

*You might be in need of some fun ideas that will help with the “I’m bored” syndrome... It happens to the best of us. Here are **(36)** useful tips of slowing down and being in the moment with your child and building a strong foundation of bonding and family fun:*

- 1. Tickle torture - tickle your little one.**
- 2. Flashlight fun - take a flashlight and make letters, hand puppets, or play flashlight tag.**
- 3. Puppets - make puppets out of socks, paper bags, or any gathered materials.**
- 4. Water balloons - no explanation needed. They LOVE this.**
- 5. Dance party - have a fun dance party in your family room.**
- 6. Story telling - share a story from your childhood - our small children love to hear stories about “when I was a child, we....”**
- 7. Play a preschool version of charades**
- 8. Play chase in the backyard or around the house**
- 9. Put out a pile of shaving cream and let them explore the feel of it. Don’t be surprised if they get messy - it’s all part of being a child. You can also do this project in the bathtub for a quick clean up**
- 10. “Ooblick” (use a ratio of $\frac{1}{2}$ cornstarch and $\frac{1}{2}$ water for a wonderful sensory experience of slime - it’s clean and fun. Hose it off and it’s gone. You will find the mixture gets runny and if you leave it alone for a few minutes, it will get clumpy again. The heat of your hands will make it runny and the process goes on and on. Use a small bucket and add some drops of paint for colorful slime)**
- 11. Volcano fun (put some baking soda in a cleaned out container and add vinegar for a fun science experience)**
- 12. Mixing colored water - Morrison’s has washable watercolor - I am not sure if it comes out of fabric so this is an**

- outside, play clothes project. They love it and will mix the water for a long time. Add some Tupperware and washed out containers, spoons, cups, etc. and let them go to it
13. **Play dough - add craft sticks to “cut” the play dough, cookie cutters, rolling pins, even a garlic press - you can get inexpensive garlic presses at the dollar store.**
 14. **Save butter, yogurt, sour cream containers, and muffin tins to use for mixing and dumping as well as to put salt, flour, etc. Use popsicle sticks and spoons for mixing, use paper plates for the paint canvas**
 15. **Have fun with pipe cleaners and collage pieces (egg cartons, fabric, felt, leaves, rocks, shells, pom poms, tissue paper, buttons, jewels, beads, wood pieces, dollar store finds, foam pieces, and pebbles).**
 16. **Use glitter, markers, glue, colored pencils, chalk, paint, and Watercolors - paint with watercolors.**
 17. **Make bubbles and use strawberry baskets, pipe cleaners, and fingers (made into an okay sign) to blow blow blow. All you need is dish soap and water to make a bubble mixture - you will add a lot of soap to the small amount of water 3 cups or so. It will be ready for blowing bubbles when you can cup your fingers into a circle and blow a bubble out of the circle from your fingers.**
 18. **Cooking fun and mixing ingredients - they love to help and if you make washing the dishes sound fun, they will even help with that too.**
 19. **Cool down with squirt bottles, hose, and sprinklers - you can join them and feel cooled down and remember the good ole’ days when you ran barefoot through the sprinklers!**
 20. **Box city - get old boxes and let the kids use markers or paints to decorate and play with. They will use the boxes for great pretend play inventions.**

- 21. Parachutes - use a sheet or parachute to launch small soft balls or teddy bears into the air. Let the children hide under and climb on top of the sheet for a fun ride around the living room.**
- 22. Laundry basket "vehicles" - these are sure to turn into airplanes, trains, you name it.**
- 23. Plays/stories - create and make up fun stories - use props and stuffed animals for other "characters" in the story**
- 24. Read in different voices for different characters in the story**
- 25. Squirt toys - you can get these at Target or the dollar store. They are good for fun and fine motor skill development.**
- 26. chase - this is sure to be fun, easy, and cost absolutely no money. They love playing chase.**
- 27. Remember the water fun - sprinklers, the hose, and of course the squirt bottles.**
- 28. Board games - Don't Break the Ice, Candyland, and Hi-Ho Cherrio are wonderful games to start with.**
- 29. Stickers**
- 30. Flour and spice dough - mix flour, water, and spices for a great sensory experience. Dollar stores usually have inexpensive spices.**
- 31. ...and of course, my personal favorite....consider anything a paintbrush!**
- 32. Have fun with pipe cleaners and collage pieces (egg cartons, fabric, felt, leaves, rocks, shells, pom poms, tissue paper, buttons, jewels, beads, wood pieces, dollar store finds, foam pieces, and pebbles). If your child is at an age for choking, please be careful as to the size of the collage items.**

33. Use glitter, markers, glue, colored pencils, chalk, paint, and watercolors
34. Outdoor nature hikes and nature hunts - in the backyard and at the park works very well for preschool-aged children. Look for bugs.
35. Fun CD's- Greg and Steve, Charlotte Diamond, Raffi, Hap Palmer, Shrek and Cars CD's
36. Most of all, it is not what you do with your child that matters most, it is that you are there and spending quality time with them that matters most. Have a wonderful time playing with the ideas I presented and know that childhood goes so quickly so enjoy every moment!

With fun and best wishes and of course happy playing,

Anne Vidovich, M.A.

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Where Children Love to Learn

Aloveoflearning@yahoo.com



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Roadsoflearning@yahoo.com

650-888-0519