Gross and Fine Motor Activities For Early Childhood

Infants and Toddlers

Stacy A. Callender

Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute
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For Early Childhood

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Sponsor
Mississippi Department of Human Services
Office for Children and Youth

Mississippi State University
Early Childhood Institute
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Foreword

The Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), Office for Children and Youth presents this manual in the Gross and Fine Motor Activities for Early Childhood Series.

The Office for Children and Youth contracted with the Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute to develop this manual and the companion volumes in the series as part of a year-long project to rebuild playgrounds and provide new learning materials to eligible early childhood centers in the Hurricane Katrina region of Mississippi.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, it is crucial that children have the greatest opportunities possible to learn and grow in safe, supportive, age-appropriate settings. The activities in this three-volume series are based on clear and powerful evidence of the importance of physical activities and play to young children’s overall development. They support best practices in using the toys and learning materials that MDHS has provided to eligible child care providers.

Strong, healthy, happy children can learn more and grow into strong, healthy, self-sufficient adults, guaranteeing a bright future for Mississippi. In the Katrina region and across Mississippi, we encourage teachers and child care providers to strive for excellence in their programming for young children.

Best wishes to all of our colleagues in early childhood education and care –

Julia Todd  
Director  
Mississippi Department of Human Services,  
Office for Children and Youth  

June 15, 2007
Introduction

Running, jumping, climbing and dancing—and all kinds of active play—are very important for young children’s development. Even children who have limited mobility need many opportunities to wave their arms, turn their heads, and flex their fingers.

Of course, young children are not just strengthening their muscles and improving their coordination when they engage in physical play. Every game and physical activity is a chance to learn concepts and to practice getting along with others. For all of these reasons, gross and fine motor activities are crucial to early childhood development.

This manual contains a rich variety of gross and fine motor activities for infants and toddlers. Like the companion volumes in the Gross and Fine Motor Activities for Early Childhood Series from the Mississippi State University (MSU) Early Childhood Institute, it offers busy early childhood teachers and family child care providers dozens of delightful ideas for incorporating physical play and learning throughout the day.

The MSU Early Childhood Institute (ECI) received important support for development and production of the Gross and Fine Motor Activities for Early Childhood Series from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), as part of a generous effort by many foundations, public agencies, businesses and individuals to restore playgrounds and classrooms at early childhood centers in the Hurricane Katrina region. The activities in this manual involve toys and learning materials that ECI provided to early childhood centers thanks to MDHS funding, although many of the activities can be adapted with other materials that teachers and family child care providers may have available.

Cathy Grace, Ed.D.
Professor, Curriculum and Instruction
Director, Early Childhood Institute
Mississippi State University

June 15, 2007
Motor Activities
for Ages
Birth – 9 months
Ball Rolls

Objective
This activity will help babies develop motor control of their arms and legs.

Materials
- Giggle and Roll Set *
- Sit-U-Up * (optional)

Procedure
Place the baby on the floor, using the Sit-U-Up as needed. Sit about three feet away facing the baby. Roll one of the balls from the Giggle and Roll Set against the baby’s feet. Encourage the baby to kick or bat the ball away. Roll the ball back to baby singing the following song:

Roll the ball, roll the ball,
Back and forth, back and forth,
Roll the ball, roll the ball,
One, two, whooooo!

Reference

Bang It and Shake It

Objective
This activity will help babies develop motor coordination in their hands and arms.

Materials
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Suction Cup Activity Set *
- Sit-U-Up * (optional)

Procedure
Place the baby on the floor, using the Sit-U-Up as needed. Bang one of the Mini Edu-Blocks on the floor to attract the baby’s attention.

* Denotes learning materials provided in the 2006-07 Rebuilding After Katrina Initiative in Mississippi.
Encourage the baby to do the same, and praise the baby when she or he copies you. Next, shake one of the Suction Cup toys. Encourage the baby to do the same, and praise the baby when she or he copies you. Once the baby learns to hold a toy while banging or shaking it, sing a children’s song or recite a nursery rhyme along with the sounds. Tunes that work well include: Mary Had a Little Lamb and Farmer in the Dell.

Reference

### Catch the Roller

**Objective**

This activity will help the baby develop balance and motor control of his or her trunk and limbs while encouraging the baby’s curiosity in exploring her or his environment.

**Materials**

- Musical Roller *

**Procedure**

Place the baby on her or his belly on the floor. Place the Musical Roller in front of the baby. Encourage the baby to reach for the Musical Roller. When the toy rolls away from the baby, gently roll it back toward the baby. Repeat several times or as long as the baby wants to play. Allow the baby to explore the Musical Roller by holding it still for a few moments.

### Chain Play

**Objective**

This activity will help the baby develop balance and motor control of his or her trunk and arms while encouraging the baby’s curiosity in exploring her or his environment. Note: This activity is only for babies who can sit up with support.
Materials

- Play Ring*
- Click ‘N Link*

Procedure
Place the Play Ring in the center of the floor. Place a small chain of the Clink ‘N Link toys through the two looped handles on top of the Play Ring. Seat the baby inside the Play Ring facing the toy chain. Be sure to keep your hand on the baby’s back for support. Encourage the baby to reach for the toy chain and to explore a variety of ways to free it from the looped handles. Allow the baby to continue to explore the toy chain pieces when they are freed.

Coos and Hugs

Objective
Infants first develop language skills by cooing at something interesting. This activity will help the baby develop eye/hand coordination and language skills.

Materials

- Suction Cup Activity Set *
- Giggle and Roll Set *

Procedure
Hold the baby in your lap to play a cooing game. Hold one of the toys from the suction cup activity set in front of the baby’s eyes. When the baby makes a cooing sound, coo back and give a gentle hug. After the baby tires of that toy, switch to one of the balls from the Giggle and Roll Set. Encourage the baby to make additional sounds.

Reference
Crawling Fun

Objective
This activity will help the baby develop balance and coordination for locomotion.

Materials
- Play Ring *
- Rocking Puppy *
- Soft Toddler Blocks *
- Workshop with tools *
- Aqua Duck *
- Sand and Water Table *

Procedure
Set up several of the toys listed above for the babies to crawl around, over, under, or through. After the baby has learned to crawl over toys such as the Aqua Duck, then place a few large toys for the baby to crawl around such as the Rocking Puppy or Workshop bench. Place the baby next to the Sand and Water Table for the baby to crawl under it. Then build a wall with the Soft Toddler Blocks; encourage the baby to crawl through the wall, knocking it down.

Reference

Dancing Game

Objective
This activity will help the baby develop eye/hand coordination.

Materials
- Quack-Along Ducks *
- Ribbon (make sure the ribbon is not long enough to go around the baby’s neck)
**Procedure**

Tie a short piece of ribbon around the head of one of the ducks. Show the baby how you can hold and tug the ribbon to make the duck dance up and down. As you make the duck dance, move it side to side, back and forth, and up and down.

**Reference**


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**Dropping Game**

**Objective**

This activity will help the baby develop eye/hand coordination.

**Materials**

- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Manipulative Set * (use several pieces from this set for the activity)
- Sit-U-Up * (optional)
- Empty coffee can
- Duct tape

**Procedure**

Place duct tape around the top edge of the coffee can to cover any sharp edges. Place the baby on the floor, using the Sit-U-Up as needed. Place the coffee can on the floor in front of the baby. Place one of the blocks or manipulatives in the baby’s hand. Hold the baby’s hand over the can. Open the baby’s fingers to let the toy drop into the can. When the toy hits the bottom of the can, say, “Boom!” Repeat several times until the baby learns to drop the toy independently. You may need to help the baby get the toy out of the can.

**Reference**

**Find the Noise**

**Objective**
This activity will help the baby develop auditory tracking skills and develop head and neck control.

**Materials**
- Suction Cup Activity Set *
- Giggle and Roll Set *

**Procedure**
Hold the baby in your lap. Shake a noisy item such as one of the toys from the Suction Cup Activity Set or one of the balls from the Giggle and Roll Set behind the baby's head out of her or his line of sight. Shake it slowly at first, then faster. As the baby searches for the toy with his or her eyes, praise and cuddle the baby.

**Reference**

**Finger Puppets**

**Objective**
From birth, babies prefer to look at faces above all other objects. This activity will help the baby develop eye/hand coordination and motor control for grasping while encouraging secure attachments with caregivers.

**Materials**
- Baby's First Puzzle * (use the cloth-covered “pieces”)

**Procedure**
Hold the baby in your lap. Using the cloth-covered “pieces” from the Baby’s First Puzzle, place your index and middle fingers through the holes to be the puppet’s “legs.” Face the Finger Puppet toward the baby and wiggle your fingers. Move the Finger Puppet around slowly so the baby can enjoy looking at it and reaching for it. Use the Finger Puppet to help you sing songs, tell stories, or just chat.
Follow the Animal

Objective
This activity will help the baby develop visual and auditory tracking skills and head and neck control while encouraging positive social interaction.

Materials
- Baby’s First Puzzle * (use the pieces for this activity)

Procedure
Hold the baby in your lap. Take one of the puzzle pieces from the Baby’s First Puzzle and hold it in the air for the baby to see. Make the animal sound and slowly move the puzzle piece around allowing the baby to track the toy by sight and sound. Touch the puzzle piece to the baby’s tummy, giving it a tickle. Repeat several times. Then give the baby the puzzle piece and move the baby’s hand around in the air while you make the animal sound. Touch the puzzle piece to your cheek.

Reference

Grab It

Objective
This activity will help the baby develop balance and motor control of his or her trunk and arms while encouraging the baby’s curiosity in exploring her or his environment.

Note: This activity is only for babies who can sit up with support.
Materials
- Sit-U-Up *
- Suction Cup Activity Set *

Procedure
Place the baby in the Sit-U-Up on the floor. Place one of the toys from the Suction Cup Activity Set in front of the baby. Encourage the baby to reach for the toy and to explore how to free it from the floor. Allow the baby to continue to explore the toy when it is freed.

Handy Clap

Objective
This activity will help the baby develop eye/hand coordination while increasing a sense of attachment and trust.

