

Surviving cold weather without turning on a television!

TIPS AND TRICKS / KRISTEN MENAPACE, M.A. CCC-SLP

Although it may be cold outside, there are many activities you can do inside instead of watching TV! *Did you know?* American Academy of Pediatrics (2016) recommends **less than 1 hour** of screen time per day for children 2-5 years old, and **no screen time** for children younger than 2. Screen time includes viewing media on a television (shows, movies, video games), iPad/tablet/cell phone (game apps, Netflix, YouTube). Below are a few ideas to keep your children engaged and learning with *few materials!*

Family Fun Activities:

- Hide & Find: take turns hiding an object around the room (like a car), and try to find the secret spot!
- Pillow and blanket fort: Using chairs, couches, pillows, blankets and anything else you can find, build a secret house or fort!
- I spy: Describe an item for your child to try and find or guess! For example, "I spy something brown and squishy that you like to sleep with..." (a teddy bear)
- Living room library: Bring a favorite blanket and book to read and talk about together. Make it more fun by turning the lights off and getting out the flashlights!
- Ice cube races: Place two ice cubes on a table. Using a straw, blow ice cubes to the finish line or until they fall off!
- Kids paint and brushes, or watercolor paints
- Bake a treat together: Take turns putting in ingredients to make cookies or trail mix. Practice kitchen safety if using the oven!
- Stamp Artwork: use paper towel rolls or Q-tips to dip into paint and stamp onto paper
- Pipe cleaner decoration: put cheerios or beads on pipe cleaners to make bracelets or keychains
- Magazine collage: Using old magazines, cut out pictures of interesting things (food, silly faces, toys); glue the pictures onto paper or old shoe box to make a colorful collage
- Shaving cream finger painting: trace letters into shaving cream on a tray or kitchen table. Make it more fun by adding objects to find in the shaving cream, or have a mini car wash with toy cars!

Child-Independent Activities:

- Coloring with crayons, or markers on paper or coloring books
- Cardboard box fun: Use a large cardboard box to color as a rocket ship, boat, or car. Your child can pretend to race around the house or blast off into space!
- Dress up: Get out old or silly clothes for your child to play dress up with
- Pots and Pans show: Bring out the pots, pans and spoons for a fun music show!
- **Top children's toys:** hot wheels cars, large Lego blocks, dolls/babies, pretend house food/dishes
- **Top children's books:** Goodnight Moon, Green Eggs and Ham, If You Give a Mouse a Cookie, Very Hungry Caterpillar, The Giving Tree, Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, Brown Bear Brown Bear, Corduroy, Frog and Toad, Where the Wild Things Are, Three Little Pigs, Harold and the Purple Crayon