









# Play, Learn, and Read At Home

## Developmental Activities for Kid's Birth to Five.

**Story this month:** Duck, Duck, Dinosaur by Kallie George, Illustrated by Oriol Vidal

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
<b>Problem-Solving Skills</b>	<p>During this first year, your baby is learning about the concept of cause and effect. When they shake a rattle, it makes a sound. Learning to make things happen is the foundation for solving problems. More things you can do: Play disappearing and reappearing games. Play peek-a-boo. Make a simple game of hiding objects to find. This helps develop your child's memory and teaches them about object permanence.</p>	<p>Give your toddler nesting toys or toys of different sizes that can fit inside each other. Play with your child by showing him that the toys can be fitted within each other. Take the nested toys apart and encourage your child to nest the toys himself. Start with few nesting objects, and gradually add more.</p> 	<p>In the story Feather and Flap argue about who is bigger, children this age can put objects in order by size. Sort objects by shape and color. Learn the meaning of math vocabulary words, such as big, small, large, tiny, round, etc. Preschoolers love to use tools, get a small cloth tape measure and let the fun begin.</p> 
<b>Language/Communication Skills</b>	<p>Start the conversation by saying anything that gets the infant's attention (e.g., "How is Mary today?") If you are about to feed the infant, you can say something like, "It's time for Mary to eat. Are you hungry?" It is best to use words that make sense in terms of what you and the child are doing together. Begin adding baby talk into the conversation. Mary is soooo cuuute. Switch back and forth between adult speech and baby talk during the conversation. It will heighten his attention to what is being said and will likely get him more involved.</p>	<p>No machine exists that will improve your child's expressive or receptive language skills. For that, your child needs human interaction. As young children begin to use words talk about the things that you use every day, like "cup," "juice," "doll." Give your child time to name them. Ask your child questions about the pictures in books. Give your child time to name the things in the picture. As your child grows, ask them to tell you what is happening in the pictures.</p>	<p>Encourage your child to take an active part in repeated book readings. Provide chances for them to interject predict what is next, Let the child pick the story. Preschool children will often choose the same book over and over on their own and ask questions. Repeated readings are valuable because they allow preschool children to become familiar with the vocabulary, repeated themes, and the language in the story.</p>
<b>Large/Gross Motor Skills</b>	<p>Use objects that suit your baby's ability, e.g. rolling, climbing, reaching, grabbing, and crawling. Things you could use: a small pop up tent, sofa cushions, a tunnel, dining chairs, small or large balls, soft and fluffy rugs or large boxes to crawl through</p>	<p>Dinosaur stomp Stomp like Spike in the story. Duck Waddle Your kids will love pretending to be a duck with this simple duck waddle! Squat, tuck your hands into your armpits to make "duck wings," and flap your arms as you walk. Quack like a duck as you waddle.</p>	<p>Significant changes in physical growth and motor development occur in the preschool years. Children get taller, stronger, and more coordinated. Preschool children should be engaged in games that involve running and walking, tag, follow-the-leader, and giant steps.</p>

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<b>Small/Fine Motor Skills</b>	<p>Infants are learning grasping and letting go (rings, blocks, rattles, favorite blanket or stuffed animal). Introducing new and novel toys will also encourage them to explore and turn that object in their hands to figure it out.</p> <p>For young infants who are not ready for these types of activities, tummy time is a great way to encourage using their hands. Using rattles and noisy toys, and encouraging them to pick up and hold things in their hands will help develop fine motor skills.</p>	<p>A new sponge and two bowls are all you need for this fine motor activity.</p> <p>Fill one bowl and leave the other empty. Have your child soak the sponge in water then squeeze the water from the sponge into the empty bowl.</p> <p>This simple activity will strengthen the hands and forearms.</p> 	<p>Paint Spike the dinosaur from the story. Different types of painting can help strengthen you are your child's hand eye coordination and manual dexterity. Finger painting gives children a chance to use their hands and get messy. Using a paintbrush helps children learn to hold a brush and gain control using it as a tool.</p> 
<b>Social-Emotional Skills</b>	<p>Babies have very little self-control. They naturally act on thoughts and feelings without the ability to stop themselves. Help children to soothe themselves. The calmer she feels, the more in control she will be. Babies have different ways of calming down. Some need lots of physical contact such as rocking or hugging; others prefer to be swaddled or put down for a minute. You teach your child to calm herself by staying calm yourself when she loses control. This helps her feel safe.</p>	<p>At this age, children begin parallel play they enjoy playing alongside other children, but does not interact a great deal with them. It is a good idea to have more than one of a favorite toy.</p> <p>Children begin to extend trusting relationships to other adults and to children with whom he or she plays frequently; shows preferences for these adults and children (e.g., hugs favorite teacher when he or she arrives at preschool). Children are able to recognize feelings when adult labels emotions.</p>	<p>Children enjoy pretend play with other children</p> <p>They are beginning to learn to share and are starting to demonstrate improved turn taking. They are beginning to take responsibility for actions. Friends are more interesting than adults and they have some ability to recognize and understand the feelings of others.</p> 
<b>Self-Help Skills</b>	<p>Children have a drive to be independent and do things on their own. This is a healthy part of normal child development. As children grow, they learn to do more and more tasks. The best way to build independent feeding skills is to learn the normal developmental stages of self-feeding. Encourage children to practice feeding themselves from infancy on. Begin by offering older infants finger foods. Introduce a spoon and fork and give children plenty of time to practice.</p>	<p>At around a year of age children start to assist with dressing and undressing themselves. By the age of three, your child should be able to Help put his toys away. Begin to dress himself (with some help from you). Put his clothes in the hamper when he undresses, clear his plate after meals, assist in setting the table, even brush his teeth, and wash his face with assistance.</p>	<p>Begin teaching her full name, address and a phone number to reach you. Preschool children should be taught how to make an emergency call</p> <p>Your child should also learn how to: Perform simple cleaning chores like dusting in easy-to-reach places and clearing the table after meal and feeding pets.</p> 

The **Play, Learn and Read at Home** activities are brought to you by the Montcalm County Great Start Collaborative Great Parents Great Start program. Children move thru predictable stages of development. The activities provided above are meant to be a guide. For more information on your child's development visit: [www.GreatStartMontcalm.org](http://www.GreatStartMontcalm.org)