

# Busy Toddler's SUMMER CAMP AT HOME

## Welcome to Summer!

My summer camp at home program is a 6-week long resource designed to help families have fun together. The activities are for toddler to elementary-aged kids - you'll be able to adapt this to so many ages.

This easy, flexible, and simple program can be used however your family needs it. You can do the weeks in ANY order, some of them or all of them. The choice is yours based on your family's needs.

The Themes:

- GAMES
- WATER & ICE
- STEM
- NATURE
- CAMPING
- ART

A welcome note with some theme thoughts

Supply list

STEM WEEK	
<b>WELCOME</b> It's STEM Week! The focus of this week's summer camp is activities rooted in science, technology, engineering or math. Keep encouraging your kids to tinker, create, and invent their own projects using items from around the house. Questioning, testing, and learning through trial and error will be a big part of this week's learning process.	<b>ACTIVITIES</b> <b>LEGO zipline</b> Tie a string across a room or outside angling slightly downhill. Build LEGO creations, attach them to the string, and send them down the zipline. Record data on which of your creations work best. <b>Oobleck</b> Mix 2 cups cornstarch with 1 cup of water to make a taste-safe non-Newtonian substance. Pour into a sensory bin or water table to play, and ask your child, "Is it a solid or a liquid?" <b>Ball ramp</b> Use cardboard to create a ramp. Flatten a box, fold back the flaps, and tape a stick or broom handle to the back. Roll the end up to make a curved jump. Let kids experiment with varying angles and objects to roll down.
<b>SUPPLIES</b> LEGO Bricks Thin string Paper Plastic cups Cornstarch Craft sticks Large cardboard box Broom handle or stick White vinegar Baking soda (bi-carb) Ice cube tray Syringes or spray bottles Sugar Wooden skewers Miscellaneous recyclables Tape, glue & scissors	<b>EXTRAS</b> <b>DIY ROCK CANDY</b> Mix 3 cups sugar with 1 cup water in a saucepan to dissolve on medium heat. Cool and pour into a jar. Take wood skewers, roll in water & sugar, let dry, then set in jar (use a clothespin to steady the skewer). Observe daily as candy forms in 5-7 days. <b>WRITING</b> Have your child create a "How-To" book explaining how you created one of your projects. Make sure to include supplies and step by step directions.

6 activities to pick and choose from

Extras: 1 extra activity that usually spans the full week and 1 writing activity for older kids

Remember, this isn't designed to add more to your summer plate. Just some fun ideas to help make days even more memorable.

~Susie

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### All Activities Must Be Supervised

All activities mentioned or referenced in Busy Toddler's Summer Camp at Home must be supervised by an adult. Use good judgment when setting up these activities to decide what is best for your child based on their age and development.

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# STEM WEEK

## WELCOME

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## SUPPLIES

LEGO Bricks  
Thin string  
Paper  
Plastic cups  
Cornstarch  
Craft sticks  
Large cardboard box  
Broom handle or stick  
White vinegar  
Baking soda (bi-carb)  
Ice cub tray  
Syringes or spray bottles  
Sugar  
Wooden skewers  
Miscellaneous recyclables  
Tape, glue & scissors

## ACTIVITIES

### LEGO zipline

Tie a string across a room or outside angling slightly downhill. Build LEGO creations, attach them to the string, and send them down the zipline. Record data on which of your creations work best.

### Oobleck

Mix 2 cups cornstarch with 1 cup of water to make a taste-safe non-Newtonian substance. Pour into a sensory bin or water table to play, and ask your child, "Is it a solid or a liquid?"

### Ball ramp

Use cardboard to create a ramp. Flatten a box, fold back the flaps, and tape a stick or broom handle to the back. Roll the end up to make a curved jump. Let kids experiment with varying angles and objects to roll down.

### Fizzy Ice Cubes

Mix 1/2 cup water with 1 cup baking soda. Optional: add food coloring. Pour into an ice cube tray and freeze overnight. Give kids syringes or spray bottles of white vinegar. Let them explore the chemical reaction.

### Build a bridge

Using cups, tape, craft sticks, and paper, let your child work to create a bridge. Test the bridge and how much weight it can hold. Record the data. Rebuild to make it stronger.

### Creation Station

Gather all your "good" trash. Make a fun space for kids to design, imagine, and build. Toss in boxes, papers, ribbons, tape, and glue. Let them create robots, aliens, and anything else they can come up with.

