

Snow Days

As I sit here writing, the ground is covered white, the wind is blowing cold, and I am tired but very happy. As I was talking with a colleague today, she said, "We either manage our pain or we manage our stress, and I'd rather manage my stress." I completely agree with her. Well, it certainly can be challenging to keep kids entertained when school is closed. But children love games, crafts and baking.

My daughter and I turn our living and dining room into a camp by covering the furniture with sheets, bringing in pillows, books and toys and have a blast. This is good for about two hours and often she falls asleep and takes a nap inside.

After we get all this cleaned up, we make home made play doh. The recipe is simple. Be sure to let your child do the measuring. They love it and it helps teach them fractions. The ingredients are: 1 cup flour, 1 cup water, 1/2 cup salt, 1 tablespoon oil, 1 teaspoon cream of tartar, color of choice, fragrance, vanilla, strawberry, etc. (optional). Mix together on low heat stirring constantly until a ball starts forming in the middle. Scrape out on wax paper and knead until thoroughly blended. Store in an airtight container,(I like ziplock bags). Have fun.

Banana bread is terrific for ripe bananas and perfect for cold weather. This recipe is easier than the play doe recipe. Blend together 1/2 cup sugar, 1/3 cup oil, 3 eggs, 1 tsp vanilla. Then add 1 3/4 cup flour and 2 tsp cinnamon. Last add 4 to 6 ripe mashed bananas. Pour into two greased and floured pans and place in a preheated 350degree oven for 40-50 minutes. It's delicious with hot chocolate.

When the sun was setting on the cold snowy day, my daughter looked at me grinning with her face bright red from playing in the cold and said, " Mama, I've had a fun day." Tired but happily I replied, "So have I."