.

STEP 2. Experiment by rolling the car wheels, stomping the dinosaur feet, or rolling the ball across the paper.

STEP 3. Try mixing colors, and move the toys around to create different patterns.



Matt Bonner
Administrative Director





FAMILY MEAL PLANNING

Blair Bell, Mental Health Support Specialist



BUILD A FAMILY MEAL CALENDAR

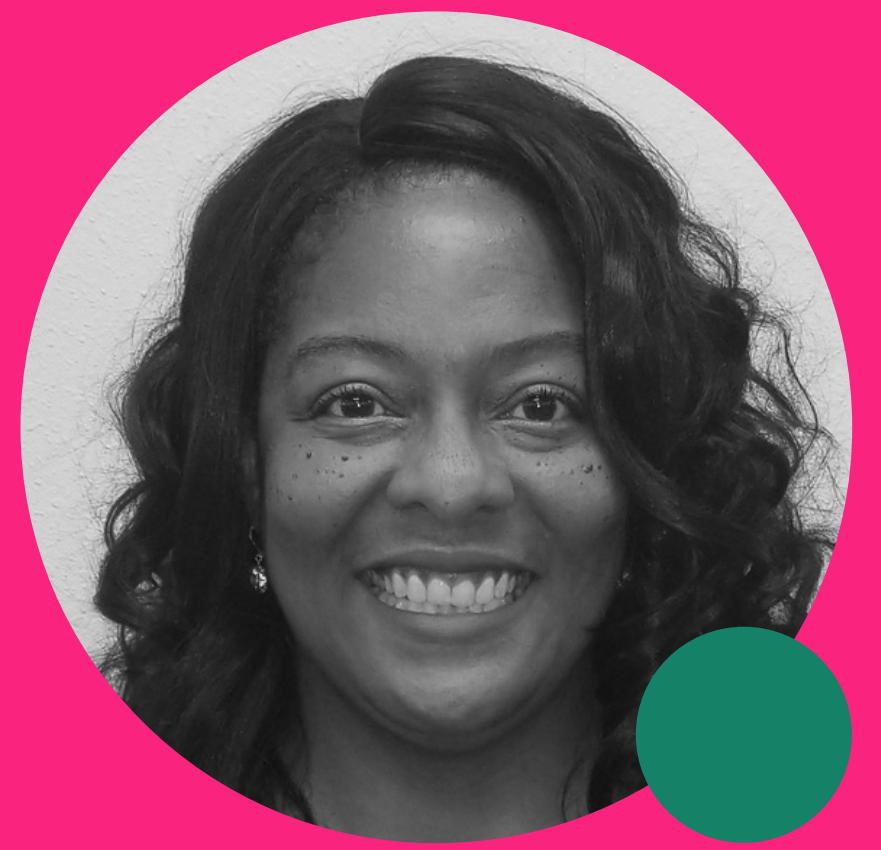
I am not sure if anyone else struggles to meal plan for the family, but sometimes it can be a little daunting. One thing that I have found to break up the monotony is when I have my kids help me plan, prepare, and assist with cooking the meals.

- We decide what meals we want to eat for the week
- We shop for the ingredients together
- We assign which task the kids will help with. Sometimes they help wash the produce, or they mix together some sauces. Older kids can probably help with chopping and cooking.

The best part is when we can sit down together and enjoy the meal together. My kids really take pride in the work they did to help prepare the food.

MARACAS

Kimberly Mickey
CCR&R Coordinator



Plastic Easter Eggs
Beans or Rice

Plastic Spoons
Tape

- Put about one tablespoon of beans or rice into a plastic easter egg. Repeat on the second egg. Use the tape to secure the eggs shut.
- Hold 2 plastic spoons facing each other and tape the handles together. Repeat on the second pair of spoons.
- Squeeze an egg between 2 spoons. Place a piece of tape around the two spoons to secure the egg inside.
- Repeat on the second set of spoons and egg.
- Decorate the maracas with markers, paint, or decorative tape. Have fun making music and different sounds with the maracas.