## EXTRAS

### DIY ROCK CANDY

Mix 3 cups sugar with 1 cup water in a saucepan to dissolve on medium heat. Cool and pour into a jar. Take wood skewers, roll in water & sugar, let dry, then set in jar (use a clothespin to steady the skewer). Observe daily as candy forms in 5-7 days.

### WRITING

Have your child create a "How-To" book explaining how you created one of your projects. Make sure to include supplies and step by step directions.

# ART WEEK

## WELCOME

It's Art Week! This week is designed to introduce your child to various art techniques - hopefully, some that are brand new to them. The goal is to broaden their art horizon and understanding, and to help them see art as more than just painting or coloring a picture on a piece of paper. There's so much more to art.

## SUPPLIES

Muffin Tin  
Large paper  
Cardboard  
Crayons & markers  
Scissors  
Wet glue  
Masking or Painter's tape  
Q-tips  
Pencils  
Mirror  
Table salt  
Watercolor paint  
Washable paint  
Kiddie pool or water table

## ACTIVITIES

### Pointillism

First, draw (or have your child draw) the outline of an object in pencil. Butterflies, trees, flowers work well for a first try. Using q-tips dipped in paint, have your child delicately fill in the drawing with small dots.

### Salt Painting

Start by having your child create a design or drawing by squeezing wet glue on paper. Do not smooth the glue. Pour table salt onto the glue, shake off excess, and let it dry. Next, carefully watercolor just the salt-glue (not the paper). The salt absorbs the paint instantly.

### Splatter Paint

Cover a large surface with paper outside. In muffin tins, mix 1/2 water + 1/2 paint to make a soupy mixture. Let the kids splatter paint by flinging and flicking paint brushes soaked with paint at the paper.

### Self-Portraits

Set your child in front of a mirror and talk about self-portraits. Give them space, time, and encouragement to draw a detailed portrait of themselves. Encourage them to add their emotions into the drawing.

### Weaving

Fold construction paper in half. Cut from the folded edge to 1 inch from the paper's edge. Do not cut all the way through the paper. Repeat every inch. Unfold. With another sheet, cut 8 one-inch wide strips of paper. Show your child how to weave the strips into the cut paper (over, under, over, under).

### Tape-Resist Art

On a large flattened box, let your child tape out a design in masking or painter's tape. Have them paint the entire canvas with washable paint. When it dries, remove the tape to reveal clean lines underneath.

## EXTRAS

### OUTDOOR ART

Grab your kiddie pool (or water table) and squirt paint right into it. Let your budding artists paint and decorate the pool. At the end, hose every one and every thing off.

### WRITING

Staple a few pages of white paper together to form a booklet. Let your child be an author AND an illustrator by writing and drawing the pictures for their own book.

# CAMPING WEEK

## WELCOME

Hello, Summer Campers!  
It's "Camping" Week!  
The focus of this week is all things camp related - from the fun and games to the outdoor time to the food we eat at a camp site. This theme is a great way to introduce camping to kids who haven't had a chance to yet and a perfect way to bring back great memories for those who have.

**Build a camp site** Have some fun setting up a camp site with your kids: pop up the tent or build a fort, grab sticks and rocks for a fake fire, bring out lawn chairs and a kiddie pool as the "lake."

## SUPPLIES

Camp site materials  
Construction paper  
Markers & paint  
Flashlight  
Box with attached lid  
Plastic wrap & foil  
Graham cracker, marshmallows, & chocolate  
Wooden skewer  
Paper plates or bucket  
Trail mix supplies  
Balls or bean bags

## ACTIVITIES

### Camp site map

It's important to have a map at a camp site so you don't get lost. Work with your kids to create a camp site / backyard map. Talk about distance & measuring, compasses, and map keys.

### Flashlight fun

What's more fun than a flashlight? A few options for flashlight fun: make a camp site hunt "I rhyme with HIRE, shine your flashlight on the \_\_\_\_", use a flashlight to read in the tent or fort, tape up camp related pictures or words for kids to flashlight find.

### Rock art

Sit around the "camp fire" and paint some rocks. Encourage older kids to paint rocks in camping theme: fires, bugs, supplies, etc. Tell stories using the painted rocks.

### Solar s'mores

Take a box with an attached lid (think pizza box) and line with foil. Set graham cracker, chocolate, and marshmallows in it like a s'more. Cover s'mores with plastic wrap. Wrap the lid of the box with foil to reflect on the s'mores. Keep the lid open by wedging a wooden skewer between the lid and the box. Set in direct sunlight and cook for 20-30 minutes.

