Stanislaus County
Office of
Education

Child/Family Services

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Resource & Referral Handout

RECIPES FOR HOMEMADE FUN

Most children love pounding, sculpting, and stretching tactile materials. You can buy these, but mixing your own doubles the fun! Here are easy recipes for play materials you can make together.

SHINY DOUGH

You and your child can make 3-D pictures by squeezing this dough onto cardboard. The salt makes it sparkle when it dries.

1 cup of flour
1 cup salt
1 cup water
food coloring (optional)

With your child, measure and mix the ingredients together, If you want to use food coloring, let your child squeeze a few drops into the water. Pour the mixture into plastic squeeze bottles like the kind used for ketchup or mustard.

GLARCH

This unusual recipe yields a wonderfully stretchy, putty-like material.

1 cup white glue
1 cup liquid starch
food coloring (optional)

Put the glue in an old plastic container and add food coloring if you choose. Pour in the liquid stretch, a little bit at a time, stirring continually. Keep stirring until the mixture holds together in a putty. Then test it with your fingers. If it's too sticky, add more starch in small amounts and stir until you get a smooth, rubbery consistency. Now have fun playing, pulling, and stretching. Store the mixture in a plastic bag or airtight container. It will last without refrigeration.

GOOP

You can't make many things with this mixture, but children really enjoy its changeable, oozy feel. Wear smocks and work in an easy-to-clean area.

1 cup cornstarch
1 cup water
food coloring (optional)

Add food coloring to water and combine with cornstarch in a bowl. Then play by squeezing, pulling, and letting the goop drip through your fingers. Store in a covered container. If it dries out over time, you can revive it by adding a small amount of water.

MODELING DOUGH

Cooking gives this long-lasting dough a workable, high-quality consistency.

2 cups flour	**2 teaspoons cream of tartar**
1 cup salt	**1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
2 cups water	**food coloring (optional)**

With your child, measure the ingredients, and add food coloring to the water if you choose. Combine the ingredients in a bowl. Let your child watch from a safe distance as you cook the mixture over medium heat, stirring constantly until it becomes stiff. When it cools, it’s ready for you and your child to use! Store in an airtight container to play with again and again. It needs no refrigeration.

Remember: Most children under five are interested in the process of playing rather than in creating particular objects. Fives and sixes are more likely to work toward a "product", but still enjoy the process as much as the results. Join in the fun by playing with your child at his or her level.

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