

Boxes are a great medium for coloring, painting, putting stickers on, putting an object in, taking them out, or even creating something to play inside! You can use boxes from your pantry, items you may order, or a trip to a store. If you have family or friends who order online – ask them to save you a few boxes that you can have to do this activity.

**Remember – We model fun to our children. Play with them and bring your best silly self. They will respond and want more.**



### Materials Needed:

- Cardboard boxes – any size will do. They don't have to be plain; they can have writing on them.
- Coloring materials – crayons, pens, paints, stamps, dot markers, etc.
- Stickers – any kind. Dots, shapes, characters, etc.
- Blanket or towel to lay down under box to protect floor/table
- Wash clothes/baby wipes to clean hands if needed.

### Inside –

If you set up inside, you may want to lay down a blanket/tablecloth for easier clean-up.

Sit with your child and model how to engage with the activity. Dot with a pen, scribble with a crayon, peel off a sticker and 'poke' it on the box. Use paints as they are the brightest (water down washable tempera paint).

### Outside –

If you choose to go outside, clean-up can be more accessible. Again, plan to play with your child to model how to engage with the activity. Remember to model. Don't get discouraged if your little one runs around for a bit and only checks in. Eventually, they will come to the activity and begin to engage.

**Development this activity encourages:** language development is supported in this play - labeling objects, using adjectives to describe items and actions, giving choices, and waiting for your child to respond with a gesture, sound, or word gives them control in how their play looks – even if the gesture is a slight eye glance in one direction. Painting, coloring, stickers, and climbing in and out are all motor development. Eye-hand coordination is going on; peeling a sticker is challenging, and putting a paint brush back into a cup on a plate is not easy when you are a busy toddler. This activity supports social and emotional development as a time to connect, explore and know you are there to connect with and support them. You're building trust by interacting, reading their cues, and being part of their play/adventure. Something to think about when coming up with ideas for your little one – does it cover PIES (Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, and Social) areas of development? Not everything needs to cover all four areas. If we keep PIES in mind when planning activities, we can engage with more focus or purpose to support an area that needs more time to work on.

Lesson Plan by AnnMarie Adams

Recipe Links and Photo Credits: [4 Tips for Extreme Box Decorating - Busy Toddler](#)