

Pre-School Pages



A newsletter for parents of pre-schoolers

packed with food, facts & fun

from your local county extension office

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Let's Play

Fun Indoor Activities for Your Children

When you are confined at home, it can be hard to find activities to do with your children. This can be especially true with younger children. Here are a few tips for activities that families can do that are free or very low cost.

- Build a tent together in your home. There is nothing that you need to purchase, use items that you have. Tents can transform even the smallest spaces in your home into a whole new world. They can open a door to many hours of creative play. Have your child pick out materials to really spark their creativity.

- Bake or cook with your children. Cooking tasks such as stirring batter and cracking eggs are great ways for kids to have fun while learning new



skills. Tasks such as measuring liquids and figuring proportions when changing recipes can help teach critical math skills. Make a homemade pizza, bake some cookies, or make a homemade salsa together and use it with a family taco bar. If you are not a cook, try making s'mores together.

- Try some indoor water play. Bath time does not have to be just for cleaning our bodies. Splashing in a warm tub can provide just as much fun. Fill a tub with warm water and throw in bubble bath and toys, and let the fun begin!
- Get up and get moving around the house. Play Hide and Seek; have a family scavenger hunt or obstacle course; play with a family pet; do yoga, stretching, or meditation together.
- Plan for regular family game nights. Board games or card games are a great way to bring the family together for lots of fun and laughs. Some family favorites that are passed down through generations are Monopoly, Go Fish, Pictionary, and Yahtzee.
- Make a "bored box." Include simple items like paper, paint supplies, Play Dough, clay, and crayons. Adults and children alike love to color or draw. Slime ingredients are always a huge hit. Don't be afraid to get messy! Stock up on a few items your family loves to do together and keep them stored in a box for an instant activity anytime.

Reference: Beyer, M. (2017). Fun Family Night Activities That Take Bonding to a Whole New Level. Retrieved November 2019 from <https://www.sheknows.com/parenting/articles/842477/50-family-funnight-ideas-for-families>

Source:

Dr. Kerri Ashurst, Senior Extension Specialist for Family and Relationship Development



Life Savers

Reducing Young Children's Risk of Choking

Transitioning a little one to table foods is an exciting time. However, you may have concerns about what is safe for them to eat. Children younger than 4 are at higher risk of choking on foods that are smooth, hard, round, or sticky.

To reduce the chance of choking, avoid giving young children hard candy, nuts, seeds, popcorn, and cough drops. You will also want to avoid sticky foods like gum, chewy candies like caramel or jellybeans, dried fruit, and chunky nut butters.

To make round foods like grapes, berries, tomatoes, olives, or hot dogs safer to eat, cut them in half or into quarters. Unless your child has a nut allergy, smooth nut butters are safe and healthy if you spread a very small amount on a food.

Other safe feeding practices for young children include:

- Offer foods that are soft or cooked.
- Cut all foods into small pieces.
- Have children sit while eating. Do not let them run around or lay down while eating.
- Avoid eating in the car or stroller.
- Have an adult present during meal and snack times.
- Encourage children to take their time and thoroughly chew food before swallowing. You can also encourage them not to speak with their mouth full.
- Get trained in first aid and CPR so that you are ready to respond should an emergency arise.



Source: Courtney Luecking, Extension Specialist for Food and Nutrition

Let's Eat



Fruit Treat

Ingredients:

- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 cup flour
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup old-fashioned oats
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups plain Greek yogurt
- 4-5 teaspoons honey, to taste
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced
- 2 cups blueberries
- 2 bananas, sliced

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Mix together all crust ingredients with hands or fork. Once mixed, form into a ball. (The mixture will be crumbly.)
3. Line a pizza pan or cookie sheet with parchment paper. Spread and pat down the crust to form a circle.
4. Bake for 10-12 minutes or until crust is lightly browned. Remove crust from oven and let cool.
5. Mix yogurt and honey together. Spread on crust.
6. Top with fruit. (You can also use other types of fruit.)

Source: Adapted from <http://creativeandhealthyfunfood.com/flag-fruit-pizza-withoatmeal-crust>
Nutrition facts per serving: 270 calories; 12g total fat; 7g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 35mg cholesterol; 105mg sodium; 31g carbohydrate; 1g fiber; 15g sugar; 7g added sugar; 11g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 8% Daily Value of calcium; 6% Daily Value of iron; 6% Daily Value of potassium

Sincerely,

Darrell Simpson

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