Materials
- Sit-U-Up *

Procedure
Place the baby in the Sit-U-Up and sit on the floor close by so the baby can see you. Sing or chant songs and rhymes while you play with the baby’s hands and fingers. Try one of the following Handy Clap games being sure to move the baby’s hands gently as you play:

Pat-A-Cake
Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker’s man, (clap baby’s hands)  
Bake me a cake as fast as you can; (repeat clapping)  
Roll it (roll baby’s hands) and pat it; (pat baby’s hands)  
Mark it with a B. (draw a B in the middle of baby’s hand)  
Put it in the oven for baby and me. (gently poke baby in the tummy)

If You’re Happy
(clap baby’s hands throughout the song)  
If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.  
If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.  
If you’re happy and you know it, then your hands will surely show it.  
If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.
Whoops! Johnny!
(Start by spreading baby's fingers open.)
Johnny (touch baby's pinky fingertip),
Johnny (touch baby's ring finger fingertip),
Johnny (touch baby's middle fingertip),
Johnny (touch baby's index fingertip),
Whoops! Johnny! (slide your finger down in between the forefinger and the thumb)
Whoops! Johnny! Johnny, Johnny, Johnny. (repeat motions going backwards)

Reference

Happy Feet

Objective
This activity will help the baby develop motor control of his or her legs while increasing a sense of attachment and trust.

Materials
• Sit-U-Up *

Procedure
Place the baby in the Sit-U-Up and sit on the floor close by so the baby can see you and you can reach the baby's feet. Sing or chant songs and rhymes while you play with the baby's feet and toes. Try one of the following Happy Feet games being sure not to tickle them too much as this may become uncomfortable:

This Little Piggy
This little piggy went to market, (wiggle the big toe)
This little piggy stayed home, (wiggle the second toe)
This little piggy had roast beef, (wiggle the third toe)
This little piggy had none, (wiggle the fourth toe)
And this little piggy cried, “Wee, wee, wee!” all the way home! (wiggle the pinky toe)
**Gobble Gobble**
Wee wiggle, (wiggle pinky toe)  
Two tickle, (wiggle next toe)  
Three giggle, (wiggle next toe)  
Four sniggle, (wiggle next toe)  
Five-gobble! (pretend to gobble up baby’s foot)

**Pitty Pat Pony**
Pitty pat pony, (pat the soles of your baby’s feet)  
Look at her toes. (hold baby’s feet and wiggle them)  
Here a nail, there a nail, (poke the bottom of baby’s feet)  
Gid-up and go! (pat the soles of your baby’s feet again)

**Reference**
dlearnandccat=play_and_learn

**Hide and Seek**

**Objective**
This activity will help the baby develop balance and motor control of his or her trunk and arms while encouraging the baby’s curiosity in exploring her or his environment.

Note: This activity is only for babies who can sit up with support.

**Materials**
- Play Ring *
- Tug Boat Set *

**Procedure**
Place the Play Ring in the center of the floor. Put a couple of the boats from the Tug Boat Set into the small pockets on the inside edge of the Play Ring. Seat the baby inside the Play Ring facing the small pockets in the Play Ring. Be sure to keep your hand on the baby’s back for support. Encourage the baby to explore the pockets with their hands to find the boats inside. Allow the baby to continue to explore placing items in the pockets and pulling them out.
**Hold it Tight**

**Objective**
This activity will help the baby develop fine motor skills to grasp and hold objects. Note: By alternating between soft/hard or rough/smooth toys, the baby will begin to develop tactile awareness.

**Materials**
- Baby’s First Puzzle * (use the pieces for this activity)
- Click ‘N Link *
- Tug Boat Set *
- Suction Cup Activity Set *
- Giggle and Roll Set *
- Soft Toddler Blocks *

**Procedure**
Hold one of the small toys listed above in front of the baby’s face. Touch the inside of the baby’s hand with the toy. Help the baby close his or her fingers around it. Take your hand away allowing the baby to hold the toy. When the baby drops the toy, return the toy to the baby’s opposite hand while speaking in soothing tones. As the baby’s fine motor skills develop move from the easy to grasp toys such as the Baby’s First Puzzle and the Click ‘N Link pieces to toys that are more challenging to grasp and hold such as the Giggle and Roll balls and the Soft Toddler Blocks.

**Reference**

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**Kick, Kick, Kick**

**Objective**
This activity will help babies develop their legs by kicking and lifting them.

**Materials**
- Soft Toddler Blocks *
- Giggle and Roll Set *
Procedure
Lay the baby on a soft floor covering such as a rug or blanket. Place several toys near the baby’s feet such as the Soft Toddler Blocks and balls from the Giggle and Roll Set. One by one place each item against the baby’s feet. When the baby kicks a toy away congratulate the baby with soft positive sounds such as “Whee!” or “Wooo!”

Reference

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**Look, Look, Look**

Objective
Research suggests that the more infants look at new objects, the higher they will score on intelligence tests. This activity will help babies develop head and neck motor control while developing their concentration.

Materials
- Sit-U-Up *
- Tug Boat Set *
- Giggle and Roll Set *
- Soft Toddler Blocks *
- Quack-Along Ducks *

Procedure
Place the baby on the floor in the Sit-U-Up. Sit facing the baby. Pick three toys from the list above and place them behind your back. Hold each toy up one at a time and tell the baby the name of the toy (boat, ball, block, or duck) returning them behind you. Then put each toy in the baby’s hand, one by one, and repeat the name of the toy. Then say to the baby, “Where is the ball?” Pick up the ball and hold it in front of the baby and say “Here it is!” Repeat with all of the toys. You can vary the activity by picking up the wrong toy and then correcting yourself: “No, this is not the ball. This is the duck! Here’s the ball.”

Reference
**Make it Spin**

**Objective**
This activity will help babies develop gross motor control of their limbs while developing a sense of control over their environment.

**Materials**
- Spinning Pop Pals *
- Sit-U-Up * (optional)

**Procedure**
Place the baby on the floor, using the Sit-U-Up as needed. Place the Spinning Pop Pals in front of the baby. Take the baby’s hand and place it on the toy’s plunger pumping up and down. Tap the clear plastic window to draw the baby’s attention to the bouncing balls inside. Allow the baby to explore the toy independently, providing assistance as needed to make the toy balls bounce to entertain the baby.

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**Pounding Play**

**Objective**
This activity will help babies develop fine and gross motor control in grasping, holding, and reaching across the body.

**Materials**
- Shape Sorting Pounder *
- Sit-U-Up * (optional)

**Procedure**
Place the Shape Sorting Pounder in the middle of an open space. Place the baby on the floor in front of the Pounder, using the Sit-U-Up as needed. Place the mallet in the baby’s right hand showing her/him how to hammer on the toy appropriately. Encourage the baby to hammer on the right side of the toy direct across from his or her trunk. Then encourage the baby to hammer on the left side, across the middle of his or her body. Carefully observe the baby, so that he or she does not hit himself/herself or others with the mallet.
Prone Play

Objective
This activity will help babies develop their head and neck muscles while learning to tolerate play on their stomachs.

Materials
- Musical Roller *
- Spinning Pop Pals *
- Aqua Duck *

Procedure
Lie on the floor and put the baby on you so that you are tummy to tummy. Talk to the baby in this position. Then change to a sitting position and lay the baby across your lap on her or his tummy. Put the Musical Roller or the Spinning Pop Pals in front of the baby and play with them to make interesting noises or sights. Then lay the baby on the floor in front of you so that the baby’s hands are on the Aqua Duck. The sight of the toy moving by hand pressure will encourage the baby to lift up and pat the toy.

Reference

Rain Bath

Objective
Water play provides great sensory-motor stimulation for babies. This activity will help the baby develop motor control of his or her limbs and may be soothing to some babies promoting a secure attachment.

Materials
- Super Sand Set * (use one pail, shovel, and screen)
- Baby bathtub (For babies that cannot sit independently, use a molded bathtub that cradles the baby in a leaning position.)
Procedure
Place a diapered baby sitting up in a baby bathtub without water. Fill the pail from the Super Sand Set with a small amount of water. Holding the screen over the baby’s legs, pour some of the water from the pail through the screen so the baby can see and feel it as it pours out from the holes. Repeat several times until you have poured all of the water into the baby bathtub. Then use the shovel to scoop up some of the water to pour over the baby’s legs again for a different sensation. Allow the baby to explore splashing in the water and using the shovel in the water. Try not to get water in the baby’s eyes or face as he or she might not like it.

Note: Never leave a child unattended around water, no matter how small the amount.

Reference

**Reaching**

Objective
This activity will help babies develop muscle strength. Note: Young babies at this age are always reaching for things.

Materials
- Suction Cup Activity Set *
- Giggle and Roll Set *

Procedure
Hold the baby in your lap and give him/her a toy to hold such as one listed above. Allow the baby to play with the toy, shaking it around. Then, take the toy from the baby and hold it a little higher than his or her reach. Encourage the baby to reach for the toy, stretching her or his muscles. Be sure to praise the baby for reaching and to give the baby the toy as a reward.

Reference
**Remembering**

**Objective**
Babies are not born knowing that objects they can no longer see still exist. This knowledge, called object permanence, usually develops by the sixth month of life. This activity will help babies develop their eye/hand coordination as well as their memory.

**Materials**
- Soft Toddler Blocks *
- Sit-U-Up * (optional)

**Procedure**
Place the baby on the floor, using the Sit-U-Up as needed. Sit facing the baby. Pick two different colored blocks and place them in front of the baby. Describe one block (“This is a red block”) then place it out of the baby’s line of sight (you can put it behind you or under a blanket. Make sure the baby sees you hide the block. Ask the baby where the block is (“Where is the red block?”). Encourage the baby to point toward the block. If the baby is correct, show him/her the block again and offer praise. If not, help the baby “find” the block. Repeat with the other block.

**Reference**

**Rocking Rides**

**Objective**
This activity will help the baby develop balance and motor control of his or her trunk while encouraging the baby to trust in you for protection.

