

Children's Centres Family Fun



April 2020 01 edition



**giving
your child
a better
start**

We hope you and your families are well as we all face these worrying and uncertain times. As we follow the government guidelines to stay at home and keep safe, we can embrace the opportunity to spend some quality time with our families. A lot of us are having to find ways to occupy, entertain and stimulate our children, as well as juggle home schooling, all within our own homes! Here are some ideas and suggestions to help you keep your little ones entertained.





I spy with my little eye, something beginning with...

Sometimes, the oldies are the goodies, or so the saying goes. Try entertaining the kids with a game of 'I spy'. Adapt it for younger children by making the sound rather than naming a letter, e.g. "I spy with my little eye something beginning with 'Ch...' Chair!" You could try

"I hear, with my two little ears something sounding like...'woof' or 'moo' and encourage your child to name the animal.

Exercise tips

Even though it's not safe to go outside, children still need exercise to use up some of that energy that they have bubbling inside them. If you are not using

your allocated hour of exercise outdoors how about getting the kids involved in an indoor workout? The 30-minute sessions called PE with Joe are streamed live on Wicks' YouTube channel at 9am every weekday morning, and will not require any specialist equipment or large amounts of space. Play 'Simon Says' and get them to jump up and down, bounce around and do star jumps. They can run on the spot and touch their toes. Why not try an energetic and fast 'Head, shoulders, knees and toes', speeding it up and then going very, very slowly! March around the house to the 'Grand old Duke of York' or 'If you're happy and you know it' hope up and down!

Online learning resources

If you have access to the internet there are lots of free websites, you can use to get ideas on activities and games to play to have fun with your child and encourage their learning and development. There are also lots of free audible story websites for children of all ages that come in a range of languages.

Check out some of these websites:

<https://www.happyclicks.net/>
<https://www.todayparent.com/toddler/20-fun-indoor-games/>
https://play.fisher-price.com/en_gb/gamesandactivities/onlinegames/index.html
<https://parenting.firstcry.com/articles/top-40-fun-indoor-games-for-kids/>
<https://kneebouncers.com/>
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/games>
<https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>
<https://www.storynory.com/>
<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/storybooks-and-games/>

If you're lucky enough to get your hands on some flour, why not have a 'Great British Bake Off' or 'Mini Masterchef' challenge? Try out some delicious recipes at:

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/kids-cooking>



Support for parents of under 5s

Although all group activities in children's centres have now stopped and children's centre buildings are closed for face to face support, we are still available to help and support you over the phone or online. We have a dedicated team ready to support you with issues such as sorting out benefits, arranging food vouchers or food parcels, supporting wellbeing or relationship advice. Or maybe you just need someone to talk to? Call us on **0207 926 2369**.



Sensory playdough

Here's how to make some soft and moist playdough. You'll need:

- A mug of flour
- Appr 100-150ml of warm water
- Food colouring
- Mixing bowl
- Spoon
- 2 tbs of oil (vegetable, olive or sunflower)
- A handful of oats

Pour the flour into the bowl. Add a few drops of colouring to the water and mix. Pour the oil onto the flour then slowly add the water to the flour, adding a little at a time and stopping to mix with the spoon. Once all the water has been added, its time to get your hands dirty! Use your hands to mix the dough and begin to knead it. If your mixture feels too wet or sticky, add a little more flour. If it's too dry or stiff, add more water. Continue kneading and rolling the dough in your hands and it should start to feel smooth and spongy. Put the dough back in the bowl and add the oats, rolling and massaging them into the dough...and voil you have a perfect ball of sensory playdough! The dough can be kept fresh for about 4-5 days by storing it in a nappy bag in the fridge.



Den making

Kids love forts and dens, try making one with your dining table chairs and some old sheets. Turn off the lights and give them a torch, read stories or sing songs in your child's fun, new space.

Homemade bubbles

Make homemade bubbles using washing up liquid, a large basin and a plastic trouser hanger. Fill 1/3 of the basin with water (you could also add food colouring if you like) and add a good squirt of the washing up liquid in the water. Plunge the hanger into the basin and lift it back out slowly. Now blow through the hanger and create some giant (and maybe colourful) bubbles!

Keeping to a simple routine

With many children's daytime routines being disrupted due to the lockdown, it is important to establish a new routine while at home. Having mealtimes at the same time each day is now possible to do and even though there's no school or nursery to wake up for, be sure to maintain a bedtime. Involve your child in the day to day household chores, a dustpan and brush can support a child's motor skills and development! Children love listening to stories and looking at books so end the day with the 3 B's, bath, book and bed!