



# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 2-month-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

Take turns with your baby when he makes cooing and gurgling sounds. Have a "conversation" back and forth with simple sounds that he can make.

Rest your baby, tummy down, on your arm, with your hand on her chest. Use your other hand to secure your baby—support her head and neck. Gently swing her back and forth. As she gets older, walk around to give her different views.

Gently shake a rattle or another baby toy that makes a noise. Put it in your baby's hand. See if she takes it, even for a brief moment.

Read simple books to your baby. Even if he does not understand the story, he will enjoy being close and listening to you read.

Put a puppet or small sock on your finger. Say your baby's name while moving the puppet or sock up and down. See whether he follows the movement.

Now move your finger in a circle. Each time your baby is able to follow the puppet, try a new movement.

With white paper and a black marker, create several easy-to-recognize images on each piece of paper. Start with simple patterns (diagonal stripes, bull's eyes, checkerboards, triangles). Place the pictures so that your baby can see them (8"–12" inches from her face). Tape these pictures next to her car seat or crib.

Place a shatterproof mirror close to your baby where she can see it. Start talking, and tap the mirror to get her to look. The mirror will provide visual stimulation. Eventually your baby will understand her reflection.

Sing to your baby (even if you don't do it well). Repetition of songs and lullabies helps your baby to learn and listen.





# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 6-month-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

While sitting on the floor, place your baby in a sitting position inside your legs. Use your legs and chest to provide only as much support as your baby needs. This allows you to play with your baby while encouraging independent sitting.

Gently rub your baby with a soft cloth, a paper towel, or nylon. Talk about how things feel (soft, rough, slippery). Lotion feels good, too.

Common household items such as measuring spoons and measuring cups make toys with interesting sounds and shapes. Gently dangle and shake a set of measuring spoons or measuring cups where your baby can reach or kick at them. Let your baby hold them to explore and shake, too.

**Play voice games.**  
Talk with a high or low voice. Click your tongue. Whisper. Take turns with your baby. Repeat any sounds made by him. Place your baby so that you are face to face—your baby will watch as you make sounds.

With your baby lying on his back, place a toy within sight but out of reach, or move a toy across your baby's visual range. Encourage him to roll to get the toy.

Place your baby in a chair or car seat to watch everyday activities. Tell your baby what you are doing. Let your baby see, hear, and touch common objects. You can give your baby attention while getting things done.

Your baby will like to throw toys to the floor. Take a little time to play this "go and fetch" game. It helps your baby to learn to release objects. Give baby a box or pan to practice dropping toys into.

Place your baby facing you. Your baby can watch you change facial expressions (big smile, poking out tongue, widening eyes, raising eyebrows, puffing or blowing). Give your baby a turn. Do what your baby does.





# Activities



## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 1-year-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

### Let your baby "help"

during daily routines. Encourage your baby to "get" the cup and spoon for mealtime, to "find" shoes and coat for dressing, and to "bring" the pants or diaper for changing.

**Following directions** is an important skill for your baby to learn.

### Babies love games at this age (**Pat-a-Cake, This Little Piggy**).

Try different ways of playing the games and see if your baby will try it with you. Hide behind furniture or doors for Peekaboo; clap blocks or pan lids for Pat-a-cake.

### Make puppets

out of a sock or paper bag—one for you and one for your baby. Have your puppet talk to your baby or your baby's puppet. Encourage your baby to "talk" back.

Tape a large piece of drawing paper to a table. Show your baby how to **scribble** with large nontoxic crayons. Take turns making marks on the paper. It's also fun to paint with water.

Babies enjoy **push and pull toys**. Make your own pull toy by threading yogurt cartons, spools, or small boxes on a piece of yarn or soft string (about 2 feet long). Tie a bead or plastic stacking ring on one end for a handle.

This is the time your baby learns that adults can be useful! When your baby "asks" for something by vocalizing or pointing, respond to his signal. **Name the object** your baby wants and encourage him to communicate again—taking turns with each other in a "**conversation**."

Cut up safe **finger foods** (do not use foods that pose a danger of your baby's choking) in small pieces and allow your baby to feed himself. It is good practice to pick up small things and feel different textures (bananas, soft crackers, berries).





# Activities

AGE 18  
MONTHS

## HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN AND GROW!

Try these fun and easy activities with your 18-month-old—a great way to have fun together and encourage your child's healthy development.

Pretend play becomes even more fun at this age. Encourage your toddler to have a doll or stuffed toy do what he does—walk, go to bed, dance, eat, and jump. Include the doll in daily activities or games.

Toddlers love movement. Take him to the park to ride on rocking toys, swings, and small slides. You may want to hold your toddler in your lap on the swing and on the slide at first.

Put favorite toys in a laundry basket slightly out of reach of your toddler or in a clear container with a tight lid. Wait for your toddler to request the objects, giving her a reason to communicate. Respond to her requests.

Sing action songs together such as "Ring Around the Rosy," "Itsy-Bitsy Spider," and "This Is the Way We Wash Our Hands." Do actions together. Move with the rhythm. Wait for your toddler to anticipate the action.

Toddlers will begin putting objects together. Simple puzzles (separate pieces) with knobs are great. Putting keys into locks and letters into mailbox slots is fun, too.

Your toddler may become interested in "art activities." Use large nontoxic crayons and a large pad of paper. Felt-tip markers are more exciting with their bright colors. Let your toddler scribble his own picture as you make one.

Play the "What's that?" game by pointing to clothing, toys, body parts, objects, or pictures and asking your toddler to name them. If your toddler doesn't respond, name it for him and encourage imitation of the words.

Fill a plastic tub with cornmeal or oatmeal. Put in kitchen spoons, strainers, measuring cups, funnels, or plastic containers. Toddlers can fill, dump, pour, and learn about textures and use of objects as tools. Tasting won't be harmful.

