



POCKET PlayCards



MADE POSSIBLE BY:



**BlueCross BlueShield
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Foundation



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POCKET PlayCards



Be Active Kids® and the Active Play Alliance would like to thank you for your interest in creating free play for our young children. These cards will help you with tips, ideas, and materials needed to provide active play through the use of loose parts. We encourage you to embrace loose parts and allow children to dive into play that is unstructured and self-directed. Through this type of play children will not only benefit physically, but cognitively and socially as well.





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FAIRY GARDEN

Tips: Provide both open and wooded space; use natural elements such as stones, sticks, shells, and rocks, as well as small animals, dolls, plants, etc.; encourage children and teachers to bring in things from home like broken toys that can be taken apart and used to build things

Types of Play: Creative Play, Fantasy Play, Imaginative Play

Recipes:

Ribbon Wands:

- Dowel rods
- Super glue or liquid cement
- Ribbon

Cut dowel rods into 9 inch or shorter segments. Using super glue or liquid cement, attach different color and length ribbons to the end. (Use sticks to give a more authentic look.)

Materials: Mirrors, glitter, glass beads, marbles, sticks, bubbles, nature materials (nuts, leaves, pine cones, shells, etc.) dolls, pipe cleaners, pom-poms, ribbons, artificial flowers, bells

Recommended for ages: Toddler and older



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MUD CAFE

Tips: Always use dirt that is pure and void of any fertilizer or chemicals; use tree cookies as plates

Types of Play: Creative Play, Imaginative Play, Social Play, Motor-Physical Play

Recipes:

Dig In!:

Hide a variety of small items (rocks, marbles, acorns, etc) in small containers of mud of various consistencies. Encourage children to explore the mud in search of “artifacts” and “treasures”.

Materials: Water, pure dirt, colander, cups, scoops, sand toys, pie pans, shovels, dump trucks, funnels, sticks, stones, shells

Recommended for ages:

Toddler and older



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WATER PLAY

Tips: Caution participants that they will get wet; have extra clothing, boots, and towels available

Types of Play: Social Play, Imaginary Play, Motor-Physical Play

Recipes:

Wooden Boats:

- Sticks
- Pieces of loose tree bark (can substitute with plastic water bottles)
- Leaves
- Scissors or knife

Choose a sea-worthy piece of bark (one that floats). Cut a small hole in the center. Shove a twig into the hole for a mast, making sure that it fits snugly. Thread a big leaf onto the stick for a sail. Find some water and launch your boat! (The best is to float them in a stream, but a sand and water table would work also.)

Materials: Water, buckets, cups, hoses, sand toys, baby pools, watering cans, pots and pans, funnels, play snakes, dinosaurs, dragons, leaves, and bark

Recommended for ages:

Toddler and older



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WOOD WORKING

Tips: Provide various size, shapes, and types of wood; create tree cookies; allow children to construct and build (large and small structures)

Types of Play: Creative Play, Exploratory Play, Social Play, Motor-Physical Play

Materials: Wood, hammer, nails, saw, wood glue, clamps, vice grips, gloves, goggles, “blueprints” of simple geometric shapes and designs, woodworking bench

Recommended for ages: Pre-school and older



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FORT BUILDING

Tips: Provide a model fort or pictures of forts; stack sticks largest on the bottom smaller on the top; use old branches as camouflage; use a tarp to waterproof

Types of Play: Creative Play, Deep Play, Fantasy Play, Social Play, Symbolic Play, Motor-Physical Play

Materials: Sticks, sheets, tarps, ropes, bungee cords, poles, PVC pipes and cardboard boxes

Recommended for ages:

Pre-school and older



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ACTIVE PLAY

Tips: Provide ample space; ample selection of diverse equipment

Types of Play: Motor-Physical Play, Object Play, Rough and Tumble Play, Social Play

Recipes:

Hula Hoops Recipe

- 3/4" or 1" (preferred) rolls of PVC irrigation pipe
- 3/4" or 1" connector for each hoop
- Hacksaw and clamp
- Colored electrical tape

Unroll and measure enough pipe so that when it creates a hoop, the hoop will be between the child's belly button and chest. Cut using the hacksaw and clamp. Insert the connector into each and connect ends to make a circle. Decorate with tape.

Materials: Balls, hula hoops, jump ropes, pool noodles, buckets, sidewalk chalk, Frisbees, beanbags, etc.

Recommended for ages: All



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BOOK NOOK

Tips: Provide simple books (board and paper); provide simple puzzles; choose books about active play or nature

Types of Play: Imaginary Play, Dramatic Play

Recipes:

Make Your Own Book

- Various colors and types of paper
- Ribbons or string
- Hole punch or stapler

Use 4 or 5 sheets of paper cut to the same size, stack and fold sheets in half to make a book.

Use hole punch and ribbon or string to create binding along the edge or stapler.

