



## 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.*



## SUMMER PLAY PLAN

# Turn off the Screen & Turn on the

# CHALK

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

Chalk is a simple, everyday item that can provide hours of fun family play. As families play together, children learn skills such as cooperation, turn taking, problem-solving, eye-hand coordination (which helps in writing), how to draw, and much more. And, of course, playing together is just plain fun for everyone.



You can add to the play by talking about what is happening: “I see that you are drawing with the red chalk and I am drawing with the blue chalk.” “You made a chimney for your house.” Ask simple questions, such as: “What else can we put on our houses?” “How can we make a pattern with our chalk?”

Watch children as they play. This can help you figure out what they are working on which can help you know what to say and do.

### PLAY VALUE—PRICE VALUE



Playing with chalk—an inexpensive, open-ended material—can offer a deeper, more creative play experience than many of the expensive, one-purpose toys sold today.

# IDEAS FOR SUMMERTIME FAMILY PLAY WITH CHALK



## CHALK ART



- **Different Sizes of Chalk.** Use small blackboard chalk or large sidewalk chalk. Whatever chalk you choose, it washes off in the rain.
- **Paint with Chalk.** Paint with water on black paper, using a paint brush. Draw on the wet paper with chalk. What happens? Reverse it—draw with chalk, then brush it with water.
- **Trace Your Child.** A parent or sibling traces the outline of a child with chalk. Children then add facial features, hair, clothes to their shape.
- **Chalk Drawing Adventure.** Draw a scene—a superhero flying over buildings, a circus with flying trapeze artist, a firefighter on a fire engine—and then put your children into the drawing.
- **Rainy Day Chalk Play.** Draw with chalk on paper. Use both dark and light-colored paper. Lay a large piece of paper or even a sheet of newspaper on the floor and draw with chalk.

## WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY?

“Chalk play can enhance your child’s communication skills by simply giving her an opportunity to write letters, draw a picture that has meaning, invent letters that she wants to practice writing.”

- Carly Jennings, *“Art and Work of Creative Parenting: Chalk It Up to Fun”*

## GAMES WITH CHALK

- **Human Board Game.** Kids love board games so draw your own giant game board on the sidewalk with chalk. Make it any shape (circle, square, squiggly) and length, depending on the ages of children (fewer squares for younger children). You could add “lose a turn” squares or “go back 5 spaces,” if you want. Family members are the “pieces.” Make a giant die out of a cardboard box. Players roll the die and move through the squares accordingly. First to make it to the final square wins.
- **Tic Tac Toe.** Play the traditional game by drawing X’s and O’s with chalk; or change it by throwing pebbles or a beanbag toward the square you want to occupy. It only counts if the pebble stays in the square.
- **Checkers.** With chalk, draw a checker board. The “checkers” can be paper plates.



## CHALK PROJECTS

- **Road for Toy Cars and Trucks.** Draw a chalk road on the sidewalk for toy cars and trucks. Add cross-roads, curves, destinations.
- **Patterns.** Find a sidewalk made of sections. Color them with chalk. Make a pattern. Create a game with your own rules.



- **More ideas.** Find more ideas with for chalk play at: [www.pleasantestthing.com/?s=chalk](http://www.pleasantestthing.com/?s=chalk)



## TRUCE FAMILY PLAY TIP

Develop a family screen turn off ritual. Here are some ideas:

- Count all the screens that are on as you turn them off.
- See if you can turn off all the screens in a minute or less.
- Have a bin or basket where you put all portable screens during family play time.

