



Preparing your child for success in school and life, beginning at birth.



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| <p>When making dinner, play restaurant! Talk about the different roles everyone can take: waiter/waitress; cook; server; cashier, etc.</p> | <p>Use playdough and pretend to be the baker in a bakery. Get out the rolling pins, baking pans, measuring cups and spoons. Don't forget an apron for the baker!</p> | <p>Spending a lot of time in the car? Turn the car into a taxi! Let your child be the passenger and allow him or her to give you a location where they want to go. Can your child give you directions to arrive there?</p> | <p>If you have a backyard wading pool, it can easily become a fishing pond. Drop in plastic toys that your child can fish for with a string tied to a stick. A large loop at the end of the string can help 'hook' items.</p> |
| <p>Make tonight MOVIE NIGHT. Check local TV listings for a family movie or rent one. Then make tickets and play money to buy the tickets to get in. Serve up some popcorn and turn down the lights!</p> | <p>Did you plant a garden this summer? Talk about the various tools that gardeners use. How about the special items of clothing that gardeners might wear? Then make a family visit to the MN Arboretum.</p> | <p>On a rainy day, set up camp indoors. Use blankets and chairs for tents. Pack foods that can be eaten without cooking for camp-style meals in the tent. Don't forget flashlights!</p> | <p>Re-stock your child's art equipment with water colors, paints, markers, crayons and a few other items (glitter? popsicle sticks? pipe cleaners?) Set up an art gallery for all to enjoy.</p> |
| <p>Play school. Let your child be the teacher. Use pencils, crayons, paper, rulers, scissors, etc.</p> | <p>Have a puppet show! Make sock puppets, one for each member of the family. Act out scenes of an upcoming event or special family outing/memory.</p> | <p>Pick a Friday to be "Freaky Friday" where you and your child reverse roles (for an hour or two).</p> | <p>Set up a home library with your family books. Organize the books by author, topic or size. Make library cards for everyone. Check out books at bedtime or story time.</p> |
| <p>Become a trash collector. Use old ice cream buckets to pick up garbage in the yard or at the park. Sort garbage from recyclables.</p> | <p>Make a construction site in your backyard or sandbox. Use blocks, rocks, etc. Toy cars, construction vehicles, Legos add reality to the site.</p> | <p>Set up a pet store with stuffed animals representing pets. Talk about how to care for the various animals in the pet store.</p> | <p>Act out a favorite story while you're on a long car ride, waiting in line, etc. Everyone take a different character and tell the story!</p> |

Dramatic play provides a child with an opportunity to explore ideas and apply new concepts learned through observation

This month's Kindergarten Connection has a special emphasis on expanding your child's imagination.

Dramatic play prepares your child for kindergarten, promoting language and literacy as well as problem-solving skills.

These fun, easy to do activities were compiled by Kids' Place Preschool teachers Lori Katz and Kathy Pierce.

Have fun playing with your child as you do these!

