



para los niños
for the children
Family Services Division

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Ages Birth and Up

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Swaying (Birth & Up)

Stimulation: Body Awareness, Listening and Visual Development.

- Elements that will help with soothing your baby are: your voice, your gentle nurturing touch and rhythmically rocking your baby side to side.

How:

- Use your lap as a cradle and using your voice as a lullaby.
- Sit in a chair with your baby lying on your thighs (baby feet pointing toward your stomach).
- Cradle baby's head with your hands and gently sway your body from side to side as you talk or sing to your baby.

If you are beyond this activity, try the:

Blanket Swing (Birth & Up)

Stimulation: Balance, Social Development, Trust, Upper –Body Strength.

Ways in which the swing will help your baby:

- Soothing.
- Balance: the body shifts from side to side in response to the momentum will help with baby learning how to sit up in the future.
- When baby tries to lift the neck off the blanket, it will strengthen the neck muscle.
- Having to loving faces smiling down, reinforces feelings of trust.

How:

- Gently lay baby on a small blanket.

- With your partner or another caregiver, holding opposite ends of the blanket, lift the blanket and gently swing the baby back and forth. Side note: holding the baby in this position replicates the carrying support the baby had in the womb.
- You can change the movement sensations the following ways:
 - Gently lifting the blanket up and down.
 - Lift one end of the blanket to raise the baby's head slightly and lower the legs. This will help the baby sit up and look around. **NOTE: assess the height depending on your strength capacity, your comfort level, and always keeping the safety of child a priority.**

*It is the motion, eye contact and interaction that makes this a fun activity for everyone.



Baby Legs Cycle (Birth & Up)

Stimulation: Body Awareness and Gross Motor Skills.

Ways in which it will help your baby:

- Physical abilities will increase.
- Eventually baby will grab legs on its own.
- Eventually baby will pedal legs on its own.
- Interest and awareness increase on baby's own body.

How:

- Lay baby on its back.
- Gently and slowly move the baby's legs in a bicycling motion.
- Talk and smile at the baby.
- Encourage the baby to wiggle the legs without your help.



Peekaboo Play (3 Months & Up)

Stimulation: Object Permanence and Social Development.

Ways in which it will help your baby:

- When you appear and disappear behind the object, baby will learn that you are still there.
- Holding mental images will help baby in the future with language development.
- Baby will eventually mimic the Peekaboo Play on its own.

How:

- Hold a blanket or a diaper in front of your face while you ask “Where is mommy?” then peek out from behind it.
- Or-
- Put a light towel over baby’s face then whisk it off and say “Peekaboo!” when baby face emerges.



Who's Faces? (3 Months & Up)

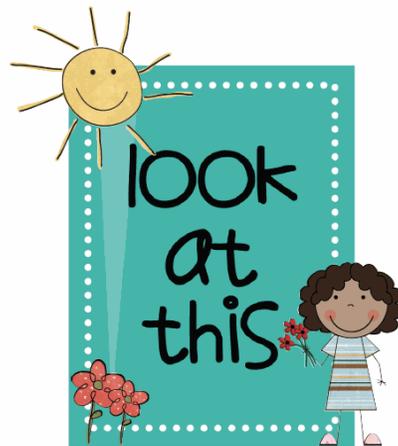
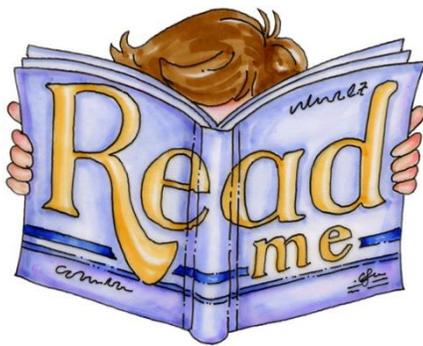
Stimulation: Social Development and Visual Discrimination

Ways in which it will help your baby:

- Attuned to facial expressions.
- Will respond to smiles and laughter.
- Differentiate between loved ones and unfamiliar faces.
- Introduced to wide range of faces and various emotions expressed.

How:

- Have a book with lots of faces such as magazine or you can gather family pictures or family albums.
- Point out the people in the pictures and describe what is happening in the picture. Begin to connect names with faces. You will notice that your baby will develop favorites.



Bubbles & Pinwheel (3 Months & Up)

Stimulation: Cause and Effect, Eye-Hand Coordination, Visual Development, Social Development.

Ways in which it will help your baby:

- Eye tracking, distance and depth perception.
- Hand eye coordination by attempting to swat the bubble.
- Cause: when touches the bubble, Effect: when the bubble pops.
- Will prompt a reaction when caregiver shows the bubbles or pinwheel.

How:

- Layout a large blanket or towel to sit on.
- Have a variety of bubbles-aim to larger bubbles so that it's easier for baby to notice.
- Create a shower of bubbles over the baby.
- Hold a colorful pinwheel in front of baby (baby will try to reach for the pinwheel but be careful as there can be sharp edges to it).
- Gently blow on the pinwheel and allow the baby to observe.
- Notice the baby's reaction and narrate their reaction.



