

# Home learning ideas

Services for Young Children - Issue 7

This is a guide to help and support you as parents and carers with providing your children with fun experiences in the home and garden.

We will aim to refresh this on a regular basis to help you keep young minds busy and bodies active.

While we will do our best to verify all the websites which we share, information is changing rapidly so please be aware that it is only accurate at the time of writing.



## Creating special places to talk

Does your child like hiding in different places...behind the curtains or under the bed covers? This is because very young children have a natural desire to be enclosed and often seek comfort away from busy routines. Your child may feel more relaxed and happier in their own special space and may be likely to talk more freely to you.



### Den building kit:

- Blankets
- Old sheets
- Bath mats
- Rugs
- Cushions
- Large cardboard boxes
- Clothes airers

### Added extras:

- Books
- Soft toys
- Small world toys (cars, people, dolls)
- Fairy lights
- Torches
- Mood lights

Here are some websites that may help.

[The beautiful benefits of den building](#)

[How to build a den.](#)

**Be safe with  
fairy lights  
and torches  
with batteries**



Look at this website for lots of great ideas about how to support your children with starting school.

[Starting school together](#)



Feeling safe - If your child is worried about the den or new experiences – talk as you build it together. Make changes to help them feel safe. Ensure they can still be seen or see out easily.

# Play ideas for sitters

## Toy rescue!

Use masking tape to stick some toys to a board and encourage them to peel the tape off to release the toy. This will support with the development of finger strength. You may want to leave a corner turned up to help get started!



Put your baby on a rug on their tummy and encourage them to reach out for nearby toys. This will help their essential core strength.



Save the lids from a wet wipes packet and create an activity board. Hide pictures, photos, different textures (e.g. crumpled up foil) or objects (e.g. a feather) and close the lids. Encourage your child to open the lid and you can describe what is in there e.g. it is a soft feather, birds have feathers.



Always supervise very young children at play!

The cBeebies website has new links to songs and activities to do with your baby.  
[The Baby Club](#)



**Tickle games:** These can be games such as “this little piggy” or “round and round the garden”. You may need to do this a couple of times to get the laughing or smiling reaction but then the child may ask you to repeat by saying “more” or “again” or even grabbing your hand and putting theirs out. [Round and round the garden](#)



Stick some straws/sticks into playdoh or plasticine. Show your child how to thread cereal, such as Cheerios onto it, or you can use larger tubes such as penne pasta. This will be good for developing hand to eye coordination and finger strength.



Here is a link for some other ideas - [Discovery bottles](#)

Be careful to screw the lids on tightly.

## Discovery bottles

Find some small clean plastic bottles. Fill with different coloured water or try mixing coloured water and oil, or add in glitter. You can add rice and small coloured beads, or any small interesting objects that you can fit through the neck of the bottle.



# Play ideas for early walkers



Make tidying up fun!

Puppets are engaging toys that can help support language skills, communication, and social/emotional development. Try acting out familiar stories in an imaginative way or have fun using different voices!

[Making and playing with puppets](#)

**CLEAN UP SONG**  
Sung to: "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"

★ Twinkle, twinkle little star, time to clean up where you are. Put the toys back in their place. Keep a smile upon your face. Twinkle, twinkle little star, time to clean up where you are.



Don't forget to let the tea bag cool down before using it!



How about using a used tea bag with your child to mark make? This will help your child's physical strength and coordination [At home: mark making](#)

Colouring while laying on your stomach helps to develop core strength. Put out large sheets of paper or some old wallpaper across the floor to try and fill with colourings and doodles.



**Scissor skills**

Cook some spaghetti and, once cooled, your child will love cutting it up with scissors. This is challenging because the spaghetti is really sticky! Maybe add food colouring whilst cooking the spaghetti.



**Printing with circles**

Dip a cardboard tube into some paint and create patterns. Can you squash and fold the tube to make different shapes? What happens if you dip the tube in to different colours of paint? Can you mix a new colour?

# Play ideas for walkers and explorers



Why not try to make your own tree face! You can use homemade play dough or clay for the base and then decorate with natural materials you find. Maybe your child can give them a name?

Why not try and find a suitable tree with strong branches to climb and hang from. This really increases upper body strength and helps to develop the muscles for writing.



**Make sure your child knows how to get down from the branch and feels safe.**



**If your child likes to put things in their mouth to explore the texture – make sure you play alongside them and they understand this is pretend soup!**



## Rose petal soup

Use spoons, bowls, and other cooking tools make “soup” using nature items like flowers, herbs, and leaves then mix it all up in a small amount of water.



Have a go at sorting toys with your child. You could sort animals by their number of legs, or cars by their colour. Ask the children to sort their toys and see what they do. Can they explain to you how they have sorted them? Children frequently have unique ways of seeing things. You could even turn it into a tidying up activity.



# Play ideas for walkers and explorers



## Copy me!

Make your own 'Twister style' game for hands and either just mirror each other's movements or give simple instructions for your child to follow. For example, "put one hand on the yellow square and move the other hand to the blue". Can your child now give you instructions, can you use your feet too?

Make **Twister** easier – help your child find the right colour by pointing to the chosen colour until they move their hand; you can use images or symbols instead of colours. Doing this on carpet or rug to help keep the paper still.

International Mud Day June 29th.

[Mud glorious mud!](#)

## Bug hotels

Make a place for insects and bees to live in your garden, gather a pile of logs, sticks, bricks and stones. Alternatively use an old bucket or plant pot and roll up old newspapers or magazines. Pack them as tightly as you can into the bucket or pot.

Sit back and watch the insects flock. They love the dark damp places!



*Be careful not to touch the insects, just watch from a distance.*



**Hungry Little Minds**

Keep an eye on the website for lots of ideas and videos to help you while at home with the children. If you scroll down there are ideas for activities you can do as part of your daily routine, such as hanging the washing out - [Hungry Little Minds](#)

