

2

Physical Development

Standards:

- **Gross motor skills**
- **Fine motor skills**
- **Self-help skills**
- **Health and safety skills**





2
Two
year olds

Gross motor skills

Control body movements as they:

- Walk up and down stairs, holding on for support
- Slide down a toddler slide
- Move a riding toy with both feet
- Try to ride a tricycle

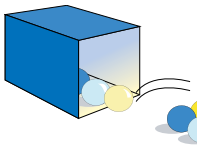
Demonstrate coordination and balance as they:

- Catch a ball rolled to them on the ground
- Jump up and down in place
- Run with ease
- Walk along a curb holding an adult's hand
- Walk on tiptoes
- Throw
- Kick a ball

Express creativity through movement as they:

- Make creative body movements freely
- Dance

Activities and Strategies for Development



Aim for the Target

- Place a large box or laundry basket on its side in an open space outdoors. Put something sturdy behind the “target” to keep it from falling over.
- Place a medium-sized ball nearby and gently kick it to show your child how to kick the ball at the target.
- Encourage your child to do the same. Retrieve it for her and roll it back so she can kick again.
- Later, set the basket upright and let her try to throw smaller balls into it.
- Step back and watch her enjoy kicking, throwing, and laughing, even if she does not hit the “target!”

Special Needs Tips

A child with limited leg mobility can sit on the ground and roll the ball toward the target. A child in a wheelchair can throw the ball or “bowl” it from the chair.



Rock and Roll

- Sit “feet to feet” with your child with your feet spread apart. Roll a medium-sized ball back and forth with him.
- Move back a short distance and roll the ball back and forth again.
- Repeat several more times, increasing the distance between you each time.
- See how far apart you can sit and still be able to roll and catch the ball.
- When your child is ready for a challenge, try bouncing the ball gently to him. See if he can catch it as you both stay seated on the ground.

Fitness Fun

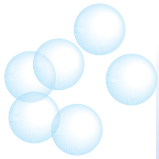


- On a day when the weather is too nasty to go outside, put on some music and do some simple exercises with your child.
- Try
 - stretching up high as the sky
 - squatting low to the ground
 - bending over and touching toes
 - walking on tiptoes
 - twisting at the waist from side to side
 - swinging arms back and forth
 - lying on the floor and kicking up in the air
 - jumping in place
- If there are other children or adults in the home, everyone can have fun exercising together!

Special Needs Tip

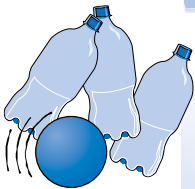
A child who cannot walk can roll and move about on the floor to the music.

Chasing Bubbles

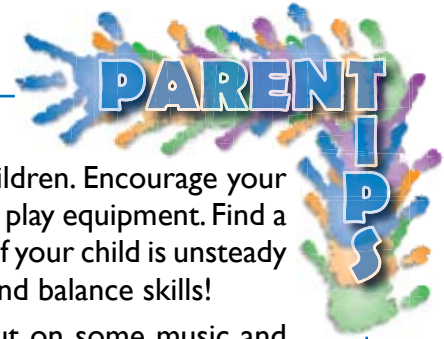


- Blow bubbles outside for your child to chase and try to pop.
- Blow some up high so your child has to reach up as she runs.
- Blow some low so she has to bend down.
- Now let your child wave a bubble wand for you to chase and pop!
- Try different “wands” for variety. Dip a fly swatter in a pan of bubbles to make little ones, for example.

Bowling Pins



- Collect 6–10 empty two-liter or half gallon drink containers.
- Set them up in the shape of a triangle, like bowling pins.
- Mark a line with a piece of tape several feet away from the “pins”.
- Invite your child to stand behind the line, roll a soccer size ball, and try to knock down the pins.
- Let him keep rolling until he knocks them all down.
- Set them back up and bowl some more.



Go to a playground that has play structures for young children. Encourage your child to hold onto the railing and walk up the steps on the play equipment. Find a slide and encourage her to slide down, too! Stand close by if your child is unsteady and help her gain confidence as she builds coordination and balance skills!

When you want something fun to do with your child, put on some music and watch your two year old dance, dance, dance! Have a box of props such as scarves, streamers, and cheerleading pompoms for your child to use while he dances.

Read a book such as *From Head to Toe* by Eric Carle, which offers another way to bring movement indoors! This book is also available in a Spanish version—*De La Cabeza a Los Pies*.

Recorded music by such artists as Greg and Steve, Ella Jenkins, the Laurie Berkner Band, and Putamayo Kids have a wide variety of songs that encourage movement. Check for recorded music in the children’s section of the public library.

Spend time playing outside. Two year olds do not need much direction to learn to run, jump, and climb but they **do** need space to move around.

Limit the amount of time you expect your two year old to sit still. Offer her the opportunity to sit and listen to a story, but let her get up and move when she needs to.

Choose restaurants that are “child friendly”—where some noise and movement are acceptable. Bring a book, crayons and paper, or a quiet toy to occupy your child while waiting for your food.



2
Two
year olds

Fine motor skills

Control hands and fingers as they:

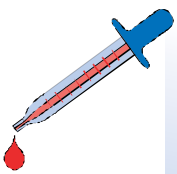
- Scribble on paper, making vertical, horizontal, and circular strokes
- Begin to use thumb and fingertips to grasp small objects
- Turn book pages
- Twist wrist to screw and unscrew
- Use both hands to cut with scissors

Show eye-hand coordination as they:

- Build a tower with a few stackable objects
- Complete a simple inset puzzle
- Put the cap back on a marker or glue stick
- Hit pegs in a pegboard
- Coordinate the use of both hands

Activities and Strategies for Development

Dropper Painting

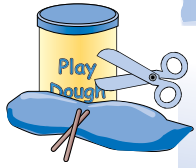


- Ahead of time, clean out three or four old medicine bottles with droppers.
- Fill the bottles with different watercolor paints.
- Cover a table with newspaper or plastic cloth and give your child a paper towel.
- Encourage her to squeeze a drop of color on the paper towel and watch it spread out.
- Invite your child to squeeze a different color near that spot and watch what happens when the colors mix!



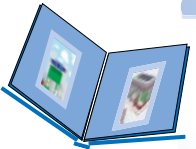
Shape and Bake

- Find cookie cutters with shapes such as a star, a heart, and an animal. Buy some ready-to-bake cookie or bread dough or make your own.
- Sprinkle flour onto the kitchen counter, table or mat.
- Let your child help roll out a large circle of the dough using a rolling pin.
- Encourage him to select shapes one at a time and press them into the dough.
- Show him how to twist his wrist to separate the shape from the rest of the dough.
- Lift the cookie out and place the shape on a tray with a spatula.
- Before putting the cookies into the oven to bake, ask your child to try to match the cut out shape with the shape outline in the remaining dough.
- If he would like, let him try to put the cookie shape back in place like a puzzle.
- Bake and enjoy!
- A variation of this activity is to use play dough or “model magic.”



Pat-a-Cake, Cut-a-Cake

- Add safety scissors and straight wooden stick pegs to your play dough area.
- Encourage the children to try to cut play dough with safety scissors. (It is easier than cutting paper!)
- They will also enjoy sticking wooden pegs in the play dough and pretending they are candles.



Homemade Board Books

- Ahead of time, get five pieces of cardboard, glue, a hole punch, and yarn. (Small cereal boxes are a great source and size.)
- Look through old child-friendly magazines with your child.
- Point out pictures with simple objects and activities that your child can name such as trucks, animals, or a child brushing her teeth.
- As your child points to pictures of interest, cut them out and lay them aside.
- Let your child help you glue the pictures to the cardboard.
- Use a hole punch to make three holes along the left edge of each cardboard page.
- Attach all pages with yarn.
- Encourage your child to tell you about each page of the “book” you have created together!
- If your child enjoys making books, give her a spiral notebook and several packs of stickers. She can make her own “sticker book” and work on hand and finger coordination at the same time!



Five Finger Exercises

- Give your child some play dough about the size of a lemon.
- Sit at the table with your child and model these movements that use finger muscles.
- Use one hand and some pressure to squeeze the play dough through your fingers.
- Now, roll the play dough into a ball using both hands, then into a long snake.
- Next, use your fist to pound the play dough flat on the table.
- Sing the following song as you work the finger muscles:
(To the tune of “This is the way we wash our clothes...”)
*This is the way we squeeze our dough,
Squeeze our dough, squeeze our dough,
This is the way we squeeze our dough,
So early in the morning.*
(repeat with “roll our dough,” “pound our dough”)



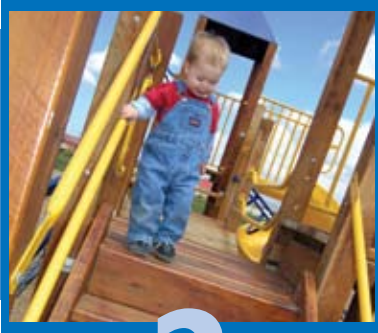
Children vary in their skill and interest in fine motor play. Some children will enjoy activities such as connecting toys, stringing large beads, or using crayons and markers. Others will seldom choose this type of play and may prefer active running, jumping, sliding and wrestling!

Toddlers need more time for active play, but also daily opportunities to use the small muscles in their fingers and hands.

Two year olds gain more eye-hand coordination. The random marks they used to make with crayons now begin to look like lines and enclosed shapes. These shapes begin to look more like circles and later, squares.

Do not expect children’s “drawings” to look like a real object. Instead, encourage the pleasure of using the paintbrush or crayon to create!

Self-help skills



2
Two
year olds

Feed themselves as they:

- Use a spoon independently
- Drink from an open cup with some spills
- Try to use a fork
- Try to pour from a small pitcher

Help dress themselves as they:

- Unzip and zip clothing
- Try to undress and dress, but need help
- Help put on their jacket
- Put on socks and shoes with help

Help with personal hygiene as they:

- Help take off their diaper
- Let an adult know when they need to use the bathroom
- Use the toilet when placed on it—with help cleaning and dressing
- Wash and dry hands independently
- Get a tissue to wipe nose
- Begin to brush teeth without assistance

Help with routine tasks as they:

- Place items on the table at mealtime
- Pick up and put away some toys

Activities and Strategies for Development



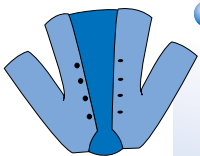
Pancakes with Toppings

- Before breakfast, fill a cup with something your child enjoys on pancakes, such as banana slices, chocolate chips, applesauce, or syrup.
- Give your child a pancake on a plate.
- Encourage her to use a small fork (and fingers) to cut the pancake into smaller bite sizes.
- Invite her to pour the contents of the cup onto the pancakes.
- Show your child the favorite topping you chose for your pancakes too!



Socks and Shoes

- Make a game of teaching your child to put on his socks and shoes at a time when you are not in a rush to get ready for the day.
- Get a pair of your socks and shoes and a pair of socks and shoes for your child.
- Sit down with him and let him help you put a sock on your foot. Then let him try, with your help, to put on one of his socks. Repeat with the second sock for each of you.
- Do the same with the shoes. Have fun. Wiggle your toes and tickle his foot.
- At bedtime, show your child where to put his shoes and socks. Establish a routine that you do each evening. In the morning, let him do as much as he can to put on his socks and shoes by himself.



Upside Down Jacket

- Try this to help your child learn to put on a jacket:
 - Show her how to place the jacket on the floor with the opening face-up and the sleeves outstretched.
 - Have your child stand at the neck of the jacket (it looks upside down), lean over and slip her arms through the sleeves.
 - With her arms in the sleeves, have her raise her arms and flip the jacket over her head and onto her body.
- After a bit of practice, you will see it works!