BUBBLE PAINTING



SUPPLIES:

Bubble Mix
Bubble Wands
Food Coloring
Paper

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Pour 1 tablespoon of bubble mix into a small, shallow bowl.
- Add a few drops of food coloring to the bubble mix and stir well.
- Place your bubble wand in the colored bubble mix, remove and blow bubbles towards your paper.
- As the bubbles hit the paper and pop, they will leave interesting patterns. Repeat with other colors.

Tip:

It is best to do this activity outside (since you may not want a soapy mess inside) and on a non-windy day so you can get the bubbles to hit the paper.



Lindsay Holmes

Communications and
Community Relations Director



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LETTER PRACTICE

Get a small tray and fill it with sand (you can use salt or sugar too). Add just enough sand to cover the bottom of the tray. Too much sand will make it difficult to see the letters.

Using paper or flashcards, set out a letter or word for your child to write in the sand tray. For young ones, make sure to show your child how to write letters using their pointer finger. If the child makes a mistake, they can simply shake the tray to “erase”.

Many children love the added sensory experience of the sand beneath their fingers! If your child does not like the feel of sand, try softer materials, like flour. You can even substitute this idea with playdough if desired. They can either carve into it or mold the letters out of playdough.



Kynia Gainer

Mental Health
Support Specialist

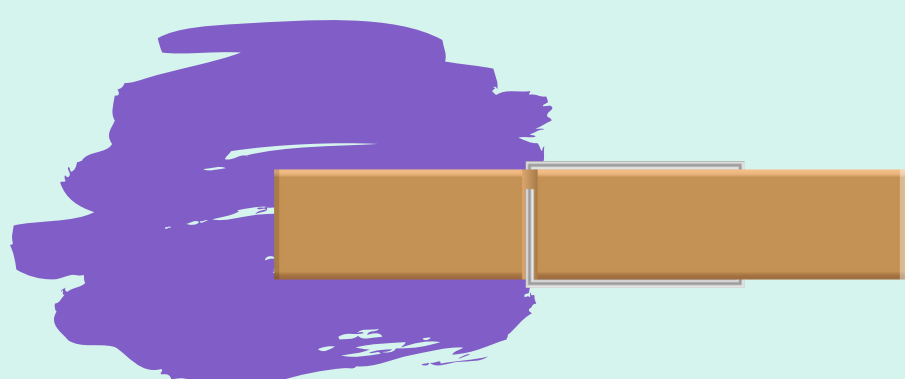
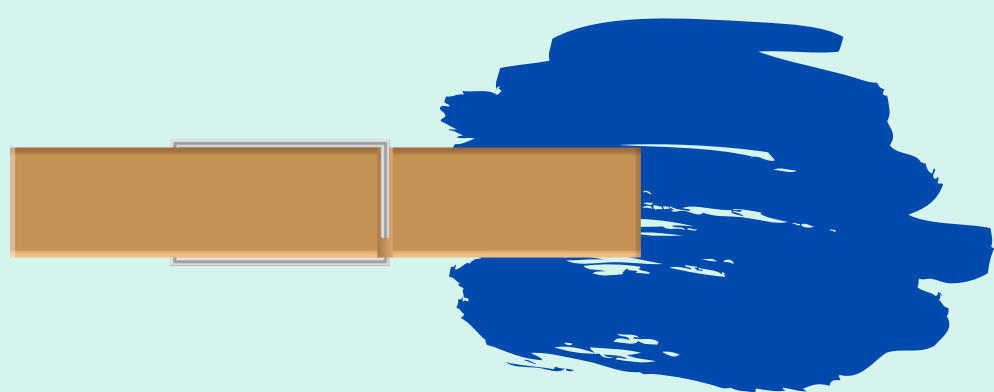
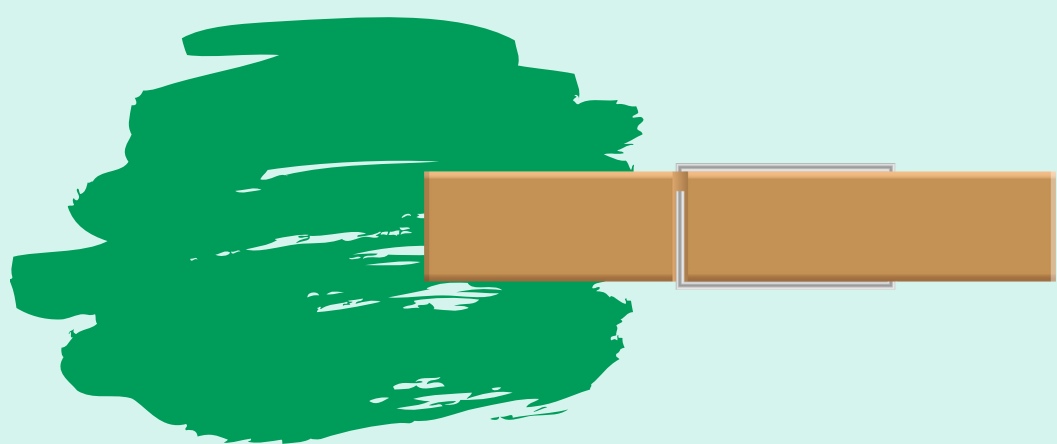
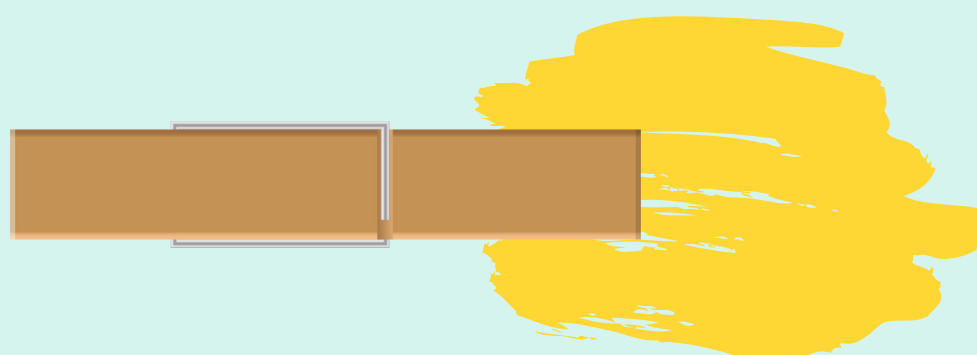
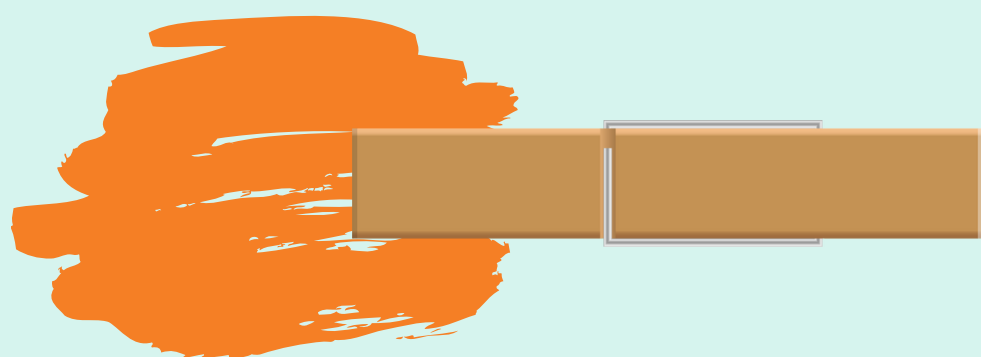
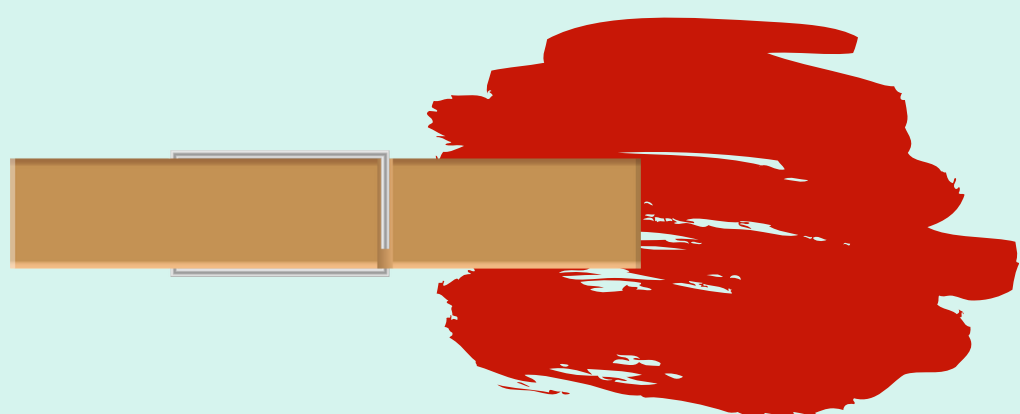
School Readiness Tip:

