



Learning Services
P.O. Box 520
Prince Rupert, B.C.
V8J 3R7
Tel: (250) 624 - 0925
Fax: (250) 624 - 6572

The main occupations of children are playing and learning. With younger children especially, playing and learning are often the same thing. Play provides invaluable social learning, cognitive stimulation, and gross and fine motor development.

At school children are provided with multiple opportunities for play: learning centres, recess, phys-ed, etc. With children learning in alternative formats outside of school, these opportunities for play are not necessarily as structured, but still just as important.

I have put together a table below of simple activities that can be done from home that require few materials. I have also included the occupational therapy reasoning for why I recommend these activities. That said, any activity that promotes social interaction and physical movement has the potential to be beneficial. Please feel free to share these ideas with your students' families.

Kind regards,
OT James
james.wintle@sd52.bc.ca

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Why?</u>
Go outside: if possible, play in a yard or on a driveway	It's important for children to get fresh air and going outside can be a great way to burn off energy. Remember to practice social distancing when outside. When re-entering the home, wash hands with soap and water.
Build a pillow fort	Fosters creative play & imagination. For smaller children, lifting and moving large cushions is great exercise!
Pass a balloon back and forth, without letting it touch the ground	A social activity that promotes hand-eye coordination and visual tracking.
Simon says	A social activity that promotes listening and following directions.
Put together a puzzle	Can be done as a social activity. Promotes visual scanning and problem solving.
Play with playdough	Can be done as a social activity. Great exercise for the hand muscles!
Involve child in cooking from a recipe	Social activity that promotes independence, following directions, literacy, and numeracy!
Play with Lego/Duplo or other blocks	Can be done as a social activity. Promotes creativity and fine motor skills!
Colour pictures	Promotes fine motor skills. The smaller the crayon, the better it is for promoting a good pencil grasp in young children. Colouring can also help children express their feelings during times of anxiety.
Animal walks	Can be done as a social activity. Have children walk around a room as different animals: slither like a snake, hop like a bunny, walk on all fours like a bear, stomp like a dinosaur, etc. Great way to burn off energy and develop gross motor skills!