Sunshine Adventures:
Activity Book for Summer Fun



Autism ONTARIO

Sunshine Adventures: Activity Book for Summer Fun

What is the purpose of this activity book?

This activity book aims to provide you with engaging, interactive, and fun activities to keep children busy all summer long.

Who should use this activity book?

Anyone and everyone! This activity book can be used by parents and caregivers, childcare, camp, and preschool educators, respite workers, or anyone else supporting autistic children.

Where can you find more opportunities for summer fun?

Autism Ontario hosts a variety of recreational events across Ontario every summer. To see a list of upcoming events, check out the Autism Ontario Events page.



Move and Groove Cube

Why are we suggesting this activity?

Gross motor skills are key in refining our balance, strength, and muscle endurance. They also support coordination and make behaviour increasingly functional and flexible.
This activity encourages individuals to utilize their gross motor skills in a fun and engaging way, independently or with friends and family!



Gross motor skills are the physical skills that require **the whole body**. These include standing, walking, running, and jumping.

This activity is appropriate for children of all ages.

What you will need:

- Printed activity cube template
- Scissors
- Glue or Tape

Instructions:

1. Cut out the cube template provided.
2. Fold the dotted lines on the cube with the pictures facing out.
3. Glue or tape the tabs/sides together, forming a 3-dimensional cube.

How to Play:

1. Toss the cube up in the air or roll it on the ground.
2. Complete the movement or action that the cube lands on.
3. If completing with a group, pass the cube to the next person until everyone gets a turn.

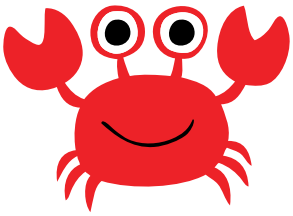
Bonus activities:

- Print the template in black and white (or leave it blank) and have your child colour in and design their own activity cube.
- Print the blank template and collaborate with your child to create your own movements to add to the cube.

