

Easter Hunt Over? NOW! Try Peanut Hunt!



by Barbara Sher

You know how much fun last Easter's egg hunt was? There is something about finding hidden treasures that appeals to everyone from toddlers to Indiana Jones. But, why wait until next spring, almost a whole year away, to enjoy a good hunt? A bag of peanuts in their shell would work fine. One of the advantages in using peanuts over eggs is if they don't get found there is no rotten egg smell!

Hide the shelled peanuts around the house, or even in one room if you want to keep the children under eye but happily occupied while you get the dishes done (and doesn't it seem that there are always dishes to be done?).

If you want to spread the game out, and you have a yard, hide them outside. You can hide some in full view for the little ones and others well hidden for the older kids. If you end up using this idea at a kid's party, or with siblings of different ages, give the smaller kids a 5-minute head start for the hunt.

If your child is allergic to peanuts, you can use individually wrapped candy. But, if you worry the kids will have a sugar rush from candies, hide something else, such as marbles. At the end of the marble-hunt, the found marbles could be combined together for a marble game. The marble game could be the traditional kind in which players take turns flicking their marble into a circle of marbles. The goal is to see how many marbles can be knocked out of the circle. The rule is each player gets to keep the marbles that their marble knocked out of the circle.

But, keep it simple if you want and just play an easy game of flicking one's marble to see how far it can go. Do the kids still want a bit of competition? Whose marble can go the longer distance? Don't have marbles or worried that the little ones might swallow them, use plastic animals. Bags of plastic animals are usually easily found at the store. Hide them "here and there." They could even be hidden among the plants, whether the plants are in containers or on the lawn. Once they are all found, the pile of animals could inspire a zoo game using broken twigs for fences.

Poker chips is something else that might be fun to hide. At the end of a poker chip hunt, players could make a tower of chips together or they could roll the chips on their rims for a poker chip race.

If there were no marbles, animals or poker chips available, the whole treasure hunt experience can be done with people and lead into a raucous family game of hide and seek where adults and kids

take turns hiding and being found.

If you end up just doing the original peanut hunt game, it's still pretty wonderful because at the very end you will have a satisfying pile of peanuts to crack open and eat. And that is fun enough! ♥

Barbara Sher M.A., O.T.R., an occupational therapist and author of nine books on children's games. This game is adapted from Barbara's new book *THE WHOLE SPECTRUM OF MOTOR, SOCIAL AND SENSORY GAMES: Using Children's Natural Love Of Play To Enhance Key Skills And Promote Inclusion*. Check out Barbara's other game books at any on-line bookstore or get a free game designed for your child at her web site: www.gameslady.com

