Homemade playdough

1 cup of plain flour
½ cup of salt
1 tablespoon of sunflower oil
1 cup of water
2 teaspoons of cream of tartar
Food colouring

- Mix all the ingredients to make a smooth paste.
- Put in a saucepan and cook slowly until it comes away from the sides of the pan.
- Take off the heat and when it has cooled, knead it for 3-4 minutes.
- Store it in a plastic container – it will keep for ages!
You don’t have to spend money to have fun, some of the best games and toys can be inexpensive or even free. Have a look around the house and get creative!

**Early interactive games**

People play is the first kind of play your child learns to do! It is important for developing early communication skills and helps your child to share enjoyment with you. Try games such as peek a boo, tickling, rough and tumble.

- **Bubble play** – just use a pot of bubbles to encourage eye contact, waiting and asking for ‘more’.
- **Turn taking** - roll a ball or car to each other, under chairs and tables.
- **Construction** e.g. taking turns to build a tower with Lego or blocks and knocking it over when it gets really tall.
- **Singing** action songs with your child can be a relaxed and enjoyable way of getting their attention and sharing enjoyment.

**Messy play games**

- Make patterns with shaving foam
- Dry breakfast cereal in a plastic box – great for scooping and pouring!
- Water play with or without bubbles and boats!
- ‘Painting the patio’ with a bucket of water and a brush
- Washing dolly, socks, plastic plates and cups
- Hide toys in cooked or dry pasta in a large bowl
- Home-made playdough – see our recipe over the page!

**Physical Play**

- Hide and seek in the house or garden
- Chase games
- Ball games - football, catch, throwing balls in a bucket or skittles

**Making Musical Instruments**

- **Shakers** - Use empty plastic pop bottles and fill with uncooked rice/lentils/split peas/dried pasta etc. Replace top and seal with tape.
- **Drums** - Use an empty tin. Seal the lid and use wooden spoons or chopsticks as drum sticks. Change the sound by putting dry pasta inside the tin.
- **Guitars** - Use an empty shoebox without the lid. Wrap elastic bands around the box. Attach a kitchen roll tube to make a handle. Strum the bands to make music.

**Treasure baskets/boxes**

Fill your treasure basket with everyday objects from around your house or from nature. No purpose made toys allowed! The purpose is to offer interest through:

- **Touch**: texture, shape, weight.
- **Smell**: variety of scents.
- **Sound**: ringing, tinkling, banging, scrunching.
- **Sight**: colour, form, length, shininess.

**Role Play and Imaginative Play**

- Pretend tea time – use pots and pans to pretend to cook tea for toys and family
- Make a house/boat/car/rocket out of a large cardboard box and have an adventure!
- Play doctors with scarves for slings and bandages
- Go shopping – set up a ‘shop’ and ‘spend’ your money!