When your child is ready, substitute a paintbrush or chopsticks for their finger, encouraging a correct grip on a writing utensil.



COLOR

SCAVENGER HUNT

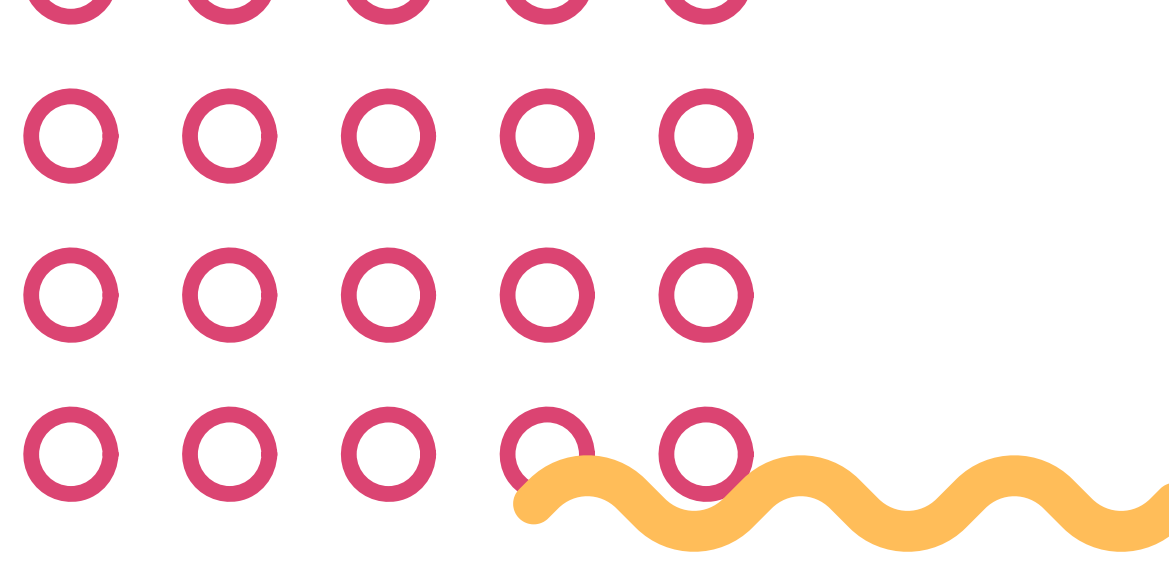


This is one of my favorite activities for kids because it requires very little materials and it is fun to see the kids run around looking for objects that match all the colors. You can do this inside or outside the house.

Use color flashcards or create a board with all the colors you choose. Have the kids search the house for small objects or toys that match each color that they can bring back to place on the color board. If doing this activity outside, they can just point out objects that they see. How many colors do you think they will be able to find?

