

Your Plan - Your Future



COISTE CHONTAE LUIMNIGH UM CHÚRAM LEANAÍ



Autumn/Winter 2009

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Free Pre-School Year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme

The ECCE is a new scheme designed to give children access to a free Pre-School Year of appropriate programme-based activities in the year before they start primary school. Research concludes that participation in a pre-school programme provides children with their first formal experience of early learning, the starting-point of their educational and social development outside the home. Children who avail of pre-school are more likely to be ready for school and a formal learning and social environment.

January to August 2010

The ECCE Scheme will commence on the 1st Jan 2010, providing free pre-school to children born between the 2 February 2005 and 30 June 2006.

Children attending a Sessional pre-school service will avail of 23 weeks of free Pre-school between January and June 2010. Children attending pre-school as part of a Full-day service will avail of 35 weeks of free Pre-school between January and August 2010.

September 2010 to August 2011

From the 1st September 2010, children born between the 2 February 2006 and the 30 June 2007 will be entitled to either 38 or 50 weeks of free pre-school, commencing on the 1st September 2010. This period of free pre-school will run from September 2010 to either June or August 2011, depending on the childcare service.

Exceptions to the Age Range for Eligible Children

The upper age limit of 4 years 6 months will be extended where a child cannot start primary school until s/he is more than 5 years 6 months of age due to

- the enrolment policy of the local National School or
- having been assessed as developmentally delayed by the Health Service Executive (HSE).

In both cases, it is the pre-school service that will request an exemption, by submitting the relevant back-up documentation (National School Enrolment Policy/Letter from the HSE) to the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) on behalf of the child. Parents who believe they are entitled to an extension of the age limit, should make their chosen pre-school service aware of the situation when enrolling their child.

Pre-school Services

The free pre-school year can be offered on a 38 or 50 week basis and will be provided through means of a capitation grant, paid directly to approved childcare services. The service may choose to offer either or both schemes (i.e. 38 week and/or 50 week services).

Terms and Conditions

Each Pre-school service must meet a number of terms and conditions in order to be eligible to run the scheme.

- The Pre-school must be notified to the Health Service Executive (HSE) and be compliant under the Child Care (Pre-school Services) (No. 2) Regulations 2006 or be registered with the Irish Montessori Education Board (IMEB).
- The Pre-school must have a minimum enrolment of 8 children who are eligible for the ECCE Scheme. Exceptions may be approved in relation to small services and services who will have at least 8 eligible children for the following pre-school year.
- The Pre-school must operate under a legal structure (Sole Trader/Limited Company etc) and be tax compliant
- The Pre-school Leader(s) must hold a certification for a major award in childcare/early education at a minimum of level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications of Ireland (NFQ) or an equivalent nationally recognised qualification. During the first 2 full years of the scheme, the qualification requirement will be considered to be met, where a person can demonstrate that he or she has achieved a certification for an award in ECCE, that includes significant content relating to early childhood education/early learning and child development and has at least 2 years experience of working in a position of responsibility with children in the 0-6 age range.

Free Pre-school for 38 Weeks

Where a facility offers a pre-school service over a 38 week period, they will receive a capitation grant of €64.50 per week for each eligible child to provide 3 hours of pre-school, 5 days a week.

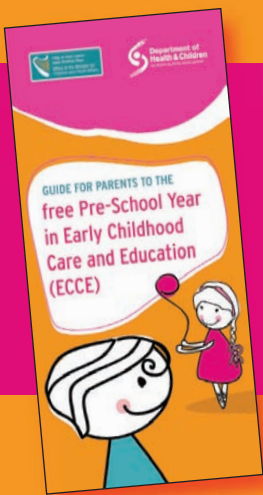
In exceptional circumstances where a service cannot open 5 days a week, they may with approval, provide pre-school for 3 hours 30 minutes per day, 4 days a week and 41 weeks per year.

Free Pre-school for 50 Weeks

Where a facility offers a pre-school service over a 50 week period, they will receive a capitation grant of €48.50 per week for each eligible child to provide 2 hours 15 minutes of pre-school, 5 days a week.

Where a child only uses a full or part time service 3 days per week, the service may provide 3 hours 45 minutes of pre-school 3 days per week, to receive the capitation grant of €48.50 per week.





Increased Capitation Grant of €75 per Week

An increased capitation grant of €75 per week, will be made available to services who meet certain criteria in relation to staff qualifications. The increased capitation is only available to 38 and 41 week services.