Potty Training

- Read a book such as *Dora's Potty Book* by Melissa Torres or *Fuzzy Bear's Potty Book* by Bentley Dawn.
- A book will help your child learn that “going to the potty” is a natural part of life.
- As you diaper or put your child on the toilet or potty chair, explain that everyone uses the bathroom. Tell your child that his body will tell him when he needs to use the bathroom and you will help him.
- When you find that your child is ready to begin potty training, praise all efforts. One way to do this is to make a chart and put a sticker or draw a smiley face in a square each time he “tries.” Do this in small steps. Reinforce attempts to sit on the potty even if he does not actually “go to the potty.” Later he can earn stickers for “going in the potty” and then telling you that he needs to “use the “potty.” Use a different type of “reward” if stickers are not appealing to your child.
- Avoid pressure to use the toilet too early, or criticism for soiling accidents. Children have their own developmental timetable for successful potty training. Your patience and support will help your child reach this milestone!

Zap Those Germs!

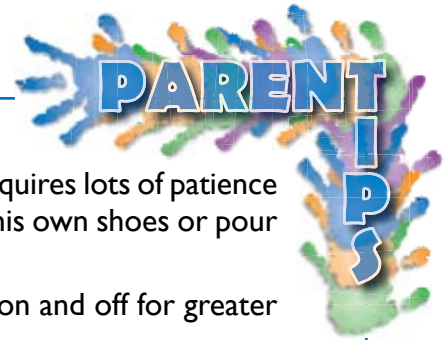


- Before and after mealtimes, toileting, and trips outdoors, make hand washing a regular part of your daily routine.
- Place a step stool in front of the sink so your child can reach it better. Supervise carefully to prevent falling.
- Show your child how to squirt a drop of liquid “zapper” (soap) into her hands and help her rub hands under warm water.
- Tell her that she is “zapping the yucky germs” that make us sick and washing them down the drain.
- Encourage her to dry her hands on her “own” towel that is hung on a low hook.
- Also help your child practice washing hands in the bathtub.
- Teaching your child to wash her hands is one of the best things you can do to help her stay healthy.



Shoobox Storage

- Get clear plastic storage boxes or laundry baskets, large enough to hold your child's toys, at a dollar store.
- Tell him that each basket or box is for some of his toys. For example, "this basket is for your stuffed animals, this one is for your books, and this one is for your blocks."
- After play time, hand your child a toy and ask him to put it into a box that he chooses. Help him put the different types of toys in different boxes.
- Your child may try to match your sorting, but the main purpose is to have him put the toy in a storage container.
- Give compliments to your child when he places toys in containers!



Allowing independent two year olds to "do it themselves" requires lots of patience from adults. Try to plan extra time for your child to put on his own shoes or pour his own juice.

Clothing for toddlers should be oversized and easy to pull on and off for greater independence.

Cleaning up after an active toddler is quite a challenge! Your child is more likely to help clean up if she can see that everything has a place.

Since toddlers love to "dump" toys, limit the number you put out at any one time. Rotate toys so your child will not get bored and will become excited when "new" toys are put out.

Children can practice hand-washing "on the go" with disposable wipes or "magic soap" (liquid hand sanitizers).



2
Two
year olds

Health and safety skills

Pay attention to safety instructions
as they:

- Cooperate with safety instructions

Begin to attend to personal health
needs as they:

- Lie down when not feeling well
- Get or ask for a drink when thirsty
- Cover up or uncover when cold or hot

Name different foods as they:

- Identify foods by name
- Express food preferences by name

Activities and Strategies for Development

Stop for Safety

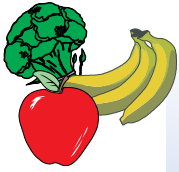


- Make a stop sign out of cardboard and let your child paint it with a sponge and red paint.
- Write “STOP” on it with a black marker.
- While taking a walk with your child, make a game of occasionally holding up the sign and stopping, putting both feet together and saying “stop!”
- Let your child take a turn holding the stop sign and telling you when to stop.
- Notice traffic stop signs on your way and be sure to stop there, too.
- Let your child use the stop sign with riding toys, trucks, and cars.

Achoo!



- Gather a few personal care objects such as a small blanket, a drinking cup, a box of tissues, and a bar of soap.
- Have a puppet or a stuffed animal describe situations and ask your child to choose one of the objects that would help her stay healthy. Use a special voice as the puppet talks.
- For example, Penelope Puppet might say:
 - “I am in bed and I’m cold. What can I do?” (get the blanket)
 - “I am thirsty. What can I do?”
 - Penelope sneezes and says “Achooo! What can I do?”
 - “My hands are dirty. What can I do?”



Name That Food!

- While shopping in the grocery store, play “Name that Food!” with your child.
- As you walk down the different aisles, name foods that your child, or someone in your family, likes to eat.
- Ask your child to point to the foods you name. For example, “I see green beans. Daddy loves to eat green beans. Do you see the green beans, Sean?”
- Let your child name a food that he likes to eat. Let him help put some of the food items in the grocery cart.
- Talk about eating healthy foods to grow big and strong!

Healthy Snacks



- Let your child help make some healthy snacks. (Note: *Modify these recipes based on your child’s abilities to chew thoroughly and any allergies.*) Here are a few ideas:

Pizza Roll Ups

- Let your child help spread pizza sauce and sprinkle mozzarella cheese on wheat tortillas.
- Help her roll it up and sprinkle parmesan cheese on top.
- Bake in the oven at 400 degrees until the cheese melts, about 8 minutes.
- Cool and enjoy!

Banana Bites

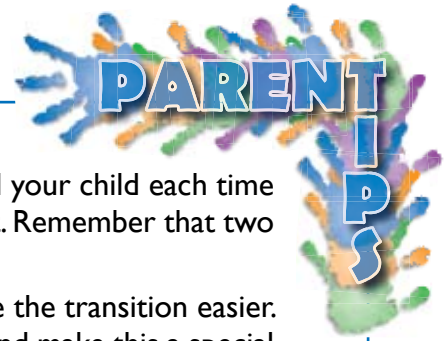
- Cut a banana lengthwise.
- Let your child help spread cream cheese (or peanut butter if your child is not allergic) and put a few raisins on one half.
- Put the two halves back together.
- Cut in half crosswise and enjoy!

Fruit Dip

- Let your child help mix together
 - 1 cup lowfat vanilla yogurt
 - 2 tablespoons frozen orange juice concentrate
 - ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- Invite him to dip pieces of banana, strawberries, and other bite size pieces of fruit into the yummy dip!

Veggie Quesadillas

- Cut vegetables such as red bell pepper, squash, spinach or broccoli into tiny, thin pieces.
- Let your child put a slice of cheese on a small tortilla and then put the vegetables on top.
- Let her put another piece of cheese and another tortilla on top.
- Put the quesadilla into a heated, covered frying pan that has been sprayed with cooking spray, or wrap in foil and place in the oven at 350 degrees.
- Cook until the cheese is melted. Cut into wedges and serve.
- Delicioso!



Make a rule that “We hold hands in the street!” and remind your child each time you get out of the car or walk across a street or parking lot. Remember that two year olds love to run, so hold on tight!

Develop a pleasurable routine before bedtime to help make the transition easier. For example, let your child choose a book for you to read and make this a special time for the two of you.

Read a book such as *Eating the Alphabet* by Lois Ehlert to help your child learn the names of different foods. Talk about eating healthy foods and then enjoy eating some together!

Children learn eating habits early in life. Make healthy foods a regular part of your diet.



2s: Physical Development

2

Emotional and Social Development

Standards:

- Personal relationships with adults
- Personal relationships with peers
- Self-awareness
- Self-control
- Self-expression





2
Two
year olds

Personal relationships with adults

Build relationships with adults as they:

- Identify pictures of their own family members
- Seek out adults to share time and activities
- Express empathy with others' feelings
- Seek approval and appreciation for their accomplishments
- Use adults for assistance with needs

Show feelings of security and trust
as they:

- Seek adults for comfort and safety
- Initiate and accept gestures of affection, such as holding hands or hugging
- Separate from parent to familiar teacher or caregiver

Activities and Strategies for Development



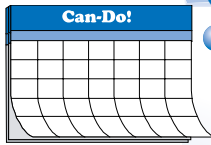
The Gift of Family

- Take photos often of your child with family members. Set aside some for gifts. Here's a simple gift idea for family members to cherish:
 - Glue four overlapping craft or popsicle sticks together in a rectangle shape to construct a picture frame for each photo. Let the frames dry.
 - Put the glued frames on newspaper for your child to decorate with paint or stickers.
 - After the frames are dry, trim the photos and tape them to the frames.
 - Invite your child to help you wrap each framed photo to give as a gift for a special member of the family.



Boo Boo Kit

- Create a special first aid or "Boo Boo Kit" with your child.
- In a small box, let him place a few bandages, tissues, and a small tube of "Boo Boo cream" (anti-bacterial cream).
- Encourage your child to help you use the Boo Boo Kit when one of you gets a small scrape. Let him rub the cream on your scrape and you rub it on his. Let him know that caring about others is kind.
- Encourage your child to ask for the Boo Boo Kit when he sees another adult or child who has a little hurt.
- Place the Boo Boo Kit on a shelf within sight, but not within reach.
- A variation of this is to make a Boo Book Kit for your child's dolls or stuffed animals. Put band-aids, tissues, and an empty tube of boo-boo cream or hand lotion in the kit for your child to pretend to rub on the babies' boo-boos!



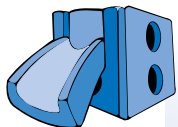
Can-Do List!

- Observe your child outdoors as she is playing and practicing new skills such as sliding, pulling a wagon, or walking the tricycle with her feet (rather than the pedals)!
- Say to your child, “I like to watch how you can....climb to the top of the slide or pull the wagon around the tree. You can do many things!”
- Show your approval with a smile, clap, or other signal of your enthusiasm.
- When you come inside, use a magnetic pad on the refrigerator to record the date and new skill you observed. Another idea is to hang a calendar on the refrigerator and record the information on the date!
- Read the list to your child and add new skills often.
- Ask your child’s teacher to tell you about new skills she has learned at school and add these to the list! Share the list with family members.



Can We Cuddle?

- Pick out a special chair or sofa in your home that offers a quiet place to cuddle with your child. This is a spot for enjoying a book together or for your child to seek comfort after something frightening or hurtful happens.
- Let your child know that this is a “cuddle place” for sharing special times.
- Place a basket near the chair and encourage him to put a few of his favorite books there.
- Take time regularly to cuddle in your special place.



I'll Catch You!

- Stand at the bottom of the toddler slide at a playground.
- Encourage your child, especially if she is not a risk-taker, to slide down by saying, “I’m here to catch you.”
- Provide several opportunities for her to slide down and build confidence while you are there to catch her at the bottom.
- As your child develops stronger muscles and wants more challenge, show her how to spread her legs and slow down her speed on the slide.
- Say often that you are there to keep her safe. Whenever she is ready, she can try new things by herself!

Special Needs Tip

A child who does not walk can be seated at the top of the slide. One adult can walk beside the child to help her slide down, while another adult catches her at the bottom.



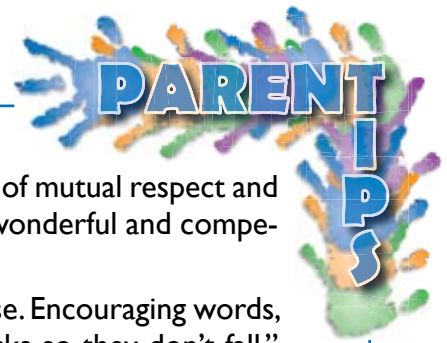
Separation Routine

- Role play with your child going to school or a family child care home.
- Gather a baby doll and a diaper bag.
- Tell your child, “Let’s pretend to take baby to school. What should we bring with us? Let’s pack baby’s bag.”
- Pretend to drive or walk to the school. Say “hi” to the teacher and put away baby’s things.
- Ask your child, “What is baby’s favorite toy? Who will she play with?”
- Have your child say goodbye to the baby with a big kiss, leave and then come back to pick up the baby.
- Reassure your child that this is just how Mommy or Daddy takes her to school and then picks her up after she plays with toys and friends.



