

WEEKLY LEARNING ACTIVITIES: EARLY CHILDHOOD



Monday

Helping with food.

Kids can tear, cut, stack, assemble, chop, stir, mash, grate, roll, spread, sprinkle, measure and pour at snack and meal time! Ask them to describe the taste of their food. Is it refreshing? Sweet? Sour? Spicy?

Practice sorting. Using 2 different items, for example carrots/celery, apple/orange, rocks/sticks, socks/pants, etc. sort into 2 different piles. Ask your child questions: "Which pile does this go in?" "Does this look the same or different?" "What color is this?"

Tuesday

What's this? Collect 2 or 3 common household objects for opening and closing in a box or basket – for example, a small purse, box or tin, makeup compact, etc. Name and talk about the uses of the objects as your child practices opening and closing them.

Empty cereal boxes? Turn them into puzzles! Create 2-3 pieces for toddlers. Let your preschooler help make his or her own puzzles by cutting the box into 10-15 pieces.

Siblings? Encourage them to share their puzzles.

Wednesday

You're doing what?! When you are watching your baby play, talk to them about what they are doing. "You are banging toys together!" "You are trying to blow a kiss!"

Hide things for your child to find. For example, put a ball in a kitchen cupboard, a stuffed animal in your child's bed, a hairbrush in the shoe pile. Talk as you search with your baby/toddler or give your preschooler clues. Take turns hiding, finding and giving clues. Wonder aloud where things might be.

Thursday

What comes next!

Kids love predictable rhymes, finger plays and activities, such as Giddy-Whoa, Pat-a-Cake, Ring Around the Rosie, that end in surprise. They help kids develop memory skills and practice anticipating a surprise when they are excited.

Turn chores into fun activities. Let your child help you with everyday chores including vacuuming, sweeping, dusting and folding clothes. Make up and sing a song about what you are doing.

Friday

How am I feeling?

Act out expressions with your child in front of a mirror. Demonstrate happy face, sad face, mad face, excited face, proud face, surprised face and more! Try to point out these faces when you look at books with your child.

Be a shape detective. Draw a shape on a piece of paper, point out what makes it that shape – for example, "A square has 4 straight sides and 4 corners." Let your child lead you around the house identifying objects with that shape.



PARENT AND CAREGIVER CORNER

When experiencing challenging times, we often feel frustrated and resentful. Your child may feel this way, too, and show sign of being upset and angry to not be able to see friends, hang out in other settings or even go to child care or preschool! We can negatively turn on our family members and others, leading us down a path of believing that we are suffering more than others, and that it's unfair.

One way to combat such feelings is to look to empathy and to teach our kids empathy, even in their very first years. Hasbro's special [BE FEARLESS BE KIND](#) website highlights [an article](#) on empathy from the Making Caring Common project at Harvard: "Empathy begins with the capacity to take another perspective, to walk in another's shoes... Empathy includes valuing other perspectives and people. It's about perspective-taking and compassion."

As parents and caregivers, we show empathy to our children, which leads to building secure, trusting relationships. Other ways to teach empathy to your children is to explicitly demonstrate it to others, model self-care and have them show acts of kindness and compassion to others.

We never know what another person may be going through at this unprecedented time – whether it's being laid off a job, the sudden loss of a loved one or struggling with anxiety and stress. May our own acts of empathy support them and may we teach our children to be people who are fearless and kind.

MORE EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING ACTIVITIES

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BOUNCING BABY

Does your baby love to bounce when you hold them on your lap? Bounce them up and down. Try going fast and slow, as well as stopping and starting. How do they respond? Follow their lead and respond to their sounds and movements. Continue doing what they like best. Suggested age: 0-12 months.

Brainy Background

Giving your baby experiences with different ways of moving helps them learn how their body works and will help develop self-control in the future. By following their lead – watching if they smile or turn away – you’re helping them learn to communicate with you.

HOW MANY WAYS?

Choose an object in your home, like a used paper towel roll, and challenge your child to see how many different ways they can use it. It can be a telescope, a tunnel for something small, or a musical instrument like a horn. What other items can they find around the house to explore? Take turns! Suggested age: 2-5 years.

Brainy Background

Thinking of lots of new ways to use an object challenges your child’s imagination. This calls on flexible and creative thinking, important skills in life and in school.

OUTSIDE ADVENTURES

Going out? Grab a container and see what you and your child find that’s safe to pick up. Do you see some rocks to bring home and decorate? Do you see some leaves to glue into a collage? Do you see a bug to watch before you let it go? Continue watching and talking about what you see. Suggested age: 3-5 years.

Brainy Background

“Outside Adventures” helps your child build many learning skills – focusing, communicating about what they’re seeing and doing, and thinking critically about what they’re finding.

TAKE TIME TO WATCH

Take a minute today to watch your child. Pay attention to what they look at. How do they move? What do they sound like? What are they learning? Even when you’re busy, responding to what they are learning deepens your connection with them. Suggested age: 0-5 years.

Brainy Background

When you’re in tune with your child, you’ll be able to pay attention to their needs and interests. This deepens the trust between you. Your child needs this security to reach out into the world to explore, experiment, discover and learn.

20 QUESTIONS

When you’re reading or telling a story to your child at bedtime, ask them questions about the story. Pause the story and ask: “What do you think will happen next? How do you think the character feels? What would you do if that happened to you?” Suggested age: 2½-5 years.

Brainy Background

Asking questions (what, where, when, who, why) helps your child learn to focus and pay attention to the details of the story and use critical thinking skills. These questions also build their memory.

TODAY’S TO-DO

Talk back and forth with your child about the plans for the day. Maybe you can chat about what you’re having for breakfast. Where are they going for the day? What might you do together? Or what are you both excited to do today? Suggested age: 4-5 years.

Brainy Background

There’s no better way to learn how to plan than practicing. Giving your child a chance to think about the day ahead helps them use what THEY ALREADY KNOW in new and flexible ways.

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