To avail of the increased capitation, the Pre-school Leader must be qualified to degree level (FETAC Level 7 or 8) in childcare/early year's education and have 3 years experience of working in the pre-school sector. In addition, all Pre-school Assistants must hold a childcare/early year's education qualification at FETAC level 5.

Optional Additional Charges

Participating services must provide the pre-school year free to parents whose children are eligible, i.e. the service must provide free Pre-school as per their contract with the OMCYA, that is

- 3 hours per day, 5 days per week on a 38 week basis, or
- 2 hours 15 minutes per day, 5 days per week on a 50 week basis, or
- 3 hours 30 minutes per day, 4 days per week on a 41 week basis, or
- 3 hours 45 minutes per day, 3 days per week on a 50 week basis,

The OMCYA will allow facilities to charge parents for additional services on condition that

- these are provided on an optional basis and
- appropriate programme based activities are provided to children not participating in an optional activity.

For example, a service can offer an additional activity such as music or dance, which parents can choose to avail of for a fee. If they do not wish to avail of this activity, their child must continue to be provided with an appropriate alternative activity.

Services can also charge for hours which are additional to the free pre-school provision. For example, the parent of a child in a full-day service for 10 hours a day should expect to pay for the 7 hours 45 minutes per day, which are not free in a 50 week service. Likewise, the parent of a child in a sessional service for 3 hours 30 minutes per day under the 38 week scheme, will be required to pay for the additional 30 minutes per day.

Outings, birthday parties, snacks etc, can also be charged for, provided they are optional for parents.

List of Pre-schools approved to operate the ECCE Scheme

All pre-school services interested in operating the scheme, made an application to the OMCYA, through County Limerick Childcare Committee (CLCC). These applications are currently being processed and a list of Pre-schools approved to operate the ECCE Scheme will be available from CLCC in October 2009.

Further Information

Further information on the Free Pre-school Year in ECCE can be obtained from www.omcya.ie or www.clcc.ie

Queries can be made to County Limerick Childcare Committee 061 600918 or info@clcc.ie

Whats happening...

Marie Hennessy retired

In June 2009, Marie Hennessy retired as Childminding Advisory Officer (CMAO) for Limerick. County Limerick Childcare Committee (CLCC) express their gratitude to Marie for her work with Childminders over the past number of years.

CLCC would also like to welcome Denise O'Shea to the role of CMAO for Limerick.

Denise is available to support all Childminders and can be contacted on 061 314111 or denise.oshea@lssc.ie

H1N1 Virus

The Health Service Executive has confirmed that the H1N1 Virus (Swine Flu) is a notifiable disease as it falls under the category Influenza A and B Virus.

In recent weeks, the HSE Pre-school Inspection and Information Service has distributed an information pack to all notified childcare services.

Information on the H1N1 can be obtained from the HSE on www.hse.ie or www.swineflu.ie or call the HSE Flu Information Line Freephone 1800 94 11 00

FETAC 6 Certificate in Childcare

County Limerick Childcare Committee in conjunction with County Limerick VEC, will run the FETAC Level 6 Certificate in Childcare during the 2009/2010 year. This course will be run from October to June and will take place in Croom.

For further information please contact rosie@clcc.ie or catriona@clcc.ie

ADHD Through A Lifetime Conference

The Attention Deficit Disorder Mid West Support Committee Ltd. will host a one day conference on ADHD on the 10th October 2009 at the Carlton Castletroy Park Hotel, Limerick.

This conference will bring together several innovative ways of looking at ADHD which will be of great interest to those affected by ADHD and their families, professionals and teachers.

To book a place contact 061 312621 or addmidwest@eircom.net

Qualification Requirements under the ECCE Scheme

The introduction of the Free Pre-school Year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE Scheme) has had a major impact on the area of staff qualifications for the sector. To operate the scheme, the pre-school service must meet a number of terms and conditions, including minimum qualification requirements.

In general, the Pre-school Leader(s) must hold a certification for a major award in childcare/early education at a minimum of level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) of Ireland or an equivalent nationally recognised qualification. During the first 2 full years of the scheme, the qualification requirement will be considered to be met, where a person can demonstrate that he or she has achieved a certification for an award in ECCE, that includes significant content relating to early childhood education/early learning and child development and has at least 2 years experience of working in a position of responsibility with children in the 0-6 age range.

An increased capitation grant will be made available to services, where the Pre-school Leader is qualified to degree level (FETAC Level 7 or 8) in childcare / early year's education and has 3 years experience of working in the pre-school sector. In addition all Pre-school Assistants must hold a childcare/ early year's education qualification at FETAC level 5.

