



CHEROKEE NATION

Child Care & Development
2025 Summer Edition



Park. Look. Lock.

Say Yes to the Mess! Water
Works

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Activities for Preschoolers

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PARK. LOOK. LOCK.



Never leave a child alone in a car.
Remember to A-C-T.



A Avoid Heatstroke

Avoid heat-related injury and death by never leaving a child alone in a car, even for a minute. And make sure to keep your car locked when you're not inside so kids get in on their own.



C Create Reminders

Keep a stuffed animal or other memento in your child's car seat when it's empty, and move it to the front seat as a visual reminder when your child is in the back seat. Or place and charge your phone, keys or bag in the backseat when traveling with your child.



T Take Action

If you see a child alone, call 911. Emergency personnel want you to call. They are trained to respond to these situations.

**SAFE
KIDS
WORLDWIDE®**

Say Yes to the Mess! Water Works



Playing with materials such as water can be an important outdoor experience for preschoolers. When children play with water, they can build fine- and gross-motor skills. They can also apply some basic principles of science and engineering.



Help children prepare to investigate water outdoors.

- Share nonfiction books, websites, and videos about water and its behavior. Ask a librarian to help you find pictures of Illinois rivers, lakes, dams, and levees to show the children.
- Invite children to plan and build models of what they see in the pictures. Help them decide what materials to use so they can contain or move water in their models.
- Introduce words such as *flow*, *flood*, *dam*, *erode*, and *contain* to help children describe how water moves.
- Suggest that families send “work clothes” for children to wear when they play outdoors with water. Provide plastic gloves for children who want to wear them during outdoor water play.
- Encourage safety and respect for others’ work by asking children to help make rules for water play. Supervise water play carefully. Children should always wash hands after playing in water.



Set aside part of the playground for water study.

- Pick a place where the water play will not disturb children who do not want to be wet. A space with sand or gravel may lend itself well to studying erosion.
- Some children may feel anxious about getting wet, messy, or splashed accidentally by other children. Allow them to practice by playing with indoor water tables that have clean water. Outside, they may prefer their own space away from others as they get used to the experience.
- Provide a source of water that children can use for water play. You could use a plastic beverage cooler with a spout, filled plastic gallon containers of water, a water table from the classroom, or a very shallow wading pool. Make sure that containers are safe (e.g., not too heavy or deep) and clean them appropriately as needed.
- Provide buckets, scoops, measuring cups, ladles, and shallow tubs for moving the water. Offer hoses, turkey basters, lengths of plastic gutter, and PVC pipe, including joints and elbow bends. You might ask families or businesses (garden centers, building supply stores, or contractors) to donate these items.
- Ask questions that provoke children’s curiosity. “Do you think a piece of wood will work as a dam?” “What do you suppose made your levee come apart?” “Can you make this water flow up the hill?”



Follow up on the children’s water experiments.

- Invite children to draw or take photos or videos of what they do with water. Let them report on their water play during class meetings.
- Let children create a display about their water study for visitors to see. They may enjoy showing videos of their water experiments while narrating.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this tip sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois State Board of Education.



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Illinois
State Board of
Education

CREATIVE POOL NOODLE ACTIVITIES FOR PRESCHOOLERS

Pool noodles are not just for the pool! These colorful and versatile foam tubes can be transformed into a wide range of engaging activities for preschoolers. Whether you're looking to keep your little ones active, promote sensory exploration, or encourage imaginative play, pool noodles offer endless possibilities. From obstacle courses to art projects, these activities will captivate preschoolers and provide them with valuable learning experiences.



