




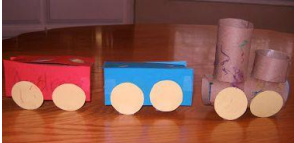






Play, Learn, and Read at Home

Developmental Activities for Kid's Birth to Five.

Story this month: Freight Train by Donald Crews

Reading Strategy: Follow the journey of a colorful train as it goes through tunnels, by cities, and over trestles. Emphasize the colors of the train cars while reading, as well as the prepositional words across, through, and by.

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
<p>Problem-Solving Skills</p>	<p>Infants learn about their world through play. Between the ages of 9-12 months your baby will be interested in this game. Use a toy train and tie a string to it. Place your baby on the floor in a sitting position. Put the toy near your baby with only the string within his reach. Demonstrate for your baby how to pull the string and get the toy. You can purchase pull toys and/or make your own.</p> 	<p>A child as young as 12 months begins to understand color differences. Between the ages of 2 and 3, your toddler will begin to match colors and shapes. Cut out different colored square shapes. Take a "color walk" through the book with your child. Select a color square, lay it on the page with the train car of the same color. Always name the color when you point to them.</p> 	<p>Cultivate a thirst for learning, help your preschooler learn how to ask the right questions and teach your child how to be a great observer and problem solver by playing a matching. Choose some different colored objects around the house to use. Have your child match the objects to the correct color of train car in the book. This activity can be enhanced if you have magnetic letters at home, review the letters while matching the color to the train car in the book.</p> 
<p>Language/Communication Skills</p>	<p>Sing this song to your infant: Train (Tune of the Farmer in the Dell) The engine chugs along, The engine chugs along, Up and down the mountain tracks, The engine chugs along. The train goes click,click,click. The train goes click,click,click Straight across the open plain. The train goes click, click, click! The whistle goes woo, woo The whistle goes woo, woo All across the USA, The whistle goes woo,woo!</p>	<p>Young children enjoy hearing a book read over and over again. After reading the book once or twice, try different methods when reading it again. You can hold up different colored objects to go along with the colors on the train cars as you read the pages. Another idea could be to sing the book to a tune you or your child make up. Another way to read the book is to act it out while reading it.</p>	<p>As you read through the book, ask your child what they think each train car is carrying. As how they might find out what each car is carrying. The conductor rides in the caboose, any liquid (water or oil) goes in a tank car, light items go in the hopper car (corn or beans), animals go in the cattle car, heavy items (stone, coal, sand) go in the gondola car, and furniture or boxed items go in a box car. The tender carries the fuel for the engine, and the engine usually goes in front.</p>
<p>Small/Fine Motor Skills</p>	<p>At this stage, your baby is beginning to have more control of his or her grasp, and will make an effort to hold onto objects. He or she still is not able to let go of them very well, but their hand is starting to mold itself around the shape of the object she's holding. By about five months, many babies can easily bring their hands and toys to their mouths. Offer two toys and watch your child decide which one to choose to grasp.</p>	<p>It is common for young children to use objects for imaginary play. If you have any empty toilet paper rolls, tissue boxes, egg cartons, you can use them as train cars. Have your child either color paper or use construction paper to attach to the toilet paper roll to go along with the colors of the train.</p> 	<p>Your child's pre-writing skills begin with scribbling and making marks on paper. Between age two and three your child will be imitating simple vertical and horizontal lines. By three years of age your child should be able to copy a circle shape. Between age 4 and 5 your child will begin to make simple geometric shapes. Help your child draw a train with several cars by linking together rectangles and circles for the wheels. Make a train track by drawing horizontal and vertical lines.</p>

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
<p>Large/Gross Motor Skills</p> <p>Create an obstacle course. A few pillows and blankets on the floor make crawling much more exciting. As you go through the obstacle course, say “choo choo” like a freight train and make chugging noises. Let your child create his or her own obstacle course. He or she will crawl under tables and behind chairs, so make sure those areas are safe and clean.</p> 	<p>Choo Choo Train This is a choo choo train (bend elbows) Puffing down the track (rotate arms in rhythm) Now it's going forward (push forward, continue rotating motion) Now it's going back (pull arms back, continue rotating motion) Now the bell is ringing (pretend to pull the cord - ding ding) Now the whistle blows (hold fist near mouth and toot toot) What a lot of noise it makes (cover ears) Everywhere it goes. (stretch out arms)</p>	<p>SING: (Tune: Down By the Station) Down by the Zoo Train Next to the zoo On came an animal  Do you know who? The engineer says an animal...such as "A Kangaroo came and it was hopping." Sing: We picked up a kangaroo And what do you know This is the way the train started to go. (Hopping, Hopping) watch us go. (Hopping) fast then (Hopping) slow (Hopping) down, then (Hopping) back Watch us (Hop) around the track.</p>	
<p>Self-Help Skills</p> <p>A younger baby’s needs are met by a caregiver, however, as babies get older, they can start doing things for themselves. Reaching for things, holding their own bottle, starting to feed themselves. They are developing trust and security as their needs are met. Encourage babies to begin to feed themselves and hold a spoon. Encourage them to explore and learn to do things on their own.</p>	<p>You can encourage independence in your toddler by allowing time to figure out direction and tasks through problem solving. By encouraging daily self-help skills such as picking up materials, washing hands, pouring into a cup, putting cups in the sink, towels in the trash, pushing chairs in giving turns and pulling pants down/up during toileting you are helping your child to become more independent.</p>	<p>Children ages 3-5 years old are continually attempting to do activities independently. Let your child set the table for meals. This will be an exciting task because it will give them the opportunity to model adult behavior and it reenacts something that happens every day in their life.</p> 	
<p>Social-Emotional Skills</p> <p>Hold your baby closely or lie your baby down on a soft flat surface. Start with small movements, like sticking out your tongue or opening your mouth in a wide grin. If you are patient, your baby may try to imitate you. For older infants you can hold your baby up to the mirror while dressing. Describe your baby’s face. Let your baby touch the mirror to discover that what is being seen is not “the real thing.”</p>	<p>Invite a friend over for a play date. Get your child excited about the visit, sharing how much fun he/she will have and offering many items of interest to explore. As children play, introduce new vocabulary and engage in conversations.</p> 	<p>Social & emotional development involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting along with others. • Making and keeping friends. • Handling emotions. • Expressing oneself. • Wanting to learn new things. • Starting and finishing an activity. • Taking responsibility for actions. <p>Encourage your preschool child to take responsibility for their actions by expressing their emotions using words.</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

