

WEEKLY LEARNING ACTIVITIES: PRENATAL TO AGE 2



Monday

Water splash! While in the bath:

- Describe what is happening: “I bet the water is tickling your toes.”
- Talk about their actions: “You splashed the water!”
- Mirror their emotions: “That splash on your cheek surprised you, didn’t it?”
- Build their confidence as they explore: “You splashed with both hands!”

Sink and float. Point out how some objects sink, and others float. What happens when you pour water into a colander? How can we get water into this bucket?

Tuesday

Reach high! Encouraging your baby to reach helps them with coordination and builds strength in their arms, hands and trunk. Create a sensory board using your laundry basket – one with holes. Poke baby-friendly items such as socks, ribbon, and scarves and let your baby pull them out.

Tape time. Build your child’s early writing skills along with attention and persistence with this activity. Tape small toys, such as tiny plastic animals, blocks of different shapes and colors, and cars to the back of a cookie sheet. Getting the tape pulled up, off the toy and off their fingers is a lot of steps for a little one.

Wednesday

Take a picture, tell a story. Storytelling not only organizes an event from our past, but conveys important information about relationships and feelings in our family. Take photos and use these pictures to help your baby recognize and name important people in their lives.

Matching socks. Create a 9-square game board with masking tape on your floor. Using 4 different pair of socks, lay one sock in each square (you’ll have an empty square). Ask your child to match the pairs. Use words such as “same,” “different,” “match,” and color words, too, as they work to make pairs!

Thursday

Babies imitate! Show your baby how to play Follow the Leader with you. Use simple movements, like tapping on the table or putting a hat on your head. Talk about what you’re doing. Say, “Your turn” and let them lead!

Eat together. Encourage your baby to pick up and eat safe foods, such as dry cereal and crackers. Put some dry cereal in a plastic bottle and let them open it. Give your baby a spoon to hold while you feed them with another spoon.

Friday

Photo talk. Scroll through different photos on your phone talking about each one. You can try using the 5 Ws plus 1 technique (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How) to help your child expand the story.

Toddlers can cook! You can plan activities that involve spreading, pouring, slicing, whisking, squeezing and garnishing, such as:

- Using a plastic knife to spread apple butter on crackers, bread or toast
- Scrambling eggs in a bowl
- Mashing bananas to put in oatmeal.

MORE LEARNING ACTIVITIES: PRENATAL TO AGE 2

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DRY DANCE

As you dry your child, rub their fingers and toes one at a time. Name each one as you dry them and do a little dance. When you dry a pinky, shake your hand. When you dry their toe, stamp your foot. Make up a new move for each little finger and toe! Suggested age: 0-1 year.

Brainy Background

Being part of the Dry Dance with you helps your child become more aware of their body, not to mention your playfulness and love. A loving, caring relationship with you supports their developing brain and thinking.

BATH ROUTINES

Create fun and simple bath routines with your child. For example, every time you feel the temperature you can say, "Splish, splash!" When the bath is over, shake the washcloth saying, "Shake, shake." Look for ways to add to the bath routine. Suggested age: 0-1 year.

Brainy Background

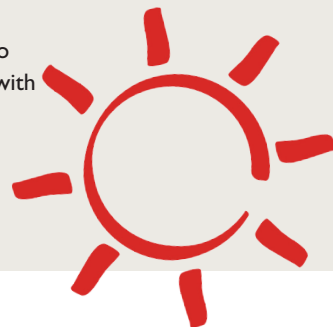
Regular routines marking the steps of bathing help your child know what to expect. If you use these words in other ways (shaking salad dressing or drying dishes), you're helping your child apply what they've learned to new situations.

BATHTIME STORIES

When your child is in the bath, make up a story about a child just like them who takes a bath, too. You can say things like, "First, they washed their hair" while you wash their hair, or "Then they splashed in the water," and see if they splash, too. Suggested age: 1-2 years.

Brainy Background

When you make up stories, you're introducing your child to creative ways of thinking while sharing lots of new words with them. They're learning focus and self-control as they listen closely, and making connections when they move their body to your words.



