

Art Therapy Activity for Children and Parents



This is an activity that can be done with your child or your child can do on his/her own with your guidance. It is designed to help your child self-regulate, be present in their body and emotions and express themselves creatively.

1. Go outside with your child for a nature treasure hunt.
Find something that is
 - a. Smooth
 - b. Soft
 - c. Bumpy
 - d. Rough
 - e. Poky
 - f. Funny
 - g. Crunchy
 - h. Slow
 - i. sticky
 - j. Something that makes you happy
 - k. Something that makes you feel safe

2. Bring these things home and using a shoebox, Kleenex box or other small box create a Safe Space using the things you find. Make it as beautiful and comfortable as you can. You can add any things to it that you like in addition to the ones you found. You can also leave anything out that you don't want to add. Feel free to get as creative as you want.

3. With your child come up with a name for the place. Find a special place in your house where you can keep the safe place.
4. Let your child add things to it or alter it as time goes on as he or she would like. Encourage them to find more things for it when they are outside. The sky is the limit on the creative possibilities for this.
5. Sit with your child and have them imagine they are in the world of the "Safe Place". Take a few deep breaths together, slow down and relax. Give him or her the following prompts:
 - In (name of place) it smells like.....
 - It tastes like.....
 - It sounds like.....
 - It looks like.....
 - It feels like.....
 - It reminds me of.....
 - It makes me feel.....
6. Write your child's responses down if you get a chance.

I will follow up with some more ideas to expand on this activity in the weeks to come. Please remember that this should be a fun, relaxing activity for you and your child. It is not designed to create any stress. Feel free to alter it in any way that feels appropriate for your family and let me know if you have any questions.

By: Janis Dyck – Art Therapist