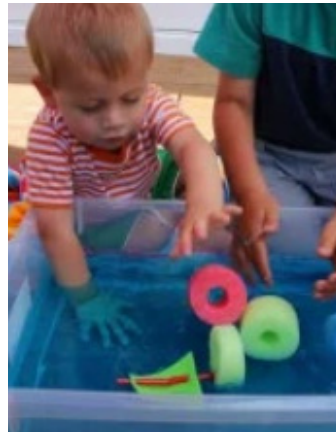
NOODLE BALANCE BEAM:

Transform a pool noodle into a balance beam for preschoolers to enhance their coordination and balance skills. Lay the pool noodle on the ground, creating a straight path. Encourage your little ones to walk on the noodle, practicing their balance as they take each step. You can make it more challenging by adding obstacles or asking them to walk backward or sideways. This activity promotes physical development, body awareness, and concentration while providing a fun and engaging challenge.



NOODLE RING TOSS:

Create a playful ring toss game using pool noodles. Cut the noodles into smaller sections to create rings. Set up targets by placing buckets or cones at different distances. Encourage preschoolers to toss the noodle rings and aim for the targets. They can take turns counting their successful throws and celebrating their achievements. This activity promotes hand-eye coordination, gross motor skills, and counting abilities while fostering friendly competition and outdoor play. Best video game consoles



SENSORY NOODLE BIN:

Create a sensory bin filled with cut-up pool noodles and other sensory materials. Fill a large container or tray with water, colored rice, or kinetic sand. Add the pool noodle pieces for preschoolers to explore and manipulate. They can squeeze, bend, stack, or even float the noodles in the sensory medium. This activity promotes tactile exploration, fine motor skills, and imaginative play. You can also incorporate scoops, funnels, or small toys to extend the sensory experience.



NOODLE SCULPTURES:

Encourage preschoolers' creativity and fine motor skills by engaging in noodle sculpture art. Provide them with different lengths of pool noodles and let their imagination run wild. They can bend, twist, and connect the noodles to create unique sculptures. You can also offer pipe cleaners, googly eyes, and other craft materials for them to decorate their creations. This activity stimulates their creativity, fine motor skills, and spatial awareness while fostering self-expression and artistic exploration.



Backpack Connection Series

About this Series

The *BackpackConnectionSeries* was created by TACSEI to provide a way for teachers and parents/caregivers to work together to help young children develop social emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. Teachers may choose to send a handout home in each child's backpack when a new strategy or skill is introduced to the class. Each *BackpackConnection* handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

The Pyramid Model



The Pyramid Model is a framework that provides programs with guidance on how to promote social emotional competence in all

children and design effective interventions that support young children who might have persistent challenging behavior. It also provides practices to ensure that children with social emotional delays receive intentional teaching. Programs that implement the Pyramid Model are eager to work together with families to meet every child's individualized learning and support needs. To learn more about the Pyramid Model, please visit challengingbehavior.org.

More Information

For more information about this topic, visit TACSEI's website at www.challengingbehavior.org and type "transition" in the Search Box in the upper-right corner of the screen.



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How to Help Your Child Transition Smoothly Between Places and Activities

Alyson Jiron, Brooke Brogle & Jill Giacomini

Transitioning, or moving, to new places, people and activities is something we do many times during the day. However, change can be overwhelming and seem unpredictable for your child, especially when she is not ready to move on to the next place or activity. Children make many transitions each day—from parents to teachers, from home to car, or from play time to the dinner table, for example. When and how often transitions occur are usually decided by an adult and children often act out with challenging behavior when they feel unable to control their routine. When you help your child prepare for transitions you are helping her to learn a valuable skill. The good news is that you can teach her this important skill while you are enjoying time together.