Shake it up (6 Months & Up)

Stimulation: Cause and Effect, Gross Motor Skills and Listening.

Ways in which it can help your baby:

- Shaking motion will boost awareness of cause and effect.
- Express the growing sense of rhythm.
- Reinforce the sense that hands and arms are connected.
- Discover the properties of objects.

How:

- You will need any plastic bottle with a lid.
- Fill the bottle with anything that makes a sound: beans, rice, beads, and buttons.
- Show baby how to shake it. Once baby gets the idea, allow the baby to try.
- **WARNING:**
 - Make sure the lid is properly secure to avoid any choking incidents.
 - It may be hard to get the baby to stop!



Light Moves (6 Months & Up)

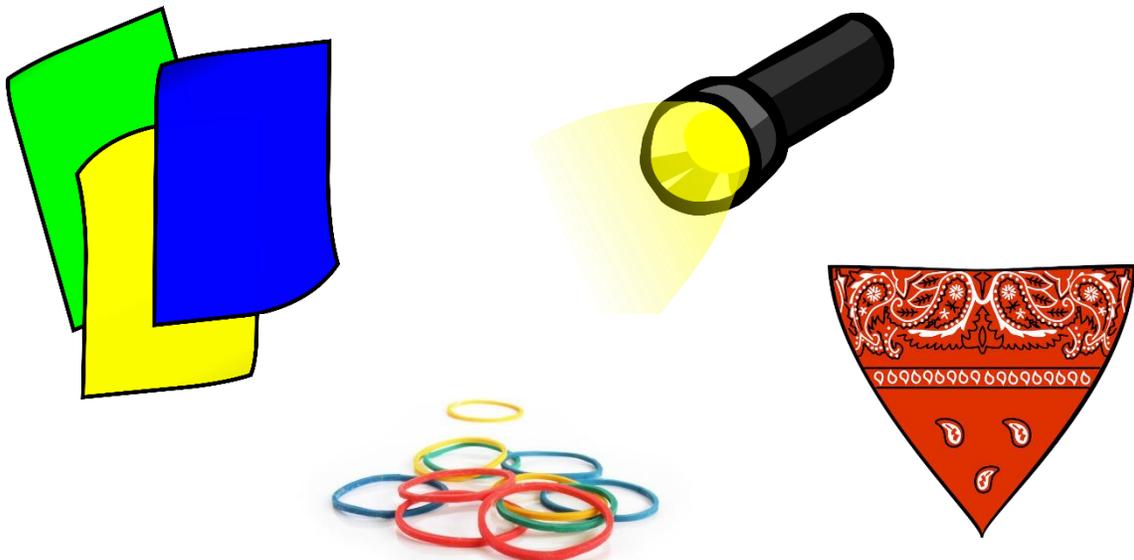
Stimulation: Fine Motors Skills, Sensory Development and Visual Development.

Ways in which it can help your baby:

- Strengthens the ability to visually track objects.

How:

- You need a flashlight (medium size recommended), Rubber band or hair tie, tissue paper (variety of colors) or bandana, masking tape.
- Place the tissue paper or bandana over the flashlight and secure it with the rubber band or the masking tape.
- Scan the color circles over the walls, ceiling, toys and baby (avoid the eyes).
- Turn on and off the flashlight and observe your baby's reaction.
- Make sure you talk your baby as you play. You are welcomed to sing if you'd like.



Knock It Down (9 Months & Up)

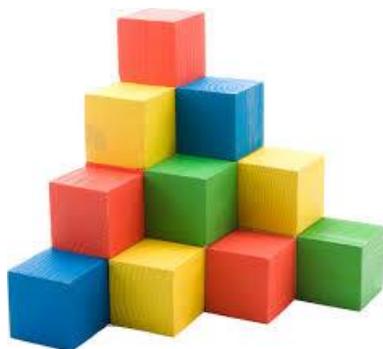
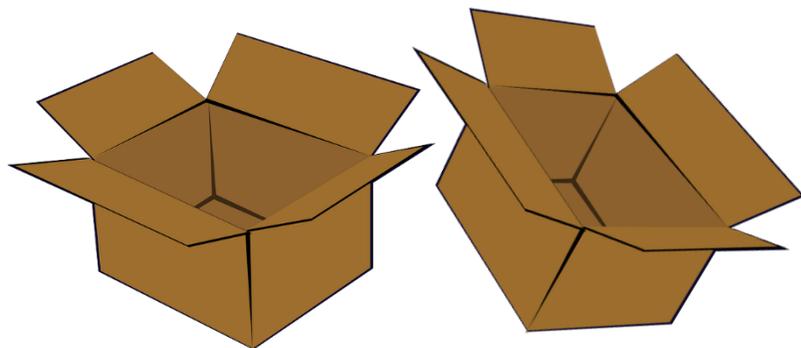
Stimulation: Fine Motor Skills, Gross Motor Skills and Size & Shape Discrimination.

Ways in which it will help your baby:

- Develop both gross and fine motor skills.
- Explore spatial relationships and differences.
- Gain more hand and arm coordination.

