

Clay family beads

Every person in a family influences each other and each person helps make the family the way that it is. Even when they are not all in the same place at the same time, people in a family are still connected with each other, and still a part of each other's lives. "Family" can include people who live very far away, people who have died, close friends or other important people.

Family beads offer a concrete way to remember each person's contribution to the family. As you make them, you can talk about your family. In this activity, each person will make their own beads made up of different coloured pieces of clay, that represent different family members.

Supplies

- String/cording to make a bracelet or necklace
- 1 toothpick
- Different colours of polymer clay cut into small pieces - one colour for each person in your family.

How to make it

Step 1: Choose colours

- Ask each person to choose a different coloured piece of clay for each person in the family.

Step 2: Talk about your family

- Ask each person to talk about why they chose the colour for that person.
- Ask them to share a story or memory about the person.
- As they talk about each person, tell them to squish the different colours of clay together to create one colourful bead. As each person forms their own bead, talk about how the colours look different in each of them. The beads are different in the same way that a family can feel different for each member of that family. Each person has their own relationships and experiences with the others. Our unique experience of our families is reflected in the uniqueness of each bead, and in our own fingerprints on these beads.



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Step 3: Talk about being together

- When each person has made their bead, ask, “now, can we take the colours apart again?” The different colours have blended together and cannot be taken apart again, just as family members will always be part of one another and their family.

Step 4: Make the bead

- Use the toothpick to poke a hole through each bead.
- Bake according to the instructions for the clay.
- When the beads have cooled, string them on the cord to make a bracelet, necklace, keychain or anything else you choose.