Note: This activity is only for babies with good neck strength and head control.

**Materials**
- Rocking Puppy *
- Soft blanket
Procedure
Seat the baby on the Rocking Puppy and place your hand on the baby’s back for support. You may place a blanket in front of the baby to ensure that he or she does not bump his or her face against the handles. Gently rock the baby forward and back as you sing or recite the following rhyme. Repeat several times or as long as the baby enjoys playing. Be careful not to rock the baby too hard or too fast while holding him or her securely to prevent slipping.

To Market, to market
To market, to market, to buy a fat pig,
Home again, home again, jiggety-jig.
To market, to market, to buy a fat hog,
Home again, home again, jiggety-jog.

Reference

Rolling Fun
Objective
This activity will help the baby develop motor control of his or her trunk and limbs while encouraging trust and positive social interaction.

Materials
• Musical Roller *

Procedure
Lay the baby across the musical roller, on his or her tummy. Using your hand to guide the baby, gently roll the Musical Roller forward no more than 1/4 of a turn, talking to the baby as you go. Then gently roll the Musical Roller back. Repeat until the baby is tired of playing. Be sure to move slowly keeping a hand on the baby so she or he will not roll too fast or get hurt.
Rolling Surprise

Objective
This activity will help the baby develop motor control of his or her trunk and limbs and encourage the baby to learn to turn over.

Materials
- Aqua Duck *
- Spinning Pop Pals *
- Suction Cup Activity Set *
- Soft Toddler Blocks *
- Musical Roller *
- Quack-Along Ducks *

Procedure
Lay the baby on his or her back next to you on a soft surface on the floor. Pick two colorful toys from the list above that the baby enjoys looking at. Put one toy on each side of the baby. Tell the baby, “It’s time to roll.” Gently roll the baby over to one side so she or he can look at the toy and reach for it. Then roll the baby over to the other side so he or she can look at and reach for the other toy.

Note: Make sure the infant is placed on the floor or in a bed with the sides up to prevent falls and injuries.

Reference

Shake, Shake, Shake

Objective
This activity will help babies develop motor control of their arms and auditory discrimination which supports language development.
Materials

- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Manipulative Set * (use several pieces from this set for the activity)
- Several small plastic containers

Procedure

Fill several small containers with a couple of small toys such as pieces from the Mini Edu-Blocks or Manipulative Set. Fasten the containers securely so that the baby cannot remove the contents. Give a container to the baby. Shake the baby’s hand while saying “Shake, shake.” Then give the baby a different container and repeat.

Note: Make sure that the containers are fastened very securely as these small pieces might become a choking hazard.

Reference


Squish, Squash

Objective

This activity will help babies develop gross motor control of their limbs while developing a sense of control over their environment.

Materials

- Aqua Duck *

Procedure

Place the baby on the floor on his or her tummy. Lay the Aqua Duck on the floor in front of the baby. Show the baby how to pat the mat making the toys float around. Allow the baby to experiment with different ways to squish the toy. Then hold the baby so that her or his feet just touch the mat. Encourage the baby to pat his or her feet to make the toys float around again. As the baby learns to crawl, encourage the baby to crawl on the toy as well.
Three Blocks, Two Hands

Objective
This activity will help the baby develop hand release skills.

Materials
• Mini Edu-Blocks *
• Sit-U-Up * (optional)

Procedure
Place the baby on the floor, using the Sit-U-Up as needed. Give the baby two blocks to hold, one in each hand. Take a third block and hold it out for the baby. The baby will learn to drop one of their blocks to take the new one.

Reference

Turn Over, Baby

Objective
This activity will help the baby develop visual tracking skills and motor control of his or her trunk and limbs by encouraging the baby to learn to turn over.

Materials
• Baby’s First Puzzle * (use the pieces for this activity)
• Soft Toddler Blocks *
• Tug Boat Set *

Procedure
Lay the baby on his or her back. Sit behind the baby’s head and hold a small toy over the baby’s face such as the puzzle pieces, a soft block, or a tug boat. When you have the baby’s attention, move the toy to one side slowly allowing the baby to follow the toy with her or his eyes. Encourage the baby to grab for the toy. As the baby turns to follow the toy, gently push against his or her back to help the baby turn over.
When the baby turns over, give her/him the toy. Repeat the activity encouraging the baby to turn over toward the other side.

**Reference**

**Upsy-Daisy**

**Objective**
This activity will help the baby develop motor control of his or her head and neck while encouraging trust and positive social interaction. Note: This activity is best played with very young babies before they lose their grasping reflex.

**Materials**
- Baby’s First Puzzle *(use the cloth-covered “pieces”)*
- Soft blanket

**Procedure**
Place the baby on a soft blanket on the floor and kneel at the baby’s feet facing him or her. Place two cloth-covered "pieces" from the Baby’s First Puzzle against the baby’s palms and let her or him grasp them. As he or she does, wrap your fingers around the backs of the baby’s hands. Very gently pull the baby into a sitting position saying “Upsy-Daisy” as you do. Be sure to hold on to the baby’s hands in case she or he lets go of the toys. Move slowly so the baby doesn’t get a neck injury. After the baby has had a moment to see your happy face and enjoy the game, lay the baby down and play again.

**Reference**
What Toy Is It?

Objective
This activity will help babies develop their grasp while learning language.

Materials
• Tug Boat Set *
• Giggle and Roll Set *
• Soft Toddler Blocks *
• Quack-Along Ducks *
• Sit-U-Up * (optional)

Procedure
Place the baby on the floor, using the Sit-U-Up as needed. Pick three toys from the list above and place them on the floor in front of you. Hold up each toy one at a time and tell the baby the name of the toy (boat, ball, block, or duck). Then ask the baby to pick up one of the toys (“Pick up the ball.”). Help the baby find the right toy then congratulate him/her (“Yea! You picked up the ball!”). Repeat with all of the toys several times to help the baby learn the names of the toys.

Reference

Where’s the Sound?

Objective
This activity will help babies develop motor control of their arms and hands. Babies become more aware of their ability to control their environment as they realize that they are controlling the sounds they hear.

Materials
• Suction Cup Activity Set *
Procedure
Give the baby a toy that makes a sound by shaking it. Help the baby shake it; then see if she/he can shake it by her/himself. Watch to see if the baby’s eyes focus on the source of the sound. Place the rattle in the baby’s other hand and repeat. As the baby shakes the rattle say, “Shake, shake, rattle, shake.”

Reference

Which Hand?

Objective
Babies are not born knowing that objects they can no longer see still exist. This knowledge, called object permanence, usually develops by the sixth month of life. This activity will help babies develop their eye/hand coordination as well as their memory.

Materials
• Mini Edu-Blocks *
• Sit-U-Up * (optional)

Procedure
Place the baby on the floor, using the Sit-U-Up as needed. Sit facing the baby. Grab one Mini Edu-block and cover it with your hand. Open your hand to reveal the toy to the baby. Close your hand and ask the baby, “Where is the block?” Open your hand again to show the block to the baby. Repeat using your opposite hand. Encourage the baby to grab your hand to try to reach the block.

Reference
Wiggle Worm

Objective
This activity will use the baby’s “walking reflex” (when you press a solid surface against babies’ feet they stretch out their legs) to help her or him practice for crawling.

Materials
• Suction Cup Activity Set *

Procedure
Place the baby on a smooth floor on her or his tummy. Place one of the toys from the Suction Cup Activity Set a few inches from the baby’s head. Call the baby’s attention to the toy. Sitting behind the baby, press your leg or hands against his or her feet. The baby will push against you causing her/him to propel a few inches forward toward the toy. Keep moving the toy and pushing against the baby’s feet until he or she has inched forward and covered some ground. Be careful not to move the baby too fast or let her/him bump into anything. Afterwards, allow the baby to explore the toy as long as he or she enjoys playing with it.

Reference
Motor Activities for Ages 10 – 18 months
**Baby Basketball**

**Objective**
This activity will help toddlers develop eye/hand coordination and gross motor skills while enhancing positive self-concept by giving a sense of achievement.

**Materials**
- Mini Shoot Around *
- Light Plastic or Foam Balls (12” in diameter)

**Procedure**
Place the Mini Shoot Around in the center of an open space inside or outside. Help a toddler stand about a foot away from the basket (moving forward or backward one or two steps depending upon the child’s age and coordination). Give the toddler the ball and encourage her/him to throw the ball into the basket.

Note: If you’re playing indoors, make sure the area is clear of breakables.

**Reference**

**Baby’s House**

**Objective**
This activity will help toddlers develop gross motor skills while enhancing the toddlers’ sense of independence and imagination.

**Materials**
- Sand and Water Table *
- Sheet or Blanket
- Flashlight (optional)

**Procedure**
Move the Sand and Water table to an open space inside or outside. Place the covers over the two bins to prevent spillage. Cover the table
with a sheet or blanket to form a house, fort, cave, or space ship. Fold back a corner to make a door. (If any toddler is fearful of the dark, you may leave one side or corner uncovered to let in more light.) Invite the toddlers to go inside. If the space is dark, you may allow them to enjoy the house with a flashlight.

Note: Never leave the toddlers unsupervised in the house. Talk with the toddlers as they enter the “house” or “fort” by asking them questions or commenting on where they are playing.

Reference

**Ball Bop**

**Objective**
This activity will help toddlers develop balance and coordination while learning body parts.

**Materials**

- Giggle and Roll Set *
- String

**Procedure**
Tie a string around the mesh ball from the Giggle and Roll Set and hang it from the ceiling within the reach of the toddlers. Call out a different body part for the toddlers to use to hit the ball including: head, nose, ear, arm, hand, finger, leg, knee, and foot.

**Reference**
**Ball Play**

**Objective**
This activity will help toddlers develop eye/hand coordination as well as motor coordination.

**Materials**
- Giggle and Roll Set *

**Procedure**
Sit on the floor opposite a toddler about two feet away. Using a ball from the Giggle and Roll Set, roll the ball to the toddler. Encourage the toddler to roll the ball back to you. Then repeat using a different ball from the set. Talk to the toddler about the differences in the balls. Continue until you use all the balls from the set. Allow the toddler to pick his or her favorite ball to continue play.

