

This Month's Activity: Star Spangled Pop!

The Fourth of July is a great holiday to host a noisy celebration in your center or classroom. For infants we suggest you share a song and surprise activity!

Here's what you'll need for older toddlers and preschoolers:

Materials:

- A roll of metallic, red, white or blue streamer paper
- Many sheets of bubble wrap
- A recording of the Star Spangled Banner and other appropriate patriotic music

Here's How:

Make your own indoor fireworks with a roll of metallic streamer paper and plenty of bubble wrap. Collect as many sheets of bubble wrap as you can, tape the sheets together, and cover as much of the floor as possible. Play the Star Spangled Banner and other appropriate patriotic music, and hand each of the children a five-foot length of streamer paper. To create a light show, darken the room and flick the lights on and off. Hand other teachers flashlights to shine as the children wave streamers to the music. Ask the class to dance, march and stomp on the bubble wrap and wave the streamers in the air. Their dancing will create the sound of firecrackers!

Serve blueberries and red strawberries or strips of red fruit wraps on white toast for a *Red, White and Blue snack!*

Note: If any children have allergies, offer substitute foods so all children can participate in the activity.

Here's what you'll need for infants and toddlers!

Materials:

- Three colorful ladies silk type scarves (not knitted thick winter scarves)
- Empty facial tissue box that has a slit opening at the top

Here's How:

You'll sing a song and play an age-appropriate game to celebrate the 4th of July with infants and toddlers in your care. Tie one corner of each scarf to one corner of another to create one long piece of fabric. Stuff the scarves into the tissue box and pull just the corner of one scarf through the slit on top of the tissue box. You can make several of these boxes so many children can have a parade together. Place the box/es in the center of the room, sing the following words to the tune of "Pop Goes the Weasel," and follow the motions after each line.

All around the town we march

(Scoop the child into your arms and hold him/her with his/her back against your belly.)

In the 4th of July parade!

(March around the room gently bouncing the child).

Step high, step low, we march and wave.

(Move the child's legs in a marching motion, then help him/her wave to others in the room).

Til....POP goes the fireworks!

(Stop in the center of the room, bend down so the child can get a grip on the scarf sticking out of the box, then jump up so the child pulls the scarves out of the box to make the fireworks go POP).

Wave the scarves around and then push the scarves back into the box. Keep marching and singing until the children are tired of the play. Babies and toddlers will love anticipating what will happen each time they pull the scarves out of the box. Share the idea with families!

Caution: Closely supervise all young children when they participate in any activities that use scarves or any material that could pose a choking hazard.

Preschool Classroom Tip

Do you have "wigglers and rollers" on your rug during story time? Try breaking the story up into two halves and read the first half immediately before an indoor activity period that includes story related activities. After the clean up, invite the children to the rug and ask them to help you remember the events from the first half of the story. Turn the lights down low, use a flashlight and read the second half of the story in a quiet voice. This technique encourages children to remember details and stay focused at story time.