

Raising Playful Tots show #4 Christmas Play Activities with Allie of
Notimeforflashcards.com

Melitsa: Welcome to another edition of Raising Playful Tots.

We want to get some play activities in so today we are going to be talking some holiday related play activities and play ideas with Allie from notimeforflashcards.com. Welcome Allie! How are you?

Allie: I'm great thanks how are you?

Melitsa: Great. Bit busy but good.

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself.

Allie: Sure. I blog at Notimeforflashcards.com. Which is a blog really dedicated to be a resources for parents for activities, like crafts. We do a lot of crafts and songs. We try and relate them back to books. I find that books are really a great jumping point for kids to play. I know a lot of my son's imaginative play comes from books as well.

I always try and link books that are of the same theme for the crafts and the activities that I am doing that day with my son. There are step by step instructions there. I also blog at familyeducation.com. I am one of their parent bloggers. I do the same thing there. I do crafts and other learning activities. Ways of sneaking learning into your day with children.

I post for Parentella as well. This is a similar post with crafts and books.

So I have background in preschool. I taught preschool and was a director of preschool before staying home with my son. Prior to that I have a degree in elementary education. I come from an education background. But we really go at it with the hope of playing and discovery.

Melitsa: Brilliant. Today we are going to be looking at a few things that happen a lot at this time of year. Since we are all so busy getting ready for the holidays. We're planning to move away and be with aunts, uncles and cousins. Sometimes we don't have enough time to pack our entire toy collection and we just don't have enough space. We

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find we are marooned at somebody's house. Without our toys and without our things and all these kids. **Can you suggest, Allie, some festive ideas?**

Allie: One of my favourite things I would do with my son. When we are like someone like a hotel or our families house when there is no toys. We go on colour hunts. We love to do that. You'd be surprised at how old kids, how young kids can do a young hunt and how old they will still enjoy it. There is a good range. You can make it hard. You can say go find something red for little guys. You can make it harder to find something scarlet. If you are away at families house they probably have a Christmas s tree up or other festive decorations. There are more colors up than there normal is. We really enjoying doing that.

Another really fun thing is to use holiday circulars. The ads that come in the paper for crafts. There are beautiful colours in there. You can cut and paste . You can pick up glue up at any 7/11. You don't need a Joannes or Micheal's to get basic craft supplies if you're family doesn't have them at your house. Some scissors and some paper. Use regular newspaper in the background. You can do fun things like make a wreath . Cut a circle out. Cover it with green . Find red in the fliers or circulars. You can easily do a Christmas tree.

I did one on my site: [Collage Christmas Tree](#).



Photo: Notimeforflashcards.com

It is very easy to do. Glue paper and it will take them a long time. You can do a whole series of them.

Banners- There are not that hard to do. You need some ribbon. You take pictures and punch holes in them and make a whole banner of picture with a digital camera or a disposable one. That will keep them busy for a *long* time.

With babies you can work with pots and pans. Luckily grandparents still think it is cute

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when the little guys make a tone of noise. You can go and do some Christmas shopping while they listen to their sweet little grandchild makes a racket.

Melitsa : They like it when you can do cooking and activities with them.

Allie: Absolutely.

Melitsa: I've spent time with my parents, I come back and the ovens going. There is mixing is going on. Some of the stuff is all over the place. They just love that whole time. Baking cookies and getting stuff everywhere and tasting everything. Because of course grandma lets them try everything first.

Allie: My mom bakes cookies with my son all the time.

Melitsa: This moves us nicely on to the next question. We have a preschooler or toddler at home. You want to do something holiday related with them. But it's such a busy time at this time of year for mums You have this dilemma. You want to do something holiday activities with them but sometimes when you look at the activities they can take a while. You've got cookies to bake, menus to plan, parties to go to. You've got so many things going on. You still want to do something festive. **Can you suggest something from your own house that they can do tonight!**

Allie: We like to make the festive activity into a gift. It checks something else off your list. They don't have to be big gifts. One thing we did last year that we did and enjoyed and was easy. We make gift tags with my son's picture on them for his grandparents gift. They double as an ornament as well. It was very easy to do. My favourite thing for festive crafts is sticky back glitter foam.

I get it at Walmart. I live in a small town. I won't do a craft if I can't find it in my town. I want to make sure readers that able to do it. It's so easy to get one piece of foam you put the picture down. You cut out the frame on top. You peel off the back , stick it on and it is done. Then you take a pipe cleaner or chenille stem, whichever way you call it. You make a loop and put it on the present. They can hang it on their tree. Super super easy! It's light so if you have to pack it because you made it at home and you're going somewhere else it is no going to weigh down you suitcase especially since

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they charge you for everything.

Allie: It's super easy to do. It's fast and glittery.

Toddlers and preschoolers don't have a long attention span. But they are so proud of themselves when they make something they can show off. So that pride is a huge reason I love to do crafts with my son. When Dad comes home, "Look what I made for Granny and Grandpa." It's great!. That is one trick I have.

The other thing is, don't think that things have to be done. Children can do long term projects. I had a classroom of two year olds doing a project. We did this rainbow and it took months to do. You can put stuff down and return to it. Don't let, 'This is going to take too long' be a barrier. Can I break it up? Can I do the first two steps today and the next on Wednesday? You might be able to.

The other thing, one thing my son liked doing last year and he was just two. I would take plan paper, cut it out in a Christmas shape. Give him red and green markers and let him go for it.

It was great because it was open play for him to colour. But because it was in the shape of a stocking or a holly. It looked really really great especially when we had a whole series of them pinned up together. So, I think often times that moms especially, things don't have to be complicated for it to be cute and be fun. Things can be really basic and still provide a fun festive look.

We often look at how totally complicated our recipes are at this time of year. I have so much to do. I have this and that to do. I got to pick up crème Fraiche. For some reason Christmas things always require crème fraiche..... and it's like..... I can't even get it in this town!

But crafts with your kids can be so simple!

Melitsa: Allie and I had so much fun talking about holiday play activities and crafts that we have made this into a 3 part series. So join us next time for the second part.