**Reference**

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**Body Art**

**Objective**
This activity will help toddlers develop fine motor control while encouraging self-expression and awareness of body parts.

**Materials**
- Sand and Water Table *
- Nontoxic Body Paint
- Wet Wipes

**Procedure**
Place the Sand and Water Table outside. Put a shallow amount of warm water in the Sand and Water table bin. Remove a toddler’s shirt (down to the diaper) and let the toddler play with the water. Then, place a dot of body paint on the toddler’s arms. Spread the color with your fingers and encourage the toddler to do the same. Add other colors to other body parts—hands, neck, shoulders, chest, and back. Let the baby
spread the colors around then wash them off and play again. Name the colors as you apply them to the toddler as well as the names of the body parts.

Note: Be sure to keep wet wipes handy to clean the baby’s hands periodically to avoid getting any paint on the baby’s face. Never leave a child unattended when using water in play, no matter how small the amount. You may want to discuss this activity with parents first to obtain their permission.

Reference

**Boom, Boom Down**

**Objective**
Young children have a hard time controlling their impulses. Games that require them to wait for a signal or cue help them develop self-regulation. This activity will help toddlers develop eye/hand coordination while practicing self-regulation.

**Materials**
- Soft Toddler Blocks *

**Procedure**
Place a basket of Soft Toddler Blocks in the center of an open space. Help the toddler build a tower of blocks stacking one on the other. When you have 3-4 blocks stacked, say “1, 2, BOOM, BOOM, DOWN!” On the word “DOWN” knock down the blocks. Repeat several times letting the toddler knock the blocks over. Most toddlers will have difficulty waiting for more than three or four blocks before knocking them over. Help them practice waiting so that you can stack the blocks even higher before knocking them over.

Reference
**Clip the Can**

**Objective**  
This activity will help toddlers develop eye/hand coordination and learn to rotate their wrists.

**Materials**  
- Click ‘N Link *
- Metal Can (use an emptied fruit or vegetable can)
- Thick Tape (duct tape or electrical tape will work)

**Procedure**  
Clean out a large metal can that has had its lid removed. Place tape around the top edge to cover any sharp edges. Set the can in front of a toddler with several links from the Click ‘N Link Set. Show the toddler how to slide the links on the top edge of the can. Help the toddler place the remaining links on the can. Talk with the toddler, describing the links as he or she places them in the can.

**Reference**  

**Color Game**

**Objective**  
This activity will help toddlers practice eye/hand coordination while developing matching skills.

**Materials**  
- Soft Toddler Blocks Primary *
- Manipulative Set *
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *
- Click ‘N Link *
- Tug Boat Set *
- Construction Paper

**Procedure**  
Place pieces of construction paper in four basic primary colors (red,
yellow, green, blue) on the floor. Tell the toddlers the names of each color while pointing to the appropriate piece of paper. Give the toddlers one of the toys from the list above and ask them to put it on the paper with the same color. (“This is a BLUE toy. Let’s put it on the BLUE paper.”) Help them match the toy to the appropriate piece of construction paper being sure to name the color. Continue placing toys on the construction paper until at least one toy is on each sheet of paper.

**Reference**

**Color Search**

**Objective**
This activity will help toddlers develop awareness of their environment while learning colors.

**Materials**
- Mini Edu-Blocks *

**Procedure**
Give each of the toddlers a block. Help the toddlers find something in the room that is the same color. Praise the toddler for finding an object with the matching color. Next give the toddler a different colored block and have him/her search for another object that matches the new color.

**Reference**

**Color Walk**

**Objective**
This activity will help toddlers practice walking while promoting color recognition and matching.
Materials

- Soft Toddler Blocks *
- Push and Ride Racer *
- Play Ring *
- Rocking Puppy *
- Spin Around *
- Soft Toddler Blocks Primary *
- Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *
- Aqua Duck *
- Toddler Two-Station Sand and Water Table *

Procedure

Ensure that the large toys listed above are spread around the room. Encourage a toddler to select one of the Soft Toddler Blocks for a reference color. Tell the toddler the name of the color of the block he or she selected. Ask the toddler to help you find a toy around the room that is the same color as the block. Taking the block walk with the toddler to one of the large toys listed above providing support for the toddler to walk as needed. When you reach the toy, place the block next to the toy and ask the toddler if the toy matches the color. If the toy matches, thank the toddler for helping you to find a matching color. If the toy does not match, proceed to another toy. Continue looking for additional toys that match in color as long as the toddler is interested.

References


Drop Box

Objective

This activity will help the baby develop eye/hand coordination and practice wrist rotation.

Materials

- Shape Sorting Pounder * (use the shapes from this toy)
- Shoebox
- Craft Knife
Procedure
Trace the shapes on the lid of a shoebox. Using the craft knife carefully cut out the shapes just a little larger than the outline. Give the toddler one of the shapes. Holding his or her hand, show the toddler how to fit the shape through the hole. Allow the toddler to try to put the remaining shapes in the box. When the shapes are in the box, show the toddler how to open the box and to remove the shapes. As the toddler fits each shape through the matching hole, name the shape as well as its color.

Reference

Dump the Balls

Objective
Young children love games where they can anticipate what will happen. This activity will help toddlers develop fine and gross motor skills while engaging in positive social interaction.

Materials
- Giggle and Roll Set *
- Basket or Box

Procedure
Place all of the balls from the Giggle and Roll Set into a basket (or box). Hold the basket about one foot from the floor and dump the balls out. Encourage the toddlers to gather the balls up and to put them back in the basket. Repeat several times, each time holding the basket higher. Note: Be sure to have the toddlers stand back before dumping the balls so that they do not get hurt. Describe the balls as you play. Example: “That’s the big red ball.”

Reference
Finger Friends

Objective
This activity will help toddlers develop fine or gross motor coordination depending upon the activities chosen.

Materials
- Play Ring *
- Light-colored Glove (should fit snugly)
- Permanent Felt-Tip Pens

Procedure
Draw funny faces on the fingertips of a glove with the pens. The faces can represent anyone—family members, animals, classmates, etc. Sit inside the Play Ring. Slip the glove onto your hand. Hide your arm behind the Play Ring for a puppet show, a song, or a fingerplay such as the one below. Encourage the toddlers to mimic your movements,

Note: Do not let the baby put the puppet in his or her mouth as the ink may come off.

(Hide both thumbs under your fingers)

Where is Thumbkin? Where is Thumbkin?
Here I am! (bring out one thumb) Here I am! (bring out other thumb)
How are you today, sir? (one thumb bows to the other)
Very fine, I thank you! (other thumb bows back)
Run away! (hide one thumb) Run away! (hide other thumb)

Additional Verses:
Where is Pointer?
Where is Tall Man?
Where is Ring Man?
Where is Pinky?

Variation
- Use the names of family members, animals, or other children.

Reference
**Frozen Fun**

**Objective**
This activity will help toddlers develop fine motor coordination while introducing them to parallel play, one of the first forms of cooperative play.

**Materials**
- Mini Edu-Blocks * (use several pieces from this set)
- Manipulatives Set * (use several pieces from this set)
- Sand and Water Table *
- Plastic Bowl
- Water

**Procedure**
Gather several pieces from the Manipulatives Set into a plastic bowl. Fill the bowl with water and freeze. When the water is completely frozen, fill a bin in the Sand and Water Table with warm water and place the ice from the container in the water. Let the toddlers explore the properties of the ice in the water and help them try to figure out what happens as the ice melts. Make sure to keep the water warm enough for the children to play in by adding more warm water as the ice cools the water temperature.

Note: Watch the toddlers so they do not put the small toys in their mouths. Name and describe the objects as the ice melts.

**Reference**

**Guess Which Hand**

**Objective**
This activity will help toddlers develop their memory.

**Materials**
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
Procedure
Sit in front of a toddler showing him/her a small block that you have in your hand. Close both hands into fists. Ask the toddler to choose the hand with the block in it. If the toddler chooses the correct hand, clap and cheer for her/him. If the toddler chooses the incorrect hand show the toy and play again.

Reference

Hammering

Objective
This activity will help toddlers develop motor control and coordination in their hands and arms.

Materials
- Shape Sorting Pounder * (use the hammer for this activity)
- Blocks of Styrofoam
- Dried-out Markers

Procedure
Set out the hammer, markers, and blocks of Styrofoam for the toddlers (a large block for a group and small blocks for individuals). Show the toddlers how to hammer a marker into the Styrofoam using the following steps. First, hold a marker in one hand and the hammer in the other. Place the marker against the Styrofoam and lightly tap it with the hammer until it can stand on its own. Then take you supporting hand away and hammer harder until the marker is the rest of the way in. For older children, you can paint the Styrofoam (using tempera paint mixed with glue) in different colors to match the markers. Then have the children hammer the matching marker into that space on the Styrofoam.

Reference
Happy!

Objective
This activity will help toddlers develop gross motor coordination while learning to express and label positive emotions.

Materials
• Play Ring *

Procedure
Place the Play Ring in the center of the floor. Seat the toddlers near the inside and outside edge of the Play Ring. Sing the following song and help the toddlers move the appropriate body part. Show the toddlers how to use the Play Ring for support particularly when standing to stomp and bend at the knees.

If You’re Happy and You Know It
If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.
If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.
If you’re happy and you know it, then your hands will really show it.
If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands

Additional verses
If you’re happy and you know it, stomp your feet.
If you’re happy and you know it, nod your head.
If you’re happy and you know it, wave your arms.
If you’re happy and you know it, bend your knees.
If you’re happy and you know it, blow a kiss.

Reference

Hide and Seek

Objective
This activity will help toddlers develop fine motor control while encouraging curiosity in exploring the environment.
**Materials**

- Play Ring *
- Tug Boat Set *

**Procedure**

Place the Play Ring in the center of the floor. Put a couple of the boats from the Tug Boat Set into the small openings in the top of the Play Ring. Place the toddler inside the Play Ring facing the small openings in the Play Ring. Encourage the toddler to explore the openings with his or her hands to find the boats inside. Allow the toddler to continue to explore placing items in the openings and pulling them out. Talk to the toddler about what her or she finds in the openings.

