

Let's Play!

Activities for Families



SET
3

Focusing on Identities,
Social Responsibility,
and Diversity

Overview

This package of resources was developed by the BC Ministry of Education for parents and caregivers who want to support their child's early learning experiences through play.

Each play activity connects with one of the Living Inquiries described within the BC Early Learning Framework, which include:

- Engagement with Others, Materials and the World
- Well-being and Belonging
- Personal Identity, Social Responsibility, and Diversity
- Communication and Literacies

These resources describe simple play activities using this easy to follow format:

- What
- Why
- How
- Where
- When

Acknowledgments

The Ministry of Education would like to thank Child Health BC for their contributions to this document.

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Everything Changes



What

This is an experience that will help your child learn about difference and change.

1 Create the Environment

Talk to your child about changes that happen every day, such as the weather, a flower that has bloomed, the leaves that have fallen, or that their fingernails or toenails are longer than they were last week.

Talk about how some changes are big, and some changes are small. Sometimes, they may feel happy about changes, and sad about others, and that all feelings are okay.

2 Sharing Experiences

Ask your child to look around and find one thing that has stayed the same, and something else that has changed. Maybe the sunny sky of the morning is still sunny. Maybe a bird you saw outside has flown away. Ask your child, "What do you see?"

Why

Through this experience, children will learn to

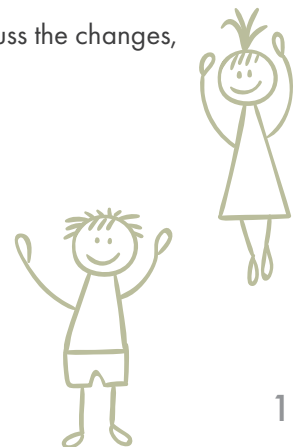
- Express a positive regard and respect for self, others, and property
- Understand that all persons have value
- Understand, accept, and welcome changes and differences in themselves and the world around them

How

Explore with your child about some of the things that stay the same, and some things that are different or change. Point them out.

Explore with your child what these changes and differences might look like on paper, either through words, through drawings, or through another creative way.

Explore with your child how these changes and differences make them feel. You can discuss the changes, write them down, draw them, or express them through some other way such as acting them out.



Where

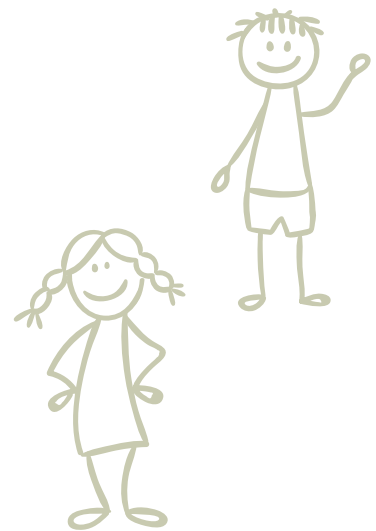
This activity can occur in any familiar area to your child.

When

This activity can occur at any time of the day.

Reference

Braun, M., & Stewart, W. (2017). *Mindful Kids: 50 Mindfulness Activities for Kindness, Focus and Calm*. [Activity Deck]. Cambridge, MA: Barefoot Books



Face Collage

Focusing on Identities,
Social Responsibility, and Diversity



What

The Face Collage is a wonderful way to teach children about their personal identity, diversity, and foster a sense of belonging.

1 Create the Environment

- Take full-face pictures of your child, children, or your family members. Print the images on a full standard size paper (best in colour). Cut the picture into four to six vertical wide strips. To make the piece more durable, you can laminate each strip or you can cover each piece with clear Mactac.
- Mix the strips together into a basket and allow your child time to explore.
- Ask your child what emotions they see in the basket and share your observation. "I see a happy smile. That looks like your mouth!"

2 Collage

Children can piece the faces together or explore mixing the strips to create unique faces using facial features of themselves, their family, or friends.

Why

Through this experience, children will learn to

- Recognize, accept, and express a wide range of emotions, thoughts, and views
- Build healthy relationships with both adults and children
- Develop an understanding of diversity and inclusion
- Feel a sense of belonging and personal identity
- Develop emotional literacy skills
- Develop language and communication

How

You may start off with one or two faces with four vertical wide strips. Encourage language development by asking your child what they see. Try pointing at the facial features (for example, a nose, or eyes) and repeat the name several times to support word association. Also, if the child completes the face puzzle, you can repeat the person's name with your child. This helps children to strengthen their relationships with their peers and family members.



Add more faces with four to six vertical strips. Ask open-ended questions such as

- “What/ Who do you see?”
- “Do they look the same to you?”
- “What do you think this is used for?” (When pointing to the facial feature, try talking about how humans and animals have similar features with similar functions but sometimes look very different)
- “How do you think they feel?”