Amy Branton
Mental Health
Support Specialist





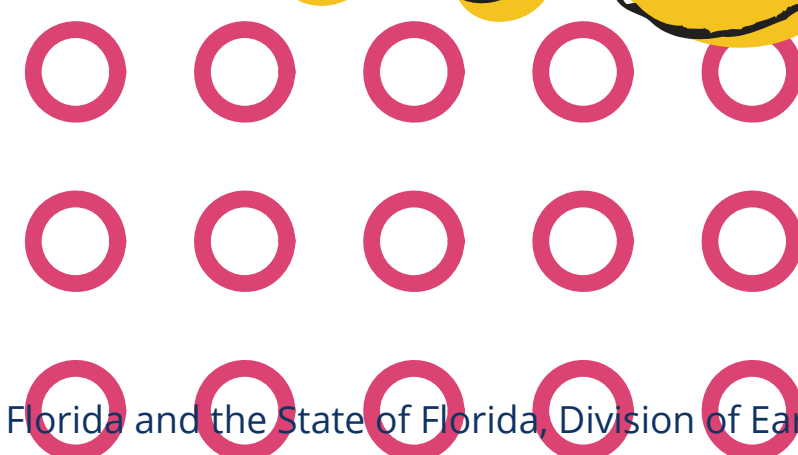
DANCE

PARTY

Have a dance party to encourage kids to explore sight, sound, and their sense of themselves in a space all at once. Start with bright lights and loud music for one song. Then lower the lights and music volume for the next. Alternate this for 15 minutes — about three to four songs. After children become accustomed to the fun, vary the pattern.



Angela Benton
Curriculum Specialist



Sight Words



Donna Carnley
Quality Service Director



"When my grandbaby was younger, he struggled with recognizing his sight words in Kindergarten and 1st grade."

This took a little bit of work, but I helped him write out all of his sight words on index cards, (one site word per card). I hid them all around my house where he could find them when he came to my house. I taped the cards on the walls and furniture in different rooms. I wrote out the instructions, and he had to read along with me as I read them to him.

The instructions were:

1. Pull out your sight word spelling list and have a pencil available.
2. Look around the house for an index card with one of your sight words on it.
3. When you find one card, come back to your sight word list and put a check beside it, and say the word one time and use it in a sentence.
4. Do this until you find all the cards.

" Then we would go for a reward. Ice cream or a trip to the Dollar Tree."

Handprint Wreaths



SUPPLIES:

Paper plate
Colored paper
Scissors
Markers
Ribbon or twine

INSTURCTIONS:

Cut a circle out of the center of the paper plate. Trace your child's hand on different colored papers. Cut out the hands and paste on the ring (overlapping a little). Add a bow of ribbon or twine. And hang for the whole world to see!



JAHN JONES

HELP ME GROW PROGRAM SPECIALIST

"I did this with my children when they were small. It can be done for any season and it was a memorable piece for me to watch their little hands grow through the years."





SENSORY RICE

Tiffany Cohen

Help Me Grow Program Specialist



MATERIALS:

A cup or so of rice

A teaspoon of white vinegar

Food coloring

Sealable sandwich baggie (or a few bags if you plan to do different colors or shades)

Optional: A few drops of essential oils for a nice, light scent

Creating a sensory rice bin is one of mine and my daughter's favorite activities. Sensory rice has many fun elements such as the color you add, the feeling of the rice granules in between your fingers, and the sound as you pour it. I hope your family enjoys it as much as we do!

First, you are going to pour your cup of rice into the Ziploc bag. Next, you will put a little of your vinegar in there with the rice. and mix it all up. Add a few drops of your food coloring and be sure to seal your bag back up to prevent spills and drips. Once it's all in the bag and sealed, continue to mix. Shake it, squish it, really get the color mixed up!