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**High Steps**

**Objective**

This activity will help toddlers develop balance and coordination while enhancing positive self-concept by giving a sense of achievement. 
Note: This activity supports toddlers learning to walk.

**Materials**

- Soft Toddler Blocks *

**Procedure**

Scatter several Soft Toddler Blocks on the floor in an open space. Hold the toddler’s hand as he or she walks around the area. Direct the toddler to one of the blocks. Encourage the toddler to step over the blocks. As the toddler increases in coordination, increase the size of the block pile.

**Reference**


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**In and Out**

**Objective**

This activity will help toddlers explore the language concepts of in and out.
Materials

- Manipulative Set *
- Super Sand Set *

Procedure
Give the toddlers buckets from the Super Sand Set and a handful of toys from the Manipulative Set. Show the toddlers how to put the toys in the buckets and say “In.” Model dumping the toys out and say “Out.” Allow the toddlers to continue to fill and to empty the buckets to explore the concepts of in and out.

Reference

Jolly Juggler

Objective
Challenges allow the baby to experience mild frustration, which helps to develop coping skills. This activity will help toddlers develop hand coordination with grasping and releasing while developing social-emotional and problem-solving skills.

Materials

- Baby’s First Puzzle * (use the puzzle pieces for this activity)
- Manipulative Set *
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Click ‘N Link *
- Shape Sorting Pounder * (use the shapes and hammer for this activity)
- Suction Cup Activity Set *
- Workshop with Tools * (use the tools for this activity)
- Tug Boat Set *
- Super Sand Set * (use the shovels for this activity)

Procedure
Gather three toys from the list above that are easy to grasp and are not too heavy. Sit on the floor in front of the toddler and place the toys
behind you out of the baby’s sight. Offer the toddler one of the toys and let him/her explore it for a few moments. As she or he holds one toy, offer the toddler a second toy for the other hand. Watch the toddler’s reaction. The toddler may take the second toy and continue holding the first toy, one in each hand, or release the first toy and only hold the second toy. If the toddler drops the first toy, show the toy again and encourage him/her to pick it up. Try to get the baby to hold two toys, one in each hand, and then offer a third toy. Watch the toddler’s reaction. The toddler may release one toy, both toys, or hold both toys and try to figure out how to pick up the new toy! Let the toddler solve the problem anyway she or he wants.

Reference

Rainmaker

Objective
This activity will help toddlers develop gross motor control and coordination in their arms and hands.

Materials
• Sand and Water Table*
• Plastic Milk Jug (use half-gallon size)
• Metal Skewer or Scissors

Procedure
Using a metal skewer or one blade of a pair of scissors, punch several holes in the bottom and sides of a plastic container. Fill one of the bins in the Sand and Water Table with cool water. Give the plastic container to a toddler. Show the toddler how to fill the container with water and to lift it out of the water for it to “rain” into the bin. Be sure to help the toddler keep the container over the Sand and Water Table to prevent spills. Note: Provide a variety of plastic containers, ranging from very small to medium, to support the development of the toddlers’ arm strength. Talk to the toddler about the “rain.” “How does it feel? What happened to make it “rain”?”
Ramps

Objective
This activity will help toddlers develop eye/hand coordination, fine and gross motor skills while enhancing positive self-concept by giving a sense of achievement.

Materials
- Quack-Along Ducks *
- Cardboard

Procedure
Fold a piece of cardboard to make a small ramp. Place the ramp in the center of an open space inside or outside. Encourage the toddler to pull the Quack-Along Ducks around the room then over the ramp. Talk about how it feels to pull the ducks as the toddler and the ducks take a trip around the room or in the playground.

Reference

Scooping Toys

Objective
This activity will help toddlers develop gross motor control and coordination in their arms, wrists, and hands as well as eye/hand coordination.

Materials
- Sand and Water Table*
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Tug Boat Set *
- Super Sand Set *
• Ladle
• Small Strainer (use one with a handle)

**Procedure**
Fill one of the bins in the Sand and Water Table with cool water. Place a lid on the other bin and set a pail from the Super Sand Set on top. Place several Mini Edu-Blocks and tug boats in the water. Provide the toddler with a ladle and a strainer. Encourage the toddler to use the ladle or strainer to scoop up the floating toys and to transfer them to the pail. Be sure to help the toddler keep the tools over the Sand and Water Table to prevent spills. As the toddler scoops up the toys, talk about them with her or him. Use descriptive words.

**Reference**

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**Sock Ball**

**Objective**
Minor challenges allow the baby to experience mild frustration and practice coping skills. This activity will help toddlers develop hand/eye coordination while developing social-emotional and problem-solving skills.

**Materials**
• Mini Shoot Around *
• Clean Pairs of Socks
• Basket

**Procedure**
Collect pairs of socks and roll them into tight balls. Set the Mini Shoot Around in the middle of the room. Place the balls in a basket. Have the toddler sit or stand one to two feet away from the Mini Shoot Around next to the basket. Encourage the toddlers to pick up and toss the sock balls at the Mini Shoot Around. Help the toddler get a sock ball into the goal and cheer for his or her successful shot.

**Reference**
Sorting Blocks

Objective
This activity will help toddlers learn about colors while engaging in positive social interactions.

Materials
- Soft Toddler Blocks *
- Baskets

Procedure
Give the toddlers a pile of Soft Toddler Blocks with one basket for each color. Place one block in each color in a different basket. Ask the toddlers to help each other finish sorting the blocks into baskets. After the toddlers have sorted the blocks, give a great group cheer!

Reference

Squeezing Sponges

Objective
This activity will help toddlers develop motor coordination and control of their hands and arms.

Materials
- Sand and Water Table *
- Sponges
- Food Coloring (optional)

Procedure
Take several sponges and cut them into a variety of shapes. Show the toddlers the sponges and place them in the water bin of the Sand
and Water Table. Show the toddlers how to squeeze the water out of the sponges. You can pour food coloring into the water to add interest. Talk with the toddlers about "squeezing" the sponges and the different colors of the water if you add food coloring.

Reference

Sticky Toys

Objective
Minor challenges allow the baby to experience mild frustration and practice coping skills. This activity will help toddlers develop fine and gross motor coordination while developing social-emotional and problem-solving skills.

Materials
- Manipulative Set *
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Click ‘N Link *
- Contact Paper

Procedure
Cut off a two-foot length of clear contact paper. Peel off the protective back layer and place it sticky-side up on the floor. Place a few toys from the Manipulative, Mini Edu-Blocks, and Click ‘N Link Sets on the sticky paper. Set the toddler near the toys and try to lift a toy from the paper to show that you are having trouble. Ask the toddler for help. Watch the toddler as she or he tries to figure out what is happening and how to get the toys off the paper. Watch the toddler carefully to ensure that the paper does not become stuck on his or her face. Help the toddler if she or he gets frustrated by showing how to release the toys from the paper. Describe the events to the toddlers as they happen, naming the toys and how the contact paper feels to the touch.

Reference
**Toy Hide and Seek**

**Objective**
This activity will help toddlers develop balance and coordination and their memory.

**Materials**
- Quack-Along Ducks *
- Giggle and Roll Set *
- Soft Toddler Blocks Primary *
- Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *
- Spinning Pop Pals *
- Suction Cup Activity Set *

**Procedure**
Sit on the floor and play with a toddler using a toy from the list above. Then take the toy and say “Now, I’m going to hide the toy.” Then “hide” the toy while the toddler watches. Ask the toddler to find the toy and congratulate her/him when the toy is found. If the toddler does not understand what you want, hold the toddler’s hand and guide him or her to find the toy. Repeat until the toddler can find the toy independently or as long as the toddler is interested.

**Reference**

**Tunnel Trip**

**Objective**
This activity will help the toddler develop walking skills while making movement fun.

**Materials**
- Wide Tracker Activity Walker *
- Large Appliance Box

**Procedure**
Open the ends of a large appliance box to make a tunnel. Place the
toddler at one end of the tunnel with the Wide Tracker Activity Walker. Encourage the toddler to push the toy through to the other end of the tunnel. Call to the toddler to encourage her/him to come back through the box. If the toddler needs help getting all of the way through, gently support his or her arms through to the other side. Repeat several times.

Note: Never leave the toddler alone in the box as the toddler may become scared.

Variation

- Place a blanket over your end of the box so the baby can’t see you. Call the baby from behind the blanket and see if he or she will go through the tunnel.

Reference


Walking Tall

Objective

This activity will help toddlers develop balance and coordination while enhancing positive self-concept by giving a sense of achievement.

Materials

- Wide Tracker Activity Walker *
- Ribbon

Procedure

Place the Activity Walker in the center of an open space inside or outside. Stand behind the toddler and help her/him to push the walker around space. Give less and less support as the toddler begins to walk more independently. Eventually, when the toddler can walk without assistance, create an interesting challenge by tying a ribbon around the handle of the Activity Walker. Encourage the toddler to pull the Activity Walker around the space by the ribbon.
Where Did It Go?

Objective
This activity will help toddlers develop their memory.

Materials
- Tug Boat Set *
- Shoebox

Procedure
Sit in front of a toddler on the floor. Place a Tug Boat on the floor and turn the shoebox upside down over the toy. Ask the toddler, “Where did the tug boat go? Can you find it?” If the toddler needs help, tap on the box, peak underneath, or sing the words below to the tune of “Frere Jacques.”

Where’s the tug boat? Where’s the tug boat?  
Can you find it? Can you find it?  
Look under the box. Look under the box.  
There it is. There it is.

Reference

Wrap It Up

Objective
This activity will help toddlers develop fine motor control and coordination.

