



A Day at the Beach Without Ever Leaving the Playground!

Host a beach party at your center, and use this time to reinforce messages about sun safety and physical activity with the children.

Use the following tips to help plan your party:

Before spending any time out in the sun, make sure children are dressed appropriately. Send a flyer home to parents and guardians asking them to send children on the day of the beach party with their sunglasses and wide brimmed hats. Remind parents and guardians to apply sunscreen to the children before they arrive at your center.

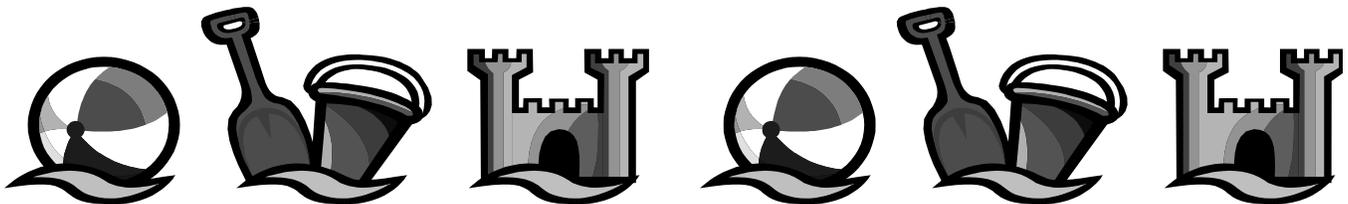
Plan some beach themed activities for the day. These ideas will help get you started:

Pack your bags! Draw a big beach bag on a piece of paper and make a copy for each child. Have each child draw on the bag what he or she would pack for a day at the beach. Make sure to remind children to pack things to keep them safe from the sun such as sunscreen, a wide brimmed hat, sunglasses, a beach umbrella and any other items that may help protect them from the sun.

Water, water everywhere! When you are at the beach there is water all around, but you can't drink it! Provide children with a water bottle and let them know that they should drink plenty of water throughout the day to help their bodies be ready for a day of fun!

Beach Dance Party! Scatter colorful beach towels on the floor and dance to the oldies. Try the Twist, the Swim and the Chicken. Children can also make up their own dance and the whole group can learn new moves. At the end of each song take a water break. Have the children put their hand on their heart to feel how fast it is beating. Share with them that dancing is helping their heart get stronger.

See other side for more ideas...



Beach Simon Says! Play Simon Says with a beach theme. Some examples to use include Simon Says, “take a walk on the beach,” “pick up seashells,” “pretend you are doing the backstroke,” or Simon Says “pretend that you are building a sand castle!” Have the kids think of a couple too! Don’t forget to trick them with instructions such as, “sit on your beach blanket all day!” Teach them the importance of moving more and sitting less.

Snazzy Sand Pails! For each child, draw a sand pail shape onto colored paper and cut it out. Then using sea animal sponges or tag board with paint, dab on painted shape. Use colored sand to sprinkle over the painted impression. Finally, if desired, add glue dots and sprinkle on colored glitter. Attach a yarn handle, and enjoy!

Crunchy Starfish! Precut medium sized starfish on tag board. Then in a small baggy, let the children crush corn flakes with a spoon. Let the child paint the starfish with glue and sprinkle on some crunchy corn flakes.

An Ocean of a Treat! Make your own edible beach. Supplies needed are a small bowl (can be paper or Styrofoam) or a large cup (bowls work best), vanilla pudding, blue food coloring, graham crackers and small party umbrellas (like the kind for drinks and usually can be found in craft or party stores). Place graham crackers in re-sealable bags and have children crush wafers using a rolling pin or round block. Next prepare pudding if not already made, add blue food coloring and mix well. Pour blue pudding into half of bowl or cup, and then add finely crushed graham crackers to the other half. Open umbrella and place on the graham cracker beach. Gummy fish can be added to the ocean and sometimes you can even find gummy crabs for the beach. The kids like the beach so much they almost don't want to eat them.

Mouth Watering Fruit Kabobs! Use pretzel sticks and thread about 4 pieces of cut up fruit onto each stick to form a kabob. You can dip the kabob in flavored yogurt such as chocolate, vanilla, cherry or blueberry and then sprinkle with granola cereal. Some suggestions for fruit to use include chunks of melon, oranges, bananas, mango, kiwi, pineapple, peaches, apricots, nectarines, strawberries and grapes. You can also use dried fruits such as apricots, apples, pitted dates or prunes. Talk with the children about each fruit you have chosen. Discuss where it has grown, how it is eaten, its color, texture and taste.

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