

Branching Out

Resource Updates to Support the Growth and Goals of Educators



As child care programs begin to reopen, we know that providing a fulsome curriculum in a time when physical distancing is required may be a challenge for educators. We wanted to share some ECCDC resources that we selected that would support individual play or could be used in a physically distanced way. We hope you find these helpful and inspiring.

Resources to Support Individual Play



Translucent Loose Parts

Children enjoy investigating light and reflection so this provocation for learning kit has everything they need to explore this learning concept. The materials could be used by one child or you could separate the materials into smaller offerings that many children could enjoy. The materials are washable and the individual light panel could be easily sanitized with a disinfectant wipe.



Take Along Railway

Exploring trains is always a fan favourite with young children. This compact wooden train set is the perfect size for individual play. It is such a popular resource we have three of them in our lending library. The materials may be sanitized using disinfectant wipes as submerging this resource in soapy water may damage the wood.



Individual Sand Tray

Sensory play is an important part of every child's development. You may be wary about introducing sensory play at this time, but hopefully this unique resource will help ease your mind. This resource only needs a small amount of sand to be useful, so it may be discarded after each use. You may also use other sensory materials as you see fit. The other materials provided are easily washed and this is the perfect size for individual play.



Marble Run

This resource was recently donated to the ECCDC and would provide endless exploration for young children. All the materials are easily washed and may be enjoyed by one child and then shared with others after they have been sanitized. They may also be used in water to add another element to the children's investigations.



Presents ...

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Check out ECCDC's YouTube Channel

We recently added a video of our Summer Intern, Emily Farr and ECCDC Staff Members, Jenn Mosher & Hayley Wutzke, sharing their ideas for marble runs and sensory play, while keeping COVID-19 restrictions in mind. [Click here](#) to have a look, share with your colleagues, and subscribe to our channel.



Power Clix Organics

Building and magnets are two materials that draw children in and open up a world of construction and creativity. These Power Clix Organics are great for preschoolers and schoolagers and are easily sanitized. There is a perfect amount for individual play. Invite a child to explore these materials and see what they come up with.



Polydron Building Materials for Toddlers

Toddlers love to build and explore. These large "Polydron" blocks are perfect for small hands and are easily sanitized. They will love to hear the "snap" as they are clicked together or pulled apart. We love to see those toddlers' minds working as they figure out how things work by trial and error!



Resources to Support Physically Distanced Play



Giant Floor Shapes

Looking for something to act as a visible reminder for children to know how far they should be apart? These rubber floor shapes are great for that and they are completely washable. They could also be used to set up a physically distanced obstacle course or to create a life-sized board game.



Yoga For Kids Resources

Yoga is a perfect physically distanced activity. Children and educators can spread out and work on yoga poses together (the floor shapes would be perfect for this). Yoga is also a great way to help ease stress and allow for mindfulness and relaxation.



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Farr Out Findings

COVID-19 has impacted us all in so many ways, but children the most. The uncertainty and change in routine directly influence children's wellbeing. The reopening of child care centres leaves educators with many questions in terms of how to keep children safe but also engaged in a play-based curriculum. The restrictions in place present educators with a unique opportunity to truly be creative in the ways they support children in their transition back to child care. Listed below are a few activities that can be done indoors and outdoors with children while keeping the COVID-19 practices in mind:

- **Virtual Museums/Aquariums** can be displayed for children to view. They are a great way to provoke conversations with children about what they see, what they think, and what they wonder about, in addition to promoting further learning experiences. A few links are listed below to try:
 - [Click here](#) to visit Ripley's Aquariums virtually
 - [Click here](#) to watch the 'Panda Cam' at Zoo Atlanta
 - [Click here](#) to watch a video of the beautiful flowers at Keukenhof in Holland
 - [Click here](#) to watch a video inside Hawaii's Nahuku Lava Tube
- **Yoga** supports mental wellness and physical activity for children.
- **Loose Parts Play** should still be valued during this time with one adjustment in mind; use washable items such as Lego, plastic cotton reels, plastic cups, tin painting cans, plastic beads, plastic sorting trays, etc. Be creative in the items you choose and how you present them to the children!
- **Plastic Marble Run** – you can either purchase or create your own with loose part bits you probably have in your home or at your child care centre, including plastic cups, Lego, plastic ruler, plastic hanger clips, etc.
- **Freeze Dance** – all you need is music and one simple rule for children to freeze when the music is paused. A very fun and physical activity!
- **Obstacle Courses** – Create obstacle courses inside or outside. Encourage children to go through one at a time without touching the obstacles, keep physical distancing in mind and ensure that items that are touched are sanitized.
- **Sensory Bin Play** will look a little different with the new restrictions in place. However, creating individual sensory bins using materials that may be easily disinfected or tossed away at the end of the day are totally workable. Some items you could include are plastic beads, dice, Lego, magnifying glasses, seashells, plastic, or steel kitchen utensils, etc.



Resources Available on our ECCDC Website to Support Re-Opening

Looking for more information to support your center's reopening? [Click here](#) to have a look at the resources listed in ECCDC's Looking Forward



The ECCDC is very excited to announce the launch of our blog "Growing Together". We are thrilled to have another platform where we can share resources and information with our early learning and child care community. To explore our blog and the posts we already have available [click here](#). We will be posting a few times a month so don't forget to check it frequently for ECCDC updates, useful articles, information about our services and much more. One of our recent posts highlights the reopening of Child Care centres so please look out for that!

We would like to thank our Summer Intern Alison Hansen for all her creativity and hard work in bringing this initiative to fruition.

