



# day of play

## *family festival*

**An Edward Street Initiative**

*Preparing young children for future success begins with play today!*

**Program Book 2025**

[www.worcesterdayofplay.org](http://www.worcesterdayofplay.org)

# Travel Around the Day of Play!



## TRAVEL AROUND THE DAY OF PLAY!

Explore all of the different play areas today! Bring this page to the Welcome Tent to claim your prize!

CREATIVE ARTS PLAY	<div>STAMP</div>	ACTIVE PLAY	<div>STAMP</div>
CONSTRUCTION PLAY	<div>STAMP</div>	READING PLAY	<div>STAMP</div>
HEALTH & WELLNESS PLAY	<div>STAMP</div>	STEM PLAY	<div>STAMP</div>
MINDFULNESS PLAY	<div>STAMP</div>	PERFORMANCES	<div>STAMP</div>

# *Welcome to the Day of Play*

We hope that you and your family enjoy this event where you will engage in activities that link the joy of playing to the joy of learning.

Young children learn the essential skills they will need to become successful as adults through play. Building block towers develops skills in architecture and engineering. Finger painting develops an understanding of our senses, color and art. Playing hop-scotch develops number recognition and early math skills. Playing tag develops social and team development skills. Playing outdoors develops an understanding of science and nature.

Today's research shows that children develop imagination, critical thinking skills and crucial problem solving skills through play. So today, enjoy the seven play areas and main stage performances. Participate in the activities that are thoughtfully designed to experience the real power of fun and games for learning.

***Brought to you by your friends at Edward Street!***



## **Get Involved!**

If you would like to get involved, please visit our website and let us know!

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## **Sign up for our *Day of Play* Newsletter!**

When you sign up for our mailing list, you'll receive Edward Street's monthly Day of Play newsletter featuring fun family friendly activities!

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## **Donate to Edward Street Day of Play!**

You can feel good about donating to Edward Street Day of Play, we are a trusted voice in early childhood since 1883!



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# Day of Play Family Festival 2025

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# Where is everything?

**There are eight play areas** spread out around Elm Park. Each area consists of exciting opportunities for children to explore and learn while having fun!



# *Play Areas and Amenities*

## PLAY AREAS

- 1 Main Stage / Performances
- 2 Science, Technology, Engineering & Math Play (STEM)
- 3 Creative Arts Play
- 4 Construction Play
- 5 Active Play
- 6 Reading Play
- 7 Health & Wellness
- 8 Mindfulness

## AMENITIES



First Aid



Parking



Bathrooms



Information Tent, Programs & Giveaways



# Construction Play



## What do children learn from construction play?

Construction play requires dexterity and promotes strength in children's fingers and hands, and improves their eye-hand coordination.

Children's vocabulary increases as they describe sizes, shapes and colors. They also increase their math skills by sorting objects by shape and color.

Because blocks encourage children to create their own designs, their imaginations are sparked and their brains are built.

## Activities

### 11:00AM – 3:30PM | Construction Junction

Build towers, make a fort, design a rocket ship...You are limited only by your imagination as you build with multi-sized blocks and recyclables at the Construction Junction.

### 11:00AM – 3:30PM | Little Ones Neighborhood

Enjoy a tot-sized neighborhood. Little ones can build and explore their neighborhood with just-the-right-size blocks and streets.



### 11:00AM-3:30PM | Build with Home Depot

Join staff from Home Depot to build a small project. Find just the right tool to get the job done!



### 11:00AM-3:30PM | Safety First!

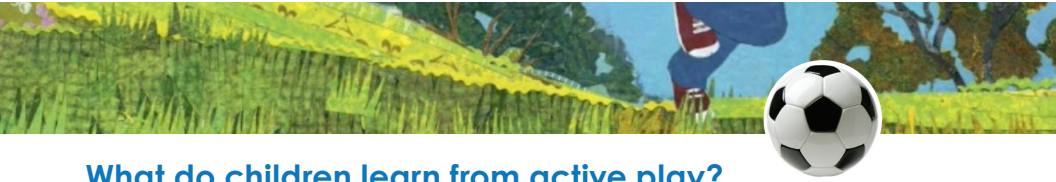
Meet Worcester Fire Department fire fighters and explore their firetruck. Learn important safety tips for you and your family.

