

Name Body Parts

An easy activity for bath time or during a diaper change

Infants: Point to and name a body part, give it a tickle or a kiss

Toddlers: Ask your child to point to or move various parts of their body. For verbal children, point to a body part and ask them to name it.

All Ages: Sing and act out Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes (moving your child's arms for infants).

Play with Bubbles

Infants: Sit them on your lap and blow bubbles for them to watch. This helps increase their abilities to track objects.

Toddlers: Have toddlers practice blowing bubbles, even if you need to hold the wand. Practicing blowing bubbles uses muscle movements that help develop talking skills.

Let your verbal toddler catch bubbles and ask how they feel. Have them describe what they see (shape, colors, movement of the bubbles, etc).

Painting with Water

Supplies: water, variety of clean paint brushes of differing sizes, rollers or sponges, outdoor surface: wooden deck or fence, sidewalk, driveway

Let your child explore using the brushes and sponges to paint. Talk about what they are doing. Point out a dry spot and how it looks different from a wet spot. Explore how a different size or type of brush looks different.

Suggested age: 6 months and up

Paint with Yogurt

Supplies: plain yogurt, food coloring, small containers, cookie tray/plate/table

Talk to your child about what you are doing while you are mixing colors. Ask questions like "How many drops of red do you think we will need to make pink?" "What will happen when I mix blue and red?" Talk about what happened.

Put a dollop of yogurt on a tray and let them swirl it, play and paint with it. Help them write their names in it, etc.

Suggested age: 6 months and up

Dance Party

Put on a CD and dance with your child! Don't be afraid to let loose and be silly, your child will follow your lead!

For Infants: Dance with them in your arms, but also help them stand and wiggle.

For Toddlers: Try songs that encourage your child to follow directions in the song and dance along.

Great CDs for action dancing that can be found in the Children's Room: The Laurie Berkner Band, Greg and Steve, Hap Palmer, Sue Schnitzer

Shaving Cream Painting

Supplies: shaving cream (optional: mix with a small amount of washable paint)

During Tub Time: Let your child use their fingers and paint in the tub

On Paper: Put a piece of paper on your child's highchair and let them paint using their fingers, Q-tips, or brushes.

Suggested age: 6 months and up

Color of the Day

Pick a Color of the Day

Infants: Talk to them throughout the day about the color and point out all the examples of the color in their day.

Toddlers: Incorporate the color into your daily routine—the clothes your child wears, foods served that day, etc. Do a color scavenger hunt—how many objects can your child point out of the color of the day in your house, on a walk, at the playground, etc.

Action Rhymes

Spend some time doing action rhymes with your child!

Learn a new action rhyme to do together! To learn a new action rhyme, try one of our books in j796.1

For Infants: Hold your child in your lap while singing and acting out the rhyme and move your child's arms.

For Toddlers: Teach your child the movements & sing/act out the rhyme or song together.

Examples of Action Rhymes:

Head Shoulders Knees and Toes

Five Little Ducks

Itsy Bitsy Spider

Wheels on the Bus

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed

I'm A Little Tea Pot

Try a New Fruit or Vegetable

Introduce your child to a new fruit or vegetable at a meal today.

Show your child a new fruit or veggie, let them touch it and talk about how it feels, talk about the color, what it tastes like, etc.

For Infants: Talk to your baby about the food.

Example: (Holding up eggplant) "This is an eggplant. Feel how smooth it is (running their hands down the side.) Isn't it a pretty purple? But look, the inside isn't purple is it? No it's white! And look at those, those are seeds. I'm making ratatouille for dinner tonight, it has lots of yummy veggies like eggplant and zucchini, and tomatoes in it!"

For Toddlers: Engage your child in conversation about the food. Have them describe the shape, color, texture, taste, etc.

Mirror Mirror on the Wall

Explore faces in the mirror

For Infants: Let them spend some time looking into a mirror at themselves. Hold them so you are both visible and make faces in the mirror, describing your expression. Examples: this is a happy face, now I'm making a sad face, oh that's a silly face, etc.

For Toddlers: Make faces with your child in the mirror. Ask them to make different types of expressions (happy, sad, etc.) Have them describe the faces you are making.

