

Houston Parks and Recreation Department

Youth and Family Engagement

Activities

Week of December 7 – December 11, 2020

Cone Drill (Fun Fitness)

Children need to develop their footwork. Doing so will help them in their development of body control and awareness. Set out a line of five cones into an easy footwork pattern. Instruct them to run through the course forward and back before you change it up. Short bursts of exercise like this are important because it can keep their attention better than long jogs.

Flower Pose (Youth Yoga)

Come to sit on your buttocks with a tall spine, lift your legs, balance on your sitting bones, touch the soles of your feet together, and weave your arms under your legs.

3D Paper Christmas Tree (6ft Social Distancing Fun)

Supplies:

- Construction Paper. Green, and brown to create the tree, then any other scraps and pieces for decorating.
- White Cardstock or a piece of thicker paper for the backdrop.
- Glue Stick
- Decorations

Start by prepping your paper strips. You will need one 1"x6" brown strip for the trunk. You will also need between 5 & 7 green strips. These will be 1"x9" (the short length of the paper). Stack your green strips leaving about half an inch before placing the next one. Flip-up the opposite end and trim off the extra green. Fold over the end to create a tab. Even out the other side of the strips and fold in the same direction. Your green paper should now go from full-length strips down to a very short strip. It's time to decorate! (It's recommended to use red and green sequins). Cut out a star to be added to the top of your tree. Once your branches are all decorated it is time to assemble the tree. Place the trunk in the center of the page near the bottom. Start near the top of your page with the shortest green strip. Use the tabs that were folded earlier to add glue. They will touch on the paper creating an arch. Take the next smallest and place using the same technique a little lower so there is a little gap between the tabs. Continue this all the way down your tree.

Microhike (Hands-on Nature)

On a microhike, kids can pretend to be small and explore an ecosystem: a biological community of living things interacting with their environment, in this case, your backyard. Create a circular habitat somewhere in the yard using a hula hoop or a piece of string. Have family members surround the micro-ecosystem and point out everything they see. The goal is not to hike far, but to explore your yard at a "micro" level. Focus on the life that lives under rocks, logs, and our feet. Have the kids pretend they're ants; encourage them to shrink down small and get close to the ground to explore! Discuss the importance of using all five senses in looking for small things. If you want your kids to explore a new part of the yard, consider throwing a bean bag or frisbee to a spot and have the kids explore the area around where the object lands.

Family Appreciation Grams (Family Engagement)

Appreciation grams consist of little notes with words of thanks, recognition, or good wishes. Allow family members to create appreciation grams for each other to reinforce the importance of family engagement.