



## Activities to Promote Development

### 24-30 Months

**Activities to Promote Gross Motor Development** – large movements like crawling, running or jumping

Things you can do to build your child's strength and coordination:

- **Rolling fun.** Take your child to a soft, grassy area or on a rug or carpet in your home. Let them lie down and show them how to roll.
- **Changing speed and direction.** Play movement games with your child where they have to change speed or direction. Give them very easy directions when telling them what to do. For example, “run to the tree and back,” or “clap fast, and now clap slow.”
- **Heel-toe walk.** Stand next to your child and tell them to watch your feet. Put one foot in front of the other, touching heel to toe. Ask them to make their feet look like yours. Show them how to take a heel-toe step and ask them to do the same. Have fun doing the heel-toe walk around your house.
- **Bike riding.** Tricycles are a fun, safe way to build gross motor muscles. Help your child pedal at first by showing them how to push down with one foot at a time. Always make sure your child wears a helmet.
- **Toss.** Toss around a ball or beanbag with your child. Try asking your toddler to toss a balled-up sock into a laundry basket.

**Activities to Promote Fine Motor Development**—small muscle movements like using a pencil or holding a spoon

It's important to build your child's hand muscles and coordination. These skills will make it easier when your child learns how to write.

- **Rice play.** Fill a bowl with about 4 inches of dry rice. Give your child a few plastic cups, bowls, and spoons to play with using the rice. Note: you may want to put a sheet under your child, as this activity can get messy.
- **Screw tops.** Put plastic bottles and jars with screw lids into a box. Show your child how to open the jars by unscrewing the tops. Let them play freely with the jars and their screw lids.
- **Beads.** Allow your child to start stringing beads together by using large string and big beads.

- **Lacing games.** Have your child to begin to use his or her fingers to lace up their shoes, or loose shoes around the house.
- **Stickers.** Peeling and sticking stickers on paper is a fun activity and great for fine motor development!

Note: It's still a good idea to keep an eye on your child when they are playing with small toys that could be choking hazards.

### Activities to Promote Language Development

- **Nursery rhyme books.** Toddlers love repetition and rhyming. Nursery rhymes are a great way to learn words and conversation. Read and sing them often. Point to the things going on in the pictures. See if your child will say a few of the words with you. When you sing familiar songs or rhymes, pause to see if they will say the missing word. Remember to let your pause last—toddlers sometimes need lots of time to think before coming up with the right word.
- **Old McDonald.** Look at animal pictures with your child. As you do, sing the old McDonald song and see if your child will sing the name of the animal they see. You can both make the animal sounds together too.
- **Observing actions.** Talk about what other children are doing with your child as you watch them (like at a playground). See if he your child can name some of the things the others are doing, using, or playing with, and if they can tell how other children may be feeling (for example, "That boy is swinging and his face looks so happy").
- **Weather and seasons.** Hang one or two weather or season pictures where your child can see them. Point to the picture that shows what the weather is like outside and talk about it. Ask your child to point out things in the picture (the sun, rain).
- **Action games.** Play an action word game with your child. Say words for actions you know your child can do (wave, clap). Do the actions as you say the words and see if your child will copy your actions. If they just want to watch, that's fine too. You can still include them in the fun ("You're watching me clap!")
- **Combining words.** Be on the lookout for your child's first use of two word-combinations (like "big ball"). When you hear a two-word sentence, show how excited it! Add to your child's words—for example if your child says "More yogurt," say "You finished your yogurt and now you want more!"

- **Puppet games.** Use a puppet for your child to talk to. Have the puppet ask your child questions that you think they might be able to answer. Be silly with the puppet as it asks about your child's name, clothes, body parts, toys, food, etc.
- **Word songs.** When your child says a word, play with the word by singing about it. For example, if your child asks to be picked up by saying "up" and stretching out their arms, you can sing a little tune as you lift them up. "Up? Do you want to be picked up? Up, up, up you go!"

### Brain Building Activities

- **Food counting.** Give your child a plate with different finger foods. Suggest that your child feed themselves, and help them count how many pieces of food they have on their plate. Talk about how many pieces of each type of food there are on the plate, "You have one banana slice and one piece of chicken, two things to eat."
- **Number Songs**
  - Five Little Pumpkins song (hold up a finger for each pumpkin as you say the poem)
    - Five little pumpkins sitting on a gate.
    - The first one said, "oh my, it's getting late."
    - The second one said, "but we don't care."
    - The third one said, "let's go to the fair."
    - The fourth one said, "let's have some fun."
    - The fifth one said, "let's run, run, run."
    - Whoooo went the wind and out went the light.
    - And the five little pumpkins rolled out of sight.
  - This Little Piggy (count your child's toes as you playfully touch each one)
    - Piggy number one went to market
    - Piggy number two stayed home
    - Piggy number three had roast beef
    - Piggy number four had none
    - Piggy number five cried wee wee wee all the way home
- **Color Sorting.** Put blocks of all one color in a basket or container. Also include several small toys of the same color. For example, you could try red blocks, a red fire engine, and red cups. Give your child the red toys and blocks to play with. As your child plays,

talk about what the toys are and their color. Stick to the same color for a few days and point out objects you see of the same color during the day. Make a game out of it and ask your child to bring you objects that are that color. When you notice your toddler has found examples of the color in many settings, it's time to switch to a new color!

- **Shape Games.** Shapes are everywhere! Begin to point them out. Stick with the same shape for at least a few days and start easy. Help your child learn a circle, a square, and a triangle before moving on to octagons. You can cut snacks into shapes (for example, a triangle sandwich, a circle piece of cheese).
- **Matching Games.** There are many available to buy, or you can make your own. Show your child how to spread out all of the pictures and then put the pairs together. "Here's a picture of an apple and here's another picture of an apple. Can you put the two apples together?" Then let your child use the pictures in their own way.