






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

Birth–12 Months

12–24 Months

24–36 Months

 <p>Communication/ Language</p>	<p>Share with your infant a book that has pictures of babies or babies and their parents. Animal babies may be of interest. Describe the pictures. Point to features you mention. Talk about your baby's responses to pictures.</p>	<p>Read a book about bedtime with your toddler. Talk with your child about how the routines or objects in the book are similar to your child's experiences with bedtime.</p>	<p>Encourage your child to tell what happens in a familiar storybook. Help the retelling by pointing to and asking about pictures. Offer clues if needed. It's fine if your child forgets some key information.</p>
 <p>Cognitive</p>	<p>Provide experience in selecting a toy to play with by offering two toys of interest to your infant. Name and describe the selected toy. Set aside the toy not selected or use the not-selected toy for your own play alongside your infant.</p>	<p>Toddlers enjoy carrying things. Invite your toddler to carry small objects, one at a time, from a basket near you to a table or other location in the room. Make up a story about the trip, such as taking toy ducks to a pretend pond.</p>	<p>Provide practice with spatial awareness skill by encouraging your toddler to move a pull toy on a route in your home that you describe or develop with your child. Create a pull toy by attaching yarn or rope to a small box.</p>
 <p>Self-Regulation</p>	<p>Encourage your infant's persistence in reaching for a favorite item by placing 2–3 toys 9–12 inches in front of him/her when on tummy or near the edge of a low table if your infant can stand. Adjust distance as needed. Clap when reached.</p>	<p>Encourage your child to follow your lead in putting arms up, down, and in front of your body. Repeat with word requests only. Ask, "What comes next?" Repeat again with a change in sequence and/or add an action, such as arms out to side.</p>	<p>Support your child's understanding of how a puzzle works. Show and describe how pieces fit and offer clues about where pieces go. Begin with a simple puzzle that has a few large pieces, preferably with nobs for easy grip.</p>
 <p>Social-Emotional</p>	<p>Engage in playful interactions with your infant and a teddy bear or cuddly animal toy. Make the toy wave hello and goodbye to your infant and encourage your infant to do the same. Talk about your infant's responses, such as smiles.</p>	<p>Use a teddy bear or doll to play with your toddler. Encourage your child to help the toy touch its nose, toes, and ears, reach for the sky, and turn around. If a second teddy or doll is available, use it to follow along with your toddler.</p>	<p>Play follow the leader with your child. Each of you uses a scarf or similar item to wave in different, creative ways. Take turns being a leader and follower. Start with simple actions and add more complex moves as appropriate.</p>
 <p>Physical/Health</p>	<p>The next time your infant plays with a rattle or bell, talk about how he/she is using a hand(s) to shake the toy. Draw attention to how the toy makes a noise when your baby shakes or moves it.</p>	<p>Provide practice in coordinated body movements by helping your toddler roll his/her body with arms to the side or hands together at the top of head. Suggest your child begin on his/her back and imagine he/she is a hot dog!</p>	<p>Provide a ball of soft play dough about the size of your toddler's fist. Encourage your child to flatten the ball with both hands and to make things of interest with his/her hand. Fingerprints are fun to make and see.</p>