Materials
- Quack-Along Ducks *

Reference
• Tissue Paper
• Aluminum Foil

Procedure
Provide a toddler with sheets of aluminum foil. Show the toddler how to place one of the ducks from the Quack-Along Ducks Set in the center of the foil and to wrap the remaining foil around the toy. Assist the toddler as needed while talking about what she or he is doing. Repeat the process with tissue paper and describe the difference of aluminum foil to tissue paper.

Note: Assist the toddlers with the aluminum foil to ensure that they do not cut themselves.

Reference
Motor Activities
for Ages
18 – 36 months
Baby Basketball

Objective
This activity will help children develop eye/hand coordination and gross motor skills while enhancing positive self-concept by giving a sense of achievement.

Materials
- Mini Shoot Around *
- Light Plastic or Foam Balls

Procedure
Place the Mini Shoot Around in the center of an open space inside or outside. Help the children stand about one to two feet away from the basket (moving forward or backward depending upon the child’s age and coordination). Give the children a ball and encourage them to throw the ball into the basket.

Note: If you’re playing indoors, make sure the area is clear of breakables.

Reference

Baby’s House

Objective
This activity will help toddlers develop gross motor skills while enhancing the children’s sense of independence and imagination.

Materials
- Sand and Water Table *
- Sheet or Blanket
- Flashlight (optional)

Procedure
Move the Sand and Water table to an open space inside or outside.
Place the covers over the two bins to prevent spillage. Cover the table with a sheet or blanket to form a house, fort, cave, or space ship. Fold back a corner to make a door. (If any child is fearful of the dark, you may leave one side or corner uncovered to let in more light.) Invite the children to go inside. After they become accustomed to the space, allow them to “close” the door and use a flashlight to explore the space. Talk with the children about what they are doing and join in the dramatic play. Sit very close to provide good supervision.

Note: Never leave the children unsupervised in the house.

Reference

Big Dig

Objective
This activity will help children develop motor control and coordination in their hands and wrists while practicing counting objects.

Materials
- Manipulative Set *
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Click ‘N Link *
- Super Sand Set *
- Sand and Water Table *

Procedure
Bury 10 small toys from the Manipulative, Mini Edu-Blocks, and Click ‘N Link Sets in the sand bin of the Sand and Water Table. Give the children shovels, screens, and pails from the Super Sand Set. Explain to the children that you have hidden 10 toys under the sand. Invite them to dig in the sand to uncover the toys. When the children think they have found all of the toys, count them touching each one to demonstrate one-to-one correspondence. If there is less than 10 toys, encourage them to continue looking for the others. If they have found all 10, give a group cheer!
Big and Small

Objective
This activity will help children explore the concept of size.

Materials
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *
- Bowls

Procedure
Show the children one Bigger-Than-Me Mega Block and describe it as big. Then show the children one Mini Edu-Block and describe it as small. Collect a handful of each type of block. Then show the blocks one at a time and ask the children to tell you if it is big or small. Pile the big blocks together and pile the small blocks separately. Then fill several bowls with an assortment of blocks. Give each bowl to a child and help them add to the piles of big blocks and small blocks to explore the concept of size.

Reference

Birdseed Fun

Objective
This activity helps children practice fine and gross motor skills while helping the environment.

Materials
- Super Sand Set *
- Sand and Water Table *
Procedure
Place the Sand and Water table outside. Fill one of the bins with birdseed. Encourage the children to pour, sift, and dig through the birdseed using the shovels, screens, and pails from the Super Sand Set. When the activity is over, have the children scatter the birdseed around the yard. Then watch from the windows indoors as the birds come to eat the seeds.

Note: Clean-up is a cinch as any spilled seeds can be left for the birds to eat! Use sunflower seeds only instead of a mix if you don’t want grasses to sprout in play area. Watch the children carefully as some may try to eat the seeds or put them in their noses or ears.

Reference

Block Music Stories

Objective
This activity will help children engage in gross motor activities to help with word recognition.

Materials
- Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *
- Story books

Procedure
During circle activities, give each child two Mega Blocks to hold. Demonstrate how to bang the blocks together. Explain to the children that you want them to bang the blocks together when they hear a specific word in the story. As you read stories, have the children bang their blocks together to highlight certain parts of the story. For example, you can have the children make loud bangs when you say “Wolf” while reading *The Three Little Pigs*. You may need to cue the children to bang the blocks by saying “Bang, Bang, Bang!”
Body Art

Objective
This activity will help children develop fine motor control while encouraging self-expression and awareness of body parts.

Materials
- Sand and Water Table *
- Nontoxic Body Paint
- Wet Wipes

Procedure
Place the Sand and Water Table outside. Put a shallow amount of warm water in the Sand and Water table bin. Remove a child’s shirt (down to the diaper) and let the child play with the water. Then, place a dot of body paint on the child’s arms. Spread the color with your fingers and encourage the child to do the same. Add other colors to other body parts—hands, neck, shoulders, chest, and back. After placing the paint dot on the child, talk with her or him about the color of the paint and the body part that is getting “painted.” Let the child spread the colors around then wash them off and play again.

Note: Be sure to keep wet wipes handy to clean the baby’s hands periodically to avoid getting any paint on the baby’s face. Never leave a child unattended when using water in play, no matter how small the amount. You may want to discuss this activity with parents first to obtain their permission.

Reference
**Build It**

**Objective**
This activity introduces cooperative play to young children and helps them develop empathy, or understanding of how other people feel.

**Materials**
- Quack-Along Ducks *
- Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *

**Procedure**
Have the child one of the ducks to build a home for it out of blocks. Challenge the children to create living spaces for the duck such as a bedroom and playroom. Then play with the duck in its new home. Encourage the children to use the ducks as puppets by having a conversation between ducks.

**Reference**

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**Children’s Bowling**

**Objective**
This activity helps children learn hand/eye coordination while developing positive self-esteem.

**Materials**
- Giggle and Roll Set *
- Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *
- Tape

**Procedure**
After the children have learned to roll a ball back and forth, give them an extra challenge by setting up some objects to knock over. Set up 6 to 10 Mega Blocks on their ends in a triangle formation—like pins in a bowling alley. Take several steps back and mark a line with tape. Have a child stand behind the line and roll one of the balls toward the blocks.
trying to knock them down. Continue setting them up and rolling the ball into them. Try rolling different balls from the Giggle and Roll Set to compare the results.

Reference

**Color Clean-Up**

**Objective**
This activity will help children develop social responsibility while learning colors.

**Materials**
- Super Sand Set *

**Procedure**
After block play, explain to the children that it is time to clean up. Give each of the colored buckets from the Super Sand Set to a different child. Ask the children to collect the blocks that match the color of their bucket to put away. For example, the child with the red bucket needs to find all of the red blocks that need to be put away.

Reference

**Digging for Friends**

**Objective**
This activity will help children develop motor control and coordination in their hands and wrists.
Materials

- Super Sand Set *
- Sand and Water Table *
- Laminated Pictures of the Children

Procedure

Take pictures of the children and laminate them for this activity. Bury the pictures in the sand bin of the Sand and Water Table. Give the children shovels, screens, and pails from the Super Sand Set. Explain to the children that you have hidden their friends under the sand. Invite them to dig in the sand to uncover the pictures. When a child finds a picture, ask the child the name of the friend who is in the picture.

Reference


**Drum Beats**

Objective

This activity will help children develop motor control and coordination in their hands and wrists while practicing making rhythms.

Materials

- Shape Sorting Pounder * (use the hammer and bench from this activity)

Procedure

Gather a small group of toddlers on a carpet or rug in a circle. Set the bench in the center of the circle. Give one child the hammer and encourage him/her to make a rhythm on the bench. Encourage the rest of the children to clap along to add to the rhythm. Invite the children to take turns using the hammer to beat a rhythm. Talk with the children about the fast and slow beats of the rhythm. Ask the children what the different rhythms remind them of such as a fast rhythm reminding them of running.

Note: Taking turns is very challenging for young children, so they need lots of practice! To help children practice taking turns, so keep
the groups small to limit waiting times. Be patient if they have trouble shifting to new activities.

Reference

**Frozen Fun**

**Objective**
This activity will introduce the toddlers to parallel play, one of the first forms of cooperative play.

**Materials**
- Manipulatives Set *
- Sand and Water Table *
- Plastic Bowl
- Water

**Procedure**
Gather several pieces from the Manipulatives Set into a plastic bowl. Fill the bowl with water and freeze. When the water is completely frozen, fill a bin in the Sand and Water Table with warm water and place the ice from the container in the water. Let the toddlers explore the properties of the ice in the water and help them try to figure out what happens as the ice melts. Make sure to keep the water warm enough for the children to play in by adding more warm water as the ice cools the water temperature. Discuss with the children what happens when the ice becomes warm and the melting process begins.

Note: Watch the toddlers closely to ensure that they do not put the small toys in their mouth once they are freed from the ice.

**Reference**
Full and Empty

Objective
This activity will help children explore the words “full” and “empty”.

Materials
• Manipulative Set *
• Super Sand Set *

Procedure
Give the children a bucket from the Super Sand Set and enough toys from the Manipulative Set to fill the bucket entirely. Show the children how to put the toys in the buckets and say “Full.” Model dumping the toys out and say “Empty.” Allow the children to continue to fill and to dump the buckets to explore the concept of being full or empty.

Reference

Find the Music

Objective
This activity will enhance one of children’s most important senses—hearing—while learning to play together.

Materials
• Musical Roller *
• Blindfold (optional)

Procedure:
Clear a large area for this activity. Have one child close his or her eyes or use a blind fold. Push the Musical Roller around the space so that it makes noise. Have the child try to find the toy just by listening. When the child finds the toy, praise him or her. Now let that child roll the toy for the next child.

