

**FACT SHEET**

**Getting Organised for Creative Activities and Projects**

Hello- I’m Bruce McNeice – a former school Principal, Homeschool Dad, and education consultant. My passion is to impart courage to parents, and to equip and support parents in their God-given role of teaching and training their children to reach their full potential, and live an abundant life.

Being prepared for the spontaneous as well as the planned creative activities of children can make life a lot less stressful. Mess is inevitable however, so make sure your activities are either outside or in as easy to clean place as possible. Make it part of the fun to clean up, in fact state it from the outset.

An excellent resource book is the Women’s Weekly publication “Fun activities for kids”( it used to be available at most newsagents, Coles, Woolworths or bookshops)… which was packed full of activities and recipes for a broad range of fun activities for children.

A word of caution, however, is that you will enjoy these fun activities so much you will be compelled to collect absolutely everything! It is very addictive. Enlist the help of relatives and non-home-school friends to collect some of these treasures for you. Also, like in a preschool, container everything (ice cream containers are ok, or click-lock containers) and only permit access to a **limited** **amount** of resources at a time. The following list gives some ideas.

This list depends on your family's curriculum, maturity and academic growth/age:

a) Pencils: We use ‘HB’ because ‘2B’ was too difficult to erase. Different brands have different results. Rubbers at the end of pencils are attractive but we found they smudged more than erased. Each child gets two ‘HB pencils’. I keep 10-20 in storage.

b) Good metal sharpener: 1 each and 1 for mum;

c) Good erasers: 1 each and 2 for mum;

d) Coloured pencils: Buy some good quality pencils because the cheaper woods of some made the pencil shatter. If you can't afford a set of each, buy 1 large set for the whole family. We did this and we lost very few pencils this way.

e) Crayola felt pens are good value. We had an occasional mishap with lids left off and they simply needed a dip in water to revive them. Cheaper varieties were a waste of money. These felts were also resistant to heavy-duty use (as when toddlers make dots with added force), whereas the bin was the final resting place for cheap varieties. We were given a barrel of Crayola felt pens and have gradually added "Stampers and Squiggles”. The older children prefer the fine point felt pens. Our toddlers were not allowed felt pens until they showed self-control in using them (i.e. didn’t eat them, poke them into strange or dangerous places or drew on floors, walls, books or themselves).

f) Rulers: Plastic or metal last longer. 1 each and 1 for mum;

g) Geometry set: Older students;

h) Nikko fine point felt pen for map, titles & labelling;

i) Chalkboard / Chalk door / Whiteboard...”

**Useful Box:**

1. Wrapping paper- save from gifts

2. Sweet wrappers- especially foil, cellophane

3. Egg cartons- cardboard for craft, plastic as paint holders

4. Spent toilet rolls

5. Margarine, yogurt, other plastic pots

6. Cardboard boxes- all sizes from tiny to fridge size (great for cubbies, forts)

7. Paddle pop sticks, raffia scraps, noodles (colour yourself in dye or the children can paint), all kinds of seeds, legumes, rice, leaves (autumn)

The list is endless and books from libraries will add to the list.

**Craft List:**

1. Stickytape: If you can buy bulk, do so. Believe me; children use phenomenal amounts of 2cm wide sticky tape. Get a couple of dispensers too.

2. Cardboard & A4 paper: reams of coloured pastel, bright, black, fluorescent

3. Tracing paper

4. Ziplock bags: A4 and ½ A4 size – great to store projects in process

5. Plastic tablecloth

6. Paint: It is more economical to buy 2 litre bottles of primary colours at school supplies or if you have little ones you could buy edicol dyes at some kindies or school supplies shops or toy shops. Most of these shops have internet sites and mail order. To save more dollars your support group could organize a bulk order or have Sunstate school supplies bus come to your home or a designated hall to sell you all you want

7. Scissors: one pair per child and one for an adult. Store these in an upturned tin with holes punched in the top. That way you can see if you have any scissors missing.

 You could also purchase fancy scissors- Silly Sollys warehouse are cheap.

8. For those brave or mad enough: glitter glue sticks (Silly’s warehouse are cheapest), glitter, foil card.

**THE KEY IS ORGANISED STORAGE**

* Lockable storage cupboard, chest, or filing cabinet.
* Containers, labelled for ease of recognition

Remember: Clean-up is part of all craft/play time- never do it by yourself.

If it is messy do it all outside. I made a slap together table when my children were small – 60 cm high by 1.2m long by 60 cm wide. It was painted well and not so precious that I couldn’t hose it down afterwards. Old large men’s shirts are cheap at second-hand shops. Use them as paint aprons (put on backwards- remove collar if necessary)

We always had a basin nearby to wash hands and whatever other body part that needed it, and another basin for the tools of fun- paint brushes, glue pots.

The other Key is to play a little yourself- some children will learn to play as you play. They will see you as a co-learner and ally too.

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Before you go – I would like to briefly pray a blessing over you.

Lord God - awesome creator of the universe, you came to set the captives free; and to give us abundant life. So, I ask your blessing over these dear folk as they launch out on their learning journey. Help them to comprehend the breadth and depth of your love for them, and open their eyes to this amazing learning journey in pursuit of all goodness, truth and beauty. Bless them, in Jesus name amen.