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Summertime Crafts To Support Regulation

Crafts can be an excellent way to engage your child while they are off from school for the summer! Crafts promote many skills including fine motor skills and sequencing through tasks like cutting, drawing, gluing, and following directions. Turn craft time into an opportunity to create sensory tools that can be used to promote your child's self-regulation! Summer can be a challenging time for many children, due to the disruption in their daily routines. There are many tools and strategies that can be beneficial in helping your child calm, cope, and focus in order to promote self-regulation. Here are a few fun crafts that can also be used as tools for sensory self-regulation.



Sensory Bottles

Sensory bottles provide visual stimulation that can create a calming effect for children. They also provide a way for children with tactile aversion to explore different textures.

Materials:

- * A bottle
- * Warm water
- * Food coloring
- * 1 bottle of clear glue (5-8 oz.)
- * Super glue
- * Glitter or confetti

Directions:

Fill the bottle $\frac{3}{4}$ full with warm water.
Add 1 (5-8 oz) bottle of clear glue to the warm water.
Add lots of glitter or confetti and a few drops of the food coloring of your choice.
Super glue the bottle shut and give it a shake!

Homemade Kazoo

A kazoo can provide opportunities for children to practice deep breathing while also receiving oral-motor vibration feedback. Both of these can promote better focus and calming for children.

Materials:

- * Cardboard tube (old paper towel or toilet paper roll)
- * Pencil/pen to poke holes
- * Paint or general art supplies to decorate the kazoo
- * Wax paper
- * Rubber band

Directions:

Place a strip of wax paper over one end of your cardboard tube and secure it with a rubber band.
Poke holes into the sides of your cardboard tube.
Decorate your kazoo with paint or any other supplies you choose.
Place the open end of the tube to your mouth and hum to hear the sound!



Take Off Those Shoes!

Summer is here and it's the perfect time to go barefoot! There are many benefits of barefoot play. Walking and playing barefoot can help to:

- Strengthen feet and legs
- Enhance proprioception
- Develop balance and body awareness
- Increase agility and mobility
- Improve body confidence and trust
- Improve circulation and posture
- Connect you to the environment
- Support healthy sensory systems



Fun Home Activities

Toega: Try to pick up different items off the floor using your feet!

Footprint art: Paint with your feet



Guessing Game: Pick a few textured things like a soft blanket, bubble wrap, grass, sand, etc. and walk across the objects to guess what they are.

While there are many benefits to being barefoot, there are times when shoes are essential for support and safety. If your child is engaging in running, sports, or playing on the playground, be sure they are wearing comfortable and supportive shoes.



How To Avoid The Summer Slump

Summer is full of wonderful opportunities for play and socializing, but it is important to build in time for reading and writing. Here are some fun and easy ways to build academics into your summer schedule.

- Look for words around you! When out in the community, point to a sentence, word, number, or letter and have them read it out loud.
- Make a pile of books and have your child run to the pile, pick a book, then run it back to you. Open the book and point to a sentence, word, letter, or number for them to read out loud. Slam the book closed and play again! Kids of all ages love this goofy way of interacting with books.
- Create dessert tickets! Give your child an index card. Depending on the age and skillset of your child, have them draw a picture, copy a word or sentence, or write their own sentence. After dinner have your child turn in their "ticket" for dessert!
- Children love reading and writing on items that are novel and not the traditional book pages or writing paper. Encourage your child to write a letter or postcard to a relative.
- Save pizza boxes and make word or letter searches on the front and inside of the box.
- When visiting your favorite restaurants and fast food chains, ask for a children's menu. Many children's menus have activities that involve coloring, reading, and writing. In-N-Out offers children a sheet of stickers that have to be peeled and then arranged in order or matched to a number square in order to make a picture. You can even ask for extras to take home!
- Paper plates – write a letter, word, or short sentence on the plate. If done correctly, the reward is to fly it like a Frisbee.