### Camp targets

Take 4 paper plates or large buckets. Label them 10, 20, 30, and 40 points. Space them out evenly in the yard and let kids toss bean bags or balls onto the target. Vary the spacing for more challenge.

### Trail mix story

Have fun making a camp snack into a story. Use mine from page 2 to make a trail mix story snack (or come up with your own).  
"First, we add a cup of logs (pretzel sticks) for the fire."

## EXTRA

### WRITING

Let your child create an informational poster on camping. Include things like: how to set up a camp site, steps to make s'mores, and reasons why camping is so much fun.



# TRAIL MIX STORY

Turning your homemade trail mix snack into a story is a fun, simple way to add an extra bit of our camping theme into this week. Here is a sample story for you to use or make up your own to fit your family and their taste buds better.

*Once upon a camping trip, I needed stuff to eat.  
I looked around the camp site for a really tasty treat.*

*I saw some ants were on a log,  
some colorful rocks were near a bog;  
I saw the clouds up in the sky,  
They waved at me and I yelled "Hi."*

*I grabbed onto my floaty ring,  
to the lake I went, my pole I'd bring:  
Some fish I'd catch to have my lunch...  
I hoped I'd get a bunch to munch.*

## Trail Mix:

Let each kid fill their trail mix bag to match the story:

Pretzel sticks (logs)  
Raisins (ants)  
Mini marshmallows (clouds)  
M & M's (colorful rocks)  
Cheerios (floaty ring)  
Gold fish crackers (fish)

# GAMES WEEK

## WELCOME

Ready or not...here we come and right into Games Week! This week is designed around awesome games we can do in the backyard or at a park. You don't need much to make a memorable game for kids - and this week proves it. Let's help our kids see the beauty in simple games that don't have or need a lot of fuss. There's magic to be found right in our backyard.

## SUPPLIES

Chalk  
Rocks  
Paint  
Paper plates  
Craft sticks  
Squirt guns  
Plastic cups  
Tape  
String  
Straws  
Water balloons  
Balloons  
Bat

## ACTIVITIES

### Obstacle course

Start with chalk and expand from there - channel your inner warrior as you create a fun (and challenging) course. Time your kids and have them beat their personal best.

### DIY game board

Gather up the perfect rocks and help your child make a tic-tac-toe board outside in chalk. Use paint to decorate the rocks. Optional: make a checkers board with older kids.

### Giant memory

Using paper plates or construction paper, draw pictures, words, or numbers. Make sure each picture has a match (12 to 15 pairs is good). Set up this giant memory game outside.

### Squirt gun race

You will need two chairs or poles. Tie string to one end. Tape a straw to the side of a plastic cup and push the string through the straw. Then tie the string to the other chair or pole. With squirt guns, have your kids shoot into the cups, pushing them, and racing from one end to the other.

### Balloon tennis

Blow up a few balloons and make some homemade rackets - backyard balloon tennis is awesome. Glue or tape a paper plate to a craft stick for a DIY racket. Play spelling & counting games as you hit the balloons back and forth. Keep track of records.

### Water balloon baseball

Fill up some water balloons for the wettest batting practice ever. Not ready for baseball? Make the balloons easier to hit by hanging them on strings like a pinata.

## EXTRAS

### THE CLASSICS

This is a great week to introduce your kids to some classic childhood games:

Hide n' Seek  
Kick the Can  
Capture the Flag  
H-O-R-S-E  
Simon Says  
Red Light, Green Light  
Mother May I  
What Time is it, Mr. Fox?

### WRITING

Have your child design a game and write the directions for it. Let them make a game board if need. Have your child explain the game and lead the family in playing it.

# NATURE WEEK

## WELCOME

Hello, Nature Week! This week is all about getting outside and up close with nature. Let's see what the kids notice this week about the world around them. Let this be a fully immersive week and move as many parts of the day outside: breakfast in the grass? Books under a tree? Coloring time while sitting on the deck? Have fun this week exploring nature with your kids.

## ACTIVITIES

### Build a bird feeder

Roll a toilet paper tube or pine cone in peanut butter and bird seeds. Attach string and hang outside. Optional: make a journal to track animals that come visit.

### Scavenger hunt

Do a nature-inspired scavenger hunt. Make your own or use the one included with this sheet. If old enough, have your child make their own scavenger hunt next.

### Nature paint brushes

Collect sturdy sticks for handles and other nature bits for the brush heads (think leaves, grass, flowers, moss, etc.). Fix it to the sticks with rubber bands or hair ties. Use the homemade brushes to paint. Which works best?