### 11:00AM-3:30PM | Driving Nails

Put on your safety goggles, pick up a hammer and enjoy some fun pounding nails into wood!



# Active Play



## What do children learn from active play?

Active physical play allows children to use their energy, gives children the chance to develop gross and fine motor skills, to learn new things, and socialize.

Physical play also benefits a child's health and helps prevent childhood obesity.

Active play helps a child to develop connections between the nerve cells and the brain. The ideal physical play incorporates play with social interactions and problem solving.

## Activities

### 11:00AM – 3:30PM | Obstacle Course

Crawl, climb, hop and jump your way through our amazing obstacle course!

### 11:00AM – 3:30PM | Parachute Fun!

For the little ones, come join in some parachute games. Can you shake the parachute to make the ball roll all around? Can you help it pop up in the air?

### 1:00AM – 3:30PM | Cornhole Toss

Grab a friend and play some cornhole. How many bags can you toss into the hole?



### **11:00AM – 3:00PM | Soccer Is for Everyone**

Love soccer? Come join Cultural Exchange Through Soccer (CETS) to learn cool new soccer skills, make awesome friends, and become a team leader!

### **12:00PM – 1:00PM | Meet Jake the Lion** (Worcester Bravehearts baseball)

Jake returns to the Day of Play! A great dancer, Jake is always up for a high-five and a photo-op.

### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Imagination Playground**

Kids use Imagination Playground blocks to build animals, rockets, houses, cities, and entire worlds of their own design. They create settings, games, and rules—encouraging self-expression through open-ended, joyful play. Equipment provided by the Worcester Family Partnership.

### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Magnet Fishing and “Guess the Goldfish”**

Check out Magnet Fishing and Guess the Goldfish games with our friends from the Seven Hills Foundation.

### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Explore Dance with the Jo Ann Warren Studio**

Get creative and dance to the music! Join the Jo Ann Warren dancers and share some moves plus enjoy an exciting dance performance on the Main Stage full of joy, creativity, and community spirit.

### **11:35AM – 12:05PM | Haitian Dance Class with Sebastien**

Celebrate culture through movement in this Haitian dance class led by acclaimed dancer Sebastien Jean. Open to all levels, this welcoming session invites you to connect and dance. Stay for Crocodile River Music's performance which follows on the main stage!

### **12:00PM – 01:00PM | Meet Smiley from the WooSox**

Keep your eyes open to spy Smiley. Stop by the Active Play Area to greet Smiley and snap a photo before Smiley heads out to the baseball game!

# Live Performances

## **11:00AM – 11:30AM | The L-Jays**

Worcester's beloved local upbeat pop rock band puts a smile on your face!

## **12:00PM – 3:00PM | Cory Scott – Rat Catcher Extraordinaire!**

Corey Scott – the Rat Catcher Extraordinaire – will take you on a delightfully zany interactive adventure as he roams around the park. He really is the Pied Piper!

## **11:35AM – 12:05PM | Drop-In Haitian Dance Class**

Crocodile River Music's Sebastien is relaunching his every Saturday Haitian Dance class this fall – check out this drop-in class and see what it's all about!



## **12:10PM – 12:45PM | Crocodile River Music**

Celebrate movement, culture, and joy! This internationally recognized group of diverse musicians share African art, music, and culture with audiences of all ages, backgrounds, and capabilities.

## **12:50PM – 1:15PM | Josh Morin & Life Skills Martial Arts Demo**

Come join in an interactive demonstration of mindfulness and confidence building through martial arts poses. Students from Life Skills Martial Arts will lead the audience in simple, fun exercises. Explore more confidence and concentration building exercises in the Mindfulness Play Area.

## **1:20PM – 1:50PM | QCC Music Ensemble**

See this group of student musicians perform an exciting mix of rock, pop, Latin, and contemporary music.



