

## **ENTERTAINING YOUR CHILD DURING ENDLESS WAITING**

There she is in a crowded public office waiting her turn. You notice that her child has a ton of energy and only wants to run about and around for as long as possible. You observe the elderly lady to your left peering at her in such a disapproving manner. The gentleman sitting to her right just keeps rolling his eyes at the bothersome child that won't sit still. Mom has tried just about every trick in the book to keep this toddler calm and content during their waiting period. She now has a bead of sweat running down the side of her face, as she surrenders herself to her two and a half year old and his high spirited energetic self.

We've all seen it, and if not, we've all been there. Kids are kids! They are not going to tune themselves down because they are in any type of office that is deemed for adult activity and behavior only. This type of setting gives them even more reason to want to shake up the joint. So what are Mom, Dad, Aunt, Uncle, or sitter supposed to do? The following are wonderful quick ideas which will help in a lot of these situations. I have listed some awesome quick tricks that our teachers use for transitions in our schools as well as Vicky Mlyniec's suggestions in her last article for Parents Magazine.

- Snag some supplies.
  - If you don't have something to draw on at a restaurant, ask the waiter to bring over some paper placemats or extra napkins. Most are offering paper table cloths and plenty of crayons!
- Pose a question.
  - Have your child respond with words starting with their initials.
  - For example: "What do you like to do Michael John?" "Make jam!"
- Play hangman.
  - For your youngest, tell them a three letter word, write out the dashes, then ask him what the letters might be. (Giving clues may help them feel less frustrated).
- Writing.
  - Use a pen or pencil to show your child how their name looks in cursive writing.
- Hiding a coin in your hand.
  - Have your child guess which hand it's in. Then allow them a turn.
- I spy.
  - Say, "I spy something green" or "I spy something that begins with the letter T." For a younger child, ask him to follow your eyes to something you are spying and guess what it is.
- Snack food.
  - This can become your own little color and math lesson all in one! Bag up some gummy bears and have your child name the color before getting to have on. Then try putting two on your lap and adding another. Ask your child how many there are in total.
- I went on a trip and brought...
  - You say this to your child and fill in with your answer, and then they have to continue with yours and theirs. For example, "I went on a trip and brought my tooth brush. I went on a trip and brought my toothbrush and my pajamas." Continue for as long as they can, and then let them start the next one.
- Finger plays are fun.
  - Itsy Bitsy Spider, Little Bunny Foo-foo, and my all time favorite, "All Around the Garden like a Teddy Bear" one step, two step tickle under there!