

Permanent Handprint Keepsake (Handy Craft)

This month your child will be creating a handprint you *will* want left on your wall. This handprint keepsake is fun for children of all ages! While your child leaves his/her mark in the plaster of Paris, your child will be learning about how animals leave their mark on one another (as well as humans) through an interesting bond called "imprinting." Your child can learn about imprinting by reading the book listed under the book link. For more craft activities and ideas, please visit us at www.signingtime.com and www.signingtimekids.org

Materials Needed:

- Plaster of Paris
- Water
- Disposable container
- Spoon
- Large paper clip
- Pencil
- Plastic mold (any shape)
- OPTIONAL: stones, paint, shells, etc.

Book Link:

"The True Story of Nickel: The Baby Buffalo Who Thought He Was A Dog" by Nancy Savage

Time to Create!

Step 1: Following the directions on the container of plaster of Paris (available at most craft stores), mix the plaster. When completely mixed, the plaster should resemble pancake batter.

Step 2: Once you have made your plaster mixture, pour it into a plastic mold. You can either use an existing mold or make your own. Press your child's hand into the plaster and, following the time recommendations on the container, hold their hand still for a minute or so. Wash your child's hand with soap and warm water. Any extra plaster should be discarded. **Do not rinse extra plaster down your drain.**

Step 3: Place the paper clip into the plaster to use as an anchor for hanging the handprint on the wall. As the plaster hardens, you can use a sharp object or pencil to write your child's name, the date, and/or year into the plaster. Your child can also add decorative stones, shells, or other decorative objects around the edge of the plaster. Allow the appropriate amount of time for drying. If you move the handprint before it is dry, it is likely to crack or shift. Once dry, your child can paint it if they choose to. This can be a great keepsake for you and your child to treasure for years to come. Have fun!

