Keep Kids Cool This Summer!

Make spongers:
You need 3 sponges for each sponger you make. First, cut the sponges into thirds. Then stack the nine pieces. Lastly, tie a rubber band or hair tie around the center of the stack. Fluff out the sponge pieces and you are done! Let kids wash the car, wash dishes or put in the bathtub or pool.

Fly Swatter Bubbles:
Did you know you could use a fly swatter to blow bubbles? Just dip it in the bubble solution and either blow on the other side of the fly swatter or rapidly move the fly swatter around. It makes fun bubbles!

Colorful Soap Foam:
This activity is colorful, fun, and easy!! To make the soap foam, simply put 1/4 cup of water, 2 tablespoons of dish soap, and food coloring into a blender. Blend until foamy (just around 20 seconds). Then dump into a bin and let the kiddos play!

Painting with Water:
This activity is so simple, but it really does keep kids busy for a while! Kids can paint the sidewalk and driveway with water using a paint brush or paint roller.

Sponge Target Practice:
To set this activity up, just draw three circles on cement using chalk. Add numbers in the circle for points. Then have your child throw wet sponges at the circles. If the sponge lands on that part of the circle, then they receive that many points.

Cheche Price,
Education/Training Manager
**Why Outside Play is Important**

By Danae Lund PhD, LP

**Top 5 benefits of children playing outside:**

On average, American children spend four to seven minutes a day in unstructured outdoor play compared to seven or more hours in front of a screen. Outdoor play should not become a thing of the past.

1. **Builds physically healthier children.**

Nowhere is better than the outdoors for running, jumping, throwing balls, catching, pulling things, lifting and carrying objects. All these actions require motor skills that improve with practice. Children get aerobic exercise and gain skills, such as pushing and pulling outdoor equipment. Studies show children burn more calories outdoors, helping to prevent obesity and strengthen bones and muscles. Playing in the sun is a natural way to build up vitamin D in the body, which means stronger bones and less likelihood of developing chronic diseases.

2. **Contributes to cognitive and social/emotional development.**

Unstructured outdoor play helps kids learn to take turns, share and develop other positive behavioral skills. They are more likely to be inventive, explore and learn about the world around them and use their own abilities. While they are having fun inventing and playing games with siblings or friends, these interactions also help them improve communication, cooperation, and organizational skills. Additionally, fresh air and free play reduce stress levels.

3. **Improve sensory skills.**

An optometry and vision science study showed kids who play outdoors regularly have better distance vision than children who are always indoors. Preschoolers, in particular, learn new things through their senses. Think of a toddler’s delight at seeing new animals (sight), stopping at a bed of fragrant flowers (smell and touch), watching the water form puddles for stomping (hearing and touch) or eating a parent approved berry from a bush (taste). On the other hand, children glued to television and electronic devices use only two senses (hearing and sight). This can negatively affect development of perceptual abilities.

4. **Increases attention spans.**

Children who play outdoors regularly are more curious, self-directed and likely to stay with a task longer. Children who spend most of their time indoors with little exposure to activities requiring their own initiation and follow-through show less ability to initiate or participate in new activities. In fact, studies of children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) found that children with ADHD who spent significant time outdoors exhibited fewer symptoms.

5. **Happiness and better immunity.**

Outdoor light stimulates the pineal gland. This part of the brain is vital to keeping our immune system strong and making us feel happier. Spending time in nature is also associated with improving mood and happiness. An added bonus is that children who identify with nature are more likely to grow up to be adults who appreciate nature and want to protect the environment.

Source: [http://news.sanfordhealth.org](http://news.sanfordhealth.org)

---

**Special Thank You**

- NPHS Board of Directors
- NPHS Parent Volunteers

Beth Prettyman,
Early Head Start Manager
Benefits of the Arts in Early Childhood Development

During early childhood, the socio-emotional and cognitive capabilities are heightened through developmentally appropriate activities designed for full and “all sided” development. This, some educators believe, takes place through arts education. Drawing, painting and working with clay are aspects of arts education for young children. Not limited to hand crafts and visuals, music is also a significant element. The incorporation of the Arts in early childhood has many benefits, and children’s involvement in Arts-infused activities will develop their cognitive, creative, social and emotional skills, playing a large part in their optimal development.