Once it is mixed up in your sandwich bag, pour the rice on a tray lined with parchment paper. Spread the rice out a tad. It may have some clumps, but they'll break apart when it is dried. You'll want to let your rice sleep for a bit and rest after the color splash party (about an hour's nap or so). Once it is dry, you are ready to play with your custom sensory rice!

Some extra things you can do with your sensory rice is add cups for pouring or small toys to hide in the rice. One of my daughter's favorite things to put into her rice was a set of small My Little Pony figures! You could theme your rice bins for different times of the year. For example, in summer you could add some seashells for texture!

HOW FUN!



OUTDOORS IN THE DARK

CHECK OUT THIS LIST OF ACTIVITIES KIDS CAN DO IN THE EVENING.

- ★ Black out the color names on crayons and take them outside after dark. Try to guess what they are and draw a picture of the green grass, pink flowers, or yellow stars. Did you use the right colors??
- ★ Play flashlight tag.
- ★ Listen for animal sounds and look for nocturnal animals.
- ★ Use flashlights to create shadows on a fence or wall.
- ★ Grandmother's Footsteps: Kids quietly sneak up to the "grandmother." If she hears footsteps, she shines her flashlight at the culprit and they must return to the start. The object is to steal a piece of treasure the grandmother has at her side and get back to the start with it without being caught by the grandmother's flashlight beam.



TAMI VALDEZ
PROVIDER DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST



Seasonal Scavenger Hunts



Sherry Massey
Project Implementation Specialist

Scan each QR code below to download a scavenger hunt sheet for each of the seasons

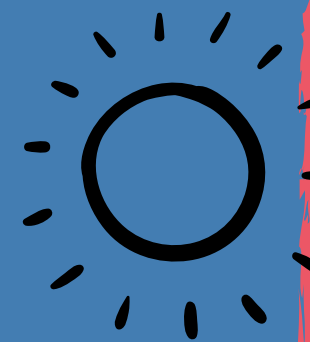
BIRTHDAY



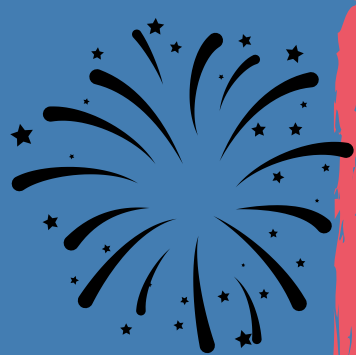
EASTER



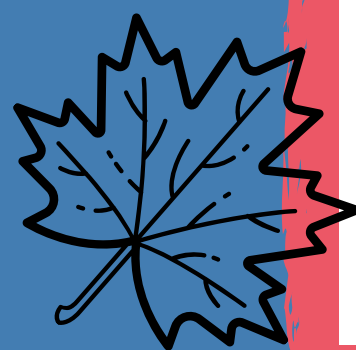
SUMMER



4TH OF JULY



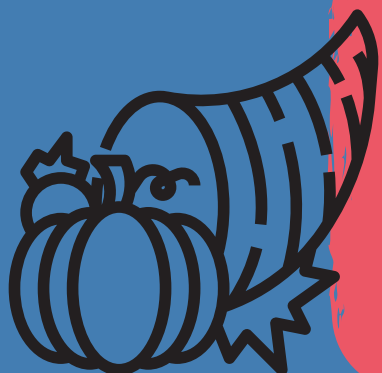
FALL



HALLOWEEN



THANKSGIVING



CHRISTMAS



DIY SIDEWALK FOAM PAINT



SUPPLIES:

(2) 4OZ. BOTTLES OF
WASHABLE SCHOOL GLUE

1 CUP WHITE FLOUR

4-5 CUPS WHITE SHAVING
FOAM

FOOD COLORING

SANDWICH-SIZED
ZIPLOCK BAGS (1/COLOR)

