



SUMMER

PLAY GUIDE

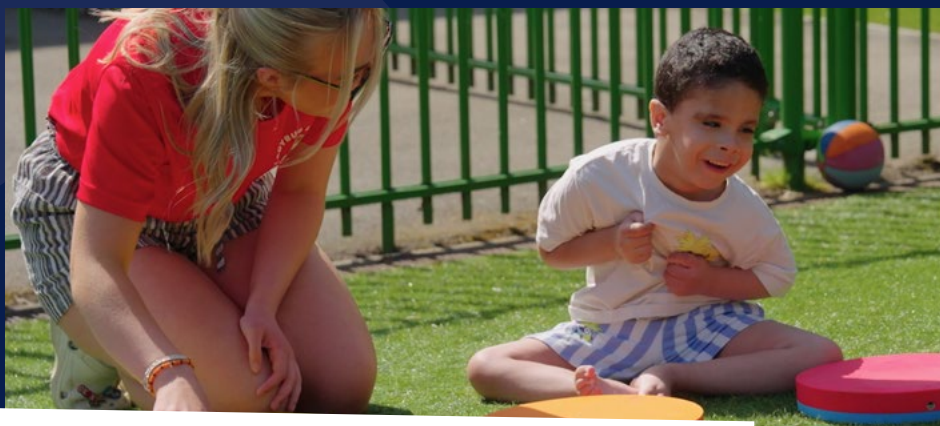


WELCOME TO OUR SUMMER PLAY GUIDE!

Summer is the perfect time to play, explore and make memories together! This guide is packed with simple, low-cost activities that encourage learning through fun, everyday items you may already have access to.

Play is so much more than keeping children busy. It helps develop communication, confidence, creativity, motor skills, problem-solving, relationships and so much more. That's why each activity includes a few of the amazing developmental benefits it naturally supports, along with ideas to make play as inclusive as possible.

At Newlife, we champion the joy of childhood and we believe every child deserves the chance to play, learn and thrive. We hope these activities bring lots of smiles, laughter and special moments.



We hope you love trying the activities in our guide!

If you take any pictures of your summer play, we'd love to see them! You can email them to **fundraise@newlifethecharity.co.uk** or share your snaps with us on social media:

 **newlifethecharity**  **@newlifethecharity**



**INCLUSIVE
ADAPTATIONS:**

Place materials on a raised table or tray for wheelchair access

Siblings can work together to rescue items from a larger ice block

ICE TREASURE RESCUE

You'll need:

- Ice cubes or frozen containers of water
- Small toys or plastic animals
- Bowls of warm water
- Spoons, cups or turkey baster

How to do it:

Freeze small toys inside ice overnight. Place the ice in a tray or bowl and encourage children to rescue the treasures using warm water and tools.

Development benefits:

- Strengthens hand and finger muscles
- Supports problem solving and cause-and-effect thinking
- Encourages sensory exploration through temperature and texture
- Builds patience and concentration

**INCLUSIVE
ADAPTATIONS:**

Particularly
accessible for children
with limited mobility

Siblings can create
and decorate bags
together



HOMEMADE SENSORY BAGS

You'll need:

- Zip-top freezer bags
- Hair gel, washing up liquid, water or shaving foam
- Buttons, sequins, beads and pom-poms
- Tape

How to do it:

Fill bags with sensory materials, seal tightly and tape to a table or window. Children press, squish and move items around inside.

Development benefits:

- Provides tactile sensory experiences without mess
- Strengthens hand and finger control
- Encourages visual tracking
- Can be calming and engaging

KITCHEN SMELL STATION

You'll need:

- Herbs, spices, tea bags, coffee, vanilla extract, citrus peel
- Small containers

How to do it:

Invite children to smell each item and describe what they notice.

Development benefits:

- Develops sensory awareness
- Expands descriptive language
- Supports memory and association skills

INCLUSIVE ADAPTATIONS:

Entire activity can be completed at a table or where the child is comfortable

Siblings can quiz each other



INCLUSIVE ADAPTATIONS:

Can also be explored with hands

SENSORY FOOTPATH

You'll need:

- Towels
- Grass
- Bubble wrap
- Cushions

How to do it:

Create a path of different textures to explore.

Development benefits:

- Sensory awareness
- Balance and body awareness
- Expands descriptive language

**INCLUSIVE
ADAPTATIONS:**

Siblings can take
turns being customers
and shopkeepers
Tabletop play



ICE CREAM SHOP PRETEND PLAY

You'll need:

- Bowls, spoons and cups
- Pom-poms, cotton wool balls or scrunched coloured tissue paper
- Muffin cases

How to do it:

Create a pretend ice cream shop and take orders. Make your creations using the various sensory materials.

Development benefits:

- Encourages social communication
- Supports imaginative play
- Develops counting and sorting skills
- Builds confidence through role-play

NATURE WALK BRACELET

You'll need:

- Masking tape or wide sticky tape
- Scissors
- Leaves, petals, grass, feathers, small flowers or other natural materials

How to do it:

Wrap a strip of masking tape around your child's wrist with the sticky side facing out, creating a bracelet. During a walk in the garden, park or local green space, encourage children to collect small natural items and stick them onto their bracelet. They can add colours, textures and shapes as they explore.

Development benefits:

- Encourages observation and exploration of the natural world
- Develops visual discrimination and attention to detail
- Supports language development through discussing colours, textures and plants
- Strengthens fine motor skills through picking up and placing small items
- Promotes creativity and self-expression

Extend the play:

After the walk, use the bracelet to:

- Count and sort the items collected
- Talk about favourite discoveries
- Create a nature-inspired story

INCLUSIVE ADAPTATIONS:

Create themed challenges such as 'find something soft' or 'find different shades of green'

Siblings can work together

INCLUSIVE ADAPTATIONS:

If outdoor space is limited, use natural materials collected beforehand and explore them together on a table

Can be completed at a child's own pace and while seated or using a wheelchair



For more information visit our website
newlifecharity.co.uk or call us on **0800 902 0095**



Newlife the Charity for Disabled Children.
Registered Charity Number 1170125 in England & Wales.

