



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.



SPRING PLAY IDEAS

Turn off the Screens & Turn on the STRING

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

A simple ball of string can become a toy to create hours of family fun. As families play together, children learn skills such as cooperation, turn taking, problem-solving, and even math skills like “longer” and “shorter.”



You can add to the play by talking about what you are doing: “My piece of string is shorter than yours.” “The string was in a ball but now it’s a long piece.” Ask simple questions, such as: “How long do you think the string has to be to reach from here to your bedroom?” “How can I make pieces the same size?”

Watch young children as they play. Often this can help you figure out what they’re working on, so you know what questions to ask.

IDEAS FOR SPRINGTIME FAMILY PLAY WITH STRING

STRING SCIENCE



◆ **Tin Can Telephone.** Poke a small hole at the bottom of two empty tin cans, with one end removed. (Plastic cups work, too.) Tie string to a paper clip inside each can. Stretch the string tight and carry on a conversation.

Why does this work? Great game for older and younger siblings.

- ◆ **Catch an Ice Cube.** Need: Ice cubes, cup of water, string, salt. Float an ice cube in the cup of water. Carefully lay one end of a piece of string on the floating cube. Sprinkle a pinch of salt onto the string and wait for about 30 seconds. Pick up the string, and WOW, you caught an ice cube. See if it works with pepper, sand, or something else. Why?

WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY?

Business leaders want employees who know how to "play" with ideas and collaborate with others.

STRING PROJECTS



◆ **Family String Puppets.** Print a full body photo of each family member. Glue it on a piece of cardboard such as a cereal box. Cut around the outline of the person. Attach string to the head and body of the puppet with strong tape.

Then set up a puppet theater and put on a show.

- ◆ **String (or Yarn) Dolls.** Wind string or yarn around an 8x4" piece of cardboard about 30 times or until as fat as two fingers. Remove from the cardboard. Tie a doubled piece of string around it. Knot at the following locations: 1/2" down from the top; 1" down from that for the bottom of the head; take one bunch on each side and tie about 1" down for the arms; 1 1/2" down from head for waist; divide the remaining yarn and tie for legs or leave untied for a skirt. Trim hair, hands, and feet.

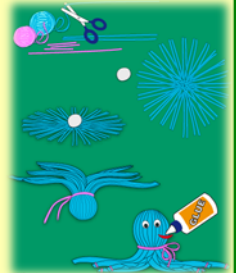


STRING GAMES



- ◆ **Cat's Cradle.** Remember creating Jacob's Ladder and Witch's Broom with string? Your child will love learning how to do it, too. If you are rusty on the process, check out the Klutz Book of Cat's Cradle.
- ◆ **String Train.** Form loops with string, enough for each member of the family. Make a "train," with each family member serving as a car—engine, coal car, box car, flat car, tank car, caboose. Family members are connected with the string loops. The engine leads the train around the house or yard, all connected with the string. Then it's someone else's turn to be the engine.
- ◆ **String Hide and Seek.** Take a ball of string. Ask your child to hide in another room, while still holding onto the string. Then follow the string to find the child. Then it's your turn to hide while your child finds you. Have siblings find each other, following the string trail.

- ◆ **String (or Yarn) Octopus.** Cut 24 12" pieces of string or yarn. (You may want to use two different colors.) Spread the pieces in a circle. Form head with small wad of cotton, tied with string or yarn. Braid the 8 legs and tie with string or yarn. Glue on 2 eyes and a mouth.



- ◆ **String Pulley.** Create a pulley with a bucket or basket and string, either indoors on a stairwell or outdoors on a tree, climbing apparatus, or other high place. Load up the bucket and transport toys, rocks, or whatever up and down.

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.