

T H E

Well- Centered CHILD

May 2003

52 Easy Ways To Have Fun With Your Child This Summer

1. Brush some slightly diluted white glue on a sheet of dark-colored paper. Blow dandelion seeds at the paper and enjoy the patterns they make.
2. Check out back issues of children's magazines the next time you visit the library. Many of them are filled with activity ideas and projects.
3. A jump rope tied to a tree or post makes a good gas pump for tricycle riders.
4. What can your child use a flower for? A hat? A pretend dish? A dress for a doll? A boat?
5. On a rainy day, join your children in "drawing" on a rug or carpet, using pieces of colorful yarn or string.
6. Instead of buying dried apple rings, make them. Core and slice a few apples. Have your child arrange the rings on a baking sheet. Then dry them at the lowest possible temperature in your oven (even the pilot light on a gas oven is warm enough). Drying takes about six to nine hours. Enjoy!
7. Play Wading Pool Basketball by floating a plastic bowl in the water. Your child can try to toss a lightweight ball into it.
8. Spend an hour cleaning out a clothes closet. Make a dress-up box for your child out of items you no longer wear.
9. Get up extra early and have a breakfast picnic outside.
10. Paint with watercolors on paper towels.
11. Catch some lightening bugs and admire them together. Then wave good-bye when you let them go.
12. Plant quick-growing seeds such as radishes and bush beans, or sturdy flowers like zinnias or marigolds.
13. Make Backyard Mud Paint by mixing water, dirt, and a squirt of liquid soap. Stir until smooth.
14. Make your own bubble solution by mixing together 1/2 cup of Joy dish-washing liquid, 1 cup of water, and 1 teaspoon of sugar.
15. Use your imagination to create bubble-makers. Try paper cups with the bottom cut out, funnels, straws, or pipe-cleaners twisted into loops.
16. Does your child like to gather stones, shells, twigs and other nature items when you take a walk? When you sit down to rest, ask him or her to think of different ways to sort the items. It's fun, and a great math activity.
17. Summer is a nice time for lying on your back with your child in the early evening and waiting for the moon and the stars to appear.
18. Don't throw away any old, worn-out pillow cases. Your child can use them for a potato sack race. Show him or her how to step in, pull up the edges up high, and jump.
19. Use water and a small brush to "paint" rocks, shells, twigs, and other items collected from nature. Watch the colors as they change from dry to wet and back again.
20. After a rain shower, have your child draw on the sidewalk with chalk. The colors will seem brighter on wet pavement.
21. Sprinkle sandbox sand with water and give your child a collection of cookie cutters to use in it.
22. Save socks that have no mates. They have lots of uses—sock puppets; filling and emptying in the sand box; and balls (roll one up inside the other).
23. Hang an aluminum pan from a low branch or clothesline as a target for ball throwing.
24. Point out the sky at different times of the day. Talk about the colors you see.
25. What can you think of for your child to string? Buttons, spools, shells from the beach? Sections of soda straws? Wrap a piece of tape around the end of a piece of yarn to make it stiff.

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