No, Silly!

- During a short car ride, play this game with your child.
- Make up several silly questions, such as, “Do we eat our socks for dinner? Do we take a bath with our coats on?”
- Show your child how to shake his head back and forth and say, “No, Silly!” in response to each nonsense question.
- Older twos may be able to ask their own silly questions to which you will both shake your heads and answer “No, Silly!”
- This game gives “tenacious twos” many opportunities to say “No!” in a situation without conflict!



Children develop a positive self-image through relationships of mutual respect and trust. When parents and teachers tell the child that she is wonderful and competent, she develops feelings of self-worth and esteem.

Practice using statements of encouragement instead of praise. Encouraging words, such as “I can see you worked hard on stacking those blocks so they don’t fall,” reinforce your child’s efforts. Statements of general praise like, “Good boy,” or “Super,” tend to suggest that your approval of your child depends on his successful performance.

In the first few years of life, very young children will learn to trust or distrust their world. They will develop trust if adults meet their basic needs consistently, promptly, and lovingly.

Children’s desire for cuddling and physical affection will depend upon their individual temperaments and family and cultural practices. Take your cues from your child. Make close, comforting contact available when she seeks it.

Even if you do not say a word, you communicate your feelings about separating from your child. It is normal to experience some anxiety when your child is away from you. Work closely with your child’s teacher to help both you and your child successfully cope with separation.



2
Two
year olds

Personal relationships with children

**Demonstrate beginning social skills
with other children** as they:

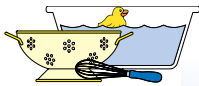
- Play beside other children
- Say “It’s mine,” when another child wants a toy they are playing with
- Begin to take turns, with guidance from adults
- Join a small group of children participating in an activity
- Imitate other children

**Show sensitivity toward other children’s
feelings** as they:

- Begin to use words to describe feelings
- Ask why another child is crying
- Comfort each other

**Begin to develop friendships with other
children** as they:

- Greet a playmate with enthusiasm
- Hug other children
- Begin to engage in pretend play with other children



Tub Time

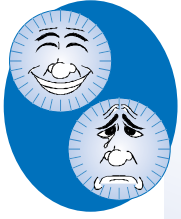
- Give your child and her playmate a tub or dishpan.
- Put a small amount of water in each tub and put them on a low table in the kitchen or outdoors. Put towels under the dishpans to catch the water.
- Help the children take turns using props such as wire whisks, sieves, slotted spoons, squeeze bottles, ladles, scoops, hand cranked egg beaters, muffin tins, and boats (for health purposes, don't use sponges).
- Add a small amount of dishwashing soap for bubbles if you like.
- Be prepared for the children to get wet, so roll up their sleeves and have an extra shirt ready!



Cookie Painting

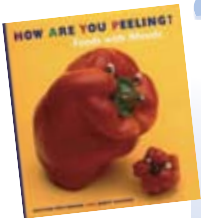
- Get some slice-and-bake sugar cookie dough (or make your own), milk, food coloring, and cotton swabs.
- Slice the cookies and let your child and his playmate help arrange them on the cookie sheet.
- Put a few drops of food coloring into a small amount of milk.
- Give each child a cotton swab and let them "paint" the cookie dough with the food coloring mixture.
- Follow the directions on the package for baking. Let the children enjoy eating a few of the cookies they made together!

How Do You Feel?

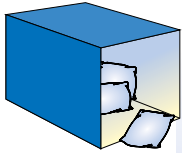


- Make two large faces out of paper plates—a “happy face” with a big smile, and a “sad face” with a frown and tears. Describe them, calling attention to the mouth on each one.
- Give your child an unbreakable mirror and ask her to make a happy face into the mirror and then a sad face.
- Use a teddy bear and make up a few simple situations. Ask your child to tell you which face shows how she thinks the bear would feel.
- Here are a few examples.
 - Teddy’s Grandma took him to the playground to swing on the swings.
 - Teddy fell down and hurt his knee.
 - Teddy’s mommy took him to get some ice cream.
 - Teddy cannot find his favorite blanket that he likes to sleep with at night.
 - Teddy found his favorite blanket.
- After each situation ask “Do you think Teddy feels ‘happy’ (show the happy face) or do you think Teddy feels ‘sad’ (show the sad face)?” Ask your child to make the appropriate face, look in the mirror, and say “happy,” or “sad.”

Name that Feeling!

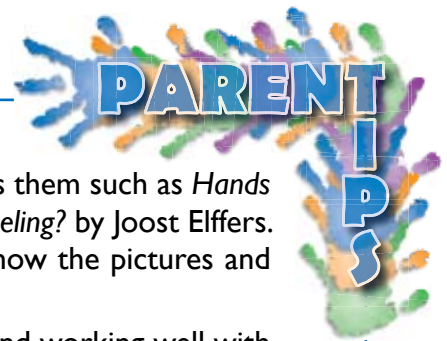


- Look at a book with your child that shows faces illustrating different feelings such as *How are you Peeling?* by Joost Elffers or *Baby Faces* by DK Publishing.
- Look through the book and have fun with your child making similar faces and naming the feelings.
- Describe something that happened to you or your child that matches the different feelings. For example, “Remember when you felt **sad** when our puppy ran away? Remember when you felt **happy** when we found her?”
- Help your child name his feelings when he is happy, sad, angry, and scared.



Friendship Fort

- When your child has a friend (or sibling) to play with, set up a cozy area that is large enough for two children.
- For example, make a “fort” by covering a table with a bed sheet and putting some comfortable pillows there. Or turn a large box on its side and put pillows in it. (Be sure nothing is on top of the table after you cover it.)
- When the children go inside they might take a book, a small toy, or stuffed animal.
- Some two year olds will enjoy the privacy and go in to play next to their friend. Others will go in and begin to play together. Still others will not choose to go inside at all.



Read books to your child about feelings and how to express them such as *Hands are not for Hitting* by Martine Agassi, Ph.D., or *How are you Peeling?* by Joost Elffers. Instead of reading every page, you can skip some or just show the pictures and tell what the book is about.

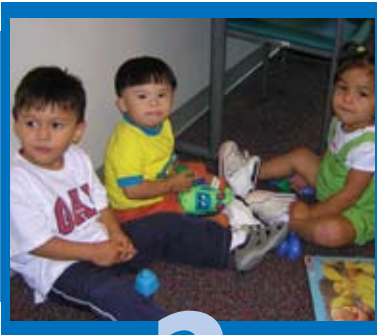
Make positive comments to your child when she is playing and working well with another child and when they comfort one another.

If you have more than one child, ask your two year old to help you comfort a brother or sister who is upset.

When your child displays inappropriate behaviors, try to figure out what the behavior is telling you. Is he scared, angry, lonely, over-stimulated? Help him learn what to do when he has these feelings.

Teach your child to “use your words” to describe feelings. Help her learn the words that match the feelings.

Remember that you are a role model in helping your child learn to play with others and resolve conflicts. Your child will imitate your actions, tone of voice, and the words you say to other children and adults.



2
Two
year olds

Self-awareness

Show behaviors that reflect their self-concept as they:

- Point to different body parts and identify them
- Show individuality by making a choice different than other children
- Assert themselves by identifying which activities they prefer
- Use their own name when referring to themselves
- Identify themselves as either a boy or a girl
- Want to be noticed and say things like “watch me”

Demonstrate confidence in their abilities as they:

- Feel capable of doing some things like an adult
- May eagerly begin a challenging activity and then ask for help when they get stuck

Activities and Strategies for Development



Just Like Me

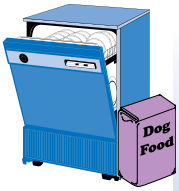
- Have your child lie down on a large piece of paper so you can draw her outline with a marker. Cut out her shape. You will also need a package of stickers.
- Draw a face, ears, hair and some clothing with markers or crayons. Choose colors that match your child's features.
- Let her point to and name as many body parts as she can such as eyes, nose, mouth, ears, hair, arms, legs, elbows, and knees. Let her put a sticker on each body part she names.
- Ask your child to tell you her name and whether she is a boy or girl and write it on the outline.
- Hang the outline where other family members can see it.



Different Strokes

- Set up some washable paints in individual containers.
- Collect several different kinds of brushes for your child to paint with such as different sized paint brushes, kitchen basting brushes, vegetable or nail brushes.
- Put a large piece of paper on a kitchen or outdoor table and let your child choose which brushes he would like to try. (Use a paint shirt or smock.)
- Encourage him for trying something "different." Your child will see how the different brushes make the paint look and will find that he prefers some more than others!
- Try this activity when another child is visiting or with a sibling and encourage each child to make their own choices.

I'm a Big Kid Now

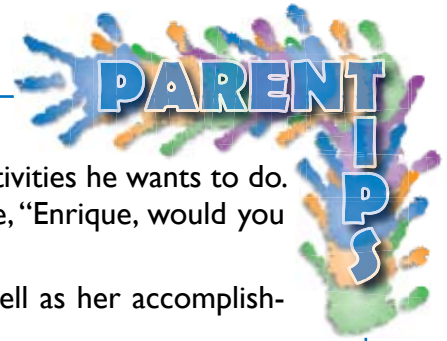


- Look through magazines, color newspaper ads, or the Internet to find pictures that represent two simple household tasks your child can help with.
- For example, choose a picture of a dishwasher if your child is able to help take spoons from the dishwasher, a bag of dog food if she can scoop food into your pet's bowl, or a toy box to represent cleaning up.
- Help your child glue each picture onto the center of a paper plate. Let her put a sticker on the plate whenever she helps with one of these "grownup" jobs.
- Show pride in your child for learning to be a "big helper."

"I Can Do It" Photo Album



- Get a photo album.
- Take photographs of your child trying and accomplishing new skills and let her help place them in the album.
- Add photos periodically to show new things your child is learning to do. Photograph a variety of activities including
 - *physical skills*, such as sliding down a slide and trying to ride a riding toy
 - *language skills*, such as looking at a book and scribbling on a piece of paper
 - *cognitive skills*, such as playing with shapes and looking through a magnifying glass
 - and *social skills*, such as playing with another child and having fun with an adult
- Encourage your child to share her "I Can Do It" photo album with family members. You and your child will enjoy remembering these two-year-old milestones in years to come!



Let your two year old begin to make choices about the activities he wants to do. Begin by limiting the choices to two options. For example, “Enrique, would you like to play with a puzzle or play dough?”

Find opportunities to encourage your child’s efforts, as well as her accomplishments.

Display your child’s “creations” with pride. Put them on the refrigerator, a bedroom door, or on a table for others to see.

Encourage your child to take pride in his efforts and accomplishments. Although children like to hear praise from adults, it is important that they learn to feel their own sense of pride, too.

When your child says, “I can’t do it,” encourage her to “try again” or break the task down into smaller steps so she can be successful one step at a time.

Encourage your child to “stretch” his abilities. When he has mastered a skill, encourage him to try something a little more difficult.

Share your child’s successes with other family members.



2
Two
year olds

Self-control

Begin to regulate their own emotions and behaviors independently as they:

- Anticipate consistent routines and transitions
- Play in a small group of children
- Accept redirection and guidance from adults
- Demonstrate some impulse control

Begin to follow simple routines and rules in a group setting independently as they:

- Participate with others in group activities
- Display understanding of simple rules
- Take turns in some activities with adult guidance
- Follow simple daily routines

Activities and Strategies for Development

Our Daily Plan

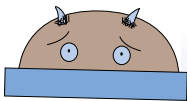


- Help your child begin his day with a predictable routine.
- Greet him when he wakes up with a warm hello and hug.
- Tell him the next event to expect based upon your routine.
- Say, for example, “First, we’re going to wash up and brush your teeth.”
- Give your child a specific task, such as finding his towel or getting the toothpaste out of the drawer.
- Say, “Now that you’re all clean, let’s get dressed. Would you like to put on the red shirt or the white shirt?”
- After dressing, ask your child if he can guess what comes next.
- Say, “That’s right, now it’s time for breakfast. You can help me pour the milk from your pitcher.”
- Try to keep similar routines from day to day.
- Modify the list of steps based upon the routine that works for your family.

