

# CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA

Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN)  
Parent and Provider Resource: Activities for Distance Learning

## Exploring Nature

The following activity will support your child's learning while they are at home. Talk to your child and ask questions as you play. As your child listens to you, your child builds language and social skills, further reinforcing the concepts you are teaching. Match activities to your child's favorite books, songs, or toys to make them more meaningful learning experiences. Visit our website at [www.chs-ca.org](http://www.chs-ca.org) and click on the News and Events tab for more learning resources.

## TODDLERS - Activity: Nature Sculptures

### What you need:

- Nature materials: sticks, stones, leaves, and/or sea shells (large enough that they cannot be swallowed)
- Large mixing bowl and spoon
- Air-tight container

### Ingredients for edible play dough:

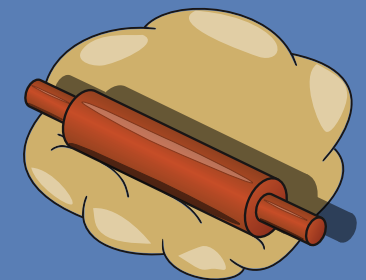
- 2 cups of all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup of salt
- 2 tablespoons of cream of tartar
- 1 to 1.5 cups of boiling water (added in increments until it feels just right)
- Optional: gel food coloring

### What to do:

- Start by making the edible play dough
- Mix the flour, salt, cream of tartar, and oil in a large mixing bowl
- Boil 1.5 cups of water. If you want to use food coloring, add it to the boiling water
- Slowly add the boiling water to the mixing bowl and stir the mixture continuously until it becomes a sticky, combined dough
- Allow it to cool down enough to touch, and then take it out of the bowl and knead it vigorously for a couple of minutes until all of the stickiness has gone and the consistency feels right. If it remains a little sticky, add a little more flour
- You can store the play dough in an air-tight container
- Take your toddler for a nature walk and collect twigs, pieces of bark, leaves, and flowers
- Once home, invite your child to knead, pound, stretch, and play with the dough
- Describe what the dough feels like as you play with your child
- Pull out your collected nature items and allow your child to press them into the dough to make nature sculptures

### What the activity does:

- Introduces new vocabulary such as: play dough, soft, hard, stretch, roll, sticks, leaves, flowers, imprint, and the colors of flowers
- Engages toddlers in imaginative play
- Practices small and large motor development
- Encourages children to study nature and the properties of natural materials



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