






Readiness Starts Early: Tips for Promoting Your Child's Learning

Birth–12 Months

12–24 Months

24–36 Months

 <p>Communication/ Language</p>	<p>Show your infant some pictures of when he/she was younger as well as more recent photos. Tell about smiles, hair, eyes, nose, and other facial features. Describe your infant's reactions to a picture.</p>	<p>Secure a book about bedtime routines. Put in a basket some items included in the book, such as a toothbrush. Invite your child to take an item from the basket when it is shown in the book and tell how it is used.</p>	<p>Read with your child a book that connects to his/her experiences, such as a visit to a special place or something he/she enjoys doing. Help your child talk about how things or events in the book are like what he/she has done.</p>
 <p>Cognitive</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for your infant to notice differences in toys. Offer two toys that are different, such as a smooth and a bumpy ball, or a large and a small soft toy. Describe how your infant explores the toys. Looking is a way to explore.</p>	<p>Provide 2–4 dolls and/or teddy bears and a basket of small toys. Encourage your child to pick one toy for each doll/bear to play with. Then pretend the dolls want different toys! Return toys to the basket and repeat, again one toy per doll.</p>	<p>Provide a ball of soft play dough for your toddler to split into two parts. Have them make a creation from each part (two creations total). When done, invite your child to hold one creation in each hand. Emphasize one hand, one creation.</p>
 <p>Self-Regulation</p>	<p>Support concentration skill by moving a puppet (or sock as a pretend puppet) while your infant watches. Observe your infant's gaze to know whether it is time for different moves or to stop. Offer chances to touch or hold the puppet.</p>	<p>Secure two toy frogs, bunnies, or small items that are make-believe animals. Make one of the toys hop and encourage your toddler to do the same with his/her toy. Stop periodically for a rest or food. Change roles so your toddler can lead.</p>	<p>Sing a nursery rhyme with hand/body actions that you know or want to learn, such as "I'm a Little Teapot" or "Itsy Bitsy Spider." Encourage your toddler to watch and copy your actions. Talk about your child's favorite movements.</p>
 <p>Social-Emotional</p>	<p>Use a toy car or a toy with moving parts to engage your infant in play. Describe and move the car's wheels. Gently move the car on a flat surface. Encourage your infant to hold and explore the car. Describe what he/she does.</p>	<p>The next time your toddler plays with a toy, show you are tuned into his/her actions by gently describing what you see. Ask whether you could play along by doing the same thing with a different toy. Follow your child's lead.</p>	<p>Invite your toddler to draw something with you, using a large sheet of paper and crayons or markers. Encourage your child to suggest what to draw and decide who will draw what. Talk about what each of you is doing.</p>
 <p>Physical/Health</p>	<p>Help your infant develop muscle strength and balance while sitting in your lap. If young, support head and back so your baby can freely move arms. If your infant sits independently, offer a fun toy your infant can reach by extending arms.</p>	<p>Sing "If You're Happy and You Know It" or a song that supports your offering body movements for your toddler to follow. Examples: clap our hands, stomp our feet, swing our arms back and forth, march in place.</p>	<p>Support hand control by giving your child a bell or shaker for each hand (two total). It is fine to have a bell in one hand and a shaker in the other hand. Give guidance on when to shake/ring one or the other or both, and on how loudly and softly.</p>