

# Learn Body Parts with Playdough

One of the goals we always have here at Holly Ridge Center is helping young children learn their body parts. Using Songs, Playdough, and Potato Heads are great ways to promote this learning.



**Developmentally this activity encourages:** children to learn self-help skills through body part identification. Body part knowledge is beneficial with dressing and undressing, increasing language and vocabulary, shape identification, counting, fine motor skills, and sensory exploration. And it's just plain fun!

**Materials Needed:** Playdough (either store-bought or homemade) & Potato Head pieces. Recipes for homemade playdough can be found: <https://hollyridge.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/art-recipes-with-header.pdf>

### Uncooked Play Dough:

Mix in a bowl: ½ cup flour, ½ cup salt, 1 TBSP Alum ADD: 2 cups of boiling water, 2 TBSP vegetable oil & 2 TBSP Food coloring (tempera paint, food coloring, Kool-Aid) flavorings like mint, vanilla, cherry, etc. can also be mixed into playdough. Mix and knead as you would bread dough until smooth. Store in an airtight container in the fridge.

### Cooked Play Dough:

Combine in saucepan: 1 cup flour, ½ cup salt, 2 tsp cream of Tartar then add into a saucepan: 1 cup Water & 1 TBSP vegetable oil & 1 TBSP Food coloring (tempera paint, food coloring, Kool-Aid) flavorings like mint, vanilla, cherry, etc. can also be added.



### **How to:**

1. You may present one color of playdough or two and give your child a choice. Shake the bag or container to encourage your child to request to open; after a 30-second pause, model the word "open" with spoken word and/or sign. Make two balls and roll one to your child.
2. If you have Potato Head pieces, these are great for this activity. If you don't, you can build parts using the playdough. If you are making body parts, name them for your little one as you build your "body" together.
3. Don't worry if your toddler doesn't put the body parts in the correct spots-this is more about creativity and learning names in the beginning. The proper placement will come naturally over time.
4. You can also continue making bodies until you have made your family teach your child about your family unit. You can also make your family of play dough potato heads dance to songs such as "Head & Shoulders, Knees, and Toes."

Songs to sing while making your playdough people: "Head & Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QA48wTGBU7A>