# Live Performances



## **1:55PM – 2:05PM | Dance Performance by Jo Ann Warren Studio**

Jo Ann Warren dancers ages 5–15 from “The Performance Plus” and the all new “Squad” will share an exciting dance performance full of joy, creativity, and community spirit!

## **2:20PM – 3:20PM | Chuck & Muds (& Buds)**

Chuck & Mud and their good buddies Peter (Mr. Peter) Allard and the legendary Walter Crockett invite you to sing along to songs you know and new songs, too - they'll have you laughing and dancing on the grass!

## **3:30PM – 4:00 PM | Lion Dancers!**

The Southeast Asian Coalition (SEAC) Lion Dance team close out the festival with their exciting traditional Lion Dance performance. Representing power, courage, and good luck, gather at the Main Stage to become part of the celebration!



# Science, Technology, Engineering

## What do children learn from STEM play?

"To establish and maintain a diverse, robust and dynamic pipeline of future STEM professionals who are globally competitive it is necessary to nurture students' innate curiosity at a young age and spark student interest and excitement in STEM subjects through authentic, experiential learning beginning in early childhood..."

*~Massachusetts Plan for Excellence in STEM Education*

### Activities

#### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | New England Botanic Garden**

Enjoy nature crafts with the folks from the New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill!

#### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Turtles, Eggs and Dinosaurs!**

Explore hands-on, interactive activities focused on turtles, eggs and dinosaurs with the folks from Mass Audubon's Broad Meadow Brook Sanctuary!

#### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Stomp Rockets Plus!**

Get ready to jump, stomp, and launch into learning! Kids will have a blast as they harness the power of gravity and force to send rockets soaring sky-high. Explore different types of kid-friendly rockets to see how designs and launch styles can vary and learn about physics, problem-solving, and creative design.



# ng & Math (STEM)

## **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Hands on Farm and Forest Exploration**

Join Turn Back Time for fun, hands-on activities inspired by farming and nature!

## **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Get Ready to Read, Think, and Build!**

Join the Worcester Head Start team at the STEM Station for a fun adventure! We'll read a favorite story together, then put on our engineer hats to solve a problem from the book. Use your imagination and cool building materials to design and test your own creative solutions. Let's get reading, thinking, and inventing!

## **11:00AM – 3:00PM | Planting with REC**

Plant seeds and read stories with the Regional Environmental Council (REC) staff and volunteers.



## **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Get Up Close with the Creepy, the Crawly, and the Cute!**

Leo Spinner from Skins & Scales, Live Animal Presentation will introduce you to snakes, frogs, lizards, spiders, and tortoises big enough to ride! Experience hands-on learning about these creatures from all around the world!

## **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Science You Can See!**

Nudge floating magnets into mysterious patterns, investigate a set of skulls, or build a bridge that seems to defy gravity. No matter your interests, join educators from the EcoTarium and explore the unseen!

## **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Robotics and Coding for Kids**

An engaging hands-on activity for kids ages 6 and up to explore the basics of robotics and coding through fun, interactive play.





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# ABOUT THE DAY OF PLAY

## The Power of Play in Child Development

At Day of Play, every activity is designed to spark children's creativity, confidence, and curiosity. Whether building, painting, experimenting, or performing, kids have countless opportunities to explore and learn through hands-on play.

The event meets every child where they are and fosters real moments of discovery—kids making connections, asking questions, and expanding their play in meaningful ways.

In the Creative Arts area, children craft self-portrait puppets after looking in a mirror—an imaginative exercise in identity and self-expression. Across the lawn, young scientists explore cause and effect through simple experiments, while others build structures, race toy cars, or design their own obstacle courses.

Live performances, including music and dance, add excitement. It's more than a fun day - it's a powerful reminder of how kids learn best—through play.

# Reading Play

## What do children learn from reading play?

Early literacy skills are the foundation of all learning. Third grade reading proficiency is a critical benchmark. Until grade three children learn to read. After grade three children read to learn.