Dialogue can sometimes be the most powerful way to support the growth and development of children. Building rich conversations based on the interests and inquiries of children can allow endless learning opportunities. Depending on where your discussion takes you, your child could learn about inclusion and embracing differences in others, emotional literacy, the human body, and basic mathematics.

Use images of unfamiliar people and make four to six vertical strips and four to six horizontal strips for each face. After building new faces, make up a story about who they are and what they enjoy.

Where

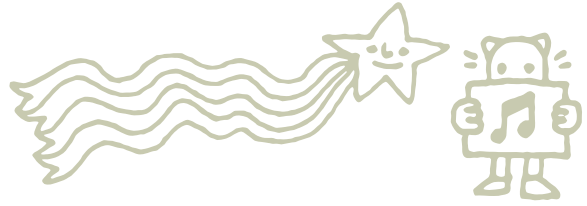
This experience can be completed on a flat surface, indoors, or outdoors. You can also add magnets to the back of the strips and they can be placed on a magnetic board or on a fridge.

When

This activity can occur at any time of the day, and is best explored individually or in small groups.



Telling Stories



What

Try this activity if you are noticing that your child is interested in listening to stories, or is starting to develop stories on their own.

You don't need to be a master storyteller to delight your child with a story. You can tell a personal meaningful story from your own childhood. Children also love to hear stories about themselves, like the story of their birth and how much you were looking forward to meeting them.

It's okay for children to interrupt stories and ask questions. There's no right or wrong way, and this supports the development of self-esteem.

Just relax, have fun, and go with the flow!

Why

Through this experience, children learn to

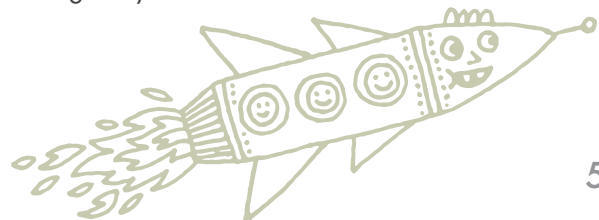
- Appreciate your values and beliefs as well as your culture
- Explore and learn about family, community, and the wider world
- Appreciate and acknowledge new vocabulary and language comprehension
- Use critical thinking skills if you involve them in the story. For example, ask them what they think might happen
- Tell a story about themselves or their family
- See and hear a model of storytelling which will encourage them to make up their own stories
- Feel empowered by learning life lessons from their parent or caregiver

This activity can help you and your child to bond. Often, children like to snuggle while listening to the story. The physical contact makes them feel close and connected by spending the time talking and listening to each other.

How

If you don't have much experience telling stories, you can start with something short. For example, try telling your child about something funny that happened to you or something funny your child said when they were smaller.

Tell longer stories that you know well. Children love to find out more about their culture and family members through stories. You can tell them about things you used to enjoy as a child, or things that scared you and how you overcame your fear. Tell your child about people who were important to you and how they impacted your life. You can tell stories about your child and the things they used to love or fear and show how they've changed and grown.



Involve your child in the telling of the story by asking questions like, “What do you think happened next?” or “How do you think that felt?” You can also make up stories where your child is the hero that saves the day. Include your child’s favourite character in the story. You can be creative or tell stories you know. Either way, children will love the attention and the time you spend talking together.

Explore stories at your local library:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/sports-culture/arts-culture/public-libraries>

Where

You can tell stories anywhere.

When

This activity can be done at bedtime, when you want to occupy your little one, waiting for an appointment, or while travelling. It can happen anytime when you or your child are in the mood!

Reference

Community Action Program for Children (CAPC)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/childhood-adolescence/programs-initiatives/community-action-program-children-capc.html>



Gardening with Kids



What

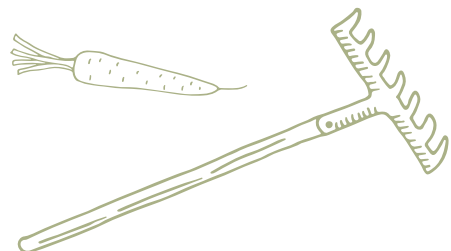
Getting young children involved with gardening is a great way to connect with nature, learn about food, and how food grows. In the garden, children also get to use all of their senses (touch, taste, see, hear, and smell). For example, they can see the plant change as it grows, and hopefully can even taste the food. Children are often more keen to try something they have helped grow or prepare. Early spring is a great time to start seeds indoors and talk to children about our growing season.

1 Create the Environment

- Explore what a garden is with your child and the different things that can be found in a garden.
- Ask your child for their ideas about caring for plants and gardens.
- Look at pictures in books or gardens in your neighbourhood.
- Ask if they would be interested in making their own garden at home!

