

Pointers For Parents

The Word On Indoor Fun: Play With Clay

(NAPSA)—Playing with clay is shaping up to be a popular activity when the kids are home from school and it's too hot or too wet to play outside. One great, easy idea that keeps kids happy and interested is to make your own play clay.

By using cornstarch play clay the kids can get involved in measuring the ingredients, mixing, stirring in the water and rolling the clay, then sculpting or cutting it into shapes with cookie cutters for hours of fun.

The best cornstarch to use comes in canisters with resealable lids, such as Clabber Girl or Rumford. The clay will keep fresh in the can for a month or more, especially if you lay a moist paper towel on top of the clay before closing the lid. And, because this type of play clay is comprised of only cornstarch and salt (and food coloring, if desired), it's nontoxic.

Try making a batch of indoor fun for the next rainy day:

Cornstarch Play Clay

- 4 cups salt
- 1½ cups water
- 1 can (12 oz.) Clabber Girl or Rumford Cornstarch
- ¾ cup cold water
- Food coloring (if desired)
- Cookie cutters

In a large saucepan, mix salt and water over medium heat, stirring occasionally for about five or six minutes, until mixture is very hot and starting to boil.

Remove from heat and add cornstarch; stir well; add cold water a little at a time and



Bring out the clay when the kids need some indoor downtime.

mix until play clay is of the consistency of mashed potatoes. (You can add more or less water as needed.)

Let mixture cool until it is easy to handle with your hands.

Dust a counter or tabletop with cornstarch; knead play clay dough lightly until it is no longer sticky.

Makes about 5 to 6 cups play clay. Store up to 2 cups of play clay in the cornstarch container.

Tip: To make brown-tinted coloring as for gingerbread men, 20 drops yellow, 3 drops red.

Creative Ideas

Mold or sculpt into shapes of the season or roll and cut out with cookie cutters for ornaments. Make a variety of colors and decorate with glitter, markers, pipe cleaners, eyeballs, etc.

For more ideas and recipes, visit www.clabbergirl.com or the Web site bakeforfamilyfun.com.