Note: Be sure that the child is not afraid of the dark before using the blindfold. If a child does not want to wear the blindfold, never make him or her.
**Float or Sink?**

**Objective**
This activity helps children practice fine and gross motor skills and problem-solving.

**Materials**
- Giggle and Roll Set * (use the rubber balls without holes for this activity)
- Soft Toddler Blocks *
- Manipulative Set *
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *
- Click ‘N Link *
- Workshop with Tools * (use the plastic tools from this activity)
- Tug Boat Set *
- Super Sand Set *
- Sand and Water Table *

**Procedure**
Place the Sand and Water Table in an open space. Fill one or both bins with water. Put a variety of plastic and rubber toys within reach of the children. One at a time, ask them to pick an object and to guess whether they think it will sink or float. Encourage them to experiment by putting the objects in the water one at a time. Discuss the results with the children. Clearly define “float” and “sink” with the children by demonstrating before starting the activity with the children.

**Reference**
Growing Grass

Objective
This activity helps children practice fine and gross motor skills while helping the environment.

Materials
- Super Sand Set *
- Sand and Water Table *
- Garden Soil
- Grass Seed
- Watering Cans
- Clay (optional)
- Craft Supplies (optional)

Procedure
Place the Sand and Water table outside. Fill one of the bins halfway with garden soil. Put the grass seed in the pails from the Super Sand Set. Encourage the children to scoop and then to sift out the grass seed using the shovels and screens from the Super Sand Set. Talk with them and explain how to use the scoop while showing them. After scattering the seeds, have the children gently pat the seeds into the soil with their hands and water the seeds with the watering cans. Let the children care for the seeds and the growing grass over the coming weeks. Avoid over-watering the seeds.

Extension
The children can make clay lawn decorations for their grass decorating them with a variety of craft supplies. You can also sing the following song with the children.

This Little Seed (Tune: This Old Man)
This little seed, we planted one,
We gave it water and lots of sun.
We watched and waited and it began to grow
Our little seed’s a dynamo!

Reference
Objective
This activity will allow children to practice a variety of gross motor skills while developing positive self-esteem.

Materials
- Mini Shoot Around *
- Push and Ride Racer *
- Quack-Along Ducks *
- Play Ring *
- Wide Tracker Activity Walker *
- Giggle and Roll Set *
- Rocking Puppy *
- K-Trike Foot to Floor *
- Toddler Safety Helmet *
- Spin Around *
- Spinning Pop Pals *
- Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *
- Camera
- White Paper
- Binder
- Page Protectors

Procedure
Help the children create a very special book about the activities she or he can do. Take pictures of the children demonstrating various physical activities that they can do (such as riding various toys, spinning, building, kicking balls, pulling toys). Attach the pictures to sheets of white paper and write descriptions of their activities by taking dictation from the children. Make a book with the pages using the binder and page protectors. Title the book “I Can Do It!” Read the book together when it’s finished.

Reference
Match Them Up

Objective
This activity will help children develop language skills while matching objects.

Materials
- Quack-Along Ducks *
- Soft Toddler Blocks *
- Manipulative Set *
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *
- Click 'N Link *
- Suction Cup Activity Set *
- Tug Boat Set *
- Super Sand Set *
- Basket

Procedure
Take a matching pair of toys from each set listed above. Place the toys together in a basket. Ask a child to find a matching pair of one type of toy. For example, ask a child, “Can you find the two boats?” When the child has found a pair, ask them to describe the objects (such as relative size, color, how it is used, etc.). Then select another child to have a turn and repeat the process. Define clearly what the word “match” means. Talk with the children about the toys and what about each one makes it look like its mate - same color, shape, size.

Reference

Movement Words

Objective
This activity will help children engage in gross motor activity while developing an understanding of movement and positional words.
Materials

• Quack-Along Ducks *
• Books with movement words

Procedure
Place the individual ducks from the Quack-Along Ducks on the floor. Explain to the children that you are moving a duck while you demonstrate moving it around on the floor. Next explain to the children that you are moving the ducks together while you demonstrate attaching the ducks and moving them altogether. Continue to explain the appropriate use of movement and positional words using the ducks to demonstrate (such as in front of, behind, next to, close together, etc.). Next, have the children act out the moving words while going on a walk. Finally, read the children a book with movement words such as Ten Apple Up on Top by Dr. Suess.

Reference

Obstacle Course

Objective
This activity will help children practice balance and coordination during gross motor activity.

Materials

• Musical Roller *
• Mini Shoot Around *
• Play Ring *
• Rocking Puppy *
• Spin Around *
• Workshop with Tools *
• Sand and Water Table *
• Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *
• Wide Tracker Activity Walker *
• Push and Ride Racer *
• K-Trike Foot to Floor *
• Toddler Safety Helmet *
• Sidewalk chalk or Duct Tape
Procedure
Create an obstacle course path using sidewalk chalk or duct tape around a variety of stationary toys listed above such as the Mini Shoot Around, Rocking Puppy, and Sand and Water Table. You may also create an obstacle such as a wall using the Mega Blocks. Encourage the children to follow the obstacle course path by crawling, walking, pushing the Activity Walker, or riding the Racer or Trike. Allow the children to see how fast they can complete the course. Be sure to encourage the children by cheering for them.

Practice Make Perfect

Objective
This activity will help children develop hand/eye coordination and motor control while learning about the concept of being full and empty.

Materials
- Manipulative Set * (use pieces from this set for the activity)
- Plastic Pitchers
- Plastic Cups

Procedure
Fill a pitcher with several pieces from the Manipulative Set. Set out three or four small plastic drinking cups. Encourage the children to practice “pouring” the manipulative pieces from the pitcher into the drinking cups.

Reference

Riding Around

Objective
This activity will help children practice balance and coordination during gross motor activity.
Materials

• Push and Ride Racer *
• K-Trike Foot to Floor *
• Toddler Safety Helmet *
• Sidewalk Chalk OR Duct Tape

Procedure
Place the Racer and Trike outside for the children to play with. Provide the riders with a Safety Helmet. Using the sidewalk chalk or duct tape, place two lines several feet apart on a firm level surface. Have the children take turns riding from one to the other. Help the children count how many pushes it takes to get to the other line.

Scooping Fun

Objective
This activity will help children develop motor control and coordination in their hands and wrists.

Materials
• Manipulative Set *
• Mini Edu-Blocks *
• 2 Large Bowls
• Plastic Spoons

Procedure
Fill one large bowl with small toys from the Manipulative Set and Mini Edu-Blocks Set. Give the children plastic spoons and show them how to scoop up one of the toys. First insert the spoon into the bowl filled with toys and slowly twist your wrist to scoop up a toy. Carefully balance the toy in the spoon while moving your hand to the empty bowl. Twist your wrist to drop the toy into the empty bowl. Allow a small group of children to explore scooping and dropping the toys to move all of the toys from one bowl to the other. Ask the children to tell you about the toys. “What else could you do with the toys?” or “What else do you scoop besides toys?”
Sew Fun

Objective
This activity will help children develop fine motor control and coordination.

Materials
• Shape Sorting Pounder *
• Card Stock
• Hole Punch
• Colored Yarn
• Plastic Yarn Needles (or masking tape)

Procedure
Trace the outlines of the shapes from the Shape Sorting Pounder on card stock. Cut out the shapes and punch a few holes in the shapes, being careful not to punch the holes too close to the edge or too close together. Cut a few pieces of colored yarn about 1-2’ long. If you have plastic yarn needles, tie one end securely to the eye of the needle. If you don’t have yarn needles, cover the ends of the yarn with masking tape to make it stronger and to prevent fraying. Show the shapes and the yarn to the children. Demonstrate weaving the yard in and out of the shape through the holes.

Note: Never leave the children alone with the needles or yarn. Make sure to collect all of the pieces of yarn afterwards to prevent them from becoming choking hazards.

Reference

Shape and Color Book

Objective
This activity will help children learn about colors and shapes while exploring their environment.
Materials

- Shape Sorting Pounder * (use the shapes for this activity)
- Construction Paper
- Markers
- Camera
- White Paper
- Binder
- Page Protectors

Procedure

Trace the shapes from the Shape Sorting Pounder on to construction paper and cut out. Give each child one construction paper shape. Ask the child to find something in the room that is the same shape as the one he or she has been given. Then ask the child to find something in the room that is the same color as the construction paper. Take photos of the objects in the classroom that the children identify. Attach the photos to a sheet of white paper and place a corresponding shape or color under it. Gather the pages together to make a book using the binder and page protectors.

Reference


Something’s Different

Objective

This activity will help children develop their memory skills.

Materials

- Soft Toddler Blocks *
- Baby’s First Puzzle * (use the puzzle pieces for this activity)
- Manipulative Set *
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Click ‘N Link *
- Shape Sorting Pounder * (use the shapes and mallet for this activity)
- Suction Cup Activity Set *
- Workshop with Tools * (use the tools for this activity)
- Tug Boat Set *
Procedure
Place three toys from the list above in front of a child. Have the child cover his or her eyes while you take one of the toys and hide it behind you. Have the child look at the toys again and try to guess which one is missing. To make it more challenging, add more toys.

Reference

Sorting Toys

Objective
This activity will help children learn about matching and sorting objects while engaging in positive social interaction.

Materials
- Soft Toddler Blocks *
- Manipulative Set *
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- Build Bigger-Than-Me Mega Blocks *
- Click ‘N Link *
- Suction Cup Activity Set *
- Tug Boat Set *

Procedure
Give the children a pile of toys from the list above with one basket for each type of toy. Place one sample toy in a different basket. Ask the children to help each other finish sorting the toys into baskets as a group. After the children have sorted the blocks, give a group cheer!

Reference
Sponge Shapes

Objective
This activity helps children practice fine and gross motor skills while developing problem-solving skills.

Materials
- Super Sand Set *
- Sand and Water Table *
- Colored Sponges

Procedure
Cut two colors of sponges into two different shapes (such as yellow triangles and blue circles). Place the Sand and Water Table in an open space. Fill one or both bins with water and scatter the sponge shapes in the water. Put two pails from the Super Sand Set next to the Sand and Water Table. Tape a sample shape on each pail (yellow triangle and blue circle) to indicate the correct pail in which to put the sponges. Invite the children to pick sponges from the water, to squeeze out the excess water, and to sort the sponges into the correct pail. Invite the children to pick sponges from the water, to squeeze out the excess water, and to sort the sponges into the correct pail.

