

RESOURCES FROM SAVE THE CHILDREN

# JUNE ACTIVITY CALENDAR: PRENATAL TO AGE 2



## Monday

## Tuesday

## Wednesday

## Thursday

## Friday

### WEEK 1

**Hide the toy.** Hide a stuffed bear, leaving some showing. Search with your child. When you “find” something that isn’t it, say, “This isn’t it, it’s my shoe! Where should we look next?” Continue until it’s “found.”

**Copy me!** Encourage imitation. Say, “Copy me!” and do simple actions for your child to repeat, like clapping, blowing raspberries, etc. Imitate their new actions, and introduce some tricky moves, too.

**Mirror, mirror.** Mirrors provide amazing opportunities for exploring, pointing, imitating and naming. Point to and name eyes, nose, cheeks, etc. Make/copy silly faces. Name expressions. Ask questions, “Who’s that?”

**Find the target.** Grab a small broom, a floaty or something similar, and encourage your child to push small toys — ball, cars, etc. — into the target.

**Count Everything!** Count and name body parts during diapering, bathing and dressing. Count toys, food, household items, (cereal, sips, bites, plates, books). What else can you name and count?

### WEEK 2

**Words to actions.** Using a plastic bowl and several small objects, ask your child, “Put the block in the bowl.” Repeat and demonstrate. This game helps your child connect words and actions.

**Bedtime stories!** At bedtime, tell stories about your child’s day — what they did, saw, felt, etc. This helps them remember their experiences and understand what happened.

**Scrubbing clean.** Pour water in a shallow container. Add scoops, bubbles, a brush and toy bricks. Stay close. Talk about what they’re doing as they wash, pour and scrub their toys!

**Silly bear!** Hide a stuffed animal inside a large box. Sing, “Silly bear, silly bear, hiding in a box, one, two three, out he hops.” Invite your child to hop out when you sing their name.

**Animal sounds.** Read books about baby animals and make their sounds. Later pretend you are the animal’s parent and your child is the baby animal. Call each other with animal sounds.

### WEEK 3

**Hide and surprise!** While folding laundry, make a tunnel with a sheet and chairs for your little explorer to crawl into. When hidden, call them. Greet them with surprise when they find you!

**Copy me.** Sing songs with hand motions like “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” and “Patty Cake” to your child. Before long, they will start copying your gestures. Soon, they’ll even start singing along!

**Making shadows.** On a sunny day, go outside and show your child their shadow. Try making shadows dance, jump, wave, crouch, run. Trace their shadow with chalk. Color in the “shadow shape.”

**Following directions.** Help your child learn to listen and follow simple directions, such as “Show me grandma,” “Wash your tummy,” or “Hold your diaper!” When your child responds, let them know you noticed.

**Shape walk!** Take a shape walk and describe shapes you see. Point out shapes you see: crackers that are square, soup can lids that are round, spoons that are oval, etc.

### WEEK 4

**Follow the leader.** Play “Follow the Leader” using simple actions like tap table, clap, put on hat. Describe what you’re doing. Sprinkle old actions in with new ones like hop, jump, flap, sway. Take turns.

**Read outside!** There’s nothing like reading a story outside with the breeze in your hair. Spread a blanket under a shady tree and share a few of your little one’s favorite books.

**Choosing objects.** Encourage your child to retrieve interesting objects from a muffin tin. Name and describe their choice. This activity builds skills needed for writing. As they grow, offer tongs which develop scissor skills.

**Peek-a-boo!** Put an object with an interesting texture — pompom, sandpaper, foil — into a box. Say “peek-a-boo” and let your child grab one. Name and describe how it feels and looks. Try several items.

**Name that noise.** Set out 3 things that make noise (ex. squeak toy, rattle, spoon). Cover and make a noise with one. Remove cover. Ask, “What made that noise?” Games like this build memory skills.

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**Your baby's brain is growing so quickly!** Our friends at Vroom share more activities and the science behind them.

**WEEK 1 DRESSING STEPS:** Dressing your child? Describe each step of the process. For example, "First we put your leg in the pants. Then we put in the other leg. Now we pull the pants up!" Pause after each step so they can move their legs, stand up to help you or make a comment.

**Brainy Background:** Your step-by-step description invites your child to focus on the details of getting dressed. By pausing, you're giving them practice in waiting and controlling their behavior as they begin to learn to get themselves dressed. And talking with them is always a brain building moment! These are important life skills.

**WEEK 2 THE POWER OF POINTING:** When your child points at something, talk back and forth about what they notice like, "You see the big truck!" Then you can take a turn to point something out to them and say what you see. Do they turn to look at it? Do they point or name the object?

**Brainy Background:** Your child learns to communicate when you respond to their movements and sounds and encourage them to reply. You support their desire to learn more about the world and motivate them to continue to be curious and explore. These are essential qualities for learning.

**WEEK 3 BYE-BYE BUBBLES!** While cleaning up, give your child a soapy sponge and a large container with a little water so they can help wash safe kitchen items. Scrub up lots of bubbles together. When you're ready say, "Bye-bye bubbles!" and show them how to rinse the bubbles away. Encourage them to try it.

**Brainy Background:** You're helping your child make connections between cause and effect as they explore the water and bubbles. This kind of experimenting will help them with learning math and science later on. When you include them in daily chores, you help them feel confident and independent.

**WEEK 4 BAT IT:** Hold a small safe toy over your child's head as they lie on their back wearing a clean diaper. Make a soft noise and jiggle the toy. Do they bat at it with their hands? Try to kick it? Answer their actions with another sound and gentle jiggle.

**Brainy Background:** As you play this fun game with your child, they're learning to pay attention and to pursue a goal: hitting the toy with their hands or feet. It's amazing to think a baby so young is already developing thinking skills they will use the rest of their life.



## PARENT AND CAREGIVER CORNER

**For pregnant parents:** Because of hormones and stressors, the fluctuation of emotions and feelings are very normal and typical for any expecting parent. But it's important to keep in mind that bringing a level of calm to those emotions and feelings will help lower stress, which will positively affect your body and help lower blood pressure. When you feel upset, stressed or anxious, choose one method of self-care to calm yourself. Self-care is not a luxury, but rather something you can do every day to help take care of yourself and focus on you. For example, consider getting more sleep, drinking more water, relaxing outside, talking to a loved one, listening to music...the list can go on and on. It's important for you to find activities you enjoy and that will help you partake in healthy, constructive self-care techniques.

**For parents with very young children:** No matter the age of our children, we will continue to have ups and downs in our own emotions and feelings! All of it is normal, and again, practicing healthy self-care will help you regain a sense of control and calm. As noted above, self-care is not a luxury but rather techniques you do every day to care for your body, mind and spirit. Whether it's for 5 minutes or for 5 hours, it is to be done for you only!

### **FAMILY ACTIVITY: RELAXATION FUN TIME!**

Choose an activity that will allow everyone to relax, play and laugh! It could be playing with your pets, sitting outside in the sunshine, playing or listening to music, dancing, eating fun snacks together, going to a waterfront, playing a sport together...the list goes on! Enjoy each other's company, and again, remember to laugh. We're all in this together!

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