Try This at Home

- Use a timer, an instrument or a funny noise to give your child advance warning of routine transition events. If possible, ask him to help "alert" everyone to the upcoming event. For example, let your toddler bang a pot with a wooden spoon to let the family know it is time for dinner.
- Let your child pick out a special object or toy to transition with to the next activity or place. "Would kitty like to come with us to the grocery store? I wonder if she could help us find the items on our list?"
- Use a visual schedule to show your child the plan for the day. "First, you have school and then we are going to take Aunt Rachel's gift to the post office and mail it to her."
- Make the transition a game or activity where the child has the opportunity to move around. "I wonder if today we can use this big shovel to scoop the cars into the bucket while we clean up?" If possible, let him think of the game. "I wonder how we could get to the car today?" You might be surprised at his creativity and how much fun you have roaring like a dinosaur or hopping like a rabbit.
- Sing songs as you transition. Children love to hear songs as they move about their day. Make up silly songs together about what you are doing or where you are going. You are sure to get a laugh and likely a smooth transition.
- Give your child a job. Children are more cooperative when they can be part of the process. Perhaps he can help stir something for dinner, unlock the car doors with the remote or pick out a diaper before a diaper change.



Practice at School

Children transition from one activity to the next throughout their day at preschool. Teachers plan for transitions in advance by creating special routines. These routines help to prepare children for transitions, engage them in the change that is taking place and help them to move smoothly to the next activity. Teachers might use a special instrument or song to let children know it is clean up time. Teachers might read books to the children while they are standing in line waiting for a turn to wash their hands before snack or create an obstacle course or morning routine to help children and parents transition at drop-off. When children are able to participate in or lead the transition, they are excited and eager to move to a new activity.



The Bottom Line

The more a child can predict and participate in the schedule and activities of her day, the less likely it is that challenging behavior will occur and the more likely it is that she will eagerly engage in transitions to new people and places. Taking the time and making the effort to teach her what to expect, when it will happen, and what happens before the transition occurs can be a rewarding experience. Most importantly, it is also an opportunity for quality time that can help lead to smoother transitions.

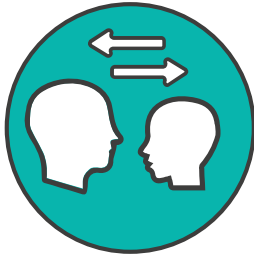


www.challengingbehavior.org

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Many schools focus on children's ability to name letters, hold a pencil, and count to ten as the only indicators of "school readiness," but research shows that children through age 8 need other skills to succeed both in school and in life. It is never too early or late to develop these skills! Below are some examples of how adults can help:



Talk and Play

- At bedtime, make up a story with your children! Start with a few sentences, then have children add the next few. Go back and forth until someone says, "the end." Make it fun with some surprising plot twists!
- Children who are helpful and cooperative often do better in school, so ask for their help! *"Can you help me get ready for dinner by getting four forks and cups? Thanks — it's great to have your help!"*



Body and Brain

- Help children feel safe when life brings change. Show extra love and confidence in their resilience.
- Unstructured play time (when kids make the decisions about what to do) has been shown to help develop independent thinking and planning skills.



Science and Math

- Asking children to explain how things work helps them develop science thinking skills. *"Why won't your balloon float anymore? How do the brakes on your bike stop the wheels from spinning?"*
- Counting on fingers helps children build strong math skills! Encourage children to use their fingers for adding and subtracting.



Bay Area
Discovery
Museum



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PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE. SHARING OUR FUTURE.



Pacific Library
Partnership



NATIONAL ICE CREAM MONTH

July is National Ice Cream Month, and you have Kentucky to thank! In 1984, Senator Walter Dee Huddleston of Kentucky introduced a resolution to proclaim the month of July 1984 National Ice Cream Month and the 15th of that month National Ice Cream Day. Ronald Reagan signed the bill into law the same year, and the rest is history! Even though the bill only specified that July 1984 was National Ice Cream Month, the tradition carries on—much to our pleasure. Celebrate with us this July!

NATIONAL ICE CREAM MONTH ACTIVITIES

1. HOST AN ICE CREAM PARTY

Next time you're having a barbecue this summer, add an ice cream bar! You can do it potluck style—supply several different flavors of ice cream and ask your friends to bring their favorite toppings. You might not be the life of the party, but your dessert will—and that's what counts.