Special Needs Tip

Routine is especially important for children with autism. Always prepare them for activities that are not part of the usual routine.

Monsters Make Good Friends



- Read your child the book, *Leonardo, the Terrible Monster* by Mo Williams.
- This book is a favorite with many two year olds who may be anxious about monsters. In this story they see that Leonardo cannot scare anyone, no matter what he tries.
- Leonardo decides that it is better to become a wonderful friend instead.
- Talk with your child about how he can be a friend, such as share a snack, help a friend up who has fallen down, or give others a smile.



Happy Face, Sad Face

- Sit facing your child and play a game of copy cat with facial expressions.
- Say, “Watch me smile. I have a happy face.”
- Say, “Now you show me a big smile. You have a happy face.”
- Now, change your expression to a sad face.
- Say, “I have a sad face. Show me your sad face.”
- Give your child several examples of her actions that cause a happy or sad face.
- Say, for example, “When you pull the dog’s tail, Mommy has a sad face.” (Show a sad expression.) “When you pet the dog gently, Mommy has a happy face.” (Make a smiling expression.)
- Repeat with other situations familiar to your child.

Knots on a Rope



- Take a thick clothesline or length of rope and tie knots in it every two feet or so. Go outdoors in a grassy area that has plenty of space.
- Invite your child and two other playmates to grab the rope on one of the knots.
- You take the lead and gently wind the small group in large circles and arches.
- Add speed if the children are enjoying the movement.
- Let each child take a turn being a leader as well as follower.
- A variation is to wrap tape around the rope every two feet to make “handles” instead of tying knots.



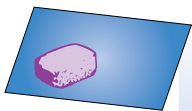
Shhh! is for the Library

- Plan a brief visit to the local library.
- Tell your child that the library is a quiet place for looking at books.
- Say, “When we’re in a quiet place we use a quiet voice, quiet hands, and quiet feet.” Demonstrate a whisper and show what you mean by “quiet hands and feet.”
- As you enter the library, point out to your child how quiet it is with no loud noises.
- Take your child to the children’s section where there are small tables and low shelves at child’s eye level.
- Find one or two picture books that interest your child. Quietly read the books to your child in the library.
- Check the books out and enjoy reading them again with your child during the week.



My Turn

- Create a game during daily activities where you and your child must wait for a turn.
- Say to your child, “I’ll help you wash your hands, and then it will be my turn to wash my hands.”
- When traveling, buckle the child safely into the car seat, and say, “Now it’s my turn to buckle up.”
- While waiting in line, say to your child, “We’re waiting in line for our turn to buy groceries.”
- When it is your turn to check out, let your child stay seated and pass you some light items to put on the conveyor belt.



Kitchen Duty

- Encourage your child to help you follow simple clean up routines after meals.
- Give your child one task to do such as cleaning crumbs under her chair with the hand-held vacuum or sponging off her table placemat.
- Following routines daily will help children learn they have a role to play in the order of events.



Your child will feel secure if schedules and routines at home are similar day after day. While there will always be unexpected events, following a schedule helps children anticipate what comes next and makes them feel more in control.

Two year olds are not ready to share with much enthusiasm. When your child plays with others, have enough high-interest toys for each child to use. If conflict over one toy continues, distract and redirect one child to another toy or activity.

Help your child learn the words to use when she struggles with another child. For example, if one child grabs a toy from another, tell the child who had the toy to “Use your words to tell her to stop. Say, ‘I was playing with that toy.’” Say to the grabbing child, “Use your words to say ‘I want a turn.’” Compliment the children when they use their words to solve conflicts.

Children are more likely to respond to adult guidance and redirection if given a choice, such as, “Would you like to play on the slide or the swing while you wait for the wagon?”

Hitting, biting, and crying are the typical impulsive reactions of toddlers who do not yet have the language or social skills to get what they want. As a parent, you can patiently teach your child to replace these impulses with more positive skills for getting along with others.

Your child will begin to enjoy watching and copying the actions of other children in a small group. However, she will also need time to be alone, perhaps with you safely nearby. Provide some quiet and private spaces and some time for being away from others.

Keep behavior rules simple and say them in a positive way, such as “Use your words” instead of “No hitting.” Save the command, “No!” for times of danger or destruction of property.

Remember that your child is “egocentric” and is only aware of his own immediate needs and wants. Taking turns and following rules are skills that your child will work on for a lifetime!



2
Two
year olds

Self-expression

Express themselves creatively through art and music as they:

- Draw squiggles and dots with large crayons
- Play with play dough
- Finger paint
- Play simple musical instruments
- Sing

Demonstrate imagination through dramatic play as they:

- Engage in pretend play
- Imitate adults' behaviors
- Use one object to represent another

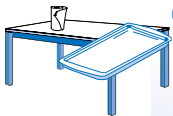
Activities and Strategies for Development



Making Play Dough

- Make play dough with you child using

5 cups flour	4 tablespoons cooking oil
2 cups salt	dry tempera paint or food coloring
water	
- Add the dry tempera to the flour or add food coloring to the finished dough.
- Let your child help mix the dry ingredients together. Next, let him help add the oil and enough water to get the desired consistency.
- Let him knead the dough until smooth. Add the food coloring at the end. You can store it in a covered container.
- Provide cookie cutters and other accessories and let your child play freely.
- Ask him to tell you about his creations.

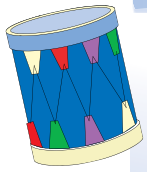


Finger Paint Fun

- Offer your two year old different surfaces to finger paint. Show her how to use washable, non-toxic finger paint on:
 - a plastic tray
 - a cookie sheet
 - a table with a washable surface
 - damp paper
 - aluminum foil
- Have your child wear a paint shirt and have water and paper towels nearby.
- Watch her enjoy making finger paint designs!

Developmental Tip

Some children do not like to put their fingers in paint. Your child may prefer to paint with a sponge or brush instead.



Little Drummer

- Help your child make his own drum.
- Remove all labels from an oatmeal box or other round cardboard container. Let your child decorate it with markers or stickers.
- Play music while he sits on the floor and beats the drum with his hand or a wooden spoon.
- Show him how to hold the drum under one arm and beat it with the other hand or the spoon. March to music and play the drum some more!

Let's Make Believe



- Get a large box to hold dress up clothes and materials that encourage your child's imagination.
- Some things to put in the box might be
 - children's or adults' clothes, including scarves, shawls, and shoes
 - old purses, wallets, and briefcases
 - broken small electronic equipment such as cell phones and remote controls (Be sure to remove any wires, batteries, or other dangerous pieces.)
- Put the box near your child's dolls and stuffed animals.
- Watch your child engage in free expression and pretend play.
- This is also a great activity for your child to do with a friend.



Encourage your child to express himself freely and creatively using art materials. Have a box with items such as crayons, markers, construction paper, fabric scraps, feathers, stickers, and glue sticks for your child to use creatively.

Give your child a large paint brush and let her "paint" the bathtub walls with water.

Pretend play gives children the opportunity to use their imaginations and express creativity. It also provides a safe way for them to express feelings that may be troubling them such as feelings about a new baby or worries about night monsters.

Find opportunities for your child to learn about the way other cultures express themselves through songs. Find recordings of children's music that includes music from other cultures.

To promote creative expression, avoid projects where your child copies something an adult has made.

Enjoy "pretending" with your child. Use silly voices as you play with stuffed animals. Pretend to call Grandma on the phone and give your child a chance to talk. Have a pretend picnic with your child's dolls. Pretend one of the stuffed animals is sick and ask your child to be the "doggy doctor." Most importantly, have fun!

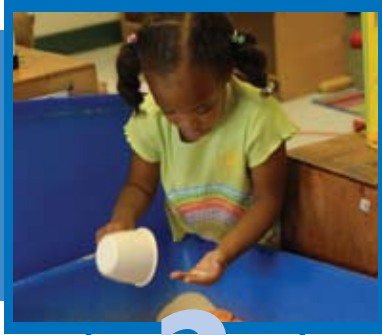
2

Approaches to Learning

Standards:

- Learning approaches for development and school success





2
Two
year olds

Learning approaches for development and school success

Show curiosity in learning new things as they:

- Investigate objects in the environment
- Explore while playing
- Try new sensory experiences
- Participate in unfamiliar activities
- Experiment with materials
- Show interest by asking questions

Show persistence in activities of interest as they:

- Attend to self-selected activities for longer periods of time
- Sustain attention in an adult-initiated activity
- Work toward completing a task
- Stay engaged for a reasonable amount of time
- Ignore distractions

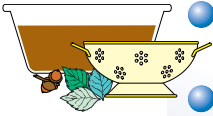
Begin to find novel solutions to problems as they:

- Use their imagination
- Display flexible thinking
- Take the initiative to find alternatives
- Show inventiveness
- Find creative solutions

Learning approaches for
development and
school success

Activities and Strategies for Development

Soil Investigation



- On a sunny day, take small hand shovels, buckets, and strainers out to the yard or park.
- Select a spot that has sandy soil and lots of small rocks, leaves, acorns, and seeds.
- Show your child how to pick up a shovel full of soil and put it in the strainer.
- Shake the strainer and see what is left in the bottom.
- Take out each item and tell your child the name of the item.
- Invite your child to investigate the soil with her own strainer.
- Encourage her to save leaves or stones that she likes, in the bucket.
- Remind your child never to put anything in her mouth that she finds on the ground or in the soil.

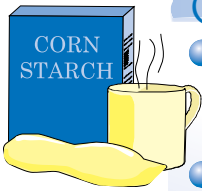
Hooked on Books



- After your child has had a period of active play, let him know that it is your special time for sharing a book.
- Invite your child to select a book that he enjoys.
- Sit together and read each page.
- Help your child ignore distractions such as TV, radio, others talking, and nearby toys.
- Pause at each page and encourage him to follow the story from the pictures.
- Ask questions to focus his attention on the story and show your own interest in it.
- Encourage him to “read” the book all the way to the end. If he loses interest before the end do not force it, but try to read a little more each time.

Special Needs Tip

For a child who is easily distracted, turn off the TV and radio and go somewhere quiet.



Goopy Fingers

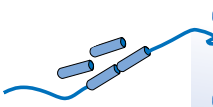
- Provide your child with a new sensory experience with this recipe for “Goop.”
 - 3 cups cornstarch
 - 2 cups warm water
- Cover a table with newspaper before you begin.
- Slowly pour the water into a bowl with the cornstarch. Let your child help mix the ingredients together with her hands. Goop is ready for molding when it changes from lumpy to a smooth and satiny texture.
- Encourage your child to explore the different forms Goop will take.
- For example, when she holds Goop in her hands, it will turn to liquid.
- If your child shapes or molds the Goop, leave it on a paper plate in a dry place to harden.
- See how long this new experience holds your child’s attention!



Imagination Station

- Create a prop box for your child at home to use his imagination for dressing up, pretending, and acting out roles.
- Fill the box with small scarves, purses and briefcases, fabric scraps, dolls, and small household items.
- Once in a while, add a new prop.
- For example, add several short and long pieces of white cotton batting (used to fill pillows), which is available at any craft store.
- Encourage your child to use his imagination for ways the cotton batting can be used.
- For example, suggest he make blankets for the stuffed animals, or a shawl like Grandmother’s or make a wig of long, white hair.
- Your child may imagine ways to use props you cannot even think of!

To the Very End



- Cut a drinking straw into six to eight one-inch-long pieces. Get a shoe lace at least 10 inches long.
- Tie a large knot at one end of the lace.
- Encourage your child to string all the straw pieces onto the lace.
- Compliment her for staying with the task until the very end.



Your two year old is naturally curious and will want to explore everything without concern for safety. Supervise his activities carefully as he tries out new skills and imitates adult behavior.