Approved Qualifications

The minimum qualification accepted under the ECCE Scheme is a full FETAC Level 5 (previously NCVA Level 2) award or equivalent on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

FETAC Level 5 (Full Award)

To obtain a FETAC Level 5 full award, the participant must complete 8 FETAC level 5 modules. The Certificate is composed of 5 Mandatory Modules and 3 Elective Modules and are chosen from a list of modules approved by FETAC.

Each module when completed in isolation, provides the student with a FETAC Level 5 Component Certificate (Minor Award). All 8 Modules can be completed together or singly over a period of time to obtain the Major Award of FETAC Level 5 Certificate in Childcare.

Mandatory Modules	Sample Elective Modules (2 must be completed)
1. Child Development	Care Provision and Practice
2. Early Childhood Education	Children with Additional Needs
3. Working in Childcare	After-school Care
4. Caring for Children (0-6years)	
5. Communications	
6. Work Experience	

Useful Websites

County Limerick Childcare Committee
FETAC

National Qualifications Authority of Ireland
Qualifications Recognition Ireland

Qualifax: The National Learners Database

www.clcc.ie

www.fetac.ie

www.nqai.ie

www.qualificationsrecognition.ie

www.qualifax.ie

The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)

The NFQ is a system of ten levels. It incorporates awards made for all kinds of learning, from basic learning to Doctorate, wherever the learning is gained. For example, the Irish Junior Certificate is at NFQ Level 3, apprenticeship qualifications are at NFQ Level 6, the Honours Bachelor Degree is at NFQ Level 8 and the Doctoral Degree is at NFQ Level 10.

The NFQ provides a structure (a framework) to compare and contrast the level and standard of different qualifications.

Finding an NFQ Recognised Course

With the introduction of the ECCE Scheme, it is more important than ever, that those embarking on a career in childcare/ the early years to obtain a qualification which is recognised by the NFQ.

To determine if a course is NFQ recognised, the student may contact the relevant college or log onto www.qualifax.ie which allows students to search for a course by Keyword, Qualification Type, College, County etc. and which provides information on the NFQ Level.

The list of search results will include a column stating the NFQ Level for each course. To determine if the course is a Major Award (Certificate) or Minor Award (Component Certificate) it is necessary to view the course details.

Supervised Work Placement

All comprehensive courses in childcare/ early years education, will include one or more supervised placements in an early years setting. The duration of the placement experience will depend on the level of the course, but in general an NFQ Level 5 Course should include an average of 20 days supervised placement.

Recognition of Foreign Qualifications

The 'National Qualifications Authority of Ireland' and 'Qualifications Recognition Ireland' assess qualifications obtained abroad to determine their equivalent NFQ Level in Ireland, for e.g. the CACHE Diploma in Early Childhood Education is equivalent to NFQ Level 5 Major Award in Childcare.



County Limerick Childcare Committee bring "Children Respecting Difference" Course to Limerick



County Limerick Childcare Committee (CLCC) is committed to diversity in the early years and has been involved in a number of initiatives which encourage equality and diversity over the past number of years, including the Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference.

The Media Initiative, combines cartoon media messages around diversity, within an early year's programme, which aims to promote positive attitudes to physical, social and cultural differences amongst young children, childcare practitioners and parents. The messages also address bullying behaviours. The Training Programme is augmented by a resource pack of puppets, table-top activities and story books based on the cartoon characters.

Recently, 'Early Years the Organisation for Young Children' have developed a new media message which aims to foster understanding and respect between the Traveller and Settled Communities. This media message introduces Kathleen. Kathleen is a Traveller who lives with her family in a trailer. Like the original programme, this message is delivered as a workshop, complete with resource pack to Childcare Providers. It is hoped that through age related activities, children will

- Be encouraged to explore similarities and differences between the Traveller community and the settled community
- Begin to understand what it feels like to be excluded
- Begin to show mutual respect to children from the Traveller community and for each others lifestyles
- Be supported to have a sense of belonging and pride in their own identity.

Given the success of the previous workshops in 2005 and 2006, CLCC have contracted 'Early Years the Organisation for Young Children' to deliver this latest message in County Limerick. The workshop will be delivered on Saturday the 7th November 2009 from 10am to 4pm, at County Limerick Childcare Committee, Groom Mills, Groom. The workshop is open to Childcare Providers (maximum of 25) at a cost of €50 per service, which includes the resource pack.