Arm Circles



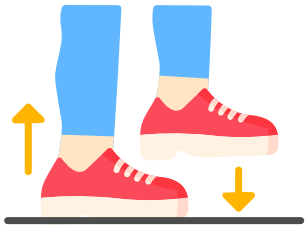
Crab Walks



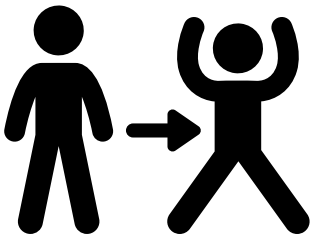
Frog Jumps



Stomps



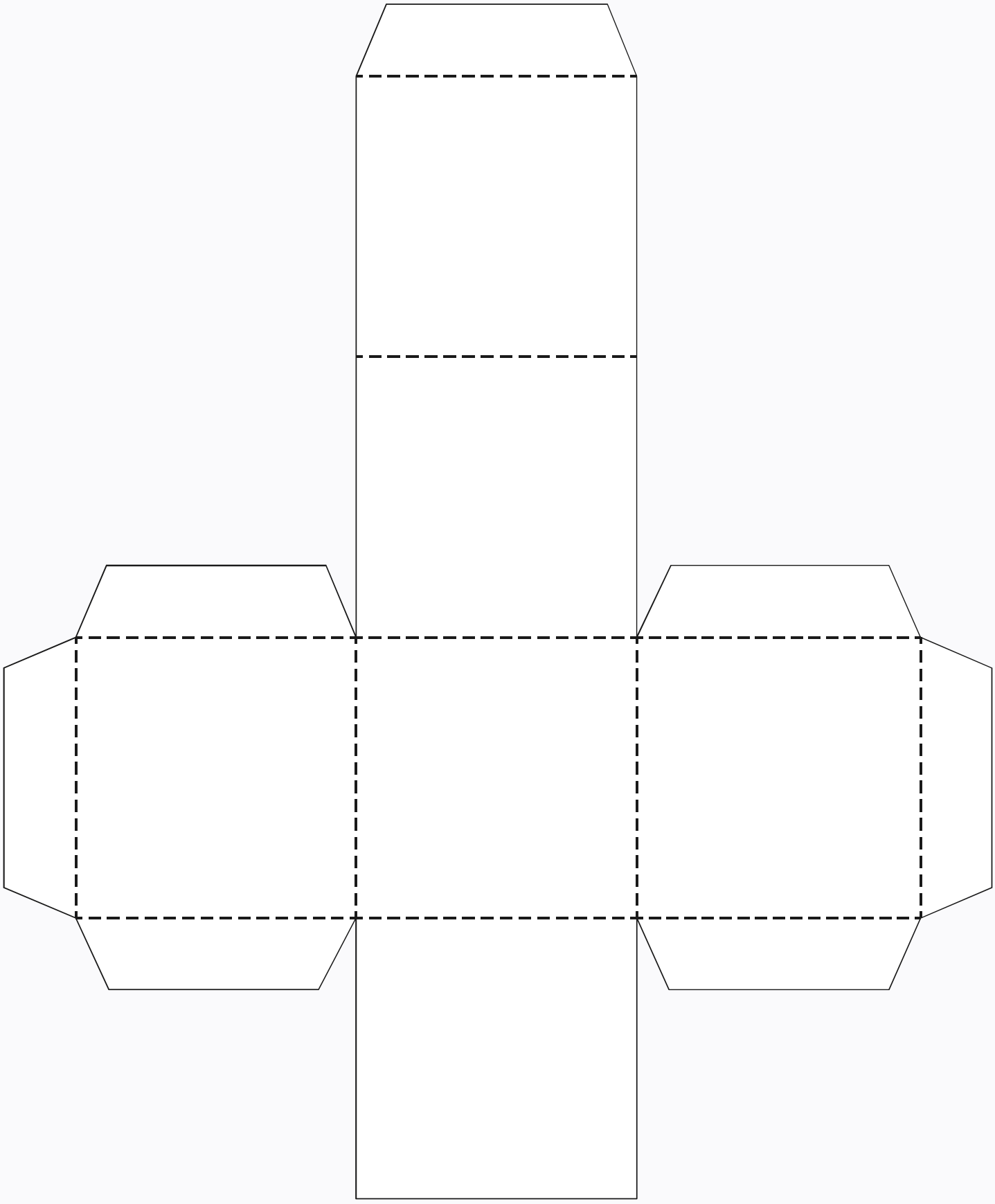
Jumping Jacks



Toe Touches



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Chalk Walk

Why are we suggesting this activity?

In hopscotch, you draw boxes and put the numbers 1-7 in them. Then, people can jump into the boxes in numerical order. A 'chalk walk' is a larger version of 'hopscotch' where you draw spaces that outline activities that can be done in those spaces. For example, you might draw spaces to jump on, spaces to spin in, spaces with numbers for counting, etc.



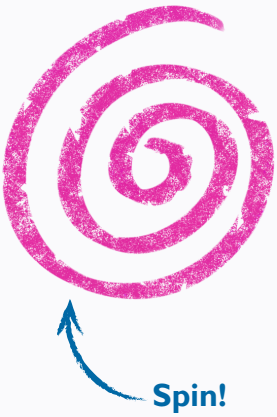
Being active and creative helps build gross motor skills, encourages community engagement, and promotes positive mental health. Your child or youth can use art as a way of expressing themselves or as a way of building an activity that they can do independently, with peers or siblings, or as a whole community. As a family, it can be fun to create something together that you can all engage and "play" with.

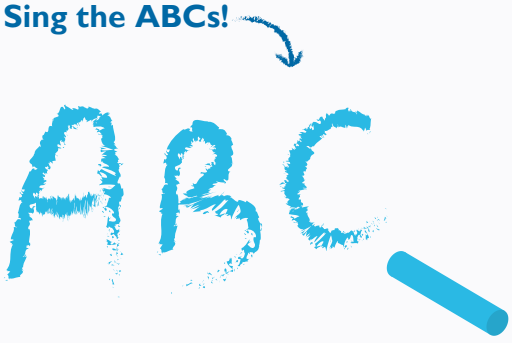
As a reminder, gross motor skills are the physical skills that require the whole body. These include standing, walking, running, and jumping.

This activity is appropriate for children of all ages.

What you will need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Community space with asphalt or concrete such as a sidewalk, playground, basketball court, etc.







Instructions:

1. Choose a dry community space that has enough space to get creative.
2. Start drawing! You and your child can draw anything that you want. Some things you might want to include:
    a. Squares for jumping, spinning, balancing on one leg, etc.
    b. Spaces for counting or labelling colours.
    c. Happy phrases or sayings that you use in your family.
3. If you have drawn 'activities', try completing them as a family or individually. Try timing how long it takes or choosing which space or activity is each person's favourite.

Don't worry — if your child isn't interested in drawing activity spaces, they can draw pictures, designs, etc. There are many variations on chalk walks for people to enjoy.

Bonus activities:

- It can be helpful to spend time at home planning before you go to make your chalk walk. Your child can draw what they want to create, and you can work together to design activities that they can participate in doing.
- If your child likes math, you can add numbers and symbols (e.g., addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) and have your child jump between the spaces creating and answering equations.