Your child's daily schedule should allow a lot of time to play with toys and activities that interest her. This is how she will learn to focus on school tasks later.

You know your child and how long he can stick with an activity. Provide games and toys that are challenging but not too difficult. Two year olds will often express their frustration through temper tantrums and other behaviors that let you know they need help.

Play pretend games with your child to stimulate imagination. Take a make-believe trip to the beach and pretend to swim and look underwater for fish. Pretend to be animals at the farm and make the sounds and movements of the chickens, cows, and pigs.

Practice problem solving aloud with your child. For example, on a rainy day say, "Let's have our picnic inside since it is raining," or "We are out of bread so let's make sandwiches with tortillas instead!" This will encourage her to "think outside the box" and find creative solutions to problems.

Your two year old may seem "bossy" and determined to do it "his way" because of a growing sense of independence. If so, try to encourage him to use this persistent attitude to complete puzzles, learn to zip his jacket, and return his toys where they belong.



2

Language and Literacy Development

Standards:

- Understands spoken words (receptive language)
- Expresses thoughts with sounds, words, and gestures (expressive language)
- Foundations for reading
- Foundations for writing





2
Two
year olds

Understands spoken words (receptive language)

Respond to spoken words as they:

- Show understanding of simple vocabulary
- Identify or point to items when they are named

Follow directions and requests as they:

- Complete simple two-step directions such as find markers and paper to draw
- Think through steps to meet a simple request, such as throwing away the napkin and putting the spoon in the bucket when asked to “clean up”

Understands spoken words
(receptive language)

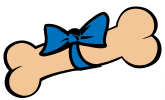
Activities and Strategies for Development

Check This Out!

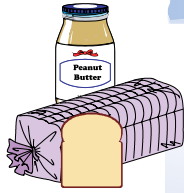


- Play this naming game the next time you are waiting in the check out lane at the grocery store.
- Take two or three items at a time from your cart and place them in the top basket of the cart where your child is sitting. For example, put apples, mangoes, and bananas next to your child. Say, "Show me the bananas." If your child points to the bananas, say, "Good, that's right. Those are the yellow bananas we peel and eat."
- When you return home, ask your child to help you put away the bag of fruit. Say, "Please hand me the apples..., the mangoes....the bananas."

Doggie, Doggie Where's Your Bone?



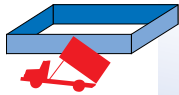
- Use one of your child's stuffed animals, preferably a dog and a pretend doggy "bone" (plastic spoon) that you have hidden ahead of time.
- Tell your child that the "doggie" has hidden his bone for the child to find.
- Give your child the stuffed dog and ask him to look in the different places that you name.
- Say, "Is the bone under the table? Is the bone on top of the table? Is the bone under the rug?"
- See if your child can follow directions and look for the "bone" in these different locations.
- Finish the game by giving the clue that helps your child find the "bone." Ask your child where he found the bone.
- As a variation, let your child hide the "bone" and as you look for it, say "Is the bone under the table? No. Is the bone on top of the table?" until you find it!



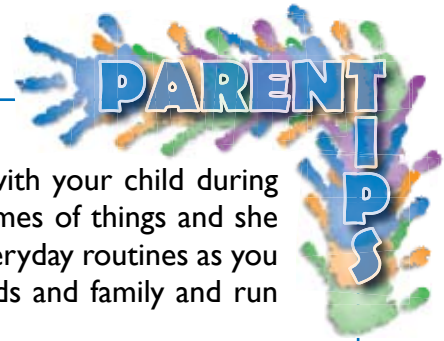
PB&J

- Invite your child to help you make lunch with a two-step recipe.
- Gather bread slices, soft peanut butter, jelly, and a small spreader.
- After washing and drying hands, encourage your child to spread peanut butter on a slice of bread. (Warming the peanut butter in a microwave makes it easier to spread!)
- Next, have her smooth the jelly on top of another piece of bread and press the slices together.
- As a variation, use other two-step recipes such as hummus and cucumber on pita or lunchmeat and cheese on wheat bread.

Two Step Clean Up



- Try to plan several short clean up times throughout the day, rather than one long one.
- Give your child two-step directions for helping to clean up.
- Say, for example, “Pick up the book and put it on the shelf” or “Push your dump trunk to the sandbox and dump out the sand.”
- As you thank your child for helping, you can repeat the two-step directions he followed, “Thank you for picking up the book and putting it on the shelf.”



Talk, talk, talk to your two year old! Whatever you do with your child during the day, talk about it. Your child is eager to learn the names of things and she will learn these words from you. Practice “talk time” in everyday routines as you prepare food, eat meals, do household chores, visit friends and family and run your daily errands.

Keep your directions simple. Two-step directions are just right for two year olds!

Make your requests simple and direct. If you ask your child if he wants to clean up now, chances are the answer will be “no!” Instead of asking a question, try “It’s time to clean up now.”

As you ride in a car or bus, describe the things you see and hear. When stopped at a traffic light, ask your child to point to something on her side of the car. “Do you see the school bus, Natalie? Can you point to it?”

Listening to books, as well as talking with adults, is the way your child will learn the meaning of new words. As you read simple picture books, ask your child to point to things that you name (“Where is the bunny?”) This will tell you what words your child understands. The words your child speaks or signs (“Sool bus”), show her speaking vocabulary. Children understand and can respond to more words than they can say.

In a bilingual household, children will have the benefit of learning different words or pronunciations for the same familiar objects, events, and greetings. Research suggests that learning two languages is easiest in the early years.



2
Two
year olds

Expresses thoughts with sounds, words, and gestures (expressive language)

Communicate without words, using motions and gestures, as they:

- Use physical signals and body language to send a message
- Use facial expressions to send a message

Demonstrate oral language skills, using words, as they:

- Refer to themselves as “me”
- Use some plurals that end in “s” such as “dogs” and “cars”
- Say their first and last name
- Use some describing words such as “pretty flowers” and “soft kitty”
- Use their home language to communicate

Use oral language in social situations as they:

- Ask for help when needed
- Talk back and forth with an adult
- Use some polite language such as “please” and “thank you”
- Tell about some events that happened
- Speak clearly enough for most adults to understand

continued

Use oral language for creative expression as they:

- Imitate adult voices
- Use language in playful ways
- Begin to make up simple stories
- Pretend to talk on a telephone

Ask questions as they:

- Join other children to signal that they are asking to play
- Ask to play with others
- Ask a few simple questions although the questions may wander from topic to topic

Expresses thoughts with sounds, words, and gestures (expressive language)

Activities and Strategies for Development

Follow the (Quiet) Leader



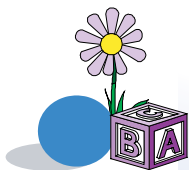
- Go outdoors with your child to play a quiet game of “Follow the Leader.” Tell your child that you are going to show her what you want her to do but you are not going to talk.
- Start the game by leading your child on a short walk. Use motions to invite her to follow you. Take her hand as you begin your walk.
- Stop and do some actions for your child to imitate such as jump up and down, turn around in place, squat and walk like a duck, walk backwards, and wave your arms and “fly” like a bird.
- Switch roles and follow your child’s actions as she leads you this time.

Who Me? Yes, You!



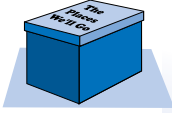
- Teach this playful rhyme to your child to reinforce the pronouns “me” and “you.” Invite others in your household to join in:
*Who took the cookie from the cookie jar?
 Luis took the cookie from the cookie jar
 (Luis says) Who me? (Others) Yes, you!
 (Luis) Couldn't be? (Others) Then, who?
 Mommy took the cookie from the cookie jar?
 (Mommy) Who me? (Others) Yes, you!
 Continue with the others in your household ...*
- Enjoy some cookies along with this rhyme!

What's in the Bag?



- Put some toys into a pillow case. Choose items that are easy for your child to describe.
- For example, a **furry** kitten, a **pretty** flower, a **hard** block, a **scratchy** piece of sandpaper, a **soft** cotton ball, and a **round** rubber ball.
- Invite your child to take out one item at a time from the bag.
- Ask her to tell what she chose. If she says “kitty,” add another word such as “furry” to help extend the description. Have her feel each item to reinforce the meaning of the describing words.
- To practice plurals, put two of some of the items in the bag and point out that “We have two hard blocks” when the second one is chosen.
- A variation of this activity is to let your child look in the bag and “Find the furry kitty” or “Grab the round rubber balls.”

Oh, the Places We Go!



- Get a shoe box and decorate it with your child.
- Gather simple “souvenirs” from places you visit with your child. You might bring home a kids’ menu, a cup, or food container from a restaurant, a pine cone from a playground, a napkin from an ice cream store, a brochure from the zoo, or a drawing your child made at Grandma’s house.
- Use the item to prompt your child to tell you and other family members about the event. You can expect your two year old’s explanations to be brief so be prepared to ask some questions to help him remember.
- Put the items in the shoe box and occasionally take them out and enjoy the memories of your outings with your child.

Puppet Play

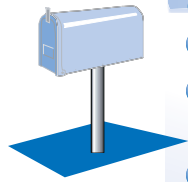


- Make two simple puppets with two paper plates, crayons, construction paper or yarn, scissors (adults only!), glue, and a popsicle stick or straw.
- Help your child make a face with crayons on his paper plate as you make one on yours. Cut the construction paper or yarn to make hair (adults only!) and glue it on. Attach the popsicle stick to the back with glue or tape
- Have your puppet start talking to your child’s puppet. Encourage him to talk back. Use toys such as animals, people, and cars, to help stimulate conversation.
- If your child is enjoying the puppets, invite him to use both of them.
- Put the puppets where your child can play with them later. Listen to see if he begins to make up simple stories.
- Try this activity with your child’s dolls or stuffed animals in place of the puppets.

Mighty Microphone



- Make a simple pretend microphone with an empty toilet paper or paper towel roll.
- Help your child wrap it with a piece of aluminum foil.
- Show your child how to talk into it. Talk in a regular voice and make silly sounds, too.
- Give your child the “microphone” and encourage her to imitate your sounds. Then let her play with it on her own. She can sing with it, too!
- A variation of this activity is to use a paper towel roll to tell secrets! Put the roll to your child’s ear and whisper quietly back and forth.

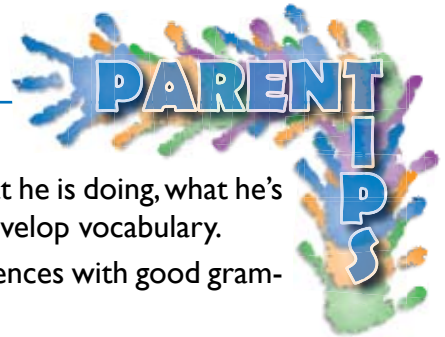


Strolling Stories

- Take your child for a walk outside.
- Begin to tell a story by describing what you see along the way. Occasionally stop, point to an object, and let your child fill in the word.
- For example, “One day Noah and Mommy went for a walk. On the way they saw a _____ (point to a mailbox). Yes, a big, black mailbox. Oh, look, here comes Señora Blanco, with her _____ (point to her dog) Right, that’s Pepe, Señora Blanco’s playful puppy. What’s that over there?”
- As your child identifies an object, add words to describe it in more detail. Encourage him to name as many things as he can.
- When you get home ask him to tell another family member about your walk.

Special Needs Tip

If your child has a visual impairment, describe large objects that are easy to see.



Surround your child with meaningful language. Describe what he is doing, what he’s playing with, what he sees and what he hears. This helps develop vocabulary.

Remember that you are a language role model. Use full sentences with good grammar and pronunciation.

Two year olds are learning the rules of talking. They will make mistakes by saying things like “I took my socks off my foots.” Rather than correcting them, it is best to reflect back what they’ve said, correctly—“I see you took your socks off your feet, Gaby.” In time, they will learn to speak the way adults around them speak.

