

## F. Ideas for Indoor Activities

Many of the following ideas are around sensory play. Sensory play is aimed to include activities that stimulate your child's senses by engaging one or more of the senses: touch, smell, taste, sight and hearing.

**Cloud Dough:** Pour 4 cups flour into the centre of a large tub. Create a crater in the middle of the flour and pour the ½ cup oil into the crater and mix it all together. You can add glitter or food colouring or essential oils.

**Goop:** Mix the 2 cups of cornflour with 1 cup of water. Add food colouring if you like. You can also make the goop dance by placing a bass speaker next to it and playing something really 'bassy'.

**Sensory bins/bags:** This simply involves filling various containers with dried beans, lentils or rice and allowing your child to scoop, stir and transfer them between pots etc. You could try making a beach or treasure island out of rice. The same concept can be used using zip-lock freezer bags. For example you could try filling them with shaving foam, or jelly etc.

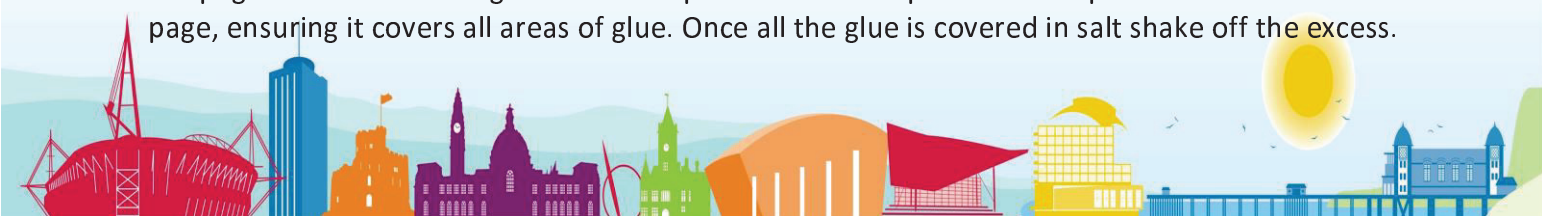
**Fizzing fun:** By adding vinegar to bicarbonate of soda it makes the powder fizz and bubble. You can play with this idea by either filling mugs/pots with bicarbonate of soda and adding vinegar and food colouring to them to create a 'fizzing tea party' or by filling a tray with bicarbonate of soda and putting the vinegar into a water pistol which your child can then squirt into the tray and watch the powder bubble up when the vinegar hits it.

**Marbled painting:** Squirt a layer of shaving cream onto a tray and let your child spread it about with their hands. Dribble some of the paint (watered down enough to pour) onto the shaving cream. Allow your child to swirl the paint around either using the back of a paintbrush or their fingers to make a marbled effect (make sure to stop before the colours mix together too much). You can print the marbled effect onto paper by placing a sheet of paper/card onto the foam. Gently lift the paper off the shaving foam and set aside. Then use a credit card or a cardboard square to scrape the shaving foam off the paper. The swirled/marbled pattern should remain on the paper. Set aside to dry.

**3D Paint:** Mix roughly equal amounts of PVA glue and white shaving cream together. Add little bits of food colouring or paint and stir into the mix. Your 3D paint is then ready to use. It works best to dab the paint onto the paper or card rather than smear, as you want it to be quite thick. Try finger painting with the paint. The paint will have a puffy, 3D texture when dry and will feel squishy like foam to the touch.

**Play Spaghetti:** Cook as much spaghetti as you wish to use then divide it up into separate containers – one container for each colour that you are making. Add a few drops of food colouring to each container and mix. Add a little cooking oil to the coloured spaghetti to stop it from becoming too sticky. Your coloured spaghetti is now ready. Allow your child to play with it!

**Raised salt painting:** Place a piece of paper onto a tray (e.g. a baking tray) and pour PVA glue onto the page. You can use the glue to draw a picture or create patterns. Then pour table salt onto the page, ensuring it covers all areas of glue. Once all the glue is covered in salt shake off the excess.



Using a paintbrush drip watercolour paint onto the patches of salt. The colour will spread out and run along the lines of salt. Try and engage your child in watching the process of the paint spreading along the salt.

**Water-play:** Water is familiar to children and can provide an easy, safe and free form of sensory play. Fill a large container with water and provide your child with some simple toys such as funnels, various sized pots or containers, marbles, cloths or sponges, bubbles or foam etc and simply allow your child to experiment and play. A tray/container of water can be used for play both indoors and outdoors.

**Coloured rice:** By simply mixing dried rice with food colouring you can create brightly coloured rice grains that your child can use for sensory play. Simple mix approximately a cup of dried rice with a teaspoon of food colouring by placing both in a screw-top container and shaking until the rice is adequately covered and then setting aside to dry on paper towels. Once the rice is dried your child engage with it by passing it between containers or playing with it with their hands.

**Sand foam:** By simply mixing clean sand with shaving foam in a large tray/container it will create a fluffy, textured mixture that provides a material kids can use for sensory play. Engage your child in mixing the two materials together. Once the sand and foam are mixed you can hide objects such as shells or plastic toys in the sand-foam for your child to find. You can also draw and write in the sand foam using your fingers.

**Bottle-tops and bubbles:** Simply fill a large tub/container with water and washing up liquid to create a container of bubbles. You can then hide bottle-tops and ask your child to find them. See if they can do it by colour, (i.e. pick out all the red bottle tops). Your child could also try using different utensils to make more bubbles such as a whisk.

**Jelly play:** When making up the jelly try hiding objects that are similar in colour to the jelly you are hiding them in. This will help disguise them better. Allow the jelly to set in various containers/pots/jugs. Your child can try building things with the jelly, making pictures or words out of it. Again this is a great activity to do with your child if they have a tendency to put toys/materials in their mouths.

**Rock Monsters:** For this you will need googly eyes, paint, and glue. Make a bunch of rock characters, give them names, you could even give them personalities!

