

PLAY AT HOME GUIDE

Basics Focus: Maximize Love, Manage Stress



Here are some easy activities that can be used at home to engage your children, and continue learning through play. This is a great way for your family to spend time together, help your children develop new skills, and have opportunities for learning through play. If you would like more information on these specific activities, please visit <https://rva.thebasics.org>.

Are your children slightly stressed or a little uneasy? Here are some easy sensory experiences that help to reduce stress and focus energy.

- **Play with bubbles**
- **Play with play dough**

What is the purpose of the activity?

- To help children and caregivers find different ways to reduce stress or stressful situations through play.
- Helping children learn how to cope in stressful situations. These skills can transfer into adulthood as well.

Why is it important?

- Research shows that the use of deep breathing required to blow bubbles is great for relaxation and stress relief.
- Playing with play dough has been known to be a good stress and anxiety relief aid.
- Play dough allows children to express themselves creatively and build self-esteem.

Remember: If they see you playing, then they will play. It makes kids want to join in on the fun.

PLAY AT HOME GUIDE

Homemade Playdough Recipe

Make homemade playdough in less than 5 minutes for under a \$1 and have it last for months! It is so soft and squishy and cuts perfectly with cookie cutters.

MATERIALS:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup salt
- 4 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 2 cups lukewarm water
- 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil (coconut oil works too)

OPTIONAL: FOOD COLORING for color and ESSENTIAL OIL for scent; Unscented Kool-Aid packets do both color and scent

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Stir together the flour, salt and cream of tartar in a large pot. Next add the water and oil. If you're only making one color, stir in the the color now.
2. Cook over medium-heat, stirring constantly. Continue stirring until the dough has thickened and begins to form into a ball. Remove from heat and then place inside a bowl, gallon sized bag or onto wax paper.
3. Allow to cool slightly and then knead until smooth. If you're adding colors after, divide the dough into balls (for how many colors you want) and then add the dough into the quart sized bags. Start with about 5 drops of color and add more to brighten it. Knead the dough, while inside the bag so it doesn't stain your hands. Once it's all mixed together, you're ready to PLAY.
4. If desired, add a few drops of an essential oil to add another sensory dimension.
5. Store the play dough inside the bags to keep soft. If stored properly it will keep soft for up to 3 months.