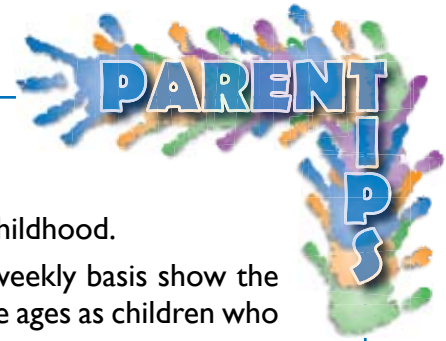
Take time to talk one on one with your child every day. Get down on his level, make eye contact and listen as he tries out new words and puts sentences together.

Be patient if your child gets frustrated when you cannot understand what she is saying. Tell her you are sorry you do not understand and ask her to keep trying and show you what she means.

Young children may push, hit, or bite when they cannot make themselves understood. Help your child learn the words to tell what he wants and what he does not!

Let your child play with old telephones that are no longer working. She can practice language while pretending to make a call.

Avoid asking “why” your child has done something—two year olds cannot analyze their own behavior. Ask him to tell you what happened instead.



Tips about Bilingual Development

Children are capable of learning two or more languages in childhood.

Children who are exposed to two languages on a daily or weekly basis show the same milestones in language development at roughly the same ages as children who are exposed to one language.

Sometimes bilingual children know fewer words in one or both languages in comparison to children who learn one language. This is because their memory must store words in two languages rather than one.

Bilingual children learn words in each language from different people in different situations. For example, they may learn some words from parents at home and others from teachers at school. Therefore, they may know certain words in one language, but not in the other.

Mixing languages in sentences is natural and normal for bilingual children. This is because they may know some words in one language but not the other. They may “borrow” words from one language to complete a sentence in the other. This tends to disappear by the time they enter elementary school.

Knowing the language of their parents and grandparents is important to their cultural identity.



2
Two
year olds

Foundations for reading

Begin to follow what happens in a story as they:

- Point to pictures in a story and name them
- Say a familiar word that is repeated in a story
- Tell what happens next in a familiar story
- Ask an adult to read a favorite story
- Repeat phrases that are familiar in a story
- Listen to a brief story that they find interesting

Show beginning book awareness as they:

- Turn pages of a board book easily
- Look through a picture book as if reading it
- Find a favorite book by looking at the cover
- Enjoy spending time looking at books

continued

Become aware of pictures and symbols in print as they:

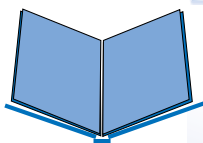
- Name a favorite item, such as a cereal box, based on its logo* or other familiar symbol
- Name a restaurant or other location based on its sign or logo
- Recognize familiar symbols such as a stop sign
- Look at picture messages with an adult such as a picture recipe
- Play with alphabet blocks or plastic letters

Begin to distinguish the different sounds of language as they:

- Sing simple rhyming songs
- Try to repeat a nursery rhyme
- Repeat words to a finger play

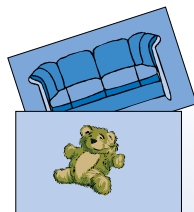
*A logo is a symbol that represents a product or business.

Activities and Strategies for Development



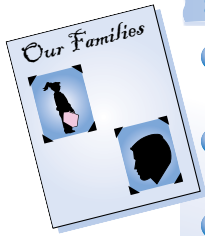
Come Read With me

- Read to your child every day. Make this a special time when just the two of you can share the joys of reading.
- Let your child choose the book to read and follow these pointers to make the most of the reading experience:
 - sit close together so your child can see the pictures easily;
 - ask her to tell you what she thinks the story is about by looking at the pictures;
 - let your child “read” with you and fill in the next word in a familiar or predictable story;
 - make a “mistake” while reading a familiar story and let her correct you (for example, call a character by the wrong name); and
 - be sensitive to your child’s interest level and attention span. Be prepared to read a portion of a new story at first and then try to read more the next time you read it together.



Picture Cards

- Cut out pictures of things that are familiar to your two year old such as a chair, a sofa, a cup, a plate, a toothbrush, stuffed animals, real animals, toys, and vehicles. Look for pictures in magazines, colorful newspaper ads, junk mail, catalogs, and the Internet.
- Glue the pictures onto large index cards or pieces of cardboard—one picture per card.
- Show them to your child and ask him to name each one. Talk about what each item is used for.
- Mix the cards up and place them in front of your child. Describe one item and see if he can point to it and tell you what it is. For example, “This is something we use to brush our teeth.”
- Put the cards in a large envelope. Your child can take them in the car or bus. He can also look through them while you are waiting in a doctor’s office or restaurant.



Family & Friends

- You will need a small inexpensive photo album and some narrow strips of paper for labels.
- Let your child help put photographs of family members and friends doing different activities into the album.
- Ask your child to name the people and describe what they are doing.
- Label each photo with the person's name, where he is, and what he is doing. (For example, write "Uncle Bob—picnic.")
- Periodically add photos and be sure your child is in some of them.
- Your child can look through the album, practice turning pages, and pretend to "read" the labels. In future years, she will enjoy looking back at these memories.



When I Was Two

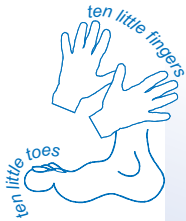
- Purchase an inexpensive scrapbook or tablet at a dollar store. You can also make one with construction paper. Staple the pages together and cover the staples with tape.
- Make a scrapbook of pictures and items that represent things your two year old enjoys. For example, if your child is fascinated by tractors find a picture of one for the scrapbook. If your two year old loves a particular storybook character, put something in the scrapbook that represents it.
- When you go places, collect "treasures" for the scrapbook. A brochure from the zoo, a napkin from a favorite restaurant, a party hat from a special party he attended.
- Make the scrapbook a real life reflection of your child as a two year old. Make it a "story in progress" that you and your child work on together.
- Your child will enjoy looking through his "When I Was Two . . ." book over and over. And he will also amuse himself in years to come when he looks at it again!



Local Logos

- Collect items with a logo of a familiar business or product such as a drinking cup or food wrapper from a restaurant, a paint stirrer from a home improvement store, a sales tag from an item at a retail store, or a box from your child's favorite cereal.
- Show the items one at a time to your child and see if he can tell where the item came from. Point to the logo as you and your child "read" what it says. Talk about the item and where it came from.
- Put the items in a box for your child to take out and "read" to other members of the family.
- A variation of this activity is to ask your child to "read" signs and logos as you ride in a car or bus.

Time to Rhyme



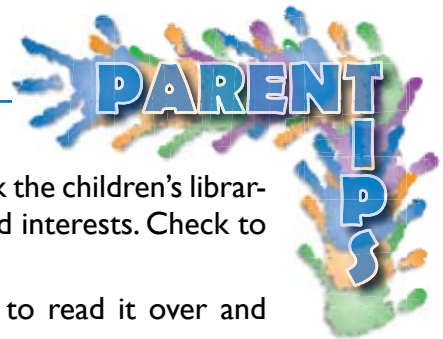
- Teach your child some rhymes and finger plays with repetitive phrases and rhyming words. Here are two:

My Turtle (Show a picture of a real turtle or a stuffed turtle to introduce this finger play.)

*This is my turtle (make a fist and extend thumb)
He lives in a shell (put thumb in fist)
He likes his home very well (pat fist with other hand)
He pokes his head out when he wants to eat (extend thumb)
And pulls it back when he wants to sleep (thumb in fist)*

Ten Little Fingers

*I have ten little fingers and ten little toes (point to body parts throughout)
Two little arms and one little nose
One little mouth and two little ears
Two little eyes for smiles and tears
One little head and two little feet
One little chin, that makes (child's name) complete!*



Visit the public library and find the children's book section. Ask the children's librarian to help you find books appropriate for your child's age and interests. Check to see if there is a "story time" you and your child can attend.

When you find a book that your child enjoys be prepared to read it over and over.

When choosing books for your child, select sturdy ones with large, colorful pictures and a story that is easy to follow. Choose topics that are interesting to your two year old. Include books about people of different cultures and abilities.

Model the joy of reading by sharing books that you enjoy.

Find a prepared cake or cookie mix that comes in a box with pictures to illustrate the recipe. Point to each step on the box as you and your child bake together!

Sing rhyming finger plays and songs.

Alphabet blocks and plastic or cardboard letters are good materials to introduce letter symbols to your two year old. Magnetic letters and a magnetic board or cookie sheet are good, too. Just let your child explore—do not expect him to name the letters yet!

Use books as a resource to find answers to your child's questions.



2
Two
year olds

Foundations for writing

Scribble as they:

- Imitate others who they see writing or drawing
- Make different marks that begin to look like lines or circles
- Explore how to use markers, crayons, chalk, and other writing tools

Draw pictures as they:

- Make circular shapes and lines and give these markings a name such as “my car”
- Tell about the drawings they have created

Dictate messages as they:

- Ask an adult to write their name on their work
- Ask an older child or adult to write simple words for them such as “Happy Birthday”

Express creativity using skills for writing as they:

- Make scribbles and dots in creative materials such as sand

Scribble A'Round



- Use the recipe below to make round crayon disks from old crayon stubs for your toddler to use for scribbling.
- Show your child these fun shaped crayons and invite her to see how they work on the coloring paper.
- Here's the recipe:
 - Ahead of time, collect old crayons and remove the papers.
 - Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and turn it off.
 - Put crayon stubs in old muffin tins, sorted by color, and put the tins in the oven.
 - Remove the tins when the crayon wax is completely melted.
 - Allow the muffin tin to cool.
 - Take a knife to gently lift the edges of the wax disks.

Sidewalk Art



- On a sunny day, take your child outdoors to an area where there is a sidewalk.
- Take a small bucket of jumbo colored chalk and a folding chair.
- While you sit nearby, invite your child to use the chalk on this large “canvas.”
- As you observe, talk with your child about the different marks he makes on the sidewalk.
- Say to him, for example, “You used the chalk to make marks that go round and round.” or “You were making siren sounds. Did your picture make you think of the fire engine we saw this morning?”



The Message Center

- When you receive a phone call, model how you sometimes write down a message using a pad and pen.
- Say to your child, for example, “I need to write down what Granddaddy told me he needs from the store.”
- Give your child a toy telephone or recycled cell phone and a notepad with a washable marker.
- Invite your child to play pretend phone with you.
- Say into the phone, “I’m sorry, Daddy is not here now. Can I take a message?”
- Pretend to write something on the message pad using the marker.
- Invite your child to have a turn to answer the pretend “ring” of the phone and to “write a message” with the marker on the pad.

Carly

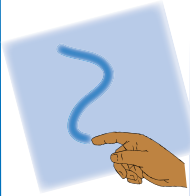
Write My Name for Me

- There are many times throughout the day that you may write your child’s name, such as completing a health form, labeling her school bag, or writing a note to the teacher.
- Every child’s name is special to them and they usually enjoy seeing their name in print.
- When you write your child’s name, point out that you are writing her name.
- Say, “I am writing ‘Carly.’” When finished, point to the word and say, “This says ‘Carly.’”
- Write your child’s name on her pictures if she asks you to.
- Encourage her to look for her name written on her cubby, cot, and paintings from school.
- As your child practices scribbling marks on paper, she may say that she is “writing her name!”



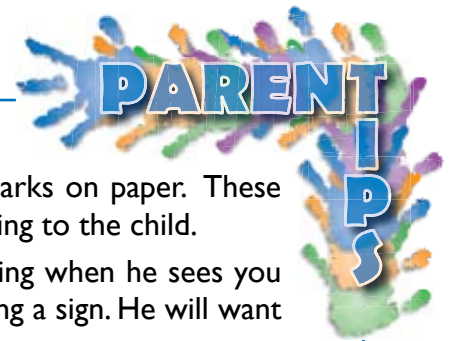
Pictures Tell a Story

- Keep at least two samples of your child’s scribbling from either home or school.
- Display both samples on the refrigerator or wall at his eye level.
- Ask him excitedly about the first sample, “Tell me about this.”
- Your child may say that his drawing is a picture of something.
- He may also point to his circular and line markings and say, “This says, ‘For Mommy.’”
- These comments let you know that your child is learning to connect symbols with meaning.



