

Theme: Families

Gross Motor (Indoor & Outdoor):

Using a piece of foam-core board (or wood), draw a big shape of a Mom with an apron. The apron “pocket” should be a hole. Let the children throw bean bags into the “pocket.”

Roll up a bunch of socks into “balls” and let children throw them into a laundry basket or hamper!

Family bowling: Use empty milk jugs, 2-liter bottles, etc., to make bowling pins. Let children “bowl” by rolling balls and trying to knock down the pins.

Math Activities:

Match game: Let children match pictures of families.

Family puzzles: Cut out pictures of people from magazines and glue them onto cardstock. Cut each picture in half puzzle-style and let children try to match the puzzle pieces.

Concentration: Use family pictures or clip art to make two-of-a-kind cards to play a good ol’ fashioned game of concentration.

Science Activities:

Talk about animal families—what do you call a baby goose, a baby cat, a baby dog, etc.

What color are your eyes? Let children look at each other’s eyes and count how many children have blue eyes, brown eyes, green eyes. You can do the same thing with brown hair, black hair, blonde hair, red hair.

Small Motor/Manipulatives:

Bingo: Use some large buttons to play bingo. Pour water into plastic baby bottles and screw on the tops.

Play with an assortment of rattles, pop beads, etc.

Snacks:

Let children share their families’ favorite snacks! Call parents ahead of time and find out what their favorite snacks are so you can prepare them for the children. Let children guess who’s favorite snack each one is.

Special Visual Aids/Room Set-Up/Field Trips:

Collect pictures of each child with his/her family and laminate them onto ¼” foam core board. Children will have fun seeing each other’s families in the pictures. Children can also bring their family photos to “show and tell” for circle time.

Songs & Fingerplays: Google “family fingerplays” and get a list!

Dramatic Play:

Put out a basket of “grown up” clothes for children to wear to pretend they’re their parents. Put out baby dolls for the “children”.

Family chores – help set the table, prepare snack, etc.

Going shopping – set up a “store” with empty cereal boxes, etc., so the kids can do the grocery shopping.

Books:

More More More, Said the Baby by Vera B. Williams
Mommy Loves Her Baby/Daddy Loves His Baby by Tara Jaye Morrow
The Day I Had to Play with My Sister by Crosby Bonsall
Families by Ann Morris
The Family Book by Todd Parr
Who's in a Family? by Robert Skutch and Laura Nienhaus
All-of-a-Kind Family by Sydney Taylor
Little Fur Family by Margaret Wise Brown
Clifford's Family by Norman Bridwell
My Family's Changing by Pat Thomas
All Kinds of Families by Norma Simon
Your Forever Family by Amy Parker, Rosita Schandy, and Neal Wooten
Me and My Family Tree by Joan Sweeney and Annette Cable
The Little Brute Family by Russell Hoban and Lillian Hoban
Families are Forever by Craig Shemin
The Gifts of Being Grand by Marianne Richmond
That's What Grandparents are For by Arlene Uslander and Freddie Levin
When Your Grandparent Dies by Victoria Ryan and R. W. Alley
Spot Visits His Grandparents by Eric Hill
Find Grandpa Everywhere by John Hodge and Susan Aitken
My New Baby by Annie Kubler
What Baby Needs by William Sears et al.
Sisters and Brothers by Robin Page Steve Jenkins
The Berenstain Bears' New Baby by Stan & Jan Berenstain

Other popular books:

- Love You Forever
- The Runaway Bunny
- Are You My Mother?
- Where is Baby's Mommy?
- I'm a Big Brother
- I'm a Big Sister
- The Berenstain Bears Hug and Make Up
- The Berenstain Bears Count Their Blessings
- The Berenstain Bears and the Trouble with Grownups
- The Berenstain Bears Get in a Fight
- The Berenstain Bears and Baby Makes Five
- The Berenstain Bears and the Week at Grandma's
- The Berenstain Bears and the Mama's Day Surprise
- The Berenstain Bears and the Papa's Day Surprise

Art:

Make a family tree! Cut out and glue a tree trunk shape onto construction paper, then add leaves. Add pictures of a mom, dad, siblings, etc., to the tree. These can be real photos, or magazine pictures.

Make paper bag puppets using pictures of family members from magazines.

Blow up a balloon for each child. Let them use markers to decorate "faces" on the balloons.

Make face masks out of paper plates. Let children decorate them with paint, yarn, etc.

Circle Time Activities:

If you can get them to come, have children's parents take turns coming in for circle time – maybe one parent per day during the week – to share stories about their family, what they enjoy doing together, places they've traveled, places they've lived, etc.

Have a dinner party! Let the children plan the menu for a given day, such as Friday, and let them set the table, help prepare the meal, do the dishes/clean up, etc.

Folding clothes: Teach children how to fold towels.

Give the baby a bath: Let children bathe dolls in the water table. You can talk about being careful with babies while they shampoo their hair, wash the dolls with a soft wash cloth and soap, etc.

What can we do to help out at home? We can pick up our clothes and put them in the laundry basket. We can take our dishes to the sink. We can wipe off the table. We can sweep the floors.

We can entertain our younger brothers and sisters. We can put the pillows back on the sofa.

Musical chairs: Put pictures of smiley faces on the floor in a circle – or faces cut from magazines. Children can walk around the circle and when the music stops, run to a face!

Have the children complete this sentence: "I love my family because...." or "One thing I like to do with my family is...."

Play games like "Mother, May I?" and "Daddy Says" (like Simon Says).

Ask "How many people are in your family?" and let the children help you make a graph to show the size of everyone's family.