

Summer is Here!



## Activity Suggestions for SEN Students

Summer allows us the freedom to have fun, to spend time doing the things we love. Many of the activities that we can offer students with Complex Needs continue to allow the student to learn.

Play and having fun supports much development for all children. Through play and being with our family and friends students continue to develop fine and gross motor skills, cognitive development, language and communication skills and we can also support sensory learning through many activities.

Many students will still require some structure within their days, the following links provide an idea of what this might look like for students with complex needs:

<https://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Activities-and-ideas-for-learning-at-home-for-children-with-Severe-and-Profound-Needs.pdf>

<https://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Supporting-Learning-at-home-for-children-with-Down-Syndrome.pdf>

### Some Summer Fun Activities:

#### **Build a fort:**

Create a fantasy land. Building a tent or fort for / with the child can support imaginative development. Putting a tent outside and or even draping some blankets over some chairs can instantly create a safe play space. Providing different types of materials / toys can help to develop imaginative play. The tent could be a dinosaur enclosure or a princess castle depending on what we put into it. We can role-play with the child to model different types of play.



## Make your own ball pool:

Most children love “swimming” in ball pools, helping to develop fine and gross motor skills. They can offer a safe place for children. Making one at home is easy to do.



## Messy / Sensory Play-Stations:

Setting up sensory play-stations is a great way to support sensory development, as well as fine motor skills. And best of all easier to clean up after! We can offer playing with cars, driving them through the mud, bubble fun, water play activities and so much more. This link provides many ideas:



<https://www.thechaosandtheclutter.com/archives/huge-list-outdoor-sensory-fun>

## Sand and Water Table:

Another great learning through sensory experiences activity which can help support children’s tactile, vestibular and proprioceptive senses. See below link for further information:



<https://www.theottoolbox.com/sensory-play/>

Useful website links in relation to all types of Outdoor Sensory Play:

<https://www.theottoolbox.com/tactile-sensory-input-in-backyard-play/>

<https://www.thechaosandtheclutter.com/archives/huge-list-outdoor-sensory-fun>

## 2 ingredient ice-cream:

A delicious and healthy ice-cream that only needs 2 ingredients and no ice cream machine needed. This recipe is also dairy and gluten free!

If the student has a switch it can easily be used with this activity to allow them to turn on and off the blender to help make their ice-cream!

### **You will need:**

<b>2 Bananas</b>	
<b>1 punnet of strawberries</b>	
<b>Baking tray lined with greaseproof paper</b>	
<b>Blender or smoothie maker</b>	

## What to do:

### First:

Slice up the strawberries and bananas.



### Then:

Lay the fruit on the tray.



### Next:

Put the tray into the freezer for 2 hours.



**Now:**

**Put the fruit into the blender and turn on.**

It will take about 5 minutes to get an ice cream consistency.

(use your child's switch if they have one at home)



**Finally:**

**Scoop the ice-cream into a bowl or cone and enjoy!**



**More ideas and recipes for students with Complex Needs can be found here:**

<https://ncse.ie/visual-recipes>

<https://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Baking-Suggestions-for-students-with-Complex-Needs.pdf>

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/cooking-special-needs-children>

<https://able2learn.com/categories/visual-recipes>

<https://accessiblechef.com/>

# Summer Fun Water Play Activities:

## Toy Sorting



Just put some toys (perhaps sets of cars and sets of ducks so the child can sort and categorise) into a basin or large container of water (with bubbly wash) the children can scoop out with nets and sort.

## Water Experiments



Lots of fun scientific learning can take place when exploring and experimenting with water – What will float? What will sink? Materials and absorbency. All through natural contextual play. All you will need are a variety of objects, e.g. empty water bottles, corks, metal spoon, plastic spoon, and watch to see what happens with the items as they are placed in the water.

## Car Wash



This activity is all about sensory exploration. The student can experience the sensation of the water, the scent of the wash, even the texture of the towel as they dry off their cars. Cars can of course be substituted for any other water safe favoured toy... washing our dolls / washing our dinosaurs etc.

## Ice Melts



Make some coloured ice cubes using water and food colouring. Add to the water and watch how the food colouring runs into the water as the ice melts. Can be carried out in glasses like the picture but preferably for children with complex needs in a basin so that they can get their hands in and explore. Another great sensory sensation.

**Some more activities can be found through these websites:**

<https://www.firstdiscoverers.co.uk/sensory-activities-children-autism/>

<https://happyhooligans.ca/25-water-play-ideas-backyard/>

<https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/indoor-water-play-ideas-for-kids/>