

WEEKLY LEARNING ACTIVITIES: EARLY CHILDHOOD



Monday

Babies love to hear you talk! Talking about the sizes of different items in your home supports connection with your baby. Toddlers can try to imitate your language and older children can talk about sizes.

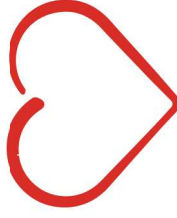
Save milk cartons, empty tissue boxes or cereal boxes. Your child can stack them to make towers. Practice counting and guessing how tall you can make it together!

Tuesday

Water play feels good! Sing a song like baby shark in the bath while pouring water over hands/feet/etc. Name the body parts you are washing.

Have some fun in the bath. You can talk about all the things to do in the water.

Use plastic cups of different sizes to talk about full and empty, dripping and pouring.



Wednesday

Babies love to play peek-a-boo. Hide your face with socks or other clothing items.

Help your child sort objects into piles. For example, socks in one pile and shirts in another. Talk about which has more.

Thursday

Use your finger to trace shapes/letters/numbers on your baby, toddler or preschooler's hand or back. For older children have them guess what you are drawing.

Hold up your hands to your child's hands. Talk about the different sizes and how it feels.

Friday

Sing action songs together, such as "Ring Around the Rosey" or "Itsy-Bitsy Spider." Do the actions together.

Counting songs are great! Think of songs like "5 Green and Speckled Frogs" or "5 Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed" to practice number sense.

PARENT AND CAREGIVER CORNER

There is going to be a lot more time with you and your child or children in close quarters. Your patience will be tested, and you may find yourself being more reactive than you are used to. Remember that feeling this way under these circumstances is totally normal, and it doesn't make you a bad caregiver!

It may be that you just need a small break: Take a few moments to quiet your mind, close your eyes, and take 3 slow, deep breaths. Say to yourself, "I am doing the best that I can. Peace begins with me." Open your eyes and take a pulse on your inner calm.

Your calm will influence the calm of your children. Let us assure you, "We're in this together!"

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IT'S ALL NEW

Almost everything is new to your child in their first year. So describe what you see. "There goes the yellow school bus. Beep beep!" Let them see, hear, smell and even touch things, if possible. Notice what they're interested in and have a back-and-forth chat. "You see the big tree? What else do you see?" Suggested age: 0-12 months.

Brainy Background

When you chat back-and-forth with your child, you help them begin to learn words. They're making connections between words and what they represent. This is an important language skill. By responding to their interests, you're prompting them to learn more.

HAND TALK

Show your child how to tell you they're feeling hungry by touching their hand to their mouth or rubbing their belly. If you do this over and over and then give them food while saying the word "hungry," they will pick up the symbol and learn to talk to you with their hands. Suggested age: 0-18 months.

Brainy Background

Children can express themselves with their hands (for example, by pointing) long before they can use words. Helping them learn to use "Hand Talk" will help them learn to communicate with words in the future.

FITTING CUPS

Give your child safe containers of different sizes to play with. You can use measuring cups, bowls or whatever is handy. Encourage them to try placing some of the containers inside others. Talk together about what they're doing. "Two cups fit inside the big pot." "Which others fit? Which ones don't?" Ask questions to keep it going! Suggested age: 12 months – 2½ years.

Brainy Background

Your child learns ideas like numbers, shapes and sizes by using them in simple ways like this. Talking about what your child is doing also helps them learn new words. Plus, it motivates them to keep exploring and learning!

BATHTIME SING-A-LONG

During bathtime, sing your child's favorite songs. You can make up your own song about what's happening in the bath, too. Are they pouring water from a cup, or pre-tending with a toy? Encourage them to sing their own song and respond to them. Suggested age: 2 years – 4 years.

Brainy Background

When you ask your child to respond to the songs, you're helping them pay attention, while also making connections between what they already know and what you're asking. These connections help them organize information in new ways, which is very important to learning.

SIZE SEARCH

Invite your child to hunt for objects of different sizes. How many small things can they find? What about big things? Make it harder and ask them to find things that are medium-sized or huge. Talk about what they see and what is the same and different. Suggested age: 2½ years – 5 years.

Brainy Background

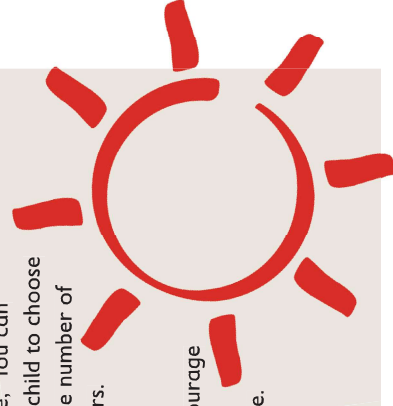
When you and your child take turns and talk about ideas like big and small and same and different, you're helping to develop their vocabulary. They're also beginning to understand math and science ideas that are important now and in the future.

SIMPLE STEPS

Make cleanup more fun by starting small. Say something like, "You can pick up these three books first." After that, encourage your child to choose their next simple step. As they get the hang of it, increase the number of objects and add more steps. Suggested age: 2 years – 4 years.

Brainy Background

By helping your child break tasks down into steps, you encourage them to practice using strategies to achieve goals. You can use these strategies to take on more challenges in the future.



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