2. TRY AS MANY ICE CREAM FLAVORS AS YOU CAN

How many ice cream flavors can you eat this month? We challenge you to try at least 10, but you can set your own goal and see how well you do. We know we'll be aiming for the moon—try and keep up!

3. INVENT YOUR OWN FLAVOR

To celebrate everyone's favorite month, find a recipe you can use as a starting point to invent your own ice cream flavor. You can use a vanilla ice cream recipe and add your favorite toppings or just pour ingredients into a pan and wing it. If you have an ice cream maker, this is your time to shine. If you don't, there are plenty of recipes that you can make without any equipment!

WHY WE LOVE NATIONAL ICE CREAM MONTH

1. IT'S THE PERFECT EXCUSE TO EAT ICE CREAM.

We're always looking for reasons to eat sweets—and with summer here, what better treat than a frozen one? This holiday gives us the perfect opportunity to eat as much ice cream as our heart desires. And believe us, our heart desires a lot.

2. IT PUSHES US OUT OF OUR COMFORT ZONE

When we treat ice cream as a rare delicacy, we always order the same flavor. We go with what we know, because we're not sure when we're going to have ice cream again. However, when we have the opportunity to eat it every day, we don't have to play it safe. Cookies and cream begone—we want to try flavors like Thai tea and taro.

3. IT'S A GATEWAY TO OTHER DESSERTS

The most beautiful thing about ice cream is how many delicious desserts it can go on top of. Brownie with chocolate ice cream? Yes please! Pie with a side of vanilla? Pile it on us. This month is a great excuse to eat lots of desserts—as long as they involve ice cream, they're fair game.



NATIONAL PLAY OUTSIDE DAY

The first Saturday of every month is National Play Outside Day. This National Day presents an opportunity to remind everyone to get outside and enjoy the fresh air through play.

#PlayOutsideDay

All year long, we are given numerous opportunities to get outside and play. But sometimes, life, responsibilities, and distractions keep us from spending time in the fresh air as we should. National Play Outside Day is a reminder to stretch our legs and expend some energy in the great outdoors.

20 IDEAS FOR NATIONAL PLAY OUTSIDE DAY

We know the seasons change, so what we were able to do outside last month will be different this month. However, that shouldn't stop you from celebrating the day. This is your monthly reminder that it's time to get outside and play. We have suggestions for every season that we're sure you'll enjoy!

1. Explore hiking trails near you.
2. Visit the local swimming pool or even take swimming lessons.
3. Check out every park in your neighborhood and climb, slide or swing on every playground set.
4. Start a game of catch, kickball, tag, or Frisbee or make up a game.
5. Go to the beach.
6. Run through the sprinkler.
7. Go camping.
8. Go fishing.
9. Fly a kite.
10. Jump in a pile of leaves.
11. Build a fort - of leaves or snow or whatever is handy.
12. Walk around the block.
13. Go for a bike ride.
14. Build a snowperson.
15. Go sledding.
16. Identify the constellations at night and look for meteors.
17. Visit your favorite state or national park.
18. Find some fun activities in your community. You'll probably be surprised that most are free to the public, too!
19. Introduce some of the games you used to play to your children. Whatever you do, be sure to get outside and play!
20. Use #PlayOutsideDay to share your outdoor fun on social media.



NATIONAL PLAY-DOH DAY

National Play-Doh Day is celebrated on September 16 every year. This day is dedicated to everyone's favorite childhood plaything — Play-Doh! Calling all of Play-Doh's former and current enthusiasts to remember the small, yellow box of vibrant, squishy fun.

HOW TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL PLAY-DOH DAY

1. Play, Duh! (Did you see what we did there?)

Whether you're an adult or a child, it doesn't matter. Consider National Play-Doh Day the excuse we've been waiting for to bring out that box of happiness and unleash our inner artists.

