



Building Kids' Brains during Wait Times (without electronic games!)

by **Judy Arnall**

Are you worried about your children's bent necks and poor posture? Do their batteries run out at the wrong time? Concerned that your toddler might drop your smart phone? You don't have to rely on cell-phone applications, portable handheld gaming devices/media players and other electronic devices to occupy your kids during waiting times.

These constructive ideas will stimulate imagination, creativity, intellect, problem-solving and social skills. Best of all, they don't require cables or batteries, can be taken anywhere and will amuse toddlers to teens. All of these items should fit in a small 9X12 inch container, such as a rectangular plastic box with a snap lid, a backpack, a lunchbox or even a laptop side pocket or briefcase for ease of carrying to restaurants, doctors' offices or airports.

The Busy Brain Kit for all Ages

- 1. Pipe-cleaners** These versatile little wires can be molded into cars, people and many other items for make-believe play.
- 2. Play dough** Keep moist in a plastic Ziploc bag. Kids can make 3D sculptures for toys. With a digital camera, teens can make animated figure movies.
- 3. Masking tape or cello tape**
- 4. Scissors**
- 5. Small whiteboard** and dry-erase markers, with a cloth for erasing. Endless opportunities to make signs, keep game scores, or play picture games.
- 6. Colouring markers** My kids used to colour the doctor's waiting

room bed-covering paper!

7. Pens and Pencils Play hangman or other words games. Write in a journal or just draw!

8. Plain paper for drawing houses and scenes, or constructing cars, buildings, items and people, to be coloured, cut out and assembled with tape and scissors.

9. Deck of cards Great for teens to play Cheat, Snap, Spoons, Blackjack, Uno and many other games.

10. Dice for playing addition, multiplication, and chance challenges. Dice also work with homemade board games created from above items.

The play value in this box of items will last a long time, especially if you only keep it for on-the-go errands. In the rare event that your child might get bored, you could also bring a book, and read to your child. Encourage your school-age child or teen to bring along a book too.

Judy Arnall, BA, DTM, CCFE is a professional certified parenting and teacher conference speaker, and trainer, mom of five children, and author of the world-wide best-selling print book, ***Discipline Without Distress: 135 tools for raising caring, responsible children without time-out, spanking, punishment or bribery.*** Judy has also produced the DVD, ***Plugged-In Parenting: Connecting with the digital generation for health, safety and love,*** and her latest new book, ***Parenting With Patience: Turn frustration into connection with 3 easy steps.*** Stay tuned for the upcoming book, ***From Unschooling to University,*** to be published Spring 2016. www.professionalparenting.ca, jarnall@shaw.ca, 403-714-6766 Sign up for notifications of free monthly parenting webinars. Copyright permission granted for "reproduction without permission" of this article in whole or part, if the above credit is included in its entirety.

Copyright permission granted for "reproduction without permission" of this article in whole or part, if the above credit is included in its entirety. Sections may be deleted for space constraints.