### Nature rubbings

Gather construction paper and crayons (remove the wrapper). Let your kids work on making nature rubbings of trees, leaves, and even human-made structures like sidewalks and doors.

### Names in nature

Your child will create their name (and other words and pictures) using items from nature. Have them first collect items from outside then use those items to form their name and drawings.

### Design a fairy garden

Using items from outside and inside, find a spot in the yard to create a fairy garden. Make a habitat fit for fairies with houses, chairs, eating areas, and play structures - all fairy sized.

## SUPPLIES

Pine cone or TP tube  
Peanut butter  
Bird seed  
String  
Scavenger hunt print out  
Sticks  
Leaves, rocks, flowers,  
Grasses, moss, weeds  
Construction paper  
Washable paint

## EXTRAS

### MUD KITCHEN

Use old kitchen utensils to build a Mud Kitchen. Create a fun space for your child to imagine and play "cook" at. Leave kitchen utensils, cups and bowls for kids to make muddy masterpieces with. Play along and "enjoy" their food creations.

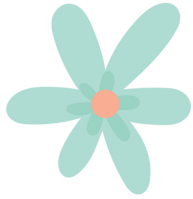
### WRITING

Have your child first make a list of all the animals they see from their window each day. Let them pick one and write a story about its life. Where is it going each day? What does it like to do? Why does it live in your yard?



# NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

Can you find these items outside?



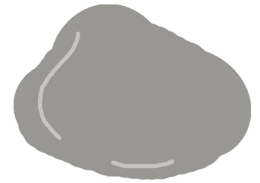
flower



wild animal



seed



rock



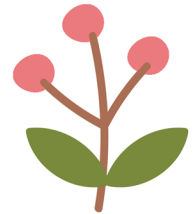
butterfly



bird



plant with small  
leaves



bush with  
berries



grass



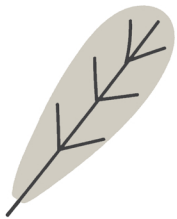
tree with  
leaves



colored leaf



tree with  
needles



feather



insect that flies



flower with  
leaves



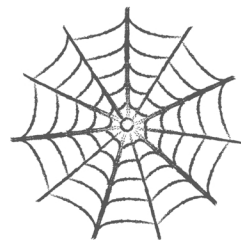
insect that  
crawls



green leaf



stump



spider web



insect that  
walks



# WATER & ICE WEEK

## WELCOME

It's a whole week of water and ice activities – how perfect for summertime! These activities are paired together because they're a fun way to showcase water and ice. Make sure to talk about how ice is just solid water... and how water is a liquid. There's so much learning and science from these two very basic supplies.

## SUPPLIES

Water & Ice  
Ice cube tray  
Washable paint  
Craft sticks  
Foil  
Pennies  
Chalk  
Water balloons or sponges  
Tear-free soap  
Mixer or blender  
Cream  
Chocolate syrup  
Salt  
Plastic zipper bags  
Water beads

## ACTIVITIES

### Ice paint

In an ice cube tray, mix 1/2 paint with 1/2 water in each space. Cover with foil and place craft sticks into each now covered spot. Freeze overnight. The next day, paint with frozen paint!

### Foil boats

Let kids make boats from foil. Can you make it float? Fill up a large container with water and set the boat to float. Then, begin placing pennies one at a time onto the boat until it sinks. Record the data and try again.

### Target practice

On a fence or side walk, draw a target with chalk. Using wet sponges or water balloons... ready, aim, fire! Consider writing kids' names, letters, or math problems for them to throw at (and erase).

### Bubble foam

Mix 2 cups water + 1/2 cup tear free soap. Use a blender or mixer to whip it into stiff peaks. Pour into a container (like the water table) and play outside.

### Ice cube bin

Dump out the ice cube maker into a storage container or water table. Add a little water so the ice floats. Let your kids explore the ice plus imagine and create. Under your supervision and judgment, you can also let them crush the ice with small hammers.

### Baggie Ice Cream

In a small ziplock bag, put 1/2 cup cream + chocolate syrup. Seal it. Place inside a second bag. Seal again. Place in a large ziplock bag filled with ice and 1/4 cup salt. Seal. Using oven mitts for protection, shake the bag for 8 minutes. Carefully open to reveal ice cream.

## EXTRAS

### WATER BEADS

Water beads are a riot and kids can play with them all week. Follow the package instructions to hydrate them, then use them in a sensory bin. They're magical (but not taste safe).

### WRITING

Have your child write about which they would rather be: water or ice. Why would they pick that? Why is one form better to them than the other?