



## Play, Learn, and Read at Home

### Developmental Activities for kid's birth to five

Story this week: Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons by Eric Litwin

Focus Skills for parents: Echo Reading: Adult reads the words and the child repeats the words. Use the repetitive words and phrases in the book such as “POP,” “Buttons come and buttons go,” and “Did Pete Cry?”

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
<b>Problem-Solving Skills</b>	<p>Just as Pete’s button rolled away, your baby will enjoy watching objects roll in front of them around 6-8 months of age. During tummy time, roll a ball in front of your baby to see if they watch where it goes. You can also roll a ball toward them to see if they reach out to grab it. As your baby gets older, she will enjoy rolling a ball back and forth with you!</p> 	<p>Between 24-30 months, your child understands the concept of one and can take “one” object from a group of objects. Between 30-36 months your child understands the concept of two. On 3 different pieces of paper, write the number 1, 2, and 3 on each sheet paper. From a group of toys, blocks, or books, have your child put the correct number of items on each piece of paper. Count the items as they put them on the paper!</p>	<p>At this age, preschoolers should be able to recognize and count objects up to 5. Make a game of counting using balloons. Blow up five balloons and write one number (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) on each balloon. Hide the balloons around the house and have your child find each balloon in the correct order, starting with the number 1. To make it harder, hide 10 balloons!</p> 
<b>Language/Communication Skills</b>	<p>Babies between 7 ½ to 12 months are exploring with their voice by varying their tone and inflection. They also make sounds that resemble your exclamations such as “Uh-oh!” As you read the story, add extra emphasis to words such as “OH NO!” and “POP.” Pause and WAIT to see if your baby will imitate the sounds back to you. Exaggerate your facial expressions to keep your baby interested in watching you. Also include words of your own while reading such as “Oops!” and “Oh!”</p>	<p>Toddlers love to sing songs with repetitive phrases because they are easy to remember. Make up your own song about your toddler’s favorite toy or blanket and sing it throughout the day when they are using that object, such as, “Your blanket, your blanket, your blue and fuzzy blanket,” or “Your car, your car, your fast and orange car.” Try using a new made up song to help with transition to a new activity or to calm down your child when they are upset!</p>	<p>Pete puts on his favorite shirt at 8:00, according to the clock. Although your child will not be ready to read a clock, you can help her understand the concept of time by talking about time and events that happen in her life. Using words like yesterday, today, and tomorrow; morning, noon, and evening and connecting these terms to an action will help them learn the passage of time. For example, “Today you went to school and tomorrow you will stay home,” or “In the morning you ate cereal and at noon you had a sandwich.”</p>
<b>Small/Fine Motor Skills</b>	<p>Between 9 and 12 months your child will be able to isolate his index finger and poke at things. Show your baby the buttons on your coat, shirt, or sweater by pointing at each one of them and saying, “button.” Point at different buttons you may find on the variety of things in your home or at the store. You may find buttons on blankets, barrettes, or socks! Always supervise to make sure they do not put any button in their mouth.</p>	<p>Buttons come in a variety of different sizes and colors. Make your own buttons by cutting different shapes in cardboard or cardstock and punch holes in it. Use yarn and tape the end to make it sturdier or pipe cleaners to thread through the holes of the button. Your child will be practicing his eye-hand coordination and building strength in his fingers at the same time.</p>	<p>Gather several buttons or make your own out of cardboard. Talk about the different characteristics of the buttons and then put them inside a dark colored sock. As your child feels through the different buttons inside the sock, ask them to pull out the biggest button. Then continue the game with the rest of the buttons by having him pull out different buttons such as a round, blue, or thick button, etc.</p> 

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
<b>Large/Gross Motor Skills</b>	<p>Babies begin to roll from their tummy to their back sometime between 2 and 5 months of age. Rolling from their back to their tummy is usually accomplished by about 7 ½ months of age. While on the floor with your baby, offer him an interesting object on one side and encourage your baby to roll to get it. You can also practice this skill as you sit down and pick up your baby by shifting his weight to the side in a rolling motion!</p>	<p>Around 18 months, as your child begins to gain greater control of his body movements, he may become interested in climbing. Like Pete who climbed onto an adult chair, your child may be interested in this activity as well so he can sit next to Mom or Dad. Let your child practice his climbing skills on the floor with couch cushions or make a pile with pillows and blankets.</p>	<p>Set up plastic sand buckets or cardboard boxes in a line. Number the buckets in order 1-5. Have your child stand at the end of the line with 5 buttons and have her toss a button in the first bucket and then another in the second bucket and so on. See how many buckets they can get in a row!</p> 
<b>Self-Help Skills</b>	<p>Your 10-12 month old will enjoy helping with dressing by pushing/pulling his arm through the sleeve and by extending his leg to put on a shoe. Don't forget to put the words with what you are doing, "Push your arm through" or "Put your shoe on." You can be silly and pretend that their shirt goes on their legs or that their pants go on your head!</p> 	<p>Getting your toddler dressed in the morning need not be stressful! Put out a couple of outfits that you would be happy for her to wear and help her choose by asking, "Do you want to wear the blue shirt or the one with rainbow stripes?" Allow time for her to think and <b>always</b> go along with her choice. Soon you will find that suggesting that "we get dressed" is greeted with smiles instead of tantrums.</p>	<p>If your child is interested in buttoning, use clothing with big, bright buttons and large holes. Practicing on stuffed animals or willing siblings and parents with buttons on their clothes will help. Show her how to grasp a button with one hand and the fabric around the opposite hole with the other. Help her (if she lets you) push the bottom of the button through the hole and say, "See it peeking through?" While she holds the button, tell her to use her other hand to pull the hole open more. Celebrate any attempts!</p>
<b>Social-Emotional Skills</b>	<p>Your baby needs all the care and attention you can give. He cries to communicate his needs, whether it's for a snack, a dry diaper, or a little cuddling with Mom or Dad. When you respond quickly to your baby, you're building his sense of self-worth. You're also establishing a foundation of trust that can last for years to come. If you give your baby prompt attention, he'll feel more secure and less anxious, giving him the courage to explore the world on his own. And once he understands that you take his cries seriously, he'll be less likely to cry for no reason. In the long run, responding quickly to your baby's needs will make him less clingy and demanding, not more. Making everything, "all good."</p>	<p>Tantrums are typical for children 15 months to 3 years of age. Helping children handle their temper tantrums begins with adults learning how to regulate their own emotions. The next time your child has a temper tantrum, take a few breaths yourself and say calmly to your child, "You're okay. You can do this. Breathe with me." How you help them manage themselves during this period is very important to how they learn to deal with stressful situations as adults. Always remember to discipline yourself first by taking several breaths before you respond to your toddler's tantrum and make yourself as calm as you want your child to become.</p>	<p>Children will often feel bad after making a mess or a mistake. Build their self-esteem and confidence by saying the phrase from the story when your child is feeling bad. For example, after your child spills his milk say "<b>Did Pete cry? Goodness no! He kept on singing his song.</b>" Then help your child clean up the mess. As your child is faced with these experiences, he may say this phrase on his own and know that <b>stuff will come and stuff will go!</b></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)