2. Make your own Play-Doh

If you can't get your hands on an OG yellow Play-Doh can, don't worry. There are plenty of recipes online to gather simple kitchen ingredients and get DIY Play-Doh.

3. Have a clay-off

Gather a group of friends and kiddos and have a Play-Doh party! Nothing is more fun than a clean, colorful, and friendly battle of the artists.

5 FACTS ABOUT PLAY-DOH THAT WILL BLOW YOUR MIND

1. You can smell like it

On its 50th anniversary, Hasbro collaborated with Demeter Fragrance Library and created a Play-Doh fragrance.

2. It could fool fingerprint scanners

Back in the day when technology wasn't as advanced, a Play-Doh replica of a human finger could fool 90% of fingerprint scanners into considering it an accurate print.

3. It has now made friends with technology

Hasbro launched an app in 2016 that enables kids to turn their Play-Doh creatures into animated characters.

4. It was successful in its past life

While this formula's calling was in the crafts and play world, Play-Doh had a successful run of 20 years even as a wallpaper cleaner.

5. Its greatness is nationally recognized

In 1998, Play-Doh was inducted into the National Toy Hall of Fame at the Strong National Museum of Play in New York.

WHY WE LOVE NATIONAL PLAY-DOH DAY

1. It's an instant mood booster

The mere thought of Play-Doh is enough to bring back innumerable childhood memories of wholeheartedly creating clay masterpieces at home or in the classroom with all our friends.

2. It's a reminder that rejection is redirection

While the plummeting of wallpaper cleaner sales was a struggle, it paved the way for something much bigger than the product was destined for.

3. It awakens our inner child

National Play-Doh Day is a day of celebration and a day for everyone, despite their age groups, to come together and let their inner clay artists run wild.



Cherokee Nation Child Care & Development Resource & Referral

Child Care Resource & Referral offers services to child care providers contracted with Cherokee Nation Child Care and Development. Some examples of services are listed below. These services are subject to change. If you need a specific training topic or resource, please contact our office for more information.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)

- Behavior and Guidance Room Arrangement
- Infant & Toddlers School Age Activities
- Lesson Planning Social Emotional Skills
- Outdoor Interest Centers Stars Advancement and QRIS
- STEAM Enrichment
- *Other topics as requested

TRAINING

- Active Supervision Family Engagement Science Training
- Behavior and Guidance Infection Control Self Care
- Circle Time Success Music & Finger Plays STEAM Training
- Classroom Management Safe Sleep Teaching Social Emotional Skills
- Other topics as requested

OTHER RESOURCES

- Die Cuts
- Laminating Services
- Learning Luggage
- Quarterly Newsletter

CONTACT INFORMATION

Catoosa Office: 918-266-5626

Pryor Office: 918-824-4533

Tahlequah Office: 918-453-5300

Toll-Free Number: 1-888-458-6230

RESOURCES



CHEROKEE NATION CHILD CARE RESOURCE CENTER

1-888-458-6230

CATOOSA OFFICE:

Sherri Schwab - *Child Care Resource
and Referral Specialist*

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Cell: 918-525-2105

PRYOR OFFICE:

Contact Tahlequah

Office at 918-453-5300

TAHLEQUAH OFFICE:

Tina Smith - *Manager, Child Care
Resource and Referral*

Office: 918-453-5054

Cell: 918-207-6920

Amber Walls

Supervisor, Child Care Consultants

Office: 918-453-5079

Cell: 918-316-2659

RESOURCES

Center for Early Childhood

Professional Development (CECPD)

1-888-446-7608

www.cecpd.org

Child Care Aware Of America

1-800-424-2246

www.childcareaware.org

OKDHS Office of Background

Investigations

1-800-347-2276

405-521-2355

Oklahoma Child Care Resource &
Referral (OCCRRA)

1-888-962-2772

www.oklahomachildcare.org

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WARMLINE: 1-888-574-5437

For questions or information related
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Programs, please call our main office
at 918-453-5300