How:

- You will need large blocks, books, cereal boxes, shoe boxes or plastic bowls and cups.
- Build these items to make a tower.
- You can help your child stack them up and then knock them down.
- You can narrate what is happening and observe their reaction.



Obstacle course (All Ages)

Stimulation: Gross Motor Skills, Coordination, spatial awareness and Problem Solving.

Ways in which it will benefit your child:

- Will work the large muscles of the body when walking, jumping, skipping and turning.
- It encourages your child to stay active.

How:

- You will need: cones, jump rope, hula hoops and chalk. You can also get large boxes or other items that are similar to the “you will need” list.
- Steps:
 - Spread out the cones in a zig zag (This will encourage everyone to run and move around).
 - Spread out the rest of the materials with enough space in between so that everyone can move freely.
 - Hula hoops can be used as a hopping exercise by jumping from one hula hoop into the next.
 - Use the chalk to draw out a hopscotch or any figure they would like to create.
 - Have everyone try it out and time each other.
 - Encourage children to come up with rules and personalize the obstacle course to their imagination needs.



Scavenger hunt (2-10 year olds)

Stimulation: Gross and Fine Motor Skills, Cognition, Body Awareness and spatial awareness.

Ways in which it will benefit your child:

- It will allow your children to use their thinking skills to guess where the hidden items are.
- It will encourage your children to observe their surroundings.

How:

- You will need a large container or bag and gloves.
- Give a pair of gloves and a container or bag to those who are participating.
- Identify what item they should be looking for i.e. branches, leaves rocks. If inside the house you can identify items with a specific color or shape.
- Collect items
- Go over the items you found.
- Ask your children the following:
 - What item was the easiest to find?
 - What item was the hardest to find?
 - Did you like this activity?
 - What can we do differently next time?



Outdoor Painting (All Ages)

Stimulation: Fine Motor Skills, Sensory exploration and Hand/Eye Coordination.

Ways in which it will benefit your child:

- Your child will use their imagination and put into practice their creative skills.
- Children will be able to identify color and shape preference.
- Children will be able to identify whether or not the outdoor setting is comfortable or not.

How:

- You will need: paper, crayons, paint, brushes, tape and plate (if using paint).
- Give children the option of taping the paper on the wall (to draw/paint standing) or tape the paper on the ground and or any other flat surface.
- Give children the option to use:
 - Crayons
 - Chalk
 - Paints
 - Water colors
- Tell children to use their imagination and creativity to draw anything they would like.



Plant a Garden (2yrs & Up)

Stimulation: Social Skills, Listening skills, Sensory Exploration and Cognition.

Ways in which it will benefit your child:

- Children will be able to have an idea how fruits, veggies, and flowers grow.
- Will encourage children to try different vegetables and fruit.
- Children will learn about the process of growing a seed.

How:

- You will need: large container, dirt, seeds, shovel, gloves, and water. If you have space with dirt in your yard, you can use that.
- Follow these steps:
 - With adult supervision: dig a hole or place dirt on a large container.
 - Ask your child which seed they would like to plant first.
 - Cover the hole.
 - Water the dirt.
 - Repeat the steps above until you plant the desired amount of veggies, fruits and flowers.
 - Name your garden and watch it grow.
 - Don't forget to water it!



Make Your Own Bird Feeder (2yrs & Up)

Stimulation: Fine Motor Skills, Sensory Exploration, Social Skills, Tactile Stimulation.

Ways in which it will benefit your child:

- Your child will practice their observing skills.
- Your child will be able to identify texture preference.
- Your child will be able to put into use all sensory senses: touch, sight, taste, hearing and smell.

How:

- You will need: toilet paper roll, peanut butter, yarn, scissors and sunflower seeds.
- Add yarn at the top of the toilet paper roll (so we can hang it once it is done).
- Add peanut butter to the toilet paper roll.
- Roll the toilet paper roll in the sunflower seeds piles.
- Once it is done hang it and watch the birds eat from it.



Making Playdough (2yrs & Up)

Stimulation: Fine Motor Skills and Sensory Exploration.

Ways in which it will benefit your child:

- Children will be able explore different types of textures while making the playdough.

How:

- You will need:
 - 1 cup flour
 - ½ cup salt
 - 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
 - 1 cup water
 - 2 tablespoons oil
 - Food coloring
 - bowl
 - spoon and
 - saucepan
- combine flour, salt, cream of tartar
- now add water and oil
- food coloring
- add to saucepan
- cook over medium heat
- stirring constantly until a ball forms
- remove from heat and knead until smooth



Creating a Puppet (2yrs & Up)

Stimulation: Hand and Eye Coordination, Fine Motor Skills and Self-Concept

Ways in which it will benefit your child:

- Children will get to use their imagination and creativity.

How:

- You will need: paper bag, colors, markers, glue, scissors, and yarn.
- Lay paper bag on smooth side, keep the bottom flap facing up.
- Children will be able to use their imagination and use any material they'd like to create a puppet.
- Have a puppet show after.