Materials:

Blankets, books, chair, journals, pillows, paper, and writing utensils (markers, pencils, crayons, etc.)

Recommended for ages: All



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BUBBLE PLAY

Tips: Mark bubble container clearly; use wet bubble wands; use a quick wrist twist to seal big bubbles; make sure solution stretches the entire hole of the wand; blow using soft gentle breaths

Types of Play: Social Play, Motor-Physical Play, Object Play

Recipes:

Bubbles

- 12 cups of water
- 1 cup of dish soap,
- 1 cup of cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons of baking powder

Wands

Roll paper into a cone shape and use the open end to dip in the bubble solution; cut the bottom out of a plastic bottle and dip in bubble solution; use toilet paper or paper towel rolls; use 7 or more straws taped together. All of the above can be blown through. Manipulate a coat hanger into a shape, then wrap it with yarn; create shapes with pipe cleaners making sure there is a long pipe cleaner at the end to hold; attach a needlepoint hoop to a stick. Wave this style through the air.

Materials: Bubbles, bubbles wands, and an empty laundry detergent dispenser, pie pans

Recommended for ages:

Toddler and older



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CLAY PLAY

Tips: Keep clay in a sealed container; use the type of clay specific to the project you are doing

Types of Play: Object Play, Social Play, Creative Play

Recipes:

Homemade Modeling Clay Recipe #1

- 2-1/2 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- 1 cup water
- Food coloring (optional)

Mix the clay ingredients together. Store the modeling clay in the refrigerator in a sealed plastic baggie or in a bowl covered with plastic wrap.

Homemade Modeling Clay Recipe #2

- 1 cup cornstarch
- 2 cups baking soda
- 1-1/2 cups cold water
- Food coloring (optional)

Mix and heat the ingredients together over low heat until a dough is formed. Cover the clay with a damp cloth and allow it to cool before use. Seal completed clay products with shellac.



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CLAY PLAY CONTINUED

Homemade Modeling Clay Recipe #3

This clay recipe produces a clay with a smooth consistency similar to that of store-bought play dough for kids. Air-dry products made with this clay.

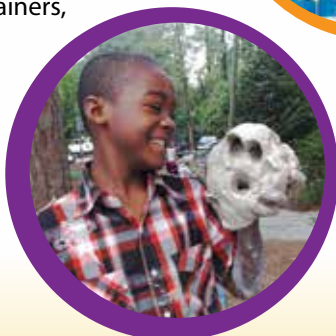
- 3-1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup of salt
- 1 tablespoon cream of tartar
- 2-1/2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 cups water
- Food coloring (optional)
- Few drops of vanilla extract for scent (optional)

Bring the water to a boil. Stir in the oil, food coloring, and vanilla. Mix the dry ingredients (flour, salt, cream of tartar) in a bowl. Mix the hot liquid into the dry ingredients a little at a time to produce a pliable clay. The clay may be stored indefinitely in a sealed container at room temperature.

Materials: Clay, tarp, tooth picks, mesh produce bags, forks, rubber stamps, Tupperware containers, cookie cutters, rolling pin, cookie press

Recommended for ages:

Toddler and older



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FACE PAINTING

Tips: Have pictures of the choices kids can have painted on their face; keep it simple

Types of Play: Dramatic Play, Creative Play

Recipes:

Face Paint:

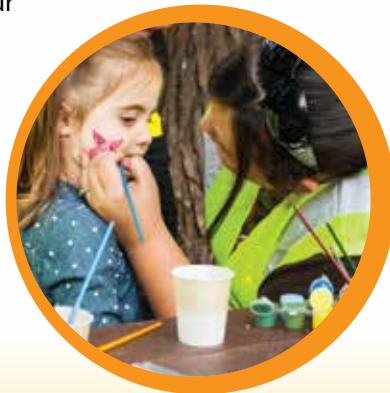
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- 1/2 teaspoon water
- 1/2 teaspoon cold cream
- 2 drops food coloring as desired

Mix together adding as much color you want until you get the desired effect.

Clown Make-up Base:

- 2 teaspoons white shortening
- 5 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon white all-purpose flour

Mix it all together, or have your kiddo do it, and apply.



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FACE PAINTING CONTINUED

Homemade Pixie Glitter:

- Plain Aloe Vera Gel
- Fine Glitter

Mix in 1/2 teaspoon of glitter for every 2 teaspoons of gel. Put on desired areas, avoiding the eyes. Store in an airtight container or it will dry out.