Here are six reasons the Arts are important:

* **Motor Skills:** This is essential for many activities including writing letters and words. Playing an instrument, using a paint brush or shaping modelling clay develop gross and fine motor dexterity and control.

* **Numbers:** Number concepts and classification can be introduced while children work with simple collage materials and beads. “Art is not only about emotion or color but also about patterns and problem solving”. This helps children to better understand the concepts surrounding numeracy.

* **Music:** Can accelerate brain development. The areas of language achievement and reading skills benefit tremendously. Learning to play an instrument has been found to improve mathematical learning, boost memory and even lead to better academic test scores.

* **Reducing Stress:** So says a study on the inclusion of music, dance and visual arts lessons among 310 preschoolers from different backgrounds.

* **Building children’s self-esteem:** By giving them the independence to express themselves. As a group activity, children working together provides them the opportunity to give each other feedback, which aids in learning how to receive criticism and praise from others.

* **Creative side of the brain (Right side of the brain):** Children learn through play, music and art, and this approach creates individuals who are creative.


Amanda Huntsman, BA  
Child Development and Disabilities Coordinator

Sun Safety

Although the sun can feel good, it’s rays can be harmful whenever you are exposed to them for too long. Even with gradual exposure, tanning can be the skin’s response to sun damage. The sun’s rays can cause serious diseases, such as skin cancer and eye damage. Here are a few tips to help you and your family avoid skin damage.

- Keep children out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. – midday is when the sun’s rays are the strongest.
- Keep infants under six months in the shade. Babies and young children have thinner skin than adults.
- Dress children in loose, dry, lightweight, light colored, cotton clothing.
- Have a child wear a hat and sunglasses with UV protection to help with protection of the eyes.
- Use waterproof sunscreen that has a skin protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. Always test a small area on your child to see if the sunscreen will cause a rash. Then put the lotion on any exposed skin except the upper eyelids. Don’t forget the tops of the ears.
- Be sure to use sunscreen on cloudy days, in the shade and in the winter. Sun rays can come through the clouds and hazy skies and reflect off the ground – sand, concrete and snow.
- Remember sun rays are stronger when you are near the water because the rays reflect off the water.
- Know the signs of heat exhaustion: dizziness, nausea, weakness, headache or stomach cramps. If these symptoms are present remove the child from the sun. Provide rest and plenty of fluids.

HAVE A HAPPY AND SAFE SUMMER!  

Cindy Yahn,  
Early Head Start Nurse
MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide a high-quality family-focused program uniquely designed to prepare children for learning and life.

VISION STATEMENT

“Building foundations for life-long growth and development”

Welcome All New Employees!

Kathryn Vizyak – MIHOW Home Visitor
Ashley Coram – Substitute Teacher Assistant
Carol Baker – Head Start Manager
Jennifer Carlton – Teacher Assistant
Joelle Stickler – Teacher Assistant
Deanna McCall – Program Assistant
Katie Amadu – Family Resource Advocate
Sue Scarfpin – Teacher
Becky Rice – Teacher Assistant
LaRinda Wicks—Family Resource Advocate

NPHS is always on the lookout for committed individuals who want to serve the children and families of the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia. You can view our list of current openings, and the qualifications or requirements of each position, on our website at: http://www.npheadstart.org/hr-and-employment/available-positions

Full-time, part-time, and substitute positions available.

We appreciate your interest in a career at Northern Panhandle Head Start, Inc.

To learn about employment opportunities at NPHS, please contact April Breiding at 304-233-3290.

Board of Directors News

The agency is seeking area professionals who are willing to serve on the Board of Directors. Do you want to make a difference in the lives of children and families in our communities? Consider membership with our Board of Directors. This group of dedicated professionals has made a profound impact on our program. They are the driving force, along with the Policy Council, in the decision-making process. Please contact Cathy Williams, Executive Director, with any questions regarding membership roles and responsibilities at 304-233-3290 or cwilliams@npheadstart.org.