"CLCC took the decision to heavily subsidise this programme given the importance of promoting diversity in the early years" said Anne Delaney, Manager.

For further information on the programme, please contact Catriona on catriona@clcc.ie or 061 600918.

Childcare Funding for County Limerick

In June 2009, four Community Groups in County Limerick, Dromin Athlaca Community Pre-school, Kilfinane Community Playgroup, Glenquin Montessori and Gerald Griffin Pre-school & Afterschool Service, were awarded a total of €565,000 under the National Childcare Investment Programme (NCIP).

With the closure of the NCIP Capital Programme, these groups will be the last to benefit from the governments capital investment in childcare in County Limerick.

Total Investment in County Limerick

Since 2002, over €6.5 million has been awarded to childcare services in County Limerick through the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (EOCP) 2002-2006 and the National Childcare Investment Programme (NCIP) 2006-2010.

Commenting on the development of childcare in County Limerick, Ann McMahon, Chairperson of County Limerick Childcare Committee stated that

"she was proud that County Limerick Childcare Committee, had over the past eight years, supported 127 Childcare Providers to obtain capital investment, staffing funding and, in more recent years, support under the Community Childcare Subvention Scheme. This funding represents a significant investment in childcare in County Limerick and is achievement not only for the County Childcare Committee but also for the sector"

Design CLCC Christmas Card

County Limerick Childcare Committee (CLCC) is holding a competition to design the 2009 CLCC Christmas Card. The competition is open to all children in County Limerick who attend a Childcare Service/Childminder.

Rules:

- Each entry must be the child's own work
- Each entry must be no bigger than A4 in size
- Individual and Group entries will be accepted
- Entries should be forwarded to Elaine no later than the 7th November 2009.

Please state on the back of the picture:

- Name of Child(ren)
- D.O.B.
- Name of Childcare Service
- Signature of Manager
- Signature of Parent/Guardian
- Date



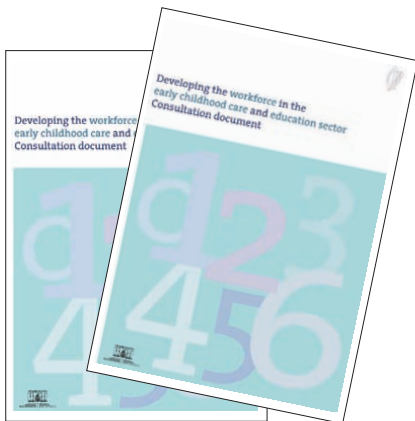
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ACM Lil'Kidz Pre-school

ACM Lil'Kidz Pre-school, an extension of ACM Kidz After-school in Castleconnell, opened for business on the 1st September 2009, in a new purpose built facility attached to ACM Community Centre. The new pre-school service caters for children aged 3 to 6 years. Both the Pre-school and After-school can be contacted on 061 372750 or info@acmkidz.ie



A Workforce Development Plan for the Early Childhood Care and Education Sector in Ireland



At present, the Office of Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) is conducting a national consultation on a Workforce Development Plan for the Early Childhood Care and Education sector in Ireland.

This public consultation process, is the final element in the programme of research and development underpinning the creation of the Workforce Development Plan. All those who are involved or interested in the future of early childhood care and education services in Ireland, are invited to participate in the consultation process.

A short consultative document, which provides a brief discussion of the core questions on this feedback form is available to download from www.omcya.ie

The closing date for receipt of completed feedback forms is 30th September 2009.

REMINDER - Book Training Now

Please remember that the closing date for booking courses advertised in the County Limerick Childcare Committee Training Calendar September/December 2009, is the 30th September 2009. All bookings must be made using the booking form attached to the Training Calendar.

Training Calendar and Booking Form can be downloaded from www.clcc.ie
All queries to rosie@clcc.ie



Cappagh Community Creche

Cappagh Community Creche, formerly Stepping Stones Community Play-school, commenced operation on the 31st August 2009, at its new purpose built facility in Cappagh. The crèche caters for children aged 3mths to 12 years, servicing Cappagh and surrounding areas. The crèche also operates a bus service to national schools in the area, allowing children to access it's After-school facility. The crèche can be contacted on 069 63758/64549 or cappaghcreche@gmail.com



Send Us Your Email Address

Receive regular updates from County Limerick Childcare Committee (CLCC) on issues such as the Free Pre-school year in ECCE, training courses, the Community Childcare Subvention Scheme (CCSS) and events related to childcare in County Limerick.