GALLON-SIZED ZIPLOCK
BAG

OPTIONAL: PLASTIC
SQUEEZE BOTTLES (LIKE
THE ONES USED FOR HAIR
DYING)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- In a gallon-size plastic ziplock bag, add 1 cup of flour.
- Pour both bottles of washable school glue on top of the flour. Make sure it's washable for easy clean-up!
- Spray about 4-5 cups of shaving foam into the bag. No need to measure it, I would just eyeball it.
- Close the bag and knead it for a few minutes until everything is mixed.
- Snip one corner of the big bag and squirt some into a sandwich-sized plastic ziplock bag to divide it up per color.
- Add 10 drops of one food coloring to each bag.
- Knead each smaller bag, until the desired color is throughout the bag.
- Snip off the edge and squirt it into plastic squirt bottles. Or you can just paint with the ziplock bags. If you keep it in the bags, just snip off a tiny corner, so it doesn't come out too heavy.

KAREN WAYMIRE
PRE-K SPECIALIST



Shower Curtain Painting



Jennifer Kent
Family Support Specialist



You get a clear plastic shower curtain, art paint, paint brushes (of all sizes), and string (to hang the shower curtain up outside). You will pull the string through the loops at the top of the shower curtain and tie it off between two trees. If there are no trees, lay the shower curtain on the drive way or in the yard. Finally, just let your child have fun creating a masterpiece that both you and they can be proud of.



DIY Playdough

Jana Miller, CLASS Coordinator

Make homemade playdough with your child. They can add the ingredients and mix them all together.

Ingredients:

**1 cup flour
½ cup salt
2 teaspoons cream of tartar
1 tablespoon cooking oil
1 cup water
food coloring**

Steps for Mixing Ingredients:

- 1. Mix flour, salt, and cream of tartar in a bowl.**
- 2. Add water and cooking oil.**
- 3. Stir together in a saucepan.**
- 4. Cook on medium heat. Keep stirring. Dough forms in about 3 minutes.**
- 5. Carefully knead the dough as it will be warm. For food coloring, you can split the dough into a few portions and add a different color to each portion and then knead so the color will mix into the dough.**

Place the playdough into ziplock bags to save and store.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILDREN

the importance of being present

Communication with children and babies is essential to their relationships and development. Good communication involves listening and talking in ways that make children feel important and valued.

Having meaningful conversations with your kids can be tough. We've all asked, "How was your day?" and received the one-word replies of "Good" and "Fine." Here are a few tips to inspire good conversation and get your kids to open up to you.

