



Play, Learn, and Read At Home

Developmental Activities for kid's birth to five.

Story this month: **Knuffle Bunny** by Mo Willems

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
<p>Problem-Solving Skills</p>	<p>Offer a variety of comfort objects, instead of the same thing all of the time. Play peek-a-boo games to help your child learn that you are there, but come back.</p> 	<p>Offer a clothing choice to your child, but keep it simple. Example: Do you want the red shirt or the blue shirt. You can also do this with a comfort object, such as, “Do you want to bring the blanket or the bunny to bed with you?” You can also help them learn to keep some of these things in the car or in the bed.</p>	<p>Giving children choices in what they wear at this age is great. You may choose 2-3 outfits and then allow them to choose from there if you are going somewhere where these outfits would be appropriate. If you are around the house, letting them choose and dress themselves is a great way to work on why that outfit may or may not work for the weather outside or why we can wear it at home but not to a wedding, for example.</p>
<p>Language/ Communication Skills</p>	<p>Playing Peek a Boo, So Big, or other nursery rhymes/finger plays are a great way to work on communication skills. Peek-a-boo is a nice game for back and forth play that works on something not being there and then being there. Knuffle bunny gets stuck in the laundry, and the little girl becomes so upset. Working on Peek-a-boo or explaining that it has to be washed will help later when the child is attached to the item.</p>	<p>Play a language game around the house. What are the various sounds around the house? Can we make them too? What does the washer sound like? What sound does the toaster make? Etc.</p> 	<p>Imitate various sounds in their environment, such as the washer, dryer, toaster, etc. Name and find the various appliances and furniture in the house or other places.</p> <p>Labeling emotions at this age is huge and helps children learn communication for when they are upset or mad.</p> 

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Small/Fine Motor Skills	<p>Coloring your own Knuffle bunny is a great way to expose your little one to crayons, markers, or other writing utensils. You can draw your own bunny to color or print one offline. Using crayons is a great way to build strength in those little hands.</p> 	<p>Ripping up and crinkling paper is a great way to learn pre-cutting skills. They can then glue them into a “washing machine” on a piece of paper that can pretend to be the clothes in the machine.</p> <p>Using bubble wrap and paint, you can create your own window to the washing machine, which the Knuffle bunny is in!</p> 	<p>Using a paper plate, a piece of paper, and a piece of cling wrap or plastic sandwich bag, you can help your child make their own washing machine.</p> <p>Assist in cutting the center of a paper plate out, glue the cling wrap or sandwich bag onto the plate then “fill” with paper, and glue onto the piece of paper with the drawn washing machine.</p> 
Large/Gross Motor Skills	<p>Help your child walk from one room to another. Take your child on a laundry basket ride, either pulling or pushing them.</p> 	<p>In the book, the little girl and her dad walk by a variety of places as they go to the laundry mat. You could go on a walk in your community and label houses, mailboxes, trees, tractors, etc.</p>	<p>Picking up laundry around the house can be a great way to work on gross motor skills; you can make it a game to crawl from room to room or race to the next spot. Throwing socks like balls into the baskets and then throwing clothes in the washer can be a reaching game (if you have a top loading washer), and then lifting those wet clothes one by one into the dryer.</p>
Self-Help Skills	<p>Little ones should be working on helping with getting dressed. In the beginning, they need you to help them, and as they get older they should begin to put their legs in, push their arms through, or pull the shirt over their head. You may have to start the process, but then they can do one of the steps to get their clothes on.</p>	<p>Helping little ones understand where they leave their toys or items they enjoy, is a great skill to work on. If they want to bring something to the store, you may want to have a conversation about keeping it in the car so they do not lose the item in the store, just like Knuffle bunny accidentally getting put into the washer.</p>	<p>Have your child help you with the laundry. They may put items in the washer and push the button with your assistance, or they might pull all the clothes out of the dryer and help try to fold. It may not be the way you would like it, but it helps them to practice these skills so later they can work on their own laundry.</p>
Social-Emotional Skills	<p>Your child in this age range may start choosing favorite toys. They may have a stuffed animal, a small toy that they can hold onto, a blanket, or other object they have chosen as a favorite. They may want this item in the car or through transitions. Sharing will begin to be an issue, but that is ok and can continued to be worked on as needed.</p> 	<p>Visiting new locations can be stressful for little ones, however, it can be a great learning experience! The laundry mat is loud and can be overwhelming, but visiting can also be a great way to expose your little one to a new place. Sesame Street has a great song about the laundry mat.</p> 	<p>Pretend play is coming out in this age group. They may make their own washer and dryer with bins or cardboard boxes. Helping them with their imagination and letting it grow is a great skill to work on and bring out leadership skills.</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