CLCC currently receives a variety of information from the Office of Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, National Voluntary Childcare Organisations, Training Institutions etc. in relation to the early years care and education which may be of interest to those working in the sector.

CLCC would like to make this information available to all interested parties, with the most efficient means of distribution being email.

CLCC will forward relevant information to Childcare Services, Primary Schools, Parents and other interested individuals who submit an email address to them.

We want to hear from you

If you have any suggestions on what to include in upcoming issues of the CLCC Newsletter, please contact Catriona on catriona@clcc.ie or 061 600918.

Please send your email address to catriona@clcc.ie and include a name, postal address, telephone number and chose one of the following categories

- Childcare Provider (Owner/Manager)
- Parent
- Parent & Toddler Group
- Childcare Staff
- Student
- Childminder
- Primary School
- Other, please specify

Parent and Toddler Initiative

In 2009, County Limerick Childcare Committee (CLCC) took over the Parent and Toddler Grant Programme, previously administered by the Katherine Howard Foundation (KHF). Twenty-one applications were made, of which 19 were approved. The average grant was €400 per group.

The Parent and Toddler Grant Scheme will be run on an annual basis and application forms will be sent to all Parent and Toddler groups notified to CLCC in 2010. To notify a new Parent and Toddler Group, please contact Anne on 061 600918 or anne@clcc.ie

Parent and Toddler Training Programme

County Limerick Childcare Committee (CLCC) in conjunction with the HSE Parent Support Programme and Limerick City Childcare Committee have developed a number of training initiatives for Parent and Toddler Groups in Limerick City and County.

Course	Date	Time	Venue	Cost
Infant & Child CPR, Choking and Common First Aid Emergencies for Parents and Carers	Sat 3rd October	9.45am - 1pm	Raheen Conference Centre Raheen Industrial Estate	€5 per person
Infant & Child CPR, Choking and Common First Aid Emergencies for Parents and Carers	Sat 10th October	9.45am - 1pm	The Pastoral Centre, Kilmallock	€5 per person
Infant & Child CPR, Choking and Common First Aid Emergencies for Parents and Carers	Sat 17th October	9.45am - 1pm	The Desmond Complex, Newcastle West	€5 per person
Parent & Toddler Network: Activities for Children aged 0-3years.	Mon 9th November	7.30pm -9.30pm	CLCC Offices, Croom Mills, Croom	€5 per person



Healthy Tots - Promoting Healthy Eating in Childcare Services

'Healthy Tots' is a healthy eating policy workshop for pre-school, crèche and childminding services. The aim of Healthy Tots is to support these services and parents in encouraging positive healthy eating with children under the age of 5 years. The workshop is designed by the Health Promotion Unit of the HSE and delivered in partnership with County Limerick Childcare Committee (CLCC).

To date, three workshops have been held in County Limerick with a fourth scheduled for the 4th November 2009. To book a place on this workshop, please complete the booking form received with the CLCC Training Calendar.

The workshop is delivered by a dietician from Limerick Health Promotion, HSE West, who will support the service to prepare for the workshop, by conducting a review of current menus and a needs analysis of the needs of parents and staff.

Past participants have found it 'very useful to get feedback from parents and staff' as it encourages everyone to become involved in designing the policy, and allows issues such as culture and dietary requirement which may be unique to the service to be considered.

At the workshop, the dietician will assist each service to develop

- An individualised Healthy Eating Policy for their service, presented in a child friendly poster format. This poster has proved hugely popular with children, "The children think it is a game and I have to read the menu to them every day, so it is working very well for me and the parents."
- A 3 Week Menu Plan Recipe Folder which has been hailed as "an informative and useful" tool.

The design of each individual Healthy Tots Healthy Eating Policy is based on needs assessment with parents and staff & menu reviews of preschool services that provide meals.

Healthy Tots is open to both preschool, crèche and childminding services who provide meals and who do not provide meals.

Celebrating Festivals: The Anti-bias Approach



The Anti-bias approach is based on the principle that each child develops a positive identity through the valuing of diversity and the challenging of bias.

Celebrating festivals such as Christmas, forms an integral part of the majority of early year's curriculums and so it is important that childcare services are aware that activities promoting cultural diversity, should be based on the "common tasks that all people do in culturally different ways" rather than the focusing merely on the exotic, i.e. the festivals of a particular culture.

However, if used in moderation, festivals and holidays can help to "broaden children's awareness of their own and others cultural experiences" (Derman Sparks, L., Anti-bias Curriculum).

