

After My Bath

After my bath I try, try, try
To rub with a towel till I'm dry, dry, dry.
Hands to dry, and fingers and toes,
And two wet legs and a shiny nose.
Just think how much less time it'd take,
If I were a dog and could shake, shake, shake!

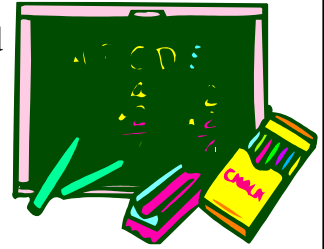


Wind Chimes

Wind chimes are an excellent item to add to your child's environment- at any age. Wind chimes can be easily made with low-cost or free items around your house. Start with a circular object- such as a plastic lid, a strong aluminum pie tin or a square of wood about an 1/2" - 1" thick. Make a hole in the center of this object to attach a length of cord to hang the wind chime. Make holes around the circumference of the circle to hang the metal objects. Look around the house for objects that will make a great sound when struck together. Wrap fishing line or dental floss around the items and pull the string through the holes in the circle and knot. Make a "striker" by attaching string down from the middle hole with a metal object attached. Small children can be lifted up to jingle the chime. You may want to hang the chime lower for children over three years for continual hands-on musical opportunities.

Homemade Magnetic Chalkboard

Purchase some chalkboard paint- which comes in black or green. Find an old, smooth piece of magnetic metal (i.e. an old cookie sheet).



Paint the metal sheet with a few coats of chalkboard paint. Paint coats may need to dry overnight. Also, a small, foam roller or paintbrush will help lay a smooth surface. The magnetic chalkboard can be used on the table or your child's lap. Or you may want to drill two holes near the top and mount on a wall.

When children work on a vertical surface, they increase strength and endurance in their hands and arms, needed for writing. Chalk boards are better than white-erase boards because the chalk provides more resistance than markers, giving little fingers and hands more "feedback".

***Bonus- stray chalk marks are easier to cleanup than markers. Picture, shapes, or letter magnets can be used to enhance language development. Plus hands get stronger when they pull magnets off of the board again and again when playing.*

Messy Pool

This idea is a great way to encourage, messy, hands-on play for your child but allow you to contain the mess, and spend less time cleaning up after the activity. Buy the smallest, stiff, plastic play pool. (About 3-4 feet in diameter). Your child will have fun inside the "pool" using play dough, ooblick, fingerpaint, crayons, etc. Fill a smaller tub full of rice or oatmeal for an open-ended sensory experience. To avoid waste, put the lid on the bin and save the rice for another play experience.

