

Age-Appropriate Parent–Child Play Activities

Below is a table of recommended play activities that support healthy development and bonding during supervised visitation, aligned with Australian early childhood development and parenting best practices.

Age Range	Example Activities	Developmental Focus
0–12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tummy time with supervision• Peek-a-boo• Singing nursery rhymes• Gentle massage• Holding and rocking	Attachment, sensory development, trust building
1–3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stacking blocks• Reading simple picture books• Playing with soft toys• Dancing to music• Water or sand play	Fine motor skills, language exposure, imitation, secure attachment
3–5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Role-play (e.g. tea parties, pretend cooking)• Drawing and colouring• Singing action songs (e.g. 'Heads Shoulders Knees and Toes')• Basic puzzles• Playing with puppets	Imaginative play, communication, emotional expression, social skills
6–8 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board games with simple rules• Craft projects• Reading together• Playing with building sets (e.g. LEGO)• Nature walks with observation games	Emotional regulation, problem solving, creativity, resilience
9–12 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy-based board games• Sports (e.g. ball games, frisbee)• Cooking simple recipes together• Story writing or journaling• Working on a shared hobby (e.g. painting, model building)	Co-regulation, cooperation, confidence, trust building
13+ years (Teens)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conversation-based games (e.g. 'Would You Rather?')• Playing card games• Cooking a meal together• Sharing music or playlists• Outdoor walks or sports	Trust, emotional safety, shared interests, open communication

Age-Appropriate Outdoor Parent-Child Play Activities

Outdoor play is essential for promoting physical activity, emotional wellbeing, and connection to nature. The following activities are suitable for different age groups and can be used to encourage positive engagement during supervised visitation sessions.

Age Range	Outdoor Activities	Developmental Benefits
0-12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pram walks • Blanket time under a tree • Watching bubbles • Tactile exploration (e.g. grass, leaves) 	Sensory stimulation, secure attachment, calming experience
1-3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing in a sandpit • Water play with supervision • Push toys in the yard • Ball rolling • Exploring a fenced park 	Gross motor skills, independence, coordination
3-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground play (slides, swings) • Nature scavenger hunts • Kicking or rolling a ball • Sidewalk chalk drawing • Catching bubbles 	Exploration, balance, physical confidence, creative expression
6-8 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike or scooter rides (helmeted) • Obstacle courses • Park games (e.g. tag) • Gardening together • Flying a kite 	Teamwork, problem solving, physical strength, curiosity
9-12 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bushwalks or nature trails • Ball games (e.g. basketball, soccer) • Skipping rope challenges • Mini-golf or frisbee • Outdoor craft (e.g. painting rocks) 	Coordination, communication, goal setting, resilience
13+ years (Teens)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beach walks or surf watching • Shooting hoops or playing catch • Outdoor fitness circuits • Shared dog walk • Photography walks in nature 	Connection through shared interest, emotional regulation, healthy lifestyle habits