Bubble Magic: Transform Stress with Every Breath!

Why are we suggesting this activity?

Taking deep, deliberate breaths can help calm the body physically and positively impact our mood and thoughts. Deep breathing techniques can help to activate the parasympathetic nervous system (i.e., a part of the nervous system that controls reactions to stress).

This activity will help to teach children deep breathing techniques that will help with self-regulation, relaxation, and concentration, as well as help to reduce stress and anxiety.

This activity is appropriate for all ages.

What you will need:

- 4 cups of warm water
- ½ cup of sugar
- ½ cup of blue Dawn dish soap
- 1 large cup
- 1 spoon
- Bubble wands of any size or shape
- 1 jar with a lid if you'd like to store your bubbles for later use



Instructions:

1. Combine the sugar and the warm water by whisking the contents until the sugar fully dissolves.
2. Add in the dish soap and continue to whisk until combined.
3. Allow the mixture to sit for a couple of hours.
   Hint: It works best if you let the mixture sit out overnight.
4. Dip the bubble wand into the bubble mixture gently.
5. Practice taking shallow breaths in and out through the bubble wand.
6. Practice taking deep, slow belly breaths in and out through the bubble wand.
7. Discuss if there is a difference.
   Hint: Try practicing breathing as deeply and slowly as possible to make the biggest bubbles!

Bonus activities:

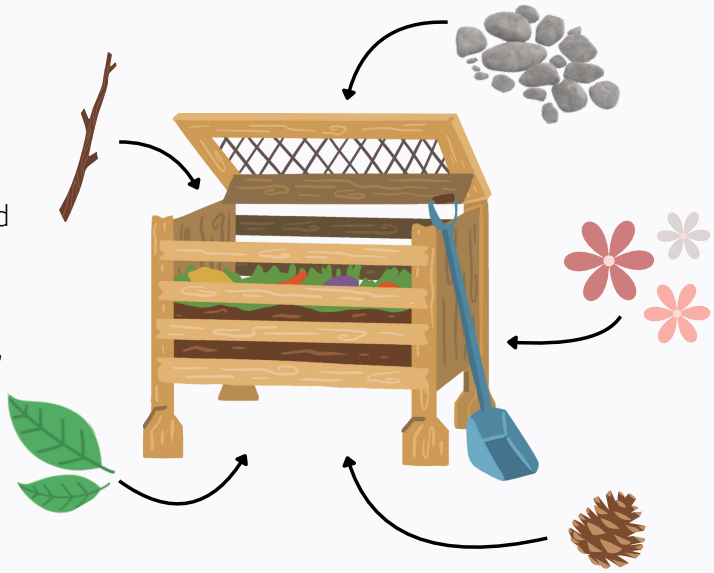
- If your child has verbal communication skills, you can talk to them about how they are feeling before and after taking deep breaths.
- Other **Mindfulness** activities to try:
  - Calypso the Flamingo- Cosmic Kids Yoga Adventure
  - Squish the Fish- Cosmic Kids Yoga Adventure
  - Creating Wonders in the Sand- Guided Meditation for Kids

Secret Garden: Small World Play

Why are we suggesting this activity?

Encouraging children to explore objects and materials around them and connecting them to the natural world can help promote and develop important skills. Small-world play in a natural environment can help develop creative and emotional thinking, build on language skills, and nurture their imagination!

This activity is appropriate for all ages.



What you will need:

- Anything you can find to re-purpose and use as the play space. For example, an old plant pot, an empty bin, or a nice space in your garden.
- Items you can find in nature (e.g., sticks, plant clippings, dirt, sand, rocks, pinecones, leaves, and flowers).
- Small toy figurines and animals.
- Sensory base (e.g., sand, rocks, dirt, etc.)

Instructions:

1. Create a space in your backyard or re-use a bin/plant pot and fill with a sensory base.
   Hint: Sensory bases can include dirt, sand, rocks, grass, or even water elements.
2. Have your child gather nature items and small figurines they want to use.
3. Encourage your child to build a small world using the items they collected.
   Hint: Experimenting and trial-and-error are great ways to build problem-solving skills.

Bonus activities:

- If your child has verbal communication skills, you can promote pretend play and storytelling:
  - Ask questions to promote language skills, such as "who is this", "what are they doing", and "where do they live?"
  - Help your child establish roles for the different characters or figures and model different challenges and problem-solving skills. For example, have the characters make a new friend and learn to share and play together.
- It can be fun to have your child draw a picture of their natural world before, during, or after they have it set up.
- Go on a nature walk in your community to find more items to add to their small world!

