

Family Survival 101

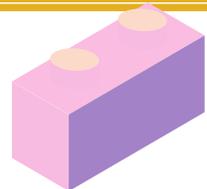
Keeping Kids Happily Occupied (Without TV!)

Here are some simple activities to keep young kids occupied productively and avoid tantrums and outbursts. They won't even realize they are practicing their fine motor skills! All you need are some objects from around the house. You can even recruit the older kids to guide the younger ones.



Dig for treasure. Put dry rice, beans, pasta, or cotton balls in a container. Then bury small "treasures." Kids can guess what the treasure is, then use measuring cups or spoons to dig it up.

Create 3D art. Cover a countertop with homemade **non-toxic slime** or shaving cream. Kids can use their fingers to draw pictures. They can also embellish with marbles, legos, or other objects.



Indoor games with paper. Make balls of crinkled newspaper, junk mail, foil, or wrapping paper. Then play indoor basketball, push with a spatula for a home run derby, or toss into bowls on the floor for tic-tac-toe.

Kids to the rescue. Tape small toys to the back of a cookie sheet and have kids rescue them. Or, freeze toys in containers. Kids can rescue the toys by melting the ice with drops of water from a medicine dropper.



Make impressions. Make your own **homemade play dough**. Roll it out or smash it flat, then press coins or other textured objects to make impressions in the dough.

Word play. Cut out letters from magazines and newspapers and paste them to practice spelling, make simple sentences, or make a homemade scrabble game.

