

Therapeutic Activities with Household Items

- ❖ Tissue box
 - Have child reach for and drop small balls/toys into the tissue box opening for grasp development.
 - Have child decorate the tissue box with markers/crayons/stickers/sequins etc. for grip development and sensory play.
- ❖ Blanket
 - Practice bilateral coordination by balling the blanket up/throwing it/covering self in it.
 - Have child feel for toys placed under the blanket.
- ❖ Pillow
 - Jump into a pile of pillows.
 - Pillow fight to work on bimanual coordination.
- ❖ Pots/pans
 - The child can use pots and pans to play drums. They can use their hands to bang or spatulas or other cooking utensils.
 - Provide the child a variety of pots and pans to build a tower.
 - Drop items into the pots and pick them back out.
- ❖ Cereal (individual package)
 - Have child open a box and pour cereal into bowl or onto tray in preparation for eating.
 - Use cereal pieces stacked up to build a structure.
 - Practice different kinds of grasp patterns while picking up pieces of cereal and eating it.
- ❖ Toilet paper
 - Wrap self/parent in toilet paper to become a "mummy" for bilateral manipulation and social participation.
 - Tear and crumple pieces up to use for a "snowball fight" (can be graded by amount used to increase strength).
- ❖ Rice
 - Find and identify toys hidden in a bowl of rice.
 - Put water and rice in a bucket for sensory play.
 - Fill/empty cups or other containers with rice.
- ❖ Couch
 - Use couch cushions as a slide.
 - Use couch to pull up to standing in order to reach and play with a toy
- ❖ Flour
 - Mix flour and water with hands to form a dough. Pinch/squeeze/pull apart dough (just like playdough) and try to form shapes. Can be rolled out and boiled as pasta for a waste free option.
 - Trace letters in a pile of flour. Remix the flour to start again.
- ❖ Toilet paper rolls
 - Roll toilet paper rolls across hard floors. Make it a race!
 - Drive cars/toys through toilet paper rolls to work on visual-perceptual skills.
- ❖ Cardboard box
 - Rest the child's lower body on a box and color on cardboard flaps to build arm strength (child leaning down onto ground).
 - Toss items in and out of a box (closing flaps to create a smaller hole to upgrade).
 - Use the box to play hide-and-seek to develop social interaction and turn-taking skills
- ❖ Bubble wrap

- Pop bubble wrap with fingers and toes.
- Roll/fold bubble wrap into different shapes.
- ❖ Sticky notes
 - Peel sticky notes off a stack. Identify stick note colors. Fold/wad sticky notes into balls.
 - Color on sticky notes and arrange in a design on the wall.
 - Parent/therapist can create puzzle pieces by drawing on sticky notes and have child assemble them.
- ❖ Books
 - Have child point to pictures/colors/numbers.
 - Practice turning pages of different thicknesses.
 - Have child stack books into a tower.
- ❖ Spray bottle (use rubber band around trigger to reduce how wide child must grasp for small hands)
 - Fill spray bottle or used cleaning bottle with water and use as squirt guns to strengthen grasp.
 - Have child use this to water plants.
 - Incorporate spray bottle use into mealtime-wiping off tables.
- ❖ Dried beans
 - Have child help to place beans into a water bottle, seal it, then use as a music instrument!
 - Use dried beans as an alternative to sand in a sensory table! Have child dig to find toys and add water for extra fun.
- ❖ Magnets
 - Spin rounded magnets on the floor.
 - Sort/identify magnets by size/shape/color.
 - Stick magnets together and pull them apart (easier with weaker and larger magnets).
- ❖ Handheld broom
 - Let the child feel the different parts of the broom. If bristles are soft, you can brush on the child's hand for a new sensation!
 - Have child sweep up cereal/toys on the floor. You can incorporate this around mealtime while the parent sweeps with a larger broom.
 - Use the bristles to paint with water onto paper or a sidewalk.
- ❖ Old socks/t-shirts
 - Cut up pieces of fabric for the child to sort and manipulate (fold, squish, etc.).
 - Use as a harder alternative to coloring on paper (child will need to use both hands to hold down cloth while coloring and may need to push harder).
- ❖ FALL ACTIVITY: Leaves
 - Place a sheet of paper over a leaf and then let the child draw.
 - Throw leaves up into the air and try to catch them again.
 - Crunch/tear leaves up. You can add water to make the leaves softer for exposure to different textures.