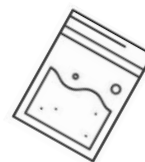




## Daily tips for Learning at Home – Number XYZ

### Squishy Bags



Messy play is a lovely sensory experience for children and really encourages them to explore, discover and be creative.

Squishy bags are great way for children and families to enjoy mess-free messy play!

Although glitter and shiny stars make eye catching squishy bags, the use of natural items such as flowers and leaves can spark children's creativity even more.

Children will enjoy choosing things to go into their squishy bag but please remind them to avoid sharp items – for obvious reasons!

#### What do I need?

- Sealable transparent food bags or transparent food bags and duct tape
- Some kind of liquid such as hair gel, shower gel, baby oil, washing up liquid, cooking oil, shaving foam ....or just water.
- Paint or food colouring (not essential)
- A variety of different items such as flowers, leaves, grass, buttons, foam shapes, stickers, coins, glitter, marbles – in fact, anything that's small enough, interesting and won't burst the bag!

#### What do we do?

- Find a bag with your child, explaining that it needs to be leak proof. (wonder together what that means?)
- Encourage your child to find some items to go into the bag – see suggested list if they get stuck.
- Allow your child to put a little gel, oil, foam or water into the bag then add the items they have collected.
- Remember to squeeze out all the air before sealing the bag. The bag can be sealed more securely with duct tape when you're sure the quantities are right.
- Now for the best part! Your child will enjoy using their hands and finger to squish, squash and move the items around the bag. Perhaps they would like to try using their feet or other parts of their body!
- Comment on what your child is doing and what is happening in the bag. If they make comments, you can repeat what they have said and add new words to build on their vocabulary.
- Once they have made one squishy bag, they will probably want to make another....and another! Encourage them to be creative and to choose different contents each time.

#### What will we learn from this?

- Making choices
- Judging quantities – more/less/enough
- Fine motor skills
- Problem solving
- Predicting – what will happen if....?
- Expressive language skills
- The properties of different materials
- Mark making
- Patterns and shapes

*It is also a great stress reliever.*

#### How can we take it further?

- You could suggest creating bags with different themes, e.g. a blue bag where all the items are blue or a matching bag where two matching items need to be moved together.
- Squishy bags can be used for mark making. If your child is interested, encourage them to draw patterns, shapes, numbers or the letters in their name.

***Play and talk together***  
***Be careful with too many questions***

***Pause and wait for your child to respond***  
***Copy what they say and add to it***