

#### Social-Emotional Support: Leka Ho'omana'o



Traditions bring a sense of belonging. Start a new tradition with your infant this year. Spend a quiet moment writing a leka ho'omana'o (keepsake letter) to your infant that highlights shared memories over the past year. Later, stamp your infant's handprint on the bottom of the leka ho'omana'o. Fold and store in a holiday keepsake box. The memories you collect over the years will connect your growing infant to a greater sense of belonging in your 'ohana.

#### Cognitive Development: Infant 'Ulu Maika



Makahiki season was a time for games. 'Ulu maika was a competition to see who could roll an 'ulu (round, smooth stone) with the most precision and strength. Encourage your infant to practice using eye-hand coordination to grasp and roll various sized balls across your lawn. Encourage your infant with a playful and competitive cheer, "I mua, i mua a lanakila! (Forward, forward to victory!)" Your encouragement will create a loving environment for your infant develop po'okela (excellence).

#### Playful Parenting: Chinese Tiger Dance



In Chinese tradition, dancers welcome in the New Year by tucking under a large lion puppet and dancing to the beat of drums and cymbals. Show your infant how to grasp a metal spoon and bang it against a tin can like a cymbal. Use an empty oatmeal container like a drum and show your infant how to use their hands to hit it to make sounds. Toss a lightweight bed sheet over your head and shoulders. As your infant bangs away, be playful and do a lion dance puppet show. Good luck to you and your 'ohana this Chinese New Year!

# Kēkēmapa| December Multi-Cultural Traditions and Celebrations Toddler Activities

## Social-Emotional Support: Traditional Comfort Meals



Home-made meals are often part of traditions. The familiar aroma and flavors in a special meal brings a sense of comfort to those in your home. Have your toddler help you make a traditional Portuguese bean soup this holiday season. Your toddler can help rinse the beans and taste test the tomato based broth. Remember to always supervise your toddler while cooking in the kitchen. After you enjoy the soup together, model ho'omaika'i (gratitude) and pack up a bowl to share with someone in need.

## Cognitive Development: DIY Travel Play Activity



Traveling in a car to visit relatives can feel long for active toddlers. Create an DIY play activity that engages your toddler's mind while you drive. Color a bunch of wide popsicle sticks with washable markers. Adhere small magnet squares to the back side of each stick and store them in a resealable plastic bag. Show your toddler how the magnets hold the sticks to a small cookie sheet pan. After your toddler buckles up, they can practice putting the sticks on the pan while you focus on the road.

## Playful Parenting: Playful Holiday Parade



Holiday parades are a fun tradition in many communities. Use a large cardboard box to create a pretend float for a playful parade at home. Have your toddler help you decorate the box with washable paint. While drying, collect ferns and flowers from outside to add as decor. Tie a string to the box so your toddler can pull the float across the floor. Hang a string of lights around the room to create a festive feeling and put on your favorite holiday music. What a po'okela (excellent) parade!

# Kēkēmapa| December Multi-Cultural Traditions and Celebrations Preschooler Activities

## Social-Emotional Support: Wave to 'Ohana



Meeting new 'ohana during the holidays can make your preschooler feel uneasy. Take time to model how to respond to unfamiliar 'ohana through play. Have your preschooler's teddy bear be keiki and role play different things Teddy can say if he's feeling cautious. Say, "Teddy, I know you don't want to honi (kiss) but you can wave aloha. I'll wave with you. Let's try." When you arrive at your travel destination, remind keiki that Teddy waves aloha and they can too!

## Cognitive Development: Playdough Mochi Pounding



Many people in Hawai'i celebrate the New Year with Japanese mochi pounding. Use playdough and pretend to pound mochi with your preschooler. Find various household items and experiment with pounding mochi. What happens when you pound mochi with a heavy metal spoon? What about a light, wooden rice paddle? Compare the shapes and sizes of your mochi. Ask keiki which ones are po'okela (outstanding) and worth sharing with loved ones? Sharing mochi is sharing well wishes!

## Playful Parenting: Firework Hanu



Popping fireworks on New Year's Eve (NYE) is a common tradition in Hawai'i and can be stimulating to your preschooler. Before you head over to your NYE party, model taking playful "firework hanu (breath)" to help regulate your preschooler. Hanu mai (breathe in) and press your hands together in front of your heart. Hanu aku (breathe out) and move your hands up over your head while you wiggle your fingers like a popping firework. Hanu helps calm the excitement NYE can bring.