Reading to your child encourages a love of learning. Making reading at bedtime a routine makes bedtime a positive experience for children and parents.

## Activities

### 11:00AM – 3:30PM | Come Meet Libby – Worcester's Mobile Library!

Come on board Libby, the mobile library, and get your free Worcester Public Library card. We have books and movies for all ages and interests.



### 11:00AM – 3:30PM | Write Your Own Story

Telling, drawing and writing stories is a powerful way for children to share their understanding and become confident readers and writers. Come write your own story and bring it home for your own library!

### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Plush Reading Buddies**

Make a small stuffed pal to sit by your side as you read and tell stories. You can make a caterpillar, bunny or even an octopus.

### **11:00 AM – 3:30 PM | Literacy Rocks**

Beep, beep. Word construction underway! Join us in the alphabet rock pits as we move letters around to construct words. Use small construction vehicles to transform our letter rock quarry into a busy construction site.



### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Alphabet Bowling**

Check out the Division of Youth Opportunity team's fun bowling activity. Children will bowl for letters, then see what they can spell with the letters they knocked over!

### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Book Nook Under the Trees**

Come relax and curl up with some great books. Grab some shade and share stories as a family. Find new titles and enjoy some classics.

### **11:00 AM – 3:30PM | Puppet Theatre**

Choose from a variety of our puppets or bring your handmade 'self-portrait puppets' to the puppet theater to create your own puppet show. All are welcome to join in or watch as part of the audience.

# *Creative Arts Play*

## **What do children learn from creative arts play?**

Children of all ages delight in expressing their ideas through sounds, textures, colors, and shapes. Creativity in children can be developed by engaging them in activities that enable them to share their ideas, thoughts and feelings.

The creative arts—painting, sculpture and drawing—are a crucial part of childhood. Not only do the arts allow children to express themselves, but creative activity can enhance development of children's skills in literacy, science, math, social studies, and more.

### Activities

#### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Self Portrait Puppets**

This activity hosted by the Quinsigamond Community College Early Childhood Education Dept. helps promote a positive self-image as children create a puppet that will look like themselves. They can then use their homemade puppet to play in the puppet theater!

#### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Lights, Camera, Action!**

Dress up and take the stage! Come explore the dramatic play area. Find a costume or a prop and bring your imagination to life.

#### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Creative Crowns**

Worcester Technical High School Early Childhood Dept. students will host a creative art activity using crayons, bingo daubers, stickers and paper strips to personalize unique head crowns for children to wear!

#### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Make Music with Pakachoag Music School of Greater Worcester**

Ever wanted to make music? Visit with Pakachoag Music School to explore the various instruments plus sing karaoke! Discover the joy of making music!







### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Explore African Arts and Culture**

Experience the rich culture and history of West Africa with Crocodile River Music. Explore traditional drums and vibrant artwork, get creative with mask-themed coloring sheets, and celebrate the art, music, and heritage of West Africa.

### **11:00AM – 3:00PM | Drum Circle**

Tony Wilson, a Head Start Music teacher, organizes engaging hands-on drum circles suitable for all age groups. Come check out the percussion tutorials and drum circles Tony has to offer.

### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Shield Making, Storytime & Armor Exploration with WAM**

Join the Worcester Art Museum (WAM) to create and color your own shield to take home. Explore real armor from their learning collection and enjoy the story Knight Owl by Christopher Denise.

### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Leaves of Worcester**

Add your thumbprint “leaves” to a community tree with the Together for Kids Coalition!

### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Try the Button Making Machine!**

Unleash your creativity and craft your very own custom button or pin with our friends from Technocopia! Get hands-on with their awesome button press machine and watch your unique design transform into a finished, wearable work of art—right before your eyes. Perfect for all ages and skill levels, this is a fun, interactive experience you won't want to miss!

# Health & Wellness

## What do children learn from health & wellness?

In raising healthy children, it's not enough to just focus on the physical aspect of health. To be truly healthy, a child's emotional health must be nurtured and strengthened. Developing a mental attitude of wellness is also essential. By adopting an attitude of wellness, we will come to believe that being well is a natural, normal state. By developing a wellness attitude in our children, they will learn that they have control over their own body and that leads to health and happiness.

