

Parenting the Preschooler

 **Working for Wisconsin Families**

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Bubbles

People of all ages are fascinated with soap bubbles. The most exciting bubbles are the ones we blow for enjoyment outdoors on a beautiful day with bubble pipes or wands. The most common bubbles are those we see floating in the kitchen sink or bathtub.

You and your preschooler can have lots of fun with bubbles and you can make your own bubble solution very economically.

Recipe for Bubble Solution

6 cups water
2 cups clear dishwashing liquid (Joy or Dawn*)
¼ cup glycerine

Directions: Combine. Stir. Let bubble solution settle at least four hours. Bubbles are best after 24 hours.

When mixing up a batch of bubble mix, you should realize that there are several sure-fire bubble bursters--dirt and other bubbles. Try to make sure that the containers you use are very clean. Avoid stirring or shaking too much or too quickly as that can cause suds. Bubbles tend to like cold air, but sometimes there is not much you can do about that.

Use Different Objects to Blow Bubbles

Drinking straws
Funnels
Scissors
Rubber bands
Tin cans with both ends cut off
Piece of tubing
Plastic holder from soda pack with six openings
Piece of string formed into a loop
Thread spools (dip one end, blow out the other end)

Coat hanger: Open up the coat hanger and bend it to any shape you like--star, heart, square...but remember that your bubbles will always be round. Use pliers to bend the handle of the coat hanger flat. Then wrap it with string to make it easier to hold onto. Continue wrapping the hoop with string in a spiral fashion so that the hoop will hold more solution and make bigger bubbles.

Your hands: Put your hands together so they form an opening between your thumbs and your index fingers. Put your hands into a bowl of bubble solution until you have a soap film formed. Then blow bubbles through your fingers.

Fun Activities with Bubbles

Hold bubbles on your hand

Have your child wet their hands. (Once hands are wet, you can touch and hold bubbles with-out popping them. It's dryness that pops bubbles.)

- ▶ See who can hold a bubble the longest.
- ▶ Transfer a bubble from one hand to the other.
- ▶ Dip a straw into the bubble solution. While holding a bubble on your hand, insert the straw into the bubble and blow gently. See how much air you can add to the bubble before it pops.
- ▶ Get a straw completely wet with bubble solution. Push the straw in one side of the bubble. Then see if you can pull it out the other side or straight up without breaking the bubble.

Bubble in a jar

Rinse a jar with water. Place a bubble in the jar. Close jar. Count how many days the bubble lasts.

Watch for colors on a bubble

Look carefully at a bubble. Sometimes you can see reflections in a bubble. If you look carefully you will see lots of colors swirling around on the surface of a bubble. Just before a bubble bursts some part of the bubble will look like it has lots of black swirls on it. Black on a bubble shows where it is thinnest and weakest.

Bubble within a bubble

Form a bubble. Put it on a surface moistened with bubble solution. Wet a straw with bubble solution. Push the straw into the bubble. Blow a smaller bubble. Remove the straw. If you are careful you should be able to form a bubble within a bubble.

Make a bubble wall

Take two sheets of clear plastic, separated by about ½ inch. Soak them in the bubble solution. Then blow bubbles between the sheets of plastic.

Look closely at the wall. What shape are the bubbles? (Bubbles form hexagons with 120° angles.) They look like the cells of a beehive.

Freeze bubbles

Blow a bubble outside in the wintertime. Let it freeze on the wand or at the end of a straw. What color is it? (Frozen bubbles have no color, unlike the colorful bubbles you see at warmer temperatures.)

Deflate a bubble slowly

1. Tie a piece of string around the stem of a funnel so the string hangs down below the funnel.
2. Tie a loop in the loose end of the string.
3. Dip the funnel, string and all into the bubble solution.
4. Remove it and blow a big bubble by blowing into the stem of the funnel. (The string will lie along the outer surface of the bubble.)
5. Using a sharp pencil, poke a hole in the bubble through the loop of the string and watch what happens. First the loop of string will stretch into a perfect circle. Then the bubble slowly collapses.

The bubble doesn't pop instantly when you puncture it because the string prevents a long tear from developing in the soap film. The bubble deflates as the air escapes through the small hole inside the string.

For more information on bubbles

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* Mention of brand name does not imply endorsement or discrimination

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