Reference

Sticker Magic

Objective
This activity introduces children to parallel play, one of the first forms of cooperative play.

Materials
- Sand and Water Table *
- Old Picture Book (use a very inexpensive book or one with torn pages)
- Clear Contact Paper

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Procedure
Collect inexpensive picture books with characters that children love such as favorite movie, TV, or comic book characters. Cut out pictures in the book including characters and props. Cut out images of the same character doing different actions (sitting, standing, or running). For props include furniture, toys, house, or car. Using clear contact paper, cut a length of it and peel the backing off. Lay it on a table sticky side up. Place the figures on the contact paper leaving an inch between each figure. Lay another piece of contact paper on top of the first, sticky side down, so the figures are encased in the plastic paper. The figures will then be waterproof. Carefully cut around the figures, leaving at least one-eighth-inch margin. Fill a bin of the Sand and Water Table with warm water. Provide each child with a “sticker” allowing them to wet it and press it to the side of the tub to stick! Have the children tell you what the character is doing and/or make up a story about the character depending upon the child’s language development.

Note: If you cut too close to the edge of the figure, the contact paper will not stick together and the figures will not be waterproof.

Reference

Objective
This activity will help children develop their ability to regulate their behavior and practice following directions while engaging in gross motor activity.

Materials
- Push and Ride Racer *
- K-Trike Foot to Floor *
- Toddler Safety Helmet *
- Paper Plates
- Markers
- Popsicle Stick, Tongue Depressor, or Paint Stirrer
- Glue
Procedure
Using the paper plates, markers, popsicle stick, and glue make the STOP and GO signs. First, color one plate red and write the word STOP in black. Then color another plate green and write the word GO in black. Glue these plates together back-to-back with a popsicle stick placed between the layers at the bottom for a handle. Place the Racer and Trike outside for the children to play with. Provide the riders with a Safety Helmet. Explain to the children that you will use the sign to tell the children to go and to stop when riding their toys. Show both sides and have them practice repeating “STOP” and “GO” with you. Show the children the green side of the sign and say “GO.” Allow the children to ride the toys around freely. Then show the children the red side of the sign and say “STOP.” Help the children stop riding their toys. After practicing stopping and going several times, stand in a location where “accidents” are likely to occur and help direct riding toy traffic.

Reference

Tong Time
Objective
This activity will help children develop motor control and coordination in their fingers and arms.

Materials
- Manipulative Set *
- Mini Edu-Blocks *
- 2 Large Bowls
- Tongs

Procedure
Fill one large bowl with small toys from the Manipulative Set and Mini Edu-Blocks Set. Give the children tongs and show them how to use them to pick up one of the toys. Allow a small group of children to explore picking up the toys with tongs to move all of them from one
bowl to the other. Show the children how to be careful using the tongs and watch to make sure they do not hurt each other.

Reference

**Wash Them Up**

**Objective**
This activity enhances children’s sense of self-esteem and develops their self-regulation.

**Materials**
- Super Sand Set *
- Sponges
- Towels
- Dusters
- Safe Cleaning Supplies
- Large Paintbrush

**Procedure**
Collect child-safe cleaning items (sponges, towels, and dusters). Give each child a different cleaning tool including a large paintbrush and a pail from the Super Sand Set filled with water. Show the children how to “paint” a table clean with the brush and water. Then another child dry it off with a towel. Let the children explore the other cleaning items and use them the way they’ve seen you use them. Praise the children for doing a great job at cleaning the room!

Note: Make sure all cleaning items are safe to be handled by young children. This is a good time to teach the toddlers about the danger of poisonous items—in this case, various cleaning fluids. You may want to use a plastic cloth on the floor.

**Reference**
Appendix A.
Developmental Milestones

These milestones are general in nature. Some babies will be “ahead” in some areas while a little “behind” in others, since human development is uneven. When children become 4-6 months “behind” in their motor skill or language development as toddlers, it may be a signal that the child needs an in-depth assessment through First Steps or other qualified health professionals.

By the End of 3 Months

Social and Emotional

☐ Begins to develop a social smile
☐ Enjoys playing with other people and may cry when playing stops
☐ Becomes more expressive and communicates more with face and body
☐ Imitates some movements and facial expressions

Movement

☐ Raises head and chest when lying on stomach
☐ Supports upper body with arms when lying on stomach
☐ Stretches legs out and kicks when lying on stomach or back
☐ Opens and shuts hands
☐ Pushes down on legs when feet are placed on a firm surface
☐ Brings hand to mouth
☐ Takes swipes at dangling objects with hands
☐ Grasps and shakes hand toys

Vision

☐ Watches faces intently
☐ Follows moving objects
☐ Recognizes familiar objects and people at a distance
☐ Starts using hands and eyes in coordination

Hearing and Speech

☐ Smiles at the sound of your voice
☐ Begins to babble
☐ Begins to imitate some sounds
☐ Turns head toward direction of sound
### By the End of 7 Months

**Social and Emotional**
- ☐ Enjoys social play
- ☐ Interested in mirror images
- ☐ Responds to other people’s expressions of emotion and appears joyful often

**Cognitive**
- ☐ Finds partially hidden object
- ☐ Explores with hands and mouth
- ☐ Struggles to get objects that are out of reach

**Movement**
- ☐ Rolls both ways (front to back, back to front)
- ☐ Sits with, and then without, support on hands
- ☐ Supports whole weight on legs
- ☐ Reaches with one hand
- ☐ Transfers object from hand to hand
- ☐ Uses hand to rake objects

**Vision**
- ☐ Develops full color vision
- ☐ Distance vision matures
- ☐ Ability to track moving objects improves

**Language**
- ☐ Responds to own name
- ☐ Begins to respond to “no”
- ☐ Can tell emotions by tone of voice
- ☐ Responds to sound by making sounds
- ☐ Uses voice to express joy and displeasure
- ☐ Babbles chains of sounds

### By The End Of 12 Months

**Social and Emotional**
- ☐ Shy or anxious with strangers
- ☐ Cries when mother or father leaves
- ☐ Enjoys imitating people in his play
- ☐ Shows specific preferences for certain people and toys
☐ Tests parental responses to his actions during feedings
☐ Tests parental responses to his behavior
☐ May be fearful in some situations
☐ Prefers mother and/or regular caregiver over all others
☐ Repeats sounds or gestures for attention
☐ Finger-feeds himself
☐ Extends arm or leg to help when being dressed

Cognitive

☐ Explores objects in many different ways (shaking, banging, throwing, dropping)
☐ Finds hidden objects easily
☐ Looks at correct picture when the image is named
☐ Imitates gestures
☐ Begins to use objects correctly (drinking from cup, brushing hair, dialing phone, listening to receiver)

Language

☐ Pays increasing attention to speech
☐ Responds to simple verbal requests
☐ Responds to “no”
☐ Uses simple gestures, such as shaking head for “no”
☐ Babbles with inflection (changes in tone)
☐ Says “dada” and “mama”
☐ Uses exclamations, such as “Oh-oh!”
☐ Tries to imitate words

Movement

☐ Reaches sitting position without assistance
☐ Crawls forward on belly
☐ Assumes hands-and-knees position
☐ Creeps on hands and knees
☐ Gets from sitting to crawling or prone (lying on stomach) position
☐ Pulls self up to stand
☐ Walks holding on to furniture
☐ Stands momentarily without support
☐ May walk two or three steps without support

Hand and Finger Skills

☐ Uses pincer grasp
☐ Bangs two objects together
☐ Puts objects into container
Takes objects out of container
Lets objects go voluntarily
Pokes with index finger
Tries to imitate scribbling

By The End Of 24 Months

Social

- Imitates behavior of others, especially adults and older children
- More aware of herself as separate from others
- More excited about company of other children

Emotional

- Demonstrates increasing independence
- Begins to show defiant behavior
- Separation anxiety increases toward midyear then fades

Cognitive

- Finds objects even when hidden under two or three covers
- Begins to sort by shapes and colors
- Begins make-believe play

Language

- Points to object or picture when it's named for him
- Recognizes names of familiar people, objects, and body parts
- Says several single words (by 15 to 18 months)
- Uses simple phrases (by 18 to 24 months)
- Uses 2- to 4-word sentences
- Follows simple instructions
- Repeats words overheard in conversation

Movement

- Walks alone
- Pulls toys behind her while walking
- Carries large toy or several toys while walking
- Begins to run
- Stands on tiptoe
- Kicks a ball
- Climbs onto and down from furniture unassisted
- Walks up and down stairs holding on to support
Hand and Finger Skills

- Scribbles on his or her own
- Turns over container to pour out contents
- Builds tower of four blocks or more
- Might use one hand more often than the other

By The End Of 36 Months

Social

- Imitates adults and playmates
- Spontaneously shows affection for familiar playmates
- Can take turns in games
- Understands concept of “mine” and “his and hers”

Emotional

- Expresses affection openly
- Expresses a wide range of emotions
- Separates easily from parents
- Objects to major changes in routine

Cognitive

- Makes mechanical toys work
- Matches object in hand or room to picture in a book
- Plays make-believe with dolls, animals, and people
- Sorts objects by shape and color
- Completes puzzles with three or four pieces
- Understands concept of “two”

Language

- Follows a two- or three-part command
- Recognizes and identifies almost all common objects and pictures
- Understands most sentences
- Understands placement in space (“on,” “in,” “under”)
- Uses 4- to 5-word sentences
- Can say name, age, and sex
- Uses pronouns (I, you, me, we, they) and some plurals (cars, dogs, cats)
- Strangers can understand most of her words

Movement

- Climbs well
☐ Walks up and down stairs, alternating feet (one foot per stair step)
☐ Kicks ball
☐ Runs easily
☐ Pedals tricycle
☐ Bends over easily without falling

Hand and Finger Skills

☐ Makes up-and-down, side-to-side, and circular lines with pencil or crayon
☐ Turns book pages one at a time
☐ Builds a tower of more than six blocks
☐ Holds a pencil in writing position
☐ Screws and unscrews jar lids, nuts, and bolts
☐ Turns rotating handles