TOOTHY TWOSOME

When brushing your teeth, have your child be your partner. Let them brush their own teeth first, then give them your toothbrush so they can help brush yours. Ask, "Can you help me brush my teeth? Can you brush the ones in the front, and then the ones on the sides?" Take turns! Suggested age: 2-3 years.

Brainy Background

Sharing a moment and taking turns is one of the most important ways you can promote your child's learning today and in the future.

MIRROR PLAY

Brushing your child's teeth? As you look in the mirror, talk about how your faces are the same and different. You both have two eyes and a nose, but yours are bigger. You both can make funny faces. Make a funny face and see if you can make them laugh! Suggested age: 1-2 years.

Brainy Background

Comparing how your faces are the same and different helps your child learn to sort objects and experiences into categories. Sorting information into categories is important for reading, math and science. And this game builds connection between you!

PROUD POTTY

Potty training can be really tough. Try celebrating your child's successful potty trips. Tell them about what they did in a proud tone: "You went to the bathroom in the potty." Invite them to tell you what they did, too. Be matter-of-fact about accidents. Suggested age: 2-3 years.

Brainy Background

It's hard work to put together the signals that your body is telling you ("I have to go potty") with the actions of sitting in the right place, the potty, and going. When you praise your child's effort, "You did it!" they'll be more willing to take on the challenge.

To find more Vroom Tips™, visit [Vroom.org](https://www.vroom.org).

WEEKLY LEARNING ACTIVITIES: PRESCHOOL



Monday

Fill up! During bath time, use a variety of sizes of cups and bowls to fill and empty with water. Have your child estimate which cup will hold the most or the least water.

Bedtime routines.

Bedtime can be hard, especially when young children are tired. Routines can make it a little easier. Let your child control things, such as picking their own pajamas or which story they want to hear.

Tuesday

I spy! Play “I Spy” while getting dressed. Looking at your child’s clothes say, “I spy something blue.” Let your child guess which shirt/pants you are thinking about. Take turns!

PJ walk! Can you take an evening walk with pajamas on? The whole family can take a short walk in the evening to prepare for bed. Talk about what you did today and what you might do tomorrow.

Wednesday

Tail tag! Tuck tails (socks work great) into everyone’s waistbands, then each player runs and spins to keep their tails from being grabbed by another player. The last player with a tail wins. If you have a child that cannot participate in tag, can they hold and count the socks of the “out” players?

Sponge art. Old sponges or old t-shirts make great paint brushes. Outside you can use water to paint a variety of things with water. Can you draw a picture or your name? How long will it last before it disappears?

Thursday

I can do it! Is there something your child really wants to do on their own? Offer suggestions of how and encourage their efforts. Are they working on getting dressed by themselves? Tying shoes? Celebrate this independence!

Scoop up! Provide your child a cup, a large bucket and a small bucket/container. Fill the large bucket with water. Have your child scoop water from the larger bucket and fill the smaller one. See how fast they can fill it!

Friday

Pajama day! Give your child the option to wear PJs all day. Talk about what things happen during the day vs. night. Can you chart your ideas?

Bath count. Give your child a washcloth and have them wash and count body parts. This one-to-one matching of objects is a good way to grow pre-math skills. Give your child containers of all shapes and sizes and pour, drip and measure.

MORE PRESCHOOL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

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BELLY BREATHING

Help your child learn to breathe deeply when feeling upset. Have them close their eyes and put their hand on their belly to feel it go out when they breath in. When breathing out, their belly moves in. Remind them to use Belly Breathing to help them calm down. Suggested age: 3-5 years.

Brainy Background

When you ask your child to focus on their breathing when they feel upset, you help them practice self-control. They also learn to manage emotions in hard situations. This ability continues to develop throughout life and supports your child solving problems on their own.

GETTING SLEEPY

At bedtime, invite your child to close their eyes and imagine relaxing just one toe, then one whole foot, then one leg, and keep going through their whole body. Afterward, talk together about how they feel and give them a turn to lead you through relaxing. Suggested age: 4-5 years.

Brainy Background

As your child focuses on slowly relaxing the body, they're practicing skills like paying attention and controlling behavior. You're also supporting them in learning strategies to help them relax in other situations.