Materials: Face paint, baby wipes, face paint applicators, cotton swabs, baby oil

Recommended for ages: All



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NATURE ART

Tips: Provide an open space; provide multiple media for children to experiment with; use pine needles as a paint brush; using glue adhere nature items to paper to create a picture (leaves that turn into fish and grass that is used as seaweed); create tree bark rubbings; use tree cookies as stepping stones, plates in the mud café or to do art on; use paint to do leaf prints; make paint using different colors of clay and dirt mixed with water

Types of Play: Creative Play, Social Play, and Imaginative Play

Recipes:

Toilet Paper Roll Sidewalk Chalk

- Toilet paper rolls (approx. 4)
- Scissors
- Duct Tape
- Wax Paper
- 3/4 cup warm water
- Throw away plastic container (old butter container)
- 1 1/2 cups Plaster of Paris
- 2-3 tablespoons tempera paint

Cover one end of each toilet paper roll with duct tape. Line with wax paper. Mix the water and plaster together in the plastic container.

Use a plastic spoon or Popsicle stick to mix, as these can be thrown away. Add the paint and mix well.

Sit each tube tape side down on a flat surface. Pour the wet plaster mixture into the tubes. Lightly tap the sides of each tube to release air bubbles. The chalk will need 24 hours to harden completely. Once all set and hardened, simply cut the toilet paper roll off and remove the wax paper!



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NATURE ART CONTINUED

Sidewalk Chalk

- 1 cup cornstarch
- 1 cup water
- Food coloring as desired

Mix together until cornstarch is mixed well. Pour mixture into an ice tray, paper cup, or other narrow container. 3 cup batches makes enough for 6-8 colors.

Shake it Paint

- 2 cups water
- 1/3 cup liquid starch
- 1/4 cup flour
- Food coloring
- Paper
- 2-3 golf balls

Put water, starch and flour into saucepan. Cook over medium heat about 5 minutes. Stirring constantly. Allow to cool. Pour mixture in small plastic containers and add different coloring to each container. Place a sheet of paper in a baking pan and drip colored paint onto sheet of paper. Add golf balls and have your kids shake the pan to make a design. Let dry.

Materials: Sticks, stones, pine cones, leaves, glue, paint, shells, nuts, mud/dirt, baby wipes, water, paper towels, paper, newspaper, tissue paper, pine needles, bark, Tupperware containers

Recommended for ages:

Toddler and older



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GAME CREATION

Tips: Provide ample equipment and loose parts

Types of Play: Rough and Tumble Play, Social Play, Motor-Physical Play, Imaginative Play, Object Play

Recipes:

Medium or large pom poms

- One ball of chunky yarn
- Cardboard
- Pencil
- Craft knife
- Cutting board
- Scissors

Trace a 22cm circle onto cardboard. Cut this out. Draw an 8cm circle in the center, and cut out, giving you a doughnut shape. Make a second shape. Sandwich together and begin winding yarn around the rings. (Cardboard circle dimensions can be change to vary the size of the pom pom) Tip: double up the yarn to make the process quicker.

Next, keep winding until you can't fit the yarn through the middle any more. Cut a length of yarn about 50cm long and set aside for later. Insert scissors between cardboard discs and snip the wrapped yarn all the way round.

Then, double up your 50cm length of yarn, slip it between the discs and tie lightly. Wrap and knot a few times to make sure it's secure. Remove cardboard discs, scrunch your pom pom and give it a light trim to even up.



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GAME CREATION CONTINUED

Stilts

- 2, 12 inch 2x4's or 2 large tin cans or heavy duty tin pot

Drill holes in both sides of the cans, blocks, or pots. Thread rope through the holes. Rope and be left untied so that both hands can be used or tied so that only one hand is needed.

Materials: Tubes, PVC pipes, balls, pool noodles, plastic bottles, pom pom, cardboard boxes, hula hoops

Recommended for ages:

Toddler and older



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SAND PLAY

Tips: Provide a baby powder pack to help sand be easily removed. (To make a baby powder pack fill a tube sock with baby powder. To remove sand from skin, rub the filled sock on the skin and sand will easily wipe away). Add cinnamon to sand to keep animals out of the box

Types of Play: Social Play, Object Play,
Motor-Physical Play

Recipes:

Homemade Sand

- 4 cups dried, used coffee grounds
- 2 cups cornmeal
- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup salt

Dry the grounds in the sun or in your oven on low heat. Stir all ingredients together and there you go!

Cloud Dough/Moon Sand

- 1/2 cup of baby oil
- 4 cups of flour

Mix everything together and enjoy!

Materials: Buckets, sand molds, shovels, watering cans, pie pans, dump trucks, wooden spoons baby pool, Tupperware containers, bowls, colanders

Recommended for ages:

Toddler and older



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GARDENING

Tips: Use potting soil; Allow the children to take home a seedling in a small container: place seeds in a dish so they are easy to pick up: allow kids to pick out different plants

Types of Play: Social Play, Object Play, Motor-Physical Play

Recipes:

Rock Signs

- Paint
- Paint Brushes
- Rocks

Paint rocks to resemble each plant then add the plant name to the rock. When dry, place in the garden near the named plant.

Materials: Market stand, gloves, dirt, child-sized garden tools, water, seeds, plastic veggies, egg cartons, Dixie cups, plastic bottles, buckets

Recommended for ages:

Toddler and older





NOTES

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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