Summer Activity BINGO

Why are we suggesting this activity?

Summer Bucket List Bingo is a great way to add structure and fun to the time spent in the summer months. It helps to get your child engaged with activities that can be planned together. This is a unique activity and challenge to complete by the end of summer.

A "bucket list" is a list of experiences or activities someone may hope to accomplish over time. We hope this list of ideas is meaningful to your family's "bucket list", but if not, please change, add, and remove items that don't feel quite right.

This activity is appropriate for all ages.



What you will need:

- Printed BINGO card — or you can make your own!
- Places to explore

Instructions:

1. Print out a BINGO card.
2. As a family, decide what each BINGO condition will be "worth". For example, a completed line is worth a favourite treat or snack, and a completed card is worth a family adventure to a local play space.

> **BINGO conditions include** a horizontal line (across the grid), a vertical line (up and down), a diagonal line, an 'X' including two intersecting diagonal lines, or a completed card with all activities crossed off.

3. Cross off activities as you go along through the summer.
4. At the end of summer, total up what conditions were met and what your rewards or prizes will be.

Have a family movie night	Visit a splash pad, pool or lake	Outdoor sports game (soccer, frisbee)	Visit family and/or friends
Decorate a sidewalk or driveway using chalk	Jump in puddles	Visit your local library	Go on a hike
Do a craft	Spend time with a sibling or peer	Have a picnic	Play in the water
Visit an attraction like the zoo, museum, carnival or farmers market	Play a game as a family	Explore a park/playground	Go for a bike ride

Bonus activities:

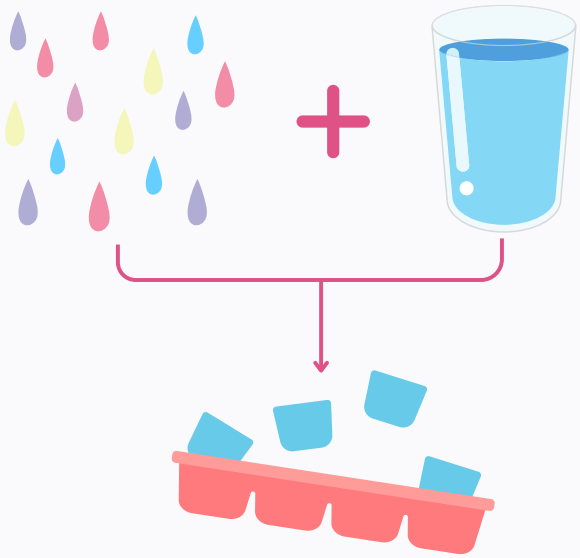
- Create your own BINGO card and decide what fun activities you want to do in the summer. These activities can include some of the other activities in this activity book!
- If your child is particularly interested in community activities and outings, you might consider turning this BINGO card into a journal or scrapbook:
    1. Your child can take pictures or collect souvenirs while doing the activities.
    2. Together, you can put them into a notebook or scrapbook for safekeeping.
    3. Once completed, your child can refer to the record of their activities this summer and even take it to school to share with their class in September!

Rainbow Chill: Sensory Exploration

Why are we suggesting this activity?

This activity is a great way to cool off on those hot summer days. Sensory activities like this are a great way to integrate different textures and sensations to support sensory integration and self-regulation skills. When engaging in play as a group, sensory activities can support social interaction and communication skills.

This activity is appropriate for children of all ages.



What you will need:

- Ice cube trays
- Water
- Food colouring Hint: Regular food colouring may stain clothes and/or skin; explore alternative/all-natural options if this is a concern with your family.
- Large tray or bucket (a toy sand bucket works great!)
- Scoops and cups

Instructions:

1. Mix water and a few (2-3) drops of food colouring.
2. Pour water into the ice cube trays and place in the freezer overnight.
3. Once frozen, dump the ice cubes into a larger bucket with a small amount of water.
4. Add cups for dumping and pouring or ladles for scooping.

Bonus activities:

- By using larger ice cube trays or cups, you can add items (e.g., figurines, cards, nature items, etc.) into the water before freezing. Allow your child to discover the items as the ice melts!
- Layer the colours and watch them mix as they melt. To create the layer effect, freeze your ice in stages by adding a different colour each time.
- Math Extension: Using cups and rulers in the sensory bin can encourage older youth to measure the volume and dimensions of the ice cubes as they melt. Alternatively, create a math challenge by estimating how long it will take for ice cubes of different sizes to melt.
- Science Extension: Using open-ended questions, discuss how to make the ice cubes melt faster or slower. Try adding salt or other materials to test the melting rate. Create hypotheses and test them out.