

# 10 Brain-Building Ideas During Daily Routines (Toddlers 1–3 Years)

## Abecedarian Approach (AA)– Enriched Caregiving



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### Dear Parent, Here's How You Can Support Your Toddler's Learning—Every Day

Your toddler's brain is growing faster than ever—but here's the good news: you don't need hours of teaching or special toys to help your child learn. The moments you already spend together—meals, bathing and dressing— can be powerful learning opportunities.

While the Abecedarian Approach (AA) includes other pillars like Language Priority, Interaction Games, and Conversational Reading, this guide focuses only on Enriched Caregiving



### What is Enriched Caregiving?

Enriched caregiving means turning everyday routines into short, playful, brain-building moments. It's about:

1. **Building on what you already do to care for your child's needs** — just doing it a little differently and more intentionally.
2. **Adding simple learning opportunities during caregiving moments**, such as talking, singing, or playing while you feed, bathe, or dress your child.
3. **Doing it with love and gentleness**, showing your child through your tone, touch, and attention that they are safe, loved, and cared for.

### Why This Matters

Research shows that toddlers who experience enriched caregiving develop:

- Stronger language and thinking skills
- Better social-emotional skills
- A head start in school readiness and lifelong learning

*Even just a few minutes at a time during your daily routines can make a big difference. You are your toddler's first teacher—and you can make every day meaningful, joyful, and playful.*



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#### Fun Idea/Activity

#### How It Supports My Toddler's Learning

1. Mealtime: Let my toddler choose between two fruits. *“apple or banana?”*



Builds autonomy and gives my child the chance to practise making simple decisions. Having a sense of control over what goes on their plate makes my child more willing to eat and helps prevent unnecessary mealtime battles.

2. Mealtime: Talk about textures. *“smooth yoghurt,” “crunchy carrot”*



Expands vocabulary and sensory awareness, easing fears of new foods.

3. Bathtime: *“What comes next?”*  
Pretend to forget the next step or do it *“wrong”* and let my child *“teach”* me the right way to bathe.



Builds my child's confidence, memory, and sense of competence — they love being the teacher!

4. Bathtime: Pour water between cups of different sizes.



When my child pours water between cups of different sizes, they're learning about volume, capacity, and comparison (more, less, full, empty). These playful moments build early math thinking, problem-solving, and coordination—all through fun water play!

5. Dressing: Encourage lifting arms, pulling up pants, or choosing socks.



Supports your child's motor development, expands their language about body parts and movements, and nurtures confidence in self-dressing.

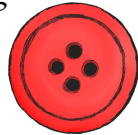
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6. Dressing: Count the buttons or pockets together while getting dressed



Builds my child's early math skills, number awareness, and attention to detail while making dressing up fun and interactive.

7. Commuting: Spot and name colours, shapes, or vehicles by playing "I spy with my eyes"



Builds my child's focus and attention to detail, helps them name colours and objects, and grows their vocabulary—all while we walk to school.

8. Commuting: Play "Follow the Leader" — Let my child be the leader and give me directions on how to get to school..



Builds my child's confidence and sense of autonomy, strengthens problem-solving and spatial awareness, and encourages them to communicate clearly as they lead the way to school.

9. Bedtime: Point to the clock and talk about the time—"It's getting late, 10 more minutes till bedtime!" Count down together as part of the routine.



Builds my child's awareness of time, number sense, and understanding of routines, helping them wind down and prepare for sleep calmly.

10. Bedtime: Talk about the favourite and least favourite parts of the day—and ask why.



Builds my child's emotional awareness, reflection skills, and ability to express thoughts and feelings clearly, while deepening our bond through conversation.



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**Let's Stay Connected**

**Hi, I'm Rainbow from The Rainbow Sprinkles.**

**I'm a certified Abecedarian Approach Master Trainer, with over 20 years of experience working with young children and supporting parents—especially during those precious first three years of life.**

### **How I Can Support You**

1. Home Visits & Parent Coaching – Simple, practical tips right in your own home.
2. Parent–Child Playgroups – Small, cosy sessions for fun and connection.
3. Workshops & talks– Relaxed talks on toddler development and parenting.

### **Have a question or want to share how it's going?**

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