



Wee Builders(3 - 4 years): Homemade Toys & Free Activities To Do With Your Children

If you are spending time getting organized and doing some 'spring cleaning' that includes reducing toys and clutter, you might want to try engaging in some of these activities and games that don't cost money and don't add new toys back into the mix!

Homemade games, toys and free activities are a great way to keep children entertained, and to help them learn and grow. They don't cost any money, and they can really boost your child's creativity. There are lots of toys and games that you and your child can create together because it's easy to come up with ideas for children, as they get older.

You can also give your child things from around your home for some open-ended play – for example, young children usually love putting on and taking off the lids of containers, and older children often enjoy playing make-believe with bed sheets, boxes, etc. Make sure that the things you give your child are unbreakable and too big to be choking hazards.

Here are some of toys and activities you can do with children of all ages:

Toddlers:

- Make some playdough and build towers, trees or just shapes – whatever your toddler likes. You can even just squeeze the playdough between your fingers.
- Put together a box of old clothes for some dress-up or pretend play.
- Give them blank paper and crayons and let their creative imagination run wild.
- Read books as part of your daily routine – for example, before bedtime. Your local library is a great place to borrow books for free.
- Giving them outdoor chalk to create masterpieces outside.

Preschool:

- Show your child how to stuff old stockings with paper or material scraps to make creatures like a snake or caterpillar.
- Make a sock puppet using old socks. Sew on buttons or paste other bits of material for eyes, nose and hair
- Let your child's imagination turn old cardboard boxes into toys – a car, club house, shop counter or kitchen stove.
- Visit the local park or a friend's house, or just take a walk in your local neighbourhood. These are all sources of adventure and fun for your child.
- Use washed empty food and juice containers for pretend play – grocery store or even pretending to cook in the kitchen.

School Age:

- Cook with your child – start with some simple family favourites
- Turn old sheets into a tent by draping them over the backs of chairs or make a cubbyhouse by draping a sheet over the edges of the table
- Play word games – for example, make up silly rhymes and riddles
- Let your child invite a friend over for a short playdate
- Egg cartons can make great caterpillars, they're good storage containers for little treasures found on walks, and they can even become airline seats for little animal toys

Sources: <https://bit.ly/2tDHu5M> and <https://bit.ly/2NvNkPK>

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<http://www.weewatch.com/wee-talk-blog/>

