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Choosing Safe Toys

www.communitybridges.org

Toys generally offer children an opportunity to develop their imaginations, learn principles of sharing and working together and often help children improve their motor skills. When buying toys this holiday season keep in mind the ages and abilities of the children you are shopping for. Look for toys that are durable, appealing, interesting and suitable for the social and mental development of the children.

- Toys made of fabric should be labeled fire resistant or flame retardant and stuffed toys should be washable.
- Toys should be free of glass or metal parts that could become sharp when chipped or broken.
- Hanging toys or toys with cords attached can cause entanglement and strangulation. Hang mobiles out of reach and avoid toys with strings and cords longer than 7 inches.
- Toys with small parts that are removable or can be pulled off can be a choking hazard. Toys should be large enough, at least 1 ¼ inches in diameter and 2 ¼ inches in length, so that they cannot be swallowed or lodged in the windpipe. Avoid marbles, coins and games with small balls.
- Art materials should be labeled non-toxic. Crayons and paints should say ASTM D-4236 on the package which means that they've been evaluated by the American Society for Testing and Materials.
- Projectiles and other flying toys can cause serious eye injuries.
- Battery operated toys should have battery cases that secure with screws so that kids cannot pry them open. Batteries and battery fluid pose a serious risk, including choking, internal bleeding and chemical burns.
- Most riding toys can be used once a child is able to sit well unsupported. Check with manufacturer's recommendation for ages.
- Toys with loud sounds, especially if the toy can be held directly up to the ear, can cause hearing damage.
- Painted toys should be lead free.
- Avoid older toys including hand-me-downs from friends and family and garage sale toys. Older toys may not meet current safety standards and may be worn down enough to break and become hazardous. Keep toys clean to decrease the spread of germs. Many plastic toys for young children can be run through the dishwasher or spot cleaned with soapy water and rinsed off.

Source: Roundtable Nutrition Edition 43. Adapted from Child Care Health Connections and kidshealth.org

Are you a web-claimer?

Have you been a web claimer for a long time? Or are you a recent switcher? Either way, we would love to hear from you. Share your experience so that others can benefit.



Have you been considering switching but still unsure?

Join us for a group training session. Held in Aptos each 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:45-7:30 pm.



Program Reminder: Infant Food

Commercial baby foods are **ONLY** reimbursable if the ingredients are as follows:

- To count as Fruit/Veg., the ingredients can only have fruit/veg. For example: "apple", or "peas & carrots"
- To count as a Meat/Meat alt., the ingredients can only have meat. For example: "Chicken", or "beef & pork"



Commercial baby foods are **NOT** reimbursable if:

- Fruit/veg. has ingredients other than fruit/veg. For example: "sweet potato & chicken". It also is not reimbursable if it says "pudding" or "dessert"
- Meat cannot be mixed with a non-meat. For example "beef & rice"

If you make "HM baby food" you should **NOT** add sugar, fat, or salt.

Menu Ideas – Meatless Mondays

Breakfast

Sweet potato pancakes	WW Cheerios	Oatmeal	Pumpkin Muffins HM	Lemon crepes w/riccota
Blueberries	Apple	Banana	Cuties	Strawberries
Milk	Milk	Milk	Milk	Milk

Lunch/Dinner

Jack cheese	Pork	Roast Chicken	Chicken Tamales	Ground Beef
Garlic ww toast	Chinese noodles	Barley	Rice	WW Buns
Cauliflower Soup HM	Butternut squash	Brussel Sprouts	Maza & vegetables	Lettuce & Tomato
Apple	Bok Choy	Roasted carrots	Pear	Green Beans
Milk	Milk	Milk	Milk	Milk

Snack Am/Pm

Dried Fruit Cluster*	Pear	HB egg	Graham Crackers	PB Toast
Milk	Monterey String Chz	Apple	Kiwi	Oranges

Making Books Come to Life



A **Prop Box**, when adapted to storybooks, can strengthen early literacy experiences.

A prop box or basket is filled with the story & concrete objects from the story that children can use to interact with the story. These interactions help children develop language skills through role playing & communicating with classmates. They can act out the story from the book or create their own using the materials from the story.

For example, if you were to read *Little Red Riding Hood*, you could use the following props:

- Picnic basket
- Pretend food
- Story Sequencing Cards
- The book *Little Red Riding Hood*
- Checkered napkin or tablecloth
- A red fabric rectangle or a red cape
- A puppet or stuffed animal wolf



Let their imaginations run wild.

Kid-Friendly Ice Packs

Freeze a damp sponge inside a resealable bag for a kid-friendly “ice pack” that won’t melt and get water everywhere. As the ice melts, the sponge reabsorbs it.



Use fun colored sponges and keep them stored in the freezer for the next time your kids need one!

*Holiday Dried Fruit and Almond Clusters

- 2 Cups Sliced Almonds, lightly toasted
 - 2 Egg Whites
 - ¼ Cup Sugar
- 8 oz. (1 ¼ C) Dried Fruit, mixed (golden raisins, cranberries, cherries, blueberries)



1. Place a rack in the middle of the oven and preheat oven to 300°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a medium sized bowl, mix the almonds with the dried fruit. Whisk the egg whites in a small bowl until frothy, add sugar and continue whisking until well combined. It should look like a loose paste.
3. Pour egg mixture over the fruit/nut mixture and stir well. Spoon heaping tablespoons onto the prepared baking sheets. The ingredients will not stick together well, so push them together with the spoon; they'll stick once baked.
4. Place baking sheets in oven one at a time and bake 20–25 minutes. Let cool completely before removing from the pan.

Yield: 20 clusters (serving size 2 clusters). Meets requirement for meat alternate at snack time only.

Source: SF Gate

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