

A PROGRAM OF UNITED DISABILITY SERVICES



TOY & RESOURCE CENTER **BUILDING BLOCKS**

ONE ITEM ONE SITE ONE IDEA

Say “cello” to a new year! We imagine everyone is a bit “strung” out from all the holiday hoopla . . . so take a break and stop into the TRC to check out our **musical instruments!**

Research shows that playing instruments activates many areas of our brain, including the area responsible for executive functioning. Executive functioning skills help us become independent in life by being able to focus, follow directions, have flexibility in our thoughts and regulate our emotions (e.g., think about choices and consequences before we act . . . which is of “major” importance).

Other benefits include sharpening the brain’s attention to sound (helpful for learning to read), improving math skills (counting beats) and providing exposure to new and different cultures by learning the origin of various instruments.

We have a nice selection of unique instruments from which to choose including options such as a **steel tongue drum** (Aztec origin), **cabasa** (African/Latin American roots), **thunder drum** (American Indian music), **pentatonic pat bells** (east Asia), an **accordion** (German origin), and more! Advances in technology allow us to provide adapted musical toys as well—accessibility for all.

Individuals often learn better when several senses are stimulated so for some multisensory instruction, we have **attached bells to paint-brushes** for the opportunity to experience music and art combined. We also adapted our **twist and turn sensory spheres** to make them musical too.



Stop “fiddling” around and check out this amazing site to gain awareness of “body percussion.” Use your body to make sounds by clapping, snapping, stomping, clicking fingers, and other actions. This site also contains songs and ideas that can’t be beat!
empoweredparents.co/body-percussion/

Treats & Beats

Let’s start the year on a “high” note with two percussion instrument ideas you can make with little ones—one to eat and one to beat!



Edible Xylophone

Graham crackers, pretzel sticks, colored frosting and mini marshmallows are all you need to create this yummy and fun treat!

DIY Drum

Use a clean can (with no sharp edges) and fill it with a small amount of rice/popcorn kernels for variation in sound. Cut off the mouthpiece of a latex-free balloon and secure it over the open portion of the can, then secure with a rubber band. Kids may also like to decorate the can with tape, markers or personalized paper secured around the can!



These activities are sure to be a HIT!



Why buy toys when you can borrow them? United Disability Services’ toy lending library loans developmental toys and resource materials to its members. Stop by and see us!
UDS ♦ 701 S. Main St., Akron, OH 44311 ♦ 330-762-9755
www.udsakron.org

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