Sand Writing

- Fill a dishpan or large baking pan with damp sand.
- Invite your two year old to explore the sand with her hands and fingers.
- She can pat it down, build up mounds, or dig in with her fingers.
- Model how to use your index finger to make circles and lines that show on the top of the damp sand.
- Show her that she can also make the “writing” disappear when she rubs her hand across the surface of the sand!



Two year olds will begin to use writing tools to make simple marks on paper. These marks may not look like “something” to the adult, but have meaning to the child.

You can help your child understand the many purposes for writing when he sees you making a shopping list, writing a letter, filling out a form, or painting a sign. He will want to imitate what you do!

Jumbo crayons are easy to grasp and may be less messy than markers and paints, but each type of drawing tool gives your child a different fine motor and sensory experience.

The fine motor skills of most toddlers are limited. They will only enjoy writing and drawing activities for a brief time. Balance these activities with lots of opportunities for active play, such as running, sliding, and climbing.

Begin a collection of your child’s “writing.” Get a special box or notebook for the writing samples. Write the date and a brief description of what your child “wrote.” As your child gets older you will see how her scribbles turn into letter shapes, letters, words, and sentences! You and your child will enjoy sharing this as she grows.

2

Cognitive Development

Standards:

- Foundations for math
- Foundations for science
- Foundations for social studies





2
Two
year olds

Foundations for math

Begin to identify basic shapes as they:

- Fit shapes into a shape box
- Put a circle, square, and triangle into a shape puzzle
- Find a circle, square, or triangle that is the same as one they are shown

Begin to sort and match objects as they:

- Find matching objects such as shoes or socks
- Sort similar objects that are “big” and “little” such as big cars and little cars, big blocks and little blocks
- Sort round objects of one color from square objects of the same color
- Match objects of the same color and shape

Build beginning number concepts as they:

- Repeat number words after an adult
- Sing songs with counting words
- Choose “just one” when asked
- Begin to use number words
- Notice when someone has “more” than another
- Begin to use one-to-one correspondence by matching objects that go together such as a blanket for each doll

continued...

Build beginning measurement concepts
as they:

- Use a smaller cup to fill a larger one
- Begin to notice when it is “time” to do something such as go to sleep when it is dark
- Stack and nest objects by size
- Begin to compare objects by size

Begin to solve simple problems using logical reasoning and mathematical thinking
as they:

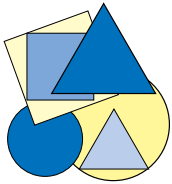
- Complete a puzzle with a few connecting pieces
- Notice when something is missing from a group of familiar items
- Look for hidden objects

Explore concepts related to patterning
as they:

- Try to copy a simple pattern of two repeating objects such as block, car, block, car, block, car
- Imitate a simple physical pattern begun by an adult such as clap hands—pat head, clap hands—pat head, clap hands—pat head

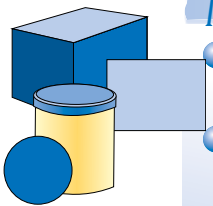
Think creatively using logic and mathematical thinking
as they:

- Use one object to represent another
- Experiment with the way objects balance and fit together
- Experiment with different ways to use objects



Shape Match

- Cut out four large circles, four large squares and four large triangles from the same piece of colored poster board.
- Glue one of each shape side by side onto a long piece of a different color cardboard leaving room between each one.
- Spread out the remaining shapes and show your child how to put each one onto its matching shape. Name and describe each shape.
- If the names of the shapes are new for your child, start with circles and squares only.



More Shape Matching

- Gather three-dimensional circles, squares, and triangles, such as plastic shapes from a shape sorter or blocks.
- Trace each shape to create an outline of the exact shape on a piece of cardboard or construction paper covered with clear contact paper.
- Have your child match the real shapes to the pictures of the shapes.
- Name and describe each shape as the children match them.

Special Needs Tip

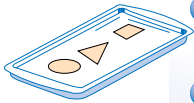
Glue sandpaper onto the shape outlines for a child with vision difficulties.

Homemade Lotto



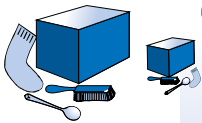
- Cut out pictures of objects from catalogs, magazines, color newspaper advertisements, or the Internet. Look for animals, toys, faces, and other things that are familiar and appealing to your child. You will need two exact copies of each picture.
- Make “lotto boards” by dividing strips of poster board into three or four sections and gluing a different picture in each section. Make several boards. Each board can have a “theme” such as animals, children’s faces, and toys.
- Make “lotto cards” by gluing the duplicate pictures onto smaller pieces of cardboard.
- Encourage your child to match the lotto card to the same picture on the lotto board.

Scrumptious Shapes



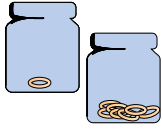
- Make sugar cookie dough using your favorite recipe or purchase some prepared dough from the grocery store.
- Break off chunks of the dough and help your child flatten them onto a cookie sheet.
- Use the edge of a plastic cup or a cookie cutter to cut out round shapes. Use the edge of a small square container or a cookie cutter to make squares. You can cut a square shape on the diagonal to make triangle shapes too!
- Let your child place chocolate chips or raisins around the edges of the cookies as you talk about their shapes.
- Bake and enjoy!

Big and Little



- Gather “big” and “little” sets of the same items and put them in a box. For example, collect a big comb and a doll size comb, an adult size sock and a baby’s sock, a large cooking spoon and a dessert spoon, and a big block and a small one.
- Have your child pull out one item from the box and then see if he can find its big or little match. For example, “Ramón, you found the big comb, can you find the little one?” Put the big items in one pile and the little ones in another.
- Use the words “big” and “little” as you help your child find the matching items and sort them.

Cereal Shake



- You will need two small plastic containers with lids.
- Help your child put “one” piece of her favorite cereal in one container and “many” pieces in the other.
- Have your child shake the container with “one” and the container with “many” and listen to the different sounds they make.
- Shake a container behind your child’s back and see if she can guess whether there is “one” or “many” in the shaker.
- Let your child choose which container she would like to open first to eat for snack!

Finger Play Fun



- Do finger plays and sing songs with your child that introduce counting words. Here are two simple ones:

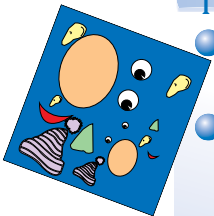
Here is the Bee Hive

- “Here is the bee hive, (hold out one hand)
- Where are the bees? (make a fist)
- Hiding out where nobody sees - (put fist behind your back)
- They are coming out now, (bring fist back around)
- They are all alive: (open fist and wiggle fingers)
- One, two, three, four, five” (put up one finger at a time)

Five Little Ducks

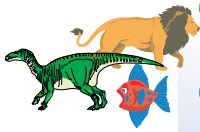
- “Five little ducks went out to play, (hold up hand with 5 fingers extended)
- Over the hill and far away, (put hand behind your back)
- The mother duck said, ‘Quack, quack, quack’
- And four little ducks came waddling back.” (show hand with 4 fingers extended)
- Continue with 3, 2, and 1 little duck.

Funny Faces



- Cut out a large and a small circle from the same color construction paper or use a large and small paper plate.
- Cut out a set of large eyes and a set of small eyes, a large and small nose, a large and small mouth, and a large and small hat. Each set should be made from the same color construction paper so the only difference between the large and small features is the size.
- Help your child decide which pieces go with the “bigger” face and which ones go with the “smaller” one.
- Help your child glue the pieces onto each circle to make a big and little funny face.

Who's Hiding?

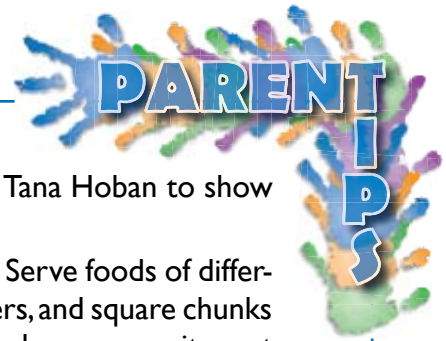


- Play a “Who’s hiding?” game with your child by placing three of his stuffed animals or toys between you—for example, a lion, a dinosaur, and a fish.
- Ask your child to close his eyes or turn his head as you hide one of the animals behind your back.
- Tell him to look back and guess “Who’s hiding?” or “Which one is gone?”
- If he enjoys the game, repeat several times.
- Add a fourth animal or toy when you think he’s ready for a challenge!

“Mommy and Me” Handprint Patterns



- You will need large pieces of construction paper, finger paint, and clear contact paper.
- Put red and blue finger paint in two separate shallow bowls.
- Put your hand in the red paint and make your handprint on the paper. Help your child make a blue handprint next to yours.
- Repeat the pattern by making prints of “Mommy’s hand, Lindsey’s hand, Mommy’s hand, Lindsey’s hand” to cover the paper.
- Write the date on the back of the paper and cover both sides with clear contact paper. This will be a keepsake to enjoy in the future.
- If your child enjoys the activity, make more of these to use as placemats.



Look at pictures in a book such as *Shapes, Shapes, Shapes* by Tana Hoban to show the children different objects with different shapes.

Meal times are great times to introduce early math concepts. Serve foods of different shapes such as sandwiches cut into triangles, round crackers, and square chunks of cheese. Introduce the concept of “just one” as your child chooses one item at a time from a serving tray.

Read books such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle or *One Hungry Monster* by Susan Heyboer O’Keefe to begin to introduce number words and counting.

Play a simple patterning game while you are waiting to be served in a restaurant or in the doctor’s office. Repeat two motions in sequence such as clapping your hands and patting your head. Encourage your child to do the same. Change the pattern and play some more!

Use size and shape words throughout the day. Point out the size and shape of different toys, cookie cutters, food items at the grocery store, and other familiar objects.

Use counting words throughout the day. Count things such as the number of people at the table, steps into your apartment, and children at the playground.

Blocks are a great learning toy—look for them at garage sales. Your two year old may begin to build structures in addition to stacking.

Tubs with water or sand and measuring cups and spoons are excellent for children to explore measurement concepts.

Give your child opportunities to experiment with different materials. Give her different size empty boxes and containers and watch her explore!

Ask questions that encourage your child to think creatively. For example, “We do not have an engine for our train—what can we use?”



2
Two
year olds

Foundations for science

Actively explore the environment
as they:

- Use their senses to discover and examine objects
- Experiment with different objects to see how they relate to one another
- Observe cause and effect
- Observe events in nature

Use language to describe things in the environment as they:

- Describe or point at characteristics of objects
- Identify body parts
- Describe how different objects relate to one another
- Describe cause and effect relationships
- Describe events in nature

Ask questions about the environment
as they:

- Wonder about unfamiliar objects and events

Use tools to experiment as they:

- Play with simple tools

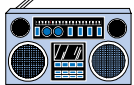


I Spy With My Little Eye

- Sit in a comfortable place with your child where you can clearly see some of her toys.
- Play “I Spy with My Little Eye” and describe one of the toys—such as “I spy with my little eye a car with a little man in it. It’s on the floor next to some blocks. Do you see it, too, Madeline?” If she does, let her go and bring it to you.
- Repeat with a few more toys that are easy to see and find.
- See if your child can name a toy for you to find.

Special Needs Tips

For a visually impaired child, place two toys in front of her, describe one, and ask her to feel each of them and choose the one you described. A child with limited mobility can point to the object and you can get it for her.



Special Sounds

- Make a recording of common sounds that your child would recognize such as a telephone ringing, your doorbell, a toilet flushing, a dog barking, a car horn beeping, a vacuum cleaner, and familiar voices.
- Play the recording, stopping after each sound to talk about what it is.
- Ask your child to show you the object or tell you the person that made that sound.

Yummy Morning Muffins



- Baking is a great way to introduce your child to measurement and the use of simple tools. He will also observe how the ingredients change color and texture after baking. Here's an easy, healthy muffin recipe—of course, you will need to do most of the work, but let your child be your helper!

