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# All TRUCE family play plans flier

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Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment

# TRUCE GUIDES AND PUBLICATIONS

Find them all at: [www.truceteachers.org](http://www.truceteachers.org)

Download the full guides for FREE.  
No further permission needed. Please share!

**TRUCE PLAY BOXES**

**Play Boxes: For Hours of Creative Play**

Play Boxes contain collections of small, familiar, inexpensive items that are organized around a play theme and are presented in an appealing way. Playing with the everyday items in these boxes encourages children to ask questions, investigate, problem solve, and act out familiar scenes. Creative play develops valuable skills including creativity, communication, collaboration, and early academic skills. Children are natural "scientists," exploring and learning about their world while involved in activities sometimes misunderstood as "just play."

Play Boxes are a great way to support children's creative play by providing easily available, engaging activities and materials that don't involve screens.

**Here's how to create Play Boxes for your child:**

1. Find a sturdy cardboard box or a plastic bin.
2. Choose a theme and put a label on the box (including both a simple word and a picture of the theme). Decorate the box yourself or with your child, if you like.
3. Collect items for your box at home or purchase supplies at drug stores, hardware stores, stationery stores, arts and crafts stores, and/or grocery stores.
4. Put items in small containers, sandwich bags, or build dividers with pieces of cardboard to make appropriate compartments in the box. Young children often like to organize play items by returning everything to its place.
5. Store the Play Boxes that your child has stopped using in an out-of-the-way place. Choose one to bring out again when your child is looking for something interesting to do. (This keeps the boxes fresh and engaging for your child). You might add one or two new items to the box before you bring it out again.

**Ideas for Play Boxes Inside!** Play Boxes are ideal for rainy days, sick days, play dates, when a child needs a break from screens, or when "bored" and looking for something fun to do.

**Play Boxes Make Great Gifts, Too!** Consider creating and giving a TRUCE Play Box as a generous gift that children will love!

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.Truceteachers.org](http://www.Truceteachers.org)

## TRUCE Play Boxes

Play Boxes contain collections of small, familiar, inexpensive items that are organized around a play theme, such as Vehicles, Office, Baby, Gardening, and Collage. These items are presented in an appealing way and are contained, conveniently, in a box.

Four pages. Also available in Spanish

## TRUCE Infant-Toddler Play & Toy Guide

This guide explains what quality play is and how parents and caregivers can support it. Included: why play is so important, what are the best toys for infants and toddlers, and what toys to avoid.

Eight pages. Also available in Spanish.

**TRUCE INFANT & TODDLER PLAY AND TOY GUIDE**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment

This guide explains why quality play is vital for the growth and development of infants and toddlers and how to support it.

**INSIDE:**

- Why is Quality Play So Important?
- What are the Best Kinds of Play and Toys for Infants and Toddlers?
- What Toys Should Be Avoided?

**WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT PLAY TODAY?**

In the 21st century, quality play is being undermined because:

- Infants and toddlers are spending many hours in front of screens.
- The increase in electronic toys, games, DVDs, and interactive devices can turn infants and toddlers into button pushers and screen swipers. This is NOT play.
- Many infant-toddler toys are marketed as educational without any evidence to prove this claim.
- Many toys are linked to popular media programs and characters. This encourages very young children to want toys tied to a favorite character, despite the poor quality of the toy or play that results.

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**TRUCE GUIDE FOR USING CHILDREN'S BOOKS TO PROMOTE PLAY**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment

**PLAY IS CHANGING**

- **Less Play at Home.** As children use screens more, including television, tablets, mobile devices, and computers, they have less time to play.
- **Less Play at School.** Today, schools devote more time to worksheets, direct instruction, and screen-based activities so children have fewer opportunities to learn through active, hands-on play.

**SCREEN TIME IS NOT PLAY TIME**

Screens involve children in a two-dimensional world as they follow programs created by someone else. There is little room for their own ideas, creativity, and imagination.

**WHEN CHILDREN PLAY...**

They are in charge of creating, exploring, cooperating, collaborating, inventing, communicating, and imagining—vital skills for school and for life!

**USE CHILDREN'S BOOKS TO SUPPORT CREATIVE PLAY, EARLY LEARNING, AND LITERACY**

This guide helps adults promote quality play and learning, using children's books organized around themes that are interesting to children.

**READ, PLAY, LEARN!**

Don't be limited by these books or topics. There are many other children's books and themes that can inspire your children's interests, play and learning.

**PLAY THEMES INSIDE THIS GUIDE:**

- Cardboard Boxes...page 2
- Colors, Words, & Dress-Up...page 3
- Ring Books...page 4
- Building Forts or Play Houses...page 5
- Playing Outside...page 6
- Playing Inside...page 7

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.Truceteachers.org](http://www.Truceteachers.org)

## TRUCE Guide for Using Children's Books to Promote Play

Children's books, from old favorites like *Where the Wild Things Are* and *Cat in the Hat*, to brand new titles, such as *How to Share with a Bear*, provide a wealth of ideas to promote children's play. Eight pages filled with ideas for play from children's books.