### Activities

#### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Do You Know Why Your Brush Your Teeth?**

Students of Quinsigamond Community College will conduct hands-on learning activities related to the connection between oral health and body health. Activities are inspired by Dr. Suess's "The Tooth Book".

#### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Keeping Fit Fun!**

Join our friends from the JCC to learn how to stay in tip-top shape with fun exercise routines for a healthy body, plus creative crafting activities to boost fine motor skills and concentration!

#### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Teddy Bear Clinic**

Try using a stethoscope, a thermometer and applying a bandage or two to our stuffed animal and doll friends – like us, they need an annual checkup to make sure they are in tip top shape! Join the staff from Bright Horizons to learn about health and safety through this fun interactive activity that demystifies the experience of visiting the doctor's office.

#### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Healthy Choices**

The Worcester Division of Public Health helps to keep Worcester Healthy - learn about good nutrition, car seat safety and healthy habits for the mind and body - take a pop quiz too!





### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | American Red Cross- Prepare with Pedro**

Join Pedro, the lovable penguin, on his mission to get his home, family and friends ready for anything that might come their way! From home fires to tornados and hurricanes Pedro knows all the best ways to keep himself and others safe, and today he will share his tips with you!

### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Brush Sharks Teeth**

Have you ever held a shark's tooth? They have so many! Practice brushing a shark's tooth while learning about the importance of good oral health with our friends from Smileland Pediatric Dentistry and Braces.

### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Granny Pants Games!**

Join the YWCA for the hilarious Granny Pants Game, where players slip into oversized, colorful "granny pants" and race to catch bouncing balls. It's silly, energetic fun for all ages — come give it a try! Plus, win prizes - jump ropes and stickers!

### **11:00AM – 3:30PM | Got Garelick?**

Nutritious and delicious - stop by to sample Garelick Farms' milk!

### **11:00AM – 04:00PM | Color, Connect 4 and More!**

Enjoy games with the folks from the ABA (Autism Awareness) Center. Resources and more!

# Mindfulness

## What do children learn from mindfulness?

Building mindful practices into your family routine is healthy for you and your child. Simple techniques like breathing, grounded feet, and building awareness of inner and outer spaces all support children's healthy development. Mindfulness brings calm and helps children build skills such as focus, attention, self-control, compassion, and resilience.

## Activities

### 11:00AM – 3:30PM | Monster Puppets

Come make your own paper bag monster. Have fun exploring different emotions and learn ways to take care of the emotions you may have.

### 11:00AM – 3:30PM | Rock Your Emotions

Decorate your own rock with emotions or feelings. Take it with you to remind you that all feelings are welcome and natural; we all have them!

### 11:00AM – 3:00PM | Confidence and Kung Fu

Join Life Skill Martial Arts for exciting games and challenges! Try punching a BOB bag 50 times in 1 minute, race in the Kung Fu Relay, build confidence in a martial arts class, and relax with Tai Chi!

### 11:00AM – 3:30PM | Come Meet Tomo!

Take some time to relax and come visit Therapy Dog Tomo from Animal-assisted Therapy services (AaTs) of Massachusetts. Tomo is a 5-year-old American Akita, who loves to play and meet new friends!

### 12:30PM – 3:00PM | Yoga Zone

Yoga for everyone! Visit the Yoga Zone for a playful exploration of yoga poses, simple meditation, and breathing exercises.

### 12:30PM – 3:30PM | Face Painting Fun!

Stop by the Face Painting station where kids (and kids at heart!) can transform into butterflies, superheroes, animals, and more. It's colorful, creative, and completely free — don't miss it!



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# Discover the Power of Play!

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day of play  
*family festival*

## Want to stay in the know?

Sign up for our newsletter for year-round updates on *Day of Play* activities and other valuable information from Edward Street!

*We can't wait to connect with you!*

**SCAN TO SIGN UP!**



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## Community is at the heart of everything we do.

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