



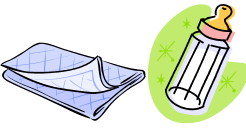









Play, Learn, and Read at Home

Developmental Activities for Kid's Birth to Five.

Story this month: How Do Dinosaurs Play with Their Friends by Jane Yolen & Mark Teague

Tip for Parents: Questioning: Ask open ended questions that cannot be answered with a “yes” or “no” answer like “What do you think a good friend would do?”

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
Problem-Solving Skills	<p>In the story, the dinosaur hid his toys under the blanket. Next time you are playing with your baby, show him one of his favorite toys and say, “here is your ball.” Then, hide it under a small blanket and ask, “Where is your ball?” Between 7-10 months, your child will be interested in uncovering his toy!</p> 	<p>Between 2 and 3 years of age, toddlers begin to enjoy simple make-believe games. Pretend that you and your child are dinosaurs. Make a tent with blankets and a table and crawl inside to have a dinosaur picnic. Use toy dinosaurs and pretend that they are playing on the slide, throwing balls, reading books and anything else your child likes to do.</p> 	<p>Conflicts during play don't just happen with dinosaurs; they are very common with preschoolers as well. As adults, we often want to solve the problem for the children involved. One of the best things we can do is help our children develop problem solving skills when there are conflicts. Try the strategy on the back next time your preschooler encounters a problem with playmates.</p>
Language/Communication Skills	<p>Around 8-12 months of age your baby will begin to understand 3-4 familiar words. When objects are close, ask “Where is your blanket?” or “Where is your bottle?” Without pointing, your baby should look in the direction of their blanket.</p> 	<p>Children at this age should be imitating words or be able to identify common objects. As you look at each page, label and point to the toys the dinosaur play with such as: choo choo train, bear, ball, shovel, football and car. Then point and wait to see if your child will name them.</p> 	<p>Help build your child's vocabulary by using descriptive words to describe each of the different dinosaurs. For example, “he is green with brown spots and spikes that look like leaves,” or “he has spikes on his tail,” or “his head is very small and he has four toes!” After you have done this with the book, describe in detail other things that your child shows an interest in.</p>
Small/Fine Motor Skills	<p>Between 10-12 months, your baby will enjoy experimenting with crayons. While sitting at the table or in the high chair, give your baby a crayon and a piece of paper. Show them how to make a scribble. Your child should try to imitate a back and forth scribble. You can help by putting your hand over your baby's hand and making marks together. Also supervise a child at this age using crayons.</p>	<p>At this age your child will enjoy exploring with a variety of writing materials such as crayons, markers, colored pencils and chalk. Between 24-30 months, your child should be able to hold a crayon using an adult grasp. If he still fists the crayon, break the crayon into a smaller piece. Display your toddler's art work to instill a sense of pride!</p>	<p>Playing with play dough helps strengthen the muscles in your child's fingers. Make peanut butter play dough and have your child create his own dinosaur using raisins, crackers, and pretzels. He will have fun eating his creation when he is done. To make dough, combine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 C. Peanut Butter 2/3-1 C. Nonfat Dry Milk 2 T. Honey

<p>Large/Gross Motor Skills</p>	<p>By 8 months of age your child should be able to sit on his own and use both hands in play. Sit on the floor across from your child and roll a ball to him. Encourage him to roll it back. If needed, another adult can sit behind him to help him roll it back.</p> 	<p>In the book the children and dinosaurs are playing on the slide. Around the age of 2, your child will be able to climb up and down a small slide without help. As the weather gets colder bring your small slide indoors to offer your child more practice!</p> 	<p>Around the age of 3 children begin to use the pedals on a tricycle. Although they may not steer well, they should be able to move the bike forward 4-6 feet. Riding bikes on a flat level surface will be easier. Always practice safety just like the boy and wear a helmet. With practice your 4 year old will be able to ride with skill and make sharp turns easily.</p>
<p>Self-Help Skills</p>	<p>Around 10-11 months your baby will be able to put objects into a container on their own. While picking up toys give your baby a ball and say “Put the ball in.” Allow your baby several opportunities to put objects in to practice this skill.</p> 	<p>Children learn by watching the people around them. At 12-18 months, toddlers enjoy imitating adult behavior such as wiping off tables and putting away toys. By 3 years, your child knows that there is a proper place for things and will put toys where they belong. Make cleaning up part of their daily routine.</p> 	<p>Many times during the day, your preschooler is told to do a lot of things. When possible give your child a choice between two options such as “Do you want to wear the blue or red shirt?” or “Go down the slide or ride your bike?” Offering choices can prevent temper tantrums and it will help your child make decisions as they get older. Only offer choices that are acceptable to you.</p>
<p>Social-Emotional Skills</p>	<p>The dinosaur holds the boy in the air to put him on the slide. Your baby at 4-8 months of age may enjoy being picked up and held in the air as you smile and look at him. At 7-10 months, your baby should reach out his hands signaling that he wants to be picked up when in sitting position.</p> 	<p>Children under three often play alongside each other, but as they get older, they start playing together more. Understanding how to take turns is a beginning step to sharing. Help teach your child the art of taking turns during the day. Take turns brushing hair and teeth, stacking blocks, rolling balls, stirring pancake mix, playing on the slide, shooting the basketball, etc.</p> 	<p>Playing board or card games is a social activity. Game playing enables and encourages your preschooler to practice important social skills that she will need to play well with other children. Nearly all games, for example, involve taking turns, sharing dice or a spinner, waiting for your turn, patience, and learning how to be a good sport. When you play games with your child try to emphasize the fun of the game as much as possible rather than focusing on "who's winning."</p>

Problem Solving

1. **Neutralize the situation:** Say, “Let me hold the desired item, while we try to solve this problem”.
2. **Identify the problem:** Indicate that there is a problem and see if the kids can say what it is such as, “He took my truck.”
3. **Restate and clarify the problem:** “It sounds like you were playing with the truck and John took the truck—so you both want to play with the truck.”
4. **Try to get a solution from the children:** “What could we do, so you can both play with the truck?” They make come with many ideas such as get another truck, take turns, or play together with the truck. Have them come to agreement about what to do with the toy.

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