When celebrating festivals, it is important to remember that while some are national holidays, they are linked to a particular faith and it is important to respect and acknowledge all the faiths represented in the service. It is equally important that diversity is celebrated in services, where all of the children are from the same faith or background.

When planning to celebrate festivals, it is important to consider:

- Do you inform families of the festivals you will be celebrating and the meaning behind these festivals, such as Christmas?
- Do you discuss with children that Christmas is linked to the Christian faith and families may have different ways of celebrating Christmas some linked to Christianity and some not. Give children information about festivals that you are celebrating in a way that they can understand, ask them questions to see what their understanding is. Be conscious that some children may see Christmas as the normal festival for normal people – we all have a culture, whether it is the majority or minority.
- What alternatives do you offer families of children who do not want their children to take part in festival activities? For families that do not want their children to take part, agree on solutions acceptable to both the family and service. Create an atmosphere of acceptance with children, that not all children will celebrate all festivals in your service and that this is ok.

- What festivals do you currently celebrate in your setting and what children are they relevant to in your setting? Talk to families about important times throughout the year that they celebrate and what elements/experiences could be introduced in the service.
- Be conscious that some festivals/traditions have become far removed from their origins and to those not familiar with them how do they appear?
- How much time do you give to festival activities and what are the benefits for the children?

While Childcare Providers are not responsible for educating children about different beliefs, they can open up possibilities and offer a range of ideas and experiences relevant to different faiths, at all times supporting identity and promoting respect (Diversity and Equality Guidelines for Childcare Providers)

Adapted from Clare County Childcare Committee and The Anti-bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children.

Christmas Around the World

As part of its focus on equality and diversity, CLCC will hold a 'Christmas Around the World' workshop on the 24th November 2009. The workshop will be delivered by Sheila Dillon of Trocaire and explore festive decorations, traditions, food, songs and stories associated with Christmas/December time.

Date: 24th November 2009

Time: 7.30-9.30pm

Venue: CLCC, Croom Mills

Fee: €5 per person

A copy of 'Diversity and Equality Guidelines for Childcare Providers' will be made available to each childcare service who attends the workshop.

Bookings can be made by completing the CLCC Training Booking Form. To obtain a copy of the Booking Form please contact 061 600918 or download from our website www.clcc.ie



Activities for Children

Remember, always encourage children to do as much of the activity as possible themselves

Fabric Art

Materials

A piece of heavy cardboard (about 12" x 12")

Scrap pieces of Fabric, Cord, Yarn etc.

PVA Glue

Scissors

Yarn

Method

1. Encourage the children to think about a design for their collage. This design could be based on a theme, such as Autumn, gardening etc. Some children may want to draw the design out on paper first.
2. The children can start laying down some outlines with pencil or start laying down the actual fabric pieces.
3. Once the design has been decided, use scissors to cut out fabric and glue down each piece firmly.
4. Cord and yarn can be used to create a special effect, like a tree trunk or the outline of a fish.
5. Once everything is glued, let dry and glue a picture hanger to the back.

If using this activity as part of a theme, use stories and group discussion to get children thinking about the particular theme.

Source: www.kinderart.com



Dough Handprint

Materials

2 cups of flour

1 cup of water

Ribbon

Wax paper

1 cup of salt

Food colouring

Gold marker

Method

1. Add food colouring to the water.
2. Mix all ingredients well, kneading until smooth. Dough should be pretty stiff, not soft or runny.
3. Form dough into a ball, of about what you can enclose in your two hands, and form into a round smooth ball.
4. Using a rolling pin roll the dough out into a circle on wax paper. Dough should be about 1/2 inch thick.
5. Press your child's hand with fingers spread into the dough.
Depending on child's age, you will have to help and individually press their fingers. Make sure to press deep enough without going completely to the bottom. (When it bakes it tends to raise the handprint up.)
6. Put on a cookie sheet.
7. Use a chop stick or pencil, etc. to make two holes in the top about 1/2 inch apart. This will be used to string the ribbon through.
8. Bake at 200 degrees for about 2-3 hours. Dough should be fairly hard but watch to see that it doesn't burn.
9. When they are done and cooled, use a gold marker pen and write the child's name and date (year).
10. Tie the ribbon in a loop to hang.

Depending on the age group of the children, the children can be involved in making the dough.

Source: www.crafts.kaboose.com

Disclaimer: Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the County Limerick Childcare Committee.
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