2 Gardening Activities

- Decide if you will be growing plants outside or only inside. If you do have room outside for a small garden or planter, encourage your child to help prepare the soil by weeding, tilling with shovels or sticks, and stirring in compost or other natural soil additions (avoid chemical fertilizers which can be toxic if ingested from children's hands).
- Choose your seeds with your child. Together, decide what types of vegetables or beans you could grow depending on the space and sunlight you have, and what your family and/or community has traditionally grown. For example, squash need to spread their vines along the ground and need more room like a large planter or garden plot. Tomatoes, herbs, lettuce, chard, and kale grow more vertically and can be planted in pots. Beans and peas need a trellis or a fence to grow up alongside. Save the seed packets to remind yourself of what your plants need to grow.
- Start growing your seeds inside by sprouting them in moist paper towels inside small plastic bags. Label the bag so your child can start to recognize words. Encourage each child to choose (ideally) two types of seeds to start, just in case one doesn't grow. Place these in a sunny window. Check daily to ensure the towel stays moist and to watch for the seeds to open. Ask them what they see as the seeds sprout. Encourage them to draw what they see each day, and label it with one or two words.
- Once sprouted, together with your child, move to a small pot or an empty paper egg carton with some fresh potting soil (choose soil that is specifically for growing food plants). Egg cartons work well as they can be planted right into a bigger pot or the garden, and the paper will eventually break down (note that this won't happen with Styrofoam egg cartons).



- Move seedlings outdoors (if you can) once there isn't a risk of frost outside. Some plants may need to stay warmer longer, like tomatoes. Some plants may need stakes to help support them.
- Encourage your child to try out the different gardener roles, like watering, weeding, and eventually picking the veggies. If you have more than one child, ask them to take turns trying out the different roles of the gardener. If your crop doesn't end up quite big enough for everyone to try some, consider getting some extra from the grocery store. Consider a taste test to see which tastes better!

Why

Through this experience, children will learn to

- Appreciate how their actions—through gardening—can affect nature and the planet
- Explore and learn about family, community, and the wider world by growing food that is important to their community
- Develop fine motor skills/abilities by planting the seeds and by pouring and scooping water or soil
- Appreciate and understand nutrition and nature
- Build empathy and see the impact of their actions in the environment around them

How

Some children might require guidance or assistance for the above activities. Do the activities with your child by guiding their movements with your own, such as hand over hand so that the child has the experience of doing the actions.

Create a space for your child to explore the different activities independently, and try watching from the sidelines. Observe their interests and ask questions that explore these interests further.

Encourage your child to think of new games and ideas that incorporate a gardening theme.

Where

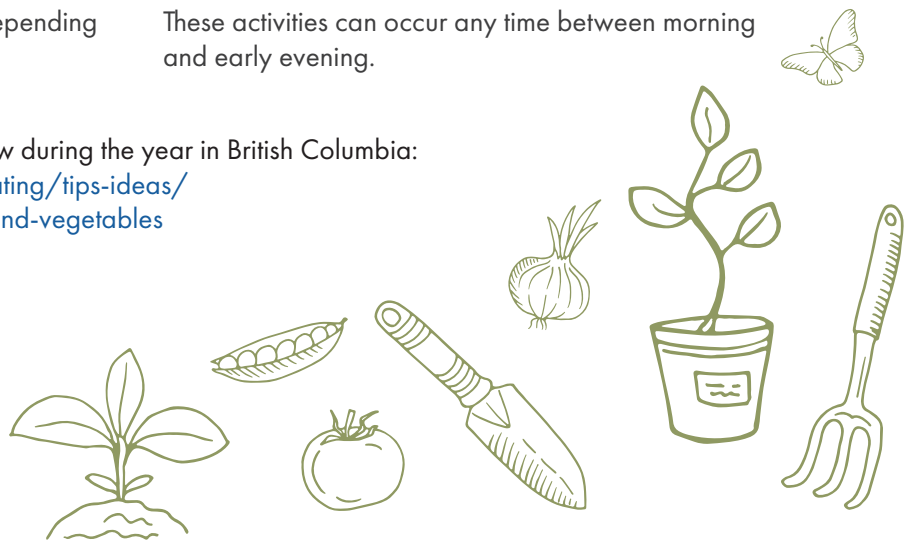
This activity can occur indoors or outdoors, depending on where the garden is being grown.

When

These activities can occur any time between morning and early evening.

Check this listing of plants and when they grow during the year in British Columbia:

<https://www.appetitetoplay.com/healthy-eating/tips-ideas/seasonally-available-british-columbia-fruits-and-vegetables>





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