Sing the ABCs

Tip: slow down as you sing the ABC song so you are clearly pronouncing each letter (especially LMNOP).

For Infants: Sing the ABCs to your baby as often as you can in the day: at each diaper change, during bath time, a bedtime lullaby, etc.

For Toddlers: Sing the ABCs with your child. If you have magnetic or foam letters, have your child point to the letters as you are singing them (if you do not have these, you could print letters and cut them out).

Clap Syllables

Clap the syllables of the names of everyone in your family.

For Infants: Sit your child on your lap, say a name, then say the name again clapping your child's hands together with each syllable. Repeat names or choose other words as needed.

For Toddlers: Say a family member's name, say the name again clapping with your child. Once you've done it together, have your child try to clap a name out themselves. Added level: Say a name, have your child identify a picture of that person, then clap the syllables of the name.

Nursery Rhymes

Read... Sing... Act out... nursery rhymes with your child!
Nursery Rhymes can be found in the 398.8's at Cary Library

For Infants: Read and sing nursery rhymes during a diaper change, while bathing, before bed, etc.

For Toddlers: Read and sing nursery rhymes but also encourage your child to act them out. For example, pretend to jump over a candle stick or eat curds and whey.

Play Lap Games

Games for Infants and Toddlers:

Peek-a-Boo: Cover something (adult's face, baby's face, toy), say "Where is ___?" Uncover person or thing and say "Peek-a-Boo! Peek-a-Boo! I see you!"

So Big: Gently stretch your child's arms above their head while saying "How big is (name)? S/He is so, so, soooo big! Someone's gonna get you. Here comes a pig." Then oink while kissing your child's tummy or neck.

Ride A Little Pony: Let your child sit on your knee. Gently bounce them up and down. Say: "Ride a little pony down to town. Better be careful so you don't fall down." As you say "don't fall down", pretend to let your child fall by opening your legs and letting them slide down between them.

More lap games, bounces, wiggles, and tickles:

<https://www.piercelylibrary.org/files/library/wigglegsticklesall.pdf>

Sing Books

Combine reading and music by singing a book!

Great Song Books at Cary Library:

Old Black Fly by Jim Aylesworth

I Ain't Gonna Paint No More by Karen Beaumont

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star by Jane Cabrera*

You Are My Sunshine by Caroline Jayne Church (E BOARD Church)*

Farmyard Beat by Lindsey Craig

The Babies on the Bus by Karen Katz

Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes by Eric Litwin (E Pete)

Down by the Bay by Raffi (E BOARD Raffi)*

The Itsy Bitsy Spider by Iza Trapani*

*author has many great singable stories

Listen to Music and Sing

Infants: While holding your baby, listen to music and sing along.

Toddlers: Encourage your child to sing along, clap along to the beat.

Go for A Walk

For Infants:

Talk about things you see

Narrate your walk like you are telling a story

For Toddlers:

Play a game of I Spy

Stop and let them explore the texture of leaves, bark, etc.

Count the number of cars that drive by

Narrate your walk like you are telling a story

Play with Pots and Pans

Suggested age: 6 months and up

Sit on the floor & play with pots, pans, plastic measuring cups, plastic/wooden spoons, etc.

Encourage him/her to pretend to cook you something.

Explore what happens when you hit two items together, and how it is different from hitting two other items together.

Play with Books

(board books or cloth books are best for this activity)

Let your child spend time playing on his/her own with books

For Young Infants: give them a book during tummy time; open it to a page for them to look at and let them interact with it according to their abilities.

For Older Infants and Toddlers: let them hold the book, turn the pages, explore with it, put it in their mouths (we recommend sanitizing the book first with a wipe), throw it, and interact with the book in any fashion they can.

Read an Interactive Book

For Infants: touch and feel or lift-the-flap books

Examples: *This is Not My...* series (E BOARD Watts) or *Where is Baby's...* series (E BOARD Katz), *Dear Zoo* (E BOARD Campbell)

For Toddlers: lift the flap books are still great, also try these:

From Head to Toe by Eric Carle

Tap the Magic Tree by Christie Matheson

Is Everyone Ready for Fun? by Jan Thomas

Press Here by Hervé Tullet