

Garlands (Lei) and Chains

Age: Preschool-age (3-4 years)

This activity helps your child's development in this domain: Social-Emotional, Cognitive

What You Need:



- Colored paper
- Plastic drinking straws, cut into one-inch lengths
- Small, uncooked pasta with holes, such as salad macaroni
- Styrofoam® "popcorn" pieces found in some mail packaging
- Ribbon, yarn, or string
- Blunt, child-sized scissors
- Scissors (for adult use only)
- Hole puncher
- Ruler
- Tape
- Pencil

What To Do:

Garlands:

1. Gather various objects that can be strung together in a garland to use as a lei or to decorate a tree, table, or window. For example, small pieces of pasta with holes, plastic drinking straws cut to one-inch lengths, paper flower cut-outs, or Styrofoam® pieces.
2. If you don't have a hole puncher, use a pencil to carefully poke a hole through pre-cut colored paper flowers and Styrofoam® pieces.
3. Wrap a piece of tape around one end of the ribbon, string, or yarn to make a



Learning to Grow

University of Hawai'i Center on the Family (CTAHR)

www.learningtogrowhawaii.org

Learning to Grow
MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

stiff point for stringing. Tie one straw piece at the other end to keep the items from slipping off.

4. Show your child how to thread the wrapped end of the ribbon, yarn, or string through the holes of the different objects and let him string together his garland.

5. To challenge your child, show him a pattern such as "flower, straw, flower" or "circle, pasta, straw, Styrofoam®" and ask him to follow it. Ask him what comes next as he strings each item to help him remember the pattern.

6. Ask him questions such as "What happens to the garland when you add another piece?"

7. Ask your child what he would like to do with his garland. For example, he might give it as a lei to someone special, hang it on a tree or window, or lay it on a table for decoration.

8. If he is making a lei, when his garland is long enough to fit loosely over his head, tie the ends of the ribbon, yarn, or string together. If he is using the garland for decoration, he can continue making a longer one. When he is done, tie another straw piece to the end.

9. Talk about the Hawaiian custom of giving a lei to someone who is celebrating a special occasion. Ask your child how a person receiving a lei might feel.

10. Sing a song or recite a poem about lei. Try the one written below:

See My Pretty Lei

See my pretty lei

I have made today.

See my pretty, pretty lei

I have made for you.

See my pretty lei

I have made today.

See my pretty, pretty lei

I have made for you.



From Hawaiian Rainbows

A recording by Margaret Young Pang ©1988

Paper Chains.

1. Use the ruler to measure and mark one-inch intervals from left to right or top to bottom of the sheets of paper.
2. Draw lines across the paper to connect the marks and create rows of strips.
3. Show your child how to use the scissors to cut along the lines to make strips. (If your child is just learning how to use scissors, share the job of cutting the strips.)
4. Show him how to overlap the ends of a strip and tape them together to form a loop. Have him slip a different color strip into the loop and tape its ends together, forming another loop.
5. Have him continue adding loops of alternating colors. Talk about the pattern of alternating colors and ask him which color the next loop should be.
6. To join the ends of the chain, insert a strip into the loops at each end, overlap the ends of the strip, and tape them together.

! Safety Alert: Adult-size scissors are not safe for young preschoolers. Let your child practice cutting with blunt, child-sized scissors. Monitor your child as he uses the scissors. If you do not have appropriate scissors or the paper is too thick for your child to cut, do the cutting yourself. Discuss the dangers of moving around with a pair of scissors in hand.

