

play day printable



play day printable

Today is national play day and we'd love to support you to play with your baby with our free printable today! We have some activities that you can try with your little one and we'll give you lots of information on why it is beneficial for your baby's brain & their sensory development too.

We really want to give you opportunities to play during your week, it helps add structure, is incredible for helping your little one develop brain connections, adds structure during this unusual time and can help bring us all together.

This pack is full of play suggestions, ideas on activities you can do with your little one, repeat them, choose your favourites, miss a day, work around your family, there is no strict way to play and nobody is ever behind.

Please post photos in our facebook group. We would LOVE to see what you get up to.



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Safety first - These activities are suggestions of how to engage your baby in play. They need to be carried out with adult supervision and you taking full responsibility for your baby during play. Please ensure that your little one is supervised with the toy at all times. Keep your little one in arms reach and eye sight when they are playing.



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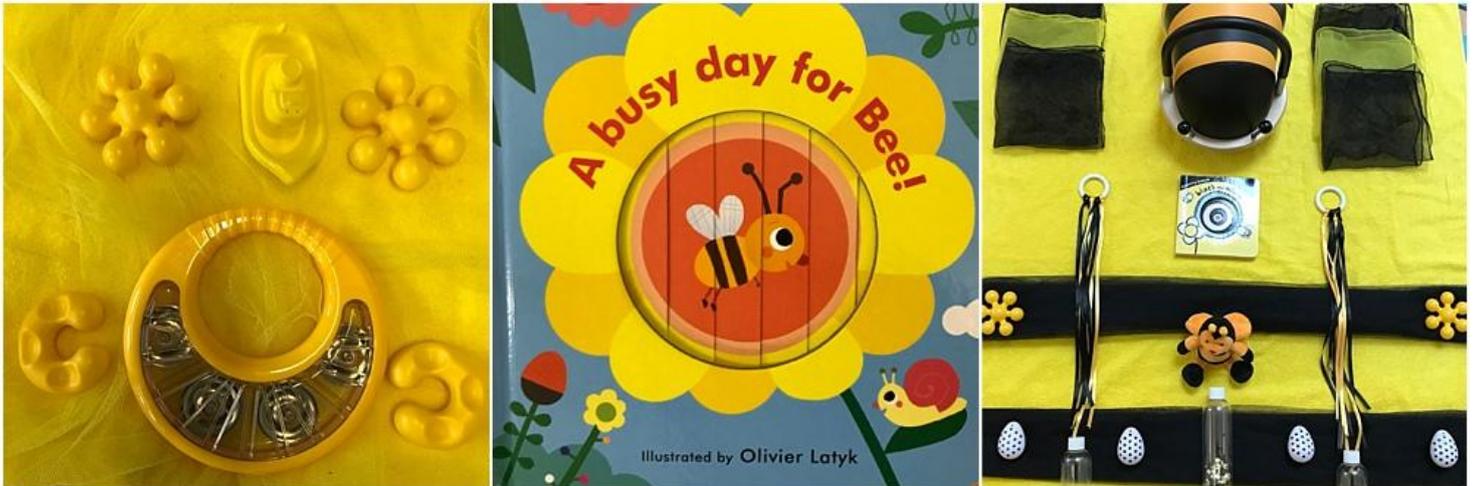


It is really important that our little one's learn how to manipulate lots of different objects, it helps their fine finger control and their ability to develop different grips like palmer grasp (where they use their whole hand) and pincer grip (where they hold smaller items between a finger and their thumb).

This week we'd love you to choose 4 or 5 toys that are different textures and that your little one would hold differently and arrange an exploratory play session to help their fine finger control. You might choose a plush toy, a link, starlink, a music toy, a book, a block or a ball.

For our smallest babies open little hands up and let them feel around corners, lie them on their side so both hands come together to play. For our sitters pop the toy in front of them so they can use both hands to manipulate bigger objects and single hands for smaller items, make sure they get an opportunity to use both hands.

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We'd love to see some contrast play area this week, yellow is one of the first colours our little one's see in focus and it is amazing to give them an opportunity to give the a play space that helps their visual development.

