



Activity Guide: July

Items in *green* are included in your PBL kit from CMNH

Ages 0-24 months:

● **DIY Crayons: just right for little hands!**

- Use the *silicone muffin "tins"* to make your own crayons—perfect for little hands learning how to grip and color.
 - Collect broken pieces of crayon. Mix them all together in the muffin tin or separate into different colors (pinks/reds, yellow/orange, etc)
 - *Pro tip:* spray the tin with a little oil before baking for easiest removal of muffin crayons
 - Preheat oven to 275
 - Bake about 8-10 mins (*OR if it's a really hot day...stick them in direct sunlight for 30 minutes and then keep checking until pieces are melted- fun for older children to watch*)
 - Remove and let completely cool and then carefully pop out crayons for coloring fun!

- Put down big pieces of cardboard or paper and let babies explore (*be careful nobody takes a bite!*), show them how the crayons work and let them explore them. These fun crayon shapes may turn into building blocks or something to toss across the coloring surface and that's okay, too! Any amount of coloring/gripping is great for building up fine motor skills.

● **Soapy, sensory, ball pit fun**

- Use small bins or one larger container (small plastic pool?!) and place all the *plastic balls* inside.
- Next, make some foam! Put a small amount of baby soap in a container and add some water. Watch for it to foam up! *For super foaming action, use a hand mixer.* Scoop up the foam and put it in the container with the balls.
- Invite babies to play! The soap won't hurt clothes, but they will likely get pretty messy so expect that a change of clothes will be in order or make it a diaper-only playtime!
 - Very young babies could lie on their tummies and try a simplified version of this activity with a cookie tray, a tiny bit of foam, and some shapes or small toys.

Ages 2-3 years:

- Soak your parachute!
 - Is it a hot day?! Throw your parachute in a bucket of cold water and then play some parachute games. It'll be as much fun as parachute games usually are...only now with a cooling effect!
 - Bounce the plastic balls on top, have children take turns sitting underneath the parachute in the "rain forest", or if you're feeling really adventurous, put some water balloons on top of the parachute and throw them into the air!
 - Children will also like helping to soak the parachute again for more cooling fun!

- Leave the parachute outside to dry and talk a bit about how evaporation has made it dry again.
 - Looking for a great book that shows this concept? Try [The Little Raindrop](#) written by Joanna Gray and illustrated by Dubravka Kolanovic.

- Unusual material stamping:
 - Use some play-doh, clay, or other dough-like-substance and try out some stamping.
 - Use items like Duplos, roll the trucks over the dough, make patterns using cooking utensils from the set of bowls, or footprints using the jungle animals.
 - See what else this fun set of materials + dough becomes!

Ages 4-5 years:

● **Guided play: Keep them cool!**

- Plan this activity for a warm day when the sun is shining!
- The day before, freeze some of the **counting critters** in ice cube trays (if you'd like children to do this project individually) or medium size bowls or tupperware containers (if you'd like them to work in groups) or both!
 - Introduce the activity by telling children that animals need to keep cool in the summertime, just like us! It's our job to help these **little counting critters** STAY cool in their blocks of ice.
 - Provide some building supplies (**cardboard blocks, play silks**, recycled materials, tape, etc) and invite them to build shelters for the blocks of ice. See how creative they can be!
 - Try making a chart of how long each block stays frozen in each shelter
 - Once the blocks have melted, use **the sensory scoops** to pull out the critters so they can play!
 - It will likely turn into a fun splashy playtime!

Looking for a book about animals staying cool? Try [Do Lizards Eat Ice Cream?](#) A fun non-fiction book written by Etta Kaner and illustrated by Jenna Piechota. Travel the world and learn how different animals stay cool in hot weather! (If you don't have this book, there are YouTube readings of it you can watch with your students!) This book also has great invitations for movement ("Lizards dance to keep cool! Dance like a lizard!") etc!