## TRUCE Play and Toy Guide

This eight-page guide will help parents and educators to promote children's creative and constructive play; to work with others at home, school, and in the community to support positive play; and to make informed choices about toys.

**TRUCE PLAY AND TOY GUIDE**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment

This guide will help parents and educators:

- Promote children's creative and constructive play
- Work with others at home, school, and in the community to support positive play
- Make informed choices about toys

**Play Belongs in School**

There is a lot of pressure on teachers to show on test programs and scores. This is done to create more time for teachers to teach academic skills that prepare children to pass high-stakes tests.

Quality play promotes skills that are necessary for later academic success—critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, persistence, creativity and a love of learning. Young children need time to play in school to develop these vital skills.

See "Kids in the Kindergarten: Why Children Need to Play in School" at [www.truceteachers.org](http://www.truceteachers.org) and "Reading Instruction in Kindergarten: Little to Gain, Much to Lose" at [www.truceteachers.org](http://www.truceteachers.org)

**ENDANGERED PLAY**

Play is essential for children's healthy development and learning. Children use play to try out new ideas, actively construct knowledge, learn new skills, and grow socially and emotionally. Through creative play, a child lays the foundation for later academic learning.

The content of children's play comes from their experiences. Since today's children spend a lot of time with screens—TV, movies, tablets, DVDs, computers, and video games—they spend less time playing. And when they do play, they often imitate what they see on screens instead of creating their own play scenarios. This loss of creative play undermines optimal development and learning.

In this age of technology, media, and marketing inappropriate toys to children, play is more important than ever. This guide helps parents promote rich and meaningful play and choose quality toys and play materials. Teachers will also find this information helpful.

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.Truceteachers.org](http://www.Truceteachers.org)



# Summer-Fall-Winter-Spring Family Play Plans

Busy families often find it hard to set aside time for play, especially with the distraction of screens and technology. Using every day items, TRUCE offers some seasonal, screen-free ideas to inspire your whole family (whatever their ages) to play together.

We invite you to print and share these Family Play Plans without further permission. Find them all at: [www.truceteachers.org/resource-family-play-plans.html](http://www.truceteachers.org/resource-family-play-plans.html). Several are available in Spanish.



**SUMMER-FALL-WINTER-SPRING FAMILY PLAY PLANS**

Busy families often find it hard to set aside time for play, especially with the distraction of screens and technology. TRUCE offers some seasonal, screen-free ideas to inspire your whole family — whatever their ages — to play together.

Using the low-cost, common materials listed below, your family can play together and enjoy hours of family fun throughout the year. Print a TRUCE two-page guide for each play theme, with easy-to-follow ideas for family play in summer, fall, winter, and spring. Find them at [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org).

	<b>SUMMER</b> Mud Water Chalk		<b>FALL</b> Boxes Leaves Playdough
	<b>WINTER</b> Forts Snow Socks		<b>SPRING</b> Bubbles String Gardening

[WWW.TRUCETEACHERS.ORG](http://WWW.TRUCETEACHERS.ORG)



**SUMMER PLAY PLAN**

Turn off the Screen & Turn on the **CHALK**

Chalk offers endless opportunities for family playtime—both indoors and outside.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org)



**SUMMER PLAY PLAN**

Turn off the Screen & Turn on the **MUD**

Mud offers endless opportunities for family playtime.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org)



**SUMMER PLAY PLAN**

Turn off the Screen & Turn on the **WATER**

Water offers endless opportunities for family playtime—both indoors and out.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org)



**FALL FAMILY PLAY PLAN**

Turn off the Screen & Turn on the **CARDBOARD BOXES**

Cardboard boxes offer endless opportunities for family playtime—both indoors and outside.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org)



**FALL FAMILY PLAY PLAN**

Turn off the Screen & Turn on the **LEAVES**

Fall leaves offer endless opportunities for family playtime—both indoors and out.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org)



**FALL FAMILY PLAY PLAN**

Turn off the Screen & Turn on the **PLAYDOUGH**

Playdough offers endless opportunities for family playtime.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org)



**WINTER FAMILY PLAY PLAN**

Turn off the Screen & Turn on the **FORTS**

Building indoor forts or hideouts offers endless opportunities for family playtime.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org)



**WINTER FAMILY PLAY PLAN**

Turn off the Screen & Turn on the **SNOW**

Snow offers endless opportunities for family playtime—both indoors and out.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org)



**WINTER FAMILY PLAY PLAN**

Turn off the Screen & Turn on the **SOCKS**

Everyday objects like socks can offer endless opportunities for family playtime.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org)



**SPRING PLAY IDEAS**

Turn off the Screens & Turn on the **BUBBLES**

Bubbles offer endless opportunities for family playtime—both indoors and out.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org)



**SPRING PLAY IDEAS**

Turn off the Screens & Turn on the **GARDENING**

Gardening offers opportunities for family playtime—both indoors and out.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment [www.TruceTeachers.org](http://www.TruceTeachers.org)



**SPRING PLAY IDEAS**

Turn off the Screens & Turn on the **STRING**

String offers endless opportunities for family playtime—both indoors and out.

**PLAY TIPS: PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS**

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