

MOVING TO THRIVE: ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 0 TO 3 YEARS

TUMMY TIME FOR INFANTS



Materials:

Floor space

Floor mat

Picture books and baby toys (optional)

Instructions:

Help your baby gain movement in his or her legs, arms and neck in order to prepare him or her for crawling! Lie your baby face down on his or her chest on the floor. You can sit on a bed, sofa, or chair close to your baby. Start talking or singing to your baby so he or she will start lifting his or her head towards you. Progress by placing your baby on his or her stomach with a play mat on the floor. You can get down to his or her level and use toys to gain your baby's attention, so he or she raises his or her head. Play Tummy Time for 5-10 minutes a day to help your baby gain muscle strength.

SIT UP AND LOOK



Materials:

Comfortable place to sit indoors or outdoors where there is a lot of activity to watch.

Instructions:

This activity helps your baby develop basic upper body movements, visual acuity, and core strength with balance. Sit with your baby on your lap, sitting upright and facing forward like you. Point at different things that are happening (e.g., children playing, cars driving, birds singing, rain falling) and talk to your baby about what you are seeing.

Notice how your baby pushes and strains to sit upright and perhaps reaches and points at the activity. This is good for building core strength to sit upright unassisted. As your baby's strength and balance improve, try sitting him or her upright on the floor with pillows behind and beside for some support and safety.

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PLAY BALL



Materials:

One to three soft balls

Instructions:

Once your baby can sit up right, sit him or her across from you with enough room in between to roll a ball. Roll the ball, let your baby reach, and roll the ball back. You can keep rolling the ball back and forth and allowing your baby to keep moving. You can also add another ball for your baby to grab.

MAKE YOUR OWN INSTRUMENTS



Materials:

Pots, pans, spoons, rattle, other household objects that make noise

Instructions:

Help your baby improve his or her coordination, listening skills, and musical exploration by allowing him or her to create music with various objects. You can also play tunes for your baby to imitate.

STICKY STEPS



Materials:

Clear contact paper
Toys to stick to the contact paper

Instructions:

This activity is great for babies to enhance their sensory awareness, muscle strength, and body awareness. Cut contact paper in different size strips. Remove the backing and place the sticky side upwards on the floor. Let your child explore the paper by standing, dancing, or running on it. You can add small toys or objects for your baby to pick up and explore.

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THE COLOR HOP



Materials:

Chalk

Sidewalk to color on

Instructions:

Using the chalk, draw different colored circles in a large circle spaced enough that your child can jump from one little circle to the next. You will need to draw the small circles in different colors on the sidewalk or driveway where it is safe for them to play. Once complete, give your child instructions, like hop to the next circle or jump to the color blue or freeze on the yellow circle. You can make up your own directions and help your child learn to listen and follow instructions.

TASTE SAFE FINGER PAINTING



Materials:

3 tablespoons sugar

½ teaspoon salt

½ cup cornstarch

2 cups of water

Food coloring

Easel paper



Instructions:

Make the homemade paints by combining all ingredients in a small saucepan on low heat. Make sure to mix them and add the food coloring to each batch. When the paint is cooled, go outside with your baby, and set up the easel paper on a surface that is safe for your baby to be on. Put some paint on the paper, let your baby play in the paint, and allow him or her to move the paint all over the paper. For a quick clean up, fill a baby pool with a small amount of water and let your baby play in the pool after he or she is done painting.

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SOUND SAFARI



Materials:

Construction paper
White paper
Markers
Ruler
Scissors
Tape

Instructions:

Create a simple chart using one space for the sound and the other space to place a check or star. Design this on the white piece of paper. Think of sounds you and your toddler hear often outside and list those on the chart. Once completed, tape the white paper to construction paper. When it's time to go outside, bring along the sound safari. If you or your child hears one of the sounds, place either a sticker or check mark next to the sound you or your child heard.

SENSORY WATER POOL



Materials:

Baby plastic or blow up pool
Water
Sensory objects and toys

Instructions:

Outside fill the small pool with water. Make sure the water is not too cold or too hot, and do not fill the water too high - just enough for your baby to sit in it. Place sensory objects, like shells, water toys, blocks, or dolls. Make sure the objects are suitable for your baby to play with and they do not present a choking hazard. When all the objects are in the pool, let your baby explore the pool. Let him or her know what objects are called and be involved in the play. ****Never leave your child unattended in the water.****

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SENSORY BAGS



Materials:

Half gallon zip lock bag
Gel (such as hair gel)
6 flat marbles or small flat rocks
Packing tape

Instructions:

Put marbles or rocks into the half-gallon zip lock, and fill the zip lock bag with gel. You want to make sure to fill the bag with just a thin layer of gel. If you use a bottle of hair gel, you can use the entire bottle. Seal the zip lock and tape on the wall just high enough that your baby can reach it while sitting. Place your baby near the wall you taped the bag to and allow him or her to explore the bag. Eventually he or she will need to sit upright in order to touch the bag.

****Always supervise your child while doing this activity as small parts are a choking hazard.****

BABY SHAKERS



Materials:

Empty water bottle
Dried beans
Beads
Pennies
Small little bells
Rice
Ribbon

Instructions:

Fill the empty water bottles with any type of object that is small enough to fit in the water bottles. Only place a small amount in the water bottles. Make sure to tightly seal the cap. You can also use a hot glue gun to securely attach the seam of the cap to the bottle. Tie ribbon on the cap of the bottle. Now, let your toddler play with the bottles and help him or her create music and explore the various objects inside the water bottles.

****Always supervise your child while doing this activity as small parts are a choking hazard.****

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DRESS UP TIME



Materials:

Old clothes
Costumes

Instructions:

Bring out a pile of old clothes and costumes and let your child play dress-up. You can also play with them, but it is great to encourage group play with two or three other children of the same age.



YOU'VE GOT MAIL



Materials:

Empty shoebox
Junk mail

Instructions:

Cut a slot out in the top of the shoebox. Decorate the box with your child. Place junk mail in it for your child to open. This will help your toddler develop fine motor skills by opening letters. You can also teach your child basic concepts, like what pictures, colors, or letters he or she can see on the mail.



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DIY SENSORY OR BUSY BOARD



Materials:

Large wood panel or board

Drill and screws

Objects that can be attached to the board that are safe for babies

Instructions:

There are many objects you can choose from to attach to the sensory board. Some include a paper towel holder, key board, calculator, door chains, and small wheels. When you have located the objects, you will need to drill them into the board. When complete, let your toddler play with the board and explore the various objects on it.

