



# Flying Start for kids



## Playing with cardboard boxes:

activities for children aged 2 to 6 years

Cardboard boxes are a fantastic tool for fostering creativity and imagination in young children.

These versatile items can be transformed into various play scenarios, like castles, shops, caves, and more. Engaging with boxes helps children develop problem-solving skills as they use their imagination to bring ideas to life.

Boxes also encourage physical play. A child's imagination is endless.





## What you need

- **Craft supplies:** scissors (with supervision), glue, tape, coloured markers, crayons, material, colourful paper, foil, fabric, paper plates, pop sticks, cellophane, wrapping paper.
- **Other household, toy items:** cushions, tea sets, toys, puppets, socks, clothing, sheets, chairs, tables.

## How to encourage play

Allow your child to lead the direction of play and offer support as they explore the materials. Ask open questions like, **'I wonder what you could make with these boxes?'**, or **'what else could you add?'**. Offer assistance as your child needs it and support them to make decisions, solve problems and explore the materials (they don't need to be perfect).



## How to set up a play environment

If your child needs inspiration, you could encourage them to set up a play environment such as:

**An airport or carpark:** Make a vehicle using a box for the body, then add wheels, wings or a roof. Ask your child, **'what else is needed?'**. Allow your child to decorate and add items. Follow their creativity.

**A house, home, castle or hideout:** Start with a large box and ask your child, **'how do we get inside the house?'**, **'what else does the house, home need?'**. Let your child explore bringing real world items such as cushions and tea sets into their creation to enhance imaginative play.

**Costume party:** Ask, **'what type of character could you turn into using the boxes?'**. Consider having different shapes and sizes of materials available, perhaps roll up some materials to become arms or legs for a costume.

**Puppet theatre:** Create a puppet theatre from a box by cutting a doorway and window, add a curtain then encourage your child to use puppets, toys or characters drawn on cardboard to create a story. Your child may even want to use a sock puppet or their hand.

**Sensory play:** Allow your child to explore the materials and how they feel, discuss what the different textures feel like - bumpy, slippery, soft, hard?

**Active play:** Encourage your child to use the boxes to climb in and around as a tunnel or even a jack-in the box.



## Adapting play for different ages and abilities

The opportunities are endless. Allow your child to be the leader, make mistakes and solve problems as they explore.

- **Younger children** may need more direction and support to bring their ideas to life.
- **Older children** may seek guidance but allow them to solve problems, such as deciding how to attach materials or where to position boxes for different activities.