Have a hunt for some single colour yellow toys and place them on the same background or a contrast background. In our playspace we've added a book about bees, yellow toys, a wheelie bug for movement and some black net and chiffons as our contrast fabrics. We've made some ribbon toys with some black and yellow ribbons and a sensory bottle with some black and gold sequins.

Have a hunt to see if you have any contrast available at home, digging out some dark clothing, black kitchen utensils, a rubber duck from the bathroom and some yellow links would be an amazing start.

You'll notice your little one really focusing on the play area as they are able to see it in focus.

spider sensory basket



Creating a spider's web in a box, basket or container is a great way to engage your baby's motor planning skills. We've looped thick red ribbon around a white basket to create a contrast that our little one could see in focus. Adding a few crosses of ribbon makes the activity easier while looping lots of ribbon creates a more complex pattern and it is a great idea to start easier and increase the ribbon over time.

Pop some small toys in the basket and encourage your little one to move the toys round to get them out of the basket. You can use different textures and increase the toy size as they get more practice. This is amazing for their hand to eye co-ordination and motor planning skills. This activity can be done from tummy time by popping the basket on it's side, sitting and popping on a sofa or chair surface to encourage standing. Practice often, repetition is amazing for brain and motor skills development!

rainbow ball pool



We use ball pools a lot with our babies in the groups that we run and today we have some top tips to share with you about how to use them with your baby.

Essentially there are a couple of types of ball pools, pop up ones like the moon and star one and jungle ones in the following picture and blow up ones like the frog and castle ones. We also put balls in some of our play tents too!

The pop up ones are really easy to store but are best for confident sitting or for lying down and it is best to pop some foam mats underneath or have it on carpet as there is no protective layer on the bottom of the pool.

rainbow ball pool

The inflatables are easy to keep clean, very often suitable for water too, are usually padded so can give new sitters support as well as those lying or sitting. Caution is needed with them as they do get damaged more easily and although they deflate for storage if you are able to get them back in the original box you are a genius!

Our advice for little people is to have one layer of balls in the bottom of your pool, with our babies we are looking at giving them as much information from their muscles and joints as possible, this is called proprioception and keeps us organised and calm. Our little ones will be getting lots of this information from the floor and the sides of the ball pool. Putting lots of balls in doesn't give them a 'firm' surface to sit against so they get less of that information that keeps them calm and aware of their body position. Playing with less balls in the pool still gives your baby the experience of playing with lots of balls while working on their hand to eye co-ordination and finger positioning while getting lots of information through their muscles and joints and working on their gross motor skills too.

rainbow ball pool

To wash the balls, pop them in the bath with a little soap and hose them down with your shower, pop in a washing basket and leave outside on a lovely day to dry off. So ball pools are great, but less is more when it comes to what you put into it for babies. When your little one is mobile, top your ball pool up!



rainbow themed activity

Our rainbow themed activity is in appreciation of our NHS staff and all the keyworkers who are keeping us all well and safe. This will feature in our Thursday sensory class.

There is a whole printable of rainbow inspired activities on the members club.



home made rainbows



Our rainbow themed activity is in appreciation of our NHS staff and all the keyworkers who are keeping us all well and safe. This week we are making some home made rainbows to show our little ones and give them an amazing opportunity to hold and touch lots of textures with your supervision

rainbow no mess painting

No mess painting is a great way of adding texture into your play with the bonus of your little one creating their first piece of art too! Place a contrast image in a ziplock bag (Ikea are our favourite as they have two seals) and add small amounts of paint to the picture before sealing the bag. Tape it down to give your little one the opportunity to feel and touch and move the paint around the bag. For our younger ones this is an amazing visual development activity with the added bonus of textures, giving them an opportunity for tummy time, sitting practice and lying next to the bag. For our older ones, taping it to a high chair tray can give an amazing opportunity for some concentrated play, fine finger control and feeling the new textures. Once your little one is done, cut the bag open and leave the painting to dry. No mess painting is a great way to create cards, introduce textures and help their concentration.

It is a quick activity to do and set up and please never leave your little one unsupervised with the bag. We have some images to get you started on the next page, or create your own at home, we'd love to see what you get up to!



