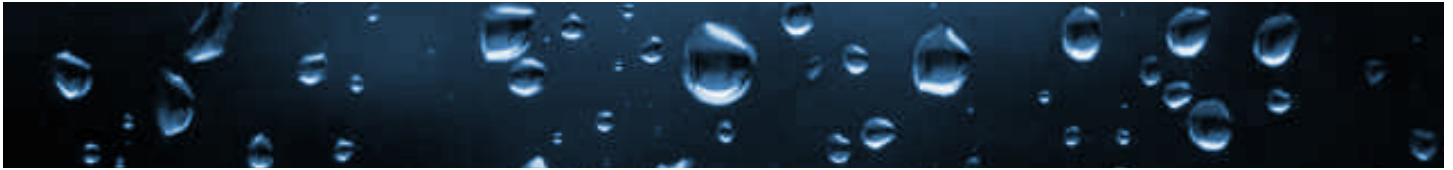


## Active play for rainy days

*Do the children drive you crazy when they have to play inside on rainy days?*

*Children need active play every day. Taking children outside where they can use their large muscles to run, jump, skip, climb, hop, ride a bike, swing, and slide is the best kind of active play.*



What do you do when it is too rainy or cold to play outside? The children still need some active play time. Not many people have gyms in their houses to allow children to run and jump like they do when they play outside. Try planning some rainy day activities to give the children active play time indoors. Here are some ideas:

### Puddle jumping

**You'll need:**

newspaper or colored construction paper

**What to do:**

Cut or tear puddle shapes out of newspaper or colored construction paper. Let the children help you to lay the "puddles" on the floor. Have the children take turns jumping in the puddles, around the puddles, over the puddles, etc.

**Variation:** Change this game by setting out boxes with low sides instead of paper puddles. Have the children hop from box to box, around the boxes, in and out of the boxes, etc.

### Box crawling

**You'll need:**

several large cardboard boxes

**What to do:**

Open the ends of each box. Set the boxes on the floor so the children can crawl in and out of one box and into another.

### Move with the music

**You'll need:**

recordings of music with a fast beat

**What to do:**

Turn on the music and let the children dance to the beat.

### Run, fly, or swim

**What to do:**

Talk with the children to decide on movements to act out a creature running, flying, and swimming. Call out the name of a bird, fish, or animal. The children decide if the named creature runs, flies, or swims and act it out.

### Indoor obstacle course

**What to do:**

Use chairs, boxes, tables, etc., to create an indoor obstacle course. Make sure there are things for children to go over, under, step into, go around, etc.

# Children need active play every day.

## Action stories

Tell a story. Have the children act out the parts as you tell it. They may want to wear dress up clothes as they pretend to play their parts in the story.

## Action songs

Sing action songs with the children. They may want to help make up the movements. Start with some simple ones like:

- The Farmer in the Dell
- London Bridge
- Ring Around the Rosie
- Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush
- Teddy Bear

## Board walk

**You'll need:**

one 2 x 4 wooden board

**What to do:**

Lay the wooden board flat on the floor. Show the children how to walk on the board and let them try it. Once they get used to walking, have them try walking heel to toe. Move on to other ways: sideways, backwards, jumping off the board, jumping over the board, straddling the board. Let the children think of new ways to walk on the board.

## Pop-up

**You'll need:**

one large cardboard box

**What to do:**

Ask for one child to sit in the box. Have the other children walk around the box singing "Pop Goes the Weasel" or another simple favorite song. At the end of the song, the children shout "POP."

When the child in the box hears the word "Pop," she jumps up like a jack-in-the-box. Another child goes to sit in the box while the rest walk around singing.

## Hide and hunt

**You'll need:**

small toy — such as a block

**What to do:**

Show the children the toy. Hide the toy in another room, and ask the children to find it. The finder gets to hide the toy for the next game of hunting.