Ask open-ended questions

Remove distractions

Make it a habit

Know what's going on

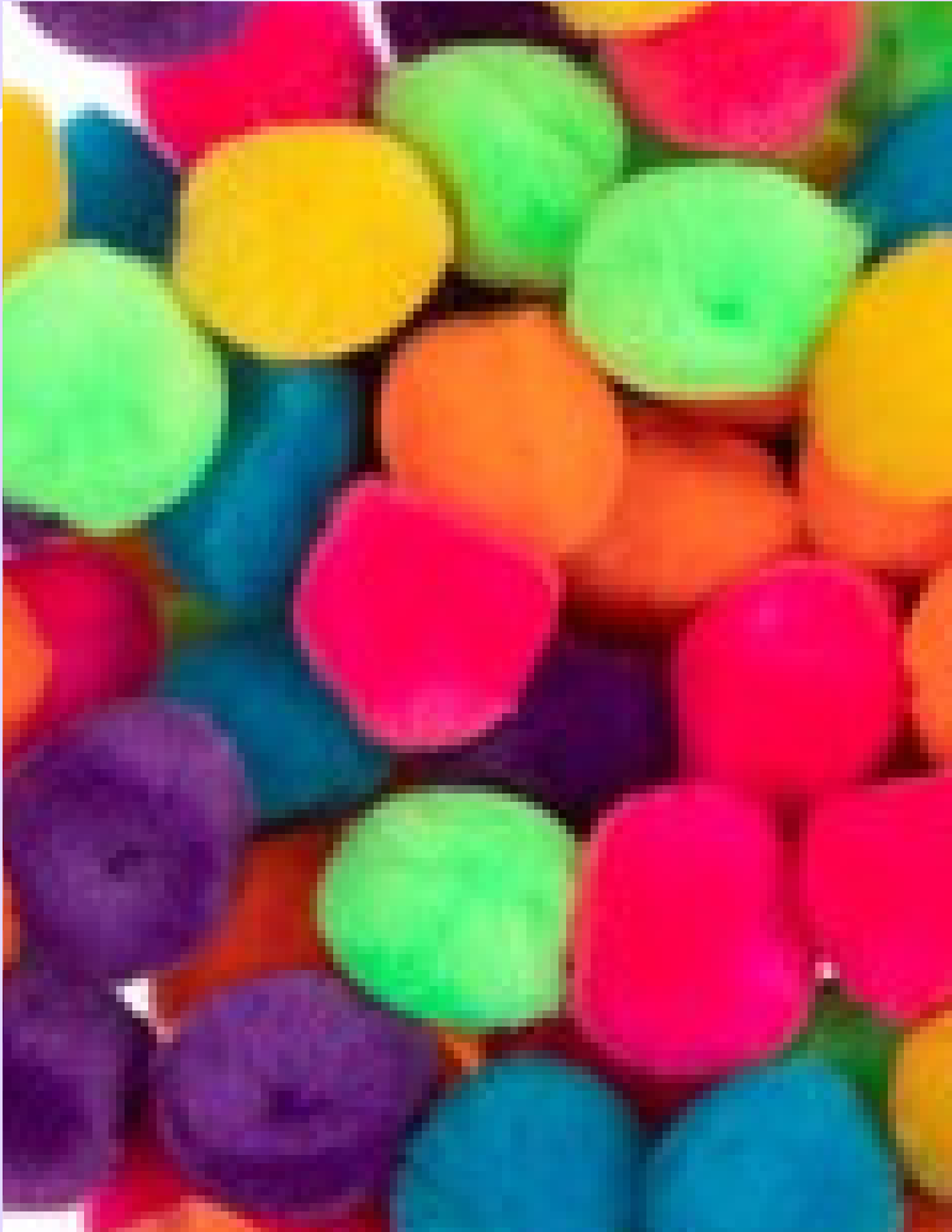
Open up about your day

Spend one-on-one time together



Ashley Hunter
Infant & Toddler
Specialist

Pom Pom Activities



You can purchase craft pom poms in an assortment of sizes and colors, tongs, and small paint containers with lids from the Dollar Tree.

Activity

- Tape empty paper towel inserts to a wall or cabinet.
- Place a small container under the paper towel insert to catch the pom poms.
- Allow the children to drop the balls into the paper towel insert where the container will catch the balls.
- You may add tongs or tweezers for the children to pick up the pom poms to promote fine motor skills.

Variations

- Children can place the balls in the holes of the containers using their fingers or tongs.
- Throw the pom poms in the air and allow the children to gather them! They can use their fingers or tongs. Add music.
- Older children can color coordinate and make patterns, as they are able.

Nancy Mitta

Infant & Toddler Specialist





DONNA WOOD
CCR&R SUPPORT
SPECIALIST

MARBLED PAPER



INSTRUCTIONS

Start by spraying shaving cream all over the bottom of a pie tin or cookie sheet. Then take 3-4 colors of acrylic paint and put drops all over. Take your stir stick and make swirl designs, making sure there's still white showing. Place a piece of paper on top of the shaving cream and press it down so all of it touches. Carefully lift up one corner and set it aside. Wait for 2-3 minutes, then take a straight edge (we used a piece of cardboard for our scraper) and scrape off all the shaving cream. Let it dry and you'll see some awesome designs! Try with other colors too!

MATERIALS

- Shaving Cream
- Shallow baking dish, such as a pie plate, or cookie sheet
- Paint
- Droppers
- Stir stick, such as a chopstick or the bottom of a paintbrush
- Card stock
- A scraper, such as a square piece of cardboard or thick popsicle stick