PRACTICE POSITIVITY

Practice saying things in new ways with your child. Take turns saying something negative, then try to talk about the same thing positively. For example, "I don't like loud noises" can become "I like quiet sounds." Suggested age: 4-5 years.

Brainy Background

This game is a good way to practice describing things and people in different ways. They're practicing language skills and how to see things from someone else's point of view. These skills are helpful in having good relationships now and in the future.

WARM AND COLD

Hide something like a spoon or cup and encourage your child to find it. As they get closer say, "You're getting warm." If they move farther away say, "You're getting cold." When they find the item, invite them to choose a hiding place and use "warm" and "cold" to tell you where to look. Suggested age: 3-4 years.

Brainy Background

As you give your child clues with the words "warm" and "cold," they must remember the rules of the game to search for the item. They must focus on finding the object without getting distracted, a skill that will help them pursue goals now and in the future.

BATHTIME LEADER

As your child gets older, encourage them to take the lead at bathtime. Ask them, "What will you need for your bath? A towel? Clean clothes?" When they're in the bath, you can ask, "What will you do first?" Invite them to choose which body part to wash and do it together. Suggested age: 4-5 years.

Brainy Background

Encouraging your child to take the lead in daily routines shows them that you believe they do things independently, which helps them feel confident and capable. This helps them to actively take on challenges and solve problems now and in the future.

DRESSING MIX-UP

When you're helping your child get dressed, play Dressing Mix-Up by asking things like: "Do your socks go on your hands? Do they go on your feet? Put them on your hands, and pretend your hands are feet." Suggested age: 4-5 years.

Brainy Background

By playing this game, you're turning dressing into a routine that's easier to manage and fun for both of you. You're also helping them learn where different clothes go as well as the skill of matching things that go together.



WEEKLY LEARNING ACTIVITIES: PRENATAL TO PRESCHOOL



PARENT AND CAREGIVER CORNER

We can all feel physically, emotionally and mentally taxed at times. Taking care of our mind is just as important as taking care of our body. There is no shame or guilt in experiencing signs of mental fatigue or mental illness and seeking help. Just as we would put a bandage on a physical wound to help it heal, we can put “band aids” on our mind so that we may be better, too. Our goal is to take care of ourselves and be able to take care of our children – from when we’re expecting to when we have teenagers.

We at Save the Children recognize the need for healthy support systems for the whole well-being of children and their caregivers. May is Mental Health Awareness month, so we will be providing tips and resources on how we can take care of our mental health. We hope you may be encouraged to access the services and supports that you need at this time in your life. **We remind you that we are in this together!**

NAMI PROVIDES COVID-19 MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

[NAMI \(National Alliance on Mental Illness\)](#), the nation’s largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness, provides community resources year-round. To provide help for those impacted by COVID-19, NAMI has compiled a helpful COVID-19 Resource and Information Guide found [here](#).

FAMILY

Let the sunshine in. Going outside for sunshine helps everyone’s state of mind. There are both physical and mental benefits to being outside and under the sun for a period of time. Here is an activity you may do on your own or with your children. It will support your mindfulness and healthy interactions with your children. Check off from the list below when you find these things! Feel free to add to the list of items to be found in your neighborhood and to make it more of a challenge!

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> MAILBOX | <input type="checkbox"/> FENCE | <input type="checkbox"/> PAW PRINT | <input type="checkbox"/> A FLAG |
| <input type="checkbox"/> YELLOW HOUSE | <input type="checkbox"/> TALLEST TREE | <input type="checkbox"/> SKATEBOARD | <input type="checkbox"/> SPRINKLER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ROSES | <input type="checkbox"/> A RED DOOR | <input type="checkbox"/> SINGING BIRDS | <input type="checkbox"/> BICYCLE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DOG | <input type="checkbox"/> CLOUDS | <input type="checkbox"/> A FAMILY | <input type="checkbox"/> A PACKAGE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STROLLER | <input type="checkbox"/> MOTORCYCLE | <input type="checkbox"/> BLUE CAR | <input type="checkbox"/> DELIVERY TRUCK |