3 eggs	1 cup whole wheat flour
½ cup sugar	1 cup all-purpose flour
½ cup vegetable oil	1 tablespoon baking powder
1 cup grated apples	¼ teaspoon salt
1 cup grated carrots	1 teaspoon cinnamon

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Grease or line a muffin tin with paper liners. Let your child help blend the eggs, sugar, and oil with a hand beater or a whisk. Let him dump in the grated apples and carrots as you stir. In a separate bowl, let your child help sift the flours, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon. Add this to the apple mixture and stir until just combined. Spoon the batter into 12 muffin tins and bake for 25 minutes or until golden brown.

- Enjoy the smell while the muffins are baking and then enjoy eating them for breakfast or snack.

The Train that Could

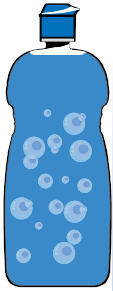


- Gather a few medium-sized cardboard boxes, punch a hole near the top of the shorter sides of the boxes and tie pieces of yarn or heavy string through them.
- Tie the boxes together. Leave the string on one box long enough for your child to hold.
- Explain to her that you are making a train and that she can be the engine that pulls the load.
- See what your child chooses to put in the “box cars” as she pulls her train from room to room.
- In addition to playing with the train, you and your child can use it at clean up time to gather toys and transport them back where they belong. The train is a “simple tool” to help make this job easier!
- A variation of this activity is to tie laundry baskets together, in place of the boxes, to make the train.



Bunches of Band-aids

- Use one of your child's dolls to teach about body parts.
- Pretend that the doll has a scrape on its forehead, elbow, knee, cheek, tummy, back, hand, or foot.
- Let your child help put a bandaid on each part as you name it. Encourage him to say the name of each body part.
- Have plenty of band-aids for this activity so your child can put some on himself too!



Making Waves

- Get a medium-sized clear plastic bottle such as one from shampoo or a one liter soft drink. Remove all labels.
- Fill the bottle about 1/3 of the way with water and add some food coloring.
- Fill the bottle the rest of the way with light colored or clear oil (such as mineral or baby oil).
- Glue the lid on securely or use colorful duct tape to keep the lid on tight.
- Encourage your child to shake and move the bottle gently and watch the waves and the tiny bubbles that form. Help her describe what she sees as she moves the bottle different ways.



Glorious Gardening

- Check with your local nursery to see what types of fruit or vegetable plants grow easily in your area.
- You will need one or two small plants, some potting soil, a container, and a few safe gardening tools.
- Outdoors, let your child help dump the soil into the container; use the tools to prepare the soil for planting, and gently place the plants in the soil. If you have space for a garden, let your child help place the plants into the ground instead of the container.
- Use an empty milk jug for watering.
- Go outside everyday to check the plants and water when necessary.
- Help your child describe the changes he sees as the plants grow, flower, and bear fruit. Encourage him to touch them gently. Be sure to taste them when they are ready to eat!



Give your two year old lots of opportunities to *safely* look at, listen to, smell, touch and taste new things. Supervise her carefully as she explores.

Throughout the day, frequently ask your child to describe what she sees and hears.

Describe things that your child sees, hears, feels, tastes, and smells to teach about the world around him.

Read a book such as *From Head to Toe* by Eric Carle to learn about many different body parts. (Note: This book is also available in Spanish: *De La Cabeza a Los Pies*.)

Make collections of objects from nature such as plants (check to be sure they're not poisonous and do not cause rashes!), rocks, leaves, shells, birds' nests, flowers, and pine cones. Put them in a box for your child to explore.

Practice identifying different smells during mealtimes.

Water play can introduce your child to concepts of measurement and cause and effect. Put a small amount of water in a dishpan or baking pan with different objects for her to explore such as funnels, turkey basters, cups, and strainers. You can put these in the bathtub, too!

Let your child help you put water in an ice cube tray and then in the freezer. Help your child describe what happens when you take the tray out a few hours later. Do the reverse—put an ice cube in a bowl and let him watch as it melts into water.

Recycle paper and other products whenever you can. Model ways to re-use items to avoid being wasteful. Talk with your child about keeping the earth clean and healthy.

Children are curious about living creatures. They enjoy watching “bugs,” snails, caterpillars, worms, butterflies, birds, and squirrels. Encourage her questions and help her describe what she sees.

Let your child help take care of the family pet.

Let your child help care for houseplants (*be sure the plants are not harmful if eaten and do not cause rashes if touched*).

Foundations for social studies



2
Two
year olds

Recognize family roles and personal relationships as they:

- Respond to their own family members
- Express positive feelings for belonging to the family
- Show attachment to caregivers
- Identify family members by their pictures
- Use names of family roles such as “sister”

Recognize obvious individual preferences and differences as they:

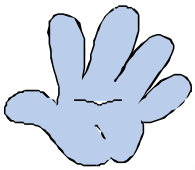
- Observe differences in physical characteristics such as glasses or a wheelchair
- Show curiosity in new things such as food and music
- Compare themselves to others such as “I have braids; she has a ponytail.”

Recognize community roles and relationships as they:

- Dress up with community worker props
- Act out the roles of a community worker
- Follow simple rules for community living such as keeping their room clean

Explore concepts of place and location as they:

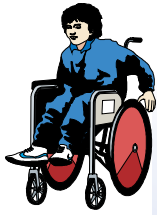
- Identify location words, such as “under” and “on top”
- Look for an object in a different room
- Follow a familiar route
- Retrace steps to a familiar location



Family Cut Outs

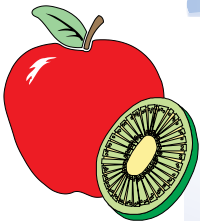
- Teach your child this simple finger play that names each member of your unique family.
- Sit with your child facing you and hold up one hand with thumb and fingers outstretched.
- Have your child copy you.
- Tell your child, “We’re going to sing a song about our family!”
- Say, “I’ll sing and you sing like me. We’ll move our fingers too.”
- Start with your thumb and wiggle it as you sing the first verse, for example:
Hello Grandma, hello Grandma,
How are you? How are you?
How are you today, Grandma?
How are you today, Grandma?
I love you, I love you! (wrap your arms around your body and give a hug)
(Sing to the tune of “Where is Thumbkin?”)
- Next, wiggle your pointing finger and name another family member, for example:
Hello Sister Skyler, Hello Sister Skyler,
How are you, How are you?
How are you today, Skyler?
How are you today, Skyler?
I love you, I love you!
- Continue with a verse for each member in the family, using as many fingers on both hands as needed!

A Special Friend



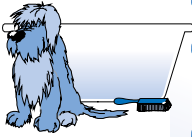
- Help your child understand disabilities, his own or others, when you look through a book such as *Danny and the Merry-Go-Round* by Nan Holcomb.
- Danny, who has cerebral palsy, visits the park with his mother and watches other children playing on a playground. He makes friends with a young girl after his mother explains cerebral palsy to her and points out that it is not contagious.
- With your two year old, do not read the words on every page. Use the book to point to the pictures, answer your child's questions, and share simple comments about Danny and his wheel chair.
- Explain that the wheel chair helps Danny move because he cannot use his legs to walk or run.
- Point out the things that Danny has in common with the other children, for example they all like to go to the park.
- Show that Danny has a friend and they can talk and play together.
- Tell your child that we are all different and special friends.

Favorite Fruit



- Select three different kinds of fruit for snack time such as a banana, an apple, and a kiwi.
- Place one bite-size sample of the first fruit on your child's napkin and one on your own napkin.
- Invite your child to sample the fruit while you eat yours.
- Place another type of fruit on both of your napkins and ask your child which he likes best.
- Tell your child which one you like best.
- Invite him to sample the third type of fruit while you eat a piece also.
- Ask your child to point to or say which fruit he likes best.
- Hold up that fruit and say for example, "You like the kiwi best and I like the apple best."
- Say to your child, "We chose our favorite fruit—the one we liked the best. It is okay for everyone to like something different."

Doggy Sitter



- Visit a local pet store or pet adoption center.
- Point out to your child that someone has the job of taking care of the doggies, feeding them, brushing their fur, and playing with them.
- When you return home, set up a spot for your child to pretend she is a doggy sitter.
- Put out one of your child's stuffed dog toys along with a small plastic bowl, an old brush, a dog leash or a three-foot piece of clothesline, a small ball, and a plastic dishpan.
- Invite your child to pretend she is "feeding" a doggy from the small plastic bowl.
- She can "give the doggy a bath" in the plastic dishpan.
- Your child can "brush or groom" the doggy with old brushes.
- A toy doggy can be "walked" on the leash and "have playtime" chasing the small ball!
- Tell your child that caring for pets is a very important job!

Now We Can Go

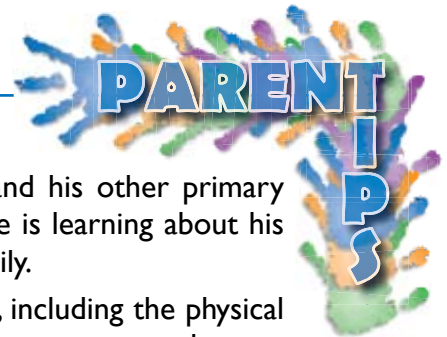


- Pick a time before a trip to read the book *Now We Can Go* by Ann Jonas.
- This book is about a toddler who refuses to leave for a family trip until her favorite toys are taken from her toy box and placed in her traveling bag.
- After the story, invite your child to play a "find and pack" game.
- Put a suitcase or diaper bag in the middle of the floor.
- Ask your child, "Can you find your slippers? We'll pack them in the suit case."
- Follow your child as he looks for the slippers and ask, "Are they under the bed? Are they inside the closet?"
- When the slippers are found, have your child bring them to the suitcase and put them inside.
- Repeat with a few other items including your child's favorite book or toy.
- Emphasize the words that describe where the item might be found such as under, on top, and inside.
- When the suitcase is full, invite your child to help you zip the suitcase.
- Thank your child for helping you get ready to go!



Around the Town

- Sit on the floor with some toy vehicles.
- Say to your child, “I’m going to drive this bus around the town,” and pretend to drive your toy vehicle on the floor.
- Invite your child to take her own vehicle and drive around.
- Say, “I’m driving this bus to the library to read some books. Oh, look, there is the McDonald’s. Now I’m passing the big school.”
- Talk about several familiar places that you travel to by bus or car with your child such as the grocery store or a nearby relative’s home.
- Encourage your child to pretend she is driving the bus or car and tell you where she is going around the town.
- A variation of this activity is to let your child sit in a laundry basket or cardboard box and pretend to be driving a bus around town, a boat on a lake, or a train on the tracks!



Your toddler has developed a strong attachment to you and his other primary caretakers. His family is his most important social group. He is learning about his connection to others and the special place he has in the family.

Toddlers are curious about everything in their environment, including the physical differences among people. They will notice and sometimes point to a person they see with a cane or in a wheel chair. They will touch another child’s hair that is different from theirs. Parents and teachers can help young children feel comfortable about differences with comments such as, “You use your legs to walk. His legs don’t work so he uses the wheels on his wheel chair to get where he wants to go.” Or, “Your skin is pink like mine. Your friend Danielle has brown skin like her Mommy’s.”

The public library is a good source for multicultural books that reflect positive images of different races, cultural groups, and people with disabilities.

Books and learning activities for young boys and girls should go beyond the traditional stereotypes such as boys play with blocks and girls play with dolls. Boys also need to develop nurturing, social, and communication skills, and girls will benefit from play with construction toys that support visual-spatial skills.

Look for books by Richard Scarry to read about all types of community helpers.

The everyday “field trips” you take with your child build her understanding of the world around her. Outdoor play, walks to the park, bus rides, and movement games all provide wonderful opportunities for your child to explore concepts of place (where am I?), space (what’s around me?) and location (how did I get here?).