

Dear Toddlers and Parents!

I miss you all dearly and I hope everyone is healthy, keeping safe and helping one another.

Much Love,

Celeste

Here are just a few of my favorite boredom busting and skill building activities for young children:

ACTIVE INDOOR ACTIVITIES FOR TODDLERS:

The under 3 crowd needs lots of active play time. No fancy materials required. Whatever you have around the house easily converts into a tool for scientific exploration for the kiddos.



- Prop up a baking sheet on a stack of books and roll toy cars or round blocks down it.
- Outline a rectangle on the floor with masking tape and have kids jump in and out of it, bounce balls in it, zoom their toy cars in it, fill it with blocks, etc.
- Children love to play with Balloons. Have a balloon dance party or play indoor balloon tennis with paper plate paddles.
- Do you have a piece of Styrofoam left over from packaging? Pound in golf tees with a toy hammer, or poke toothpicks into it.
- Put on some music and **dance** with scarves (or use bells, shakers, balloons). Sing together.
- Set up towers of empty plastic containers or empty boxes or cups and bowl them down!
- Cut a hole in the top of a tall cardboard box and drop blocks or other toys into it.
- Use plastic yogurt lids as frisbees.
- A bathtub filled with stuffed animals. (provides an invitation to use their imagination/creative thinking skills.)
- Bubble Wrap- placed on the floor to jump on, roll, dance, pinch and pop.



How Does Learning Happen?

- ✓ Engagement: Creating Contexts for Learning through Exploration, Play and Inquiry.
- ✓ As the child becomes interested in the activity, a sense of **Engagement** is supported.

Skills Development:

- *Physical Skills Development: Exercising and strengthening the small muscles in the fingers, hands, and wrists; developing hand-eye co-ordination and balance.*
- *Cognitive Skills development: Counting, focusing their Attention -Concentrating.*
- *Social Skills Development: Sharing; Teamwork, Following directions, Co-operating; inventing own rules and games.*
- *Communication & Language Skills Development: Learning new words; Listening/responding to questions; Identifying words and sounds.*
- *Music and Movement: Enjoying activities with music.*

ART AND CRAFT ACTIVITIES FOR TODDLERS:

All of these are so easy to set up and don't require much clean up, either. Clean up is a great way to keep little ones occupied. Toddlers love to help.



- Paint on the windows! Washable tempera paint is perfect for this. You can add a little squirt of **dish soap** to the paint in the pots to make clean up even easier. Your child can even wash the windows after everyone has had a chance to admire his/her artwork.
- Finger painting and painting with your hands. It can be messy, but so very much fun and learning is happening. Rainbow hands prints – sooo adorable and cheery!
- Spread big paper across the floor to draw from a new perspective.
- Set up an invitation to paint on the wall (*really!*). Tape a sheet of paper or plastic table cloth to the wall with a drop sheet on the floor and invite the child to paint from a standing position)
- Cut out magazine pictures of your toddler's favorite subjects (*diggers, dinosaurs, or healthy foods etc.*). They can use a glue stick to apply them to paper, or why not let them exercise their muscles and squirt glue all over the paper.
- Learn about coloring mixing and squirt two different colors in a plastic Ziploc baggie. Tape it to a tray or table. Your child can smooch it around to create a new color without getting messy!
- Do you have a chalkboard? Paint on it with water.

How Does Learning Happen?

- ✓ By providing children with art invitations, it sparks their curiosity, and provides them with endless possibilities to the things they can create. Having various loose parts available can help foster a child's sense of **Expression** by allowing them to use varied forms of creative expression to communicate their ideas, feelings, and understanding of the world around them.

Skills Development:

- *Exercises and strengthens the small muscles in the fingers and hands and wrists.*
- *Developing hand-eye co-ordination skills.*
- *Practicing attention regulation skills (focusing on the activity, starting and stopping after a distraction).*
- *Language and Communication skills practice (listening/following instruction, new words added to their vocabulary).*
- *Cognitive: Colour & Shape recognition skills; Creative and Divergent thinking is fostered.*

FINE MOTOR AND SENSORY ACTIVITIES

Toddlers love to work on their fine motor skills. It's so fascinating to see them concentrating so hard. They are learning so much, too!



- Drop popsicle sticks, pom poms or bottle caps into a yogurt container that has slits cut into the top.
- Use **muffin baking tins** for sorting items such as pom poms by color or quantity.
- Give your toddler a spare wallet filled with old credit cards and business cards. They love to put them in and pull them out of the pockets.
- **Sorting** colours and shapes using **tongs** to grasp the objects.
- **Threading / Beading** :Punch holes in an index card and have your toddler poke pipe cleaners through it.
- Poke toothpicks (or pipe cleaners) through the holes in a **colander**.
- Make a toddler-friendly **lacing** bead activity out of ribbon and cut up paper roll or piece of cardboard.
- Repurpose games, like Boggle or Scrabble for fine motor play.

How Does Learning Happen?

- ✓ Engagement: Creating Contexts for Learning through Exploration, Play and Inquiry.

Skills Development:

- *Exercises and strengthens the small muscles in the fingers and hands.*
- *Developing hand-eye co-ordination skills.*
- *Practicing attention regulation skills (focusing on the activity, starting and stopping after a distraction).*
- *Language and Communication skills practice (listening/following instruction, new words added to their vocabulary)*

WATER PLAY ACTIVITIES FOR TODDLERS

Most toddlers never get bored of water play! Even, at the ages of 5 and 9, they still love it. It definitely deserves its own category! Scooping and dumping are some of the favourite cause and effect activities for Toddlers. Children are natural scientists and learn through hands- on exploration.



Materials: Water + Simple Tools (whisks, basting tubes, spoons, measuring cups, small containers, floating and sinking toys/objects, small strainers, spoons, bubbles)

- Give the toys bubble bath in a shallow bucket. Provide a sponge or a small brush to make it extra fun, or add a whisk for your child to make bubbles (as they explore simple tools).
- Blow drops of water across wax paper with a straw.
- Sit them down on a towel and let them play with water, cups and spoons. Simple but very effective!
- Scooping! Place a bunch of small toys in a large bucket and give your child a big kitchen spoon to scoop them from one container to another.

How Does Learning Happen?

- ✓ Children are naturally curious and capable of directing their own learning. Young children learn through hands-on exploration and utilizing all their senses to gather information. Water Play fosters a sense of **Engagement** for toddlers as they are magnetically drawn to how it moves, feels and behaves. Toddlers enjoy experimenting with cause and effect play and the many sensory aspects of water.

Skills Development:

- *Exercises and strengthens the small muscles in the fingers and hands.*
- *Developing hand-eye co-ordination skills.*
- *Practicing attention regulation skills (focusing on the activity, starting and stopping after a distraction).*
- *Language and Communication skills practice (listening/following instruction, new words added to their vocabulary).*
- *Cognitive: Exploring math concepts such as volume measurement, weight and the scientific properties of water and gravity.*