







Play, Learn, and Read At Home

Developmental Activities for kid's birth to five.

Story this month: **The Koala Who Could** by Rachel Bright & Jim Field

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
Problem-Solving Skills	<p>Children in this age learn their preferences for things they like or do not like. As they begin to become more mobile they will push a toy aside for a toy they like, or they may move away from something or someone they do not like.</p>	<p>Offering open ended exploration and showing/teaching your child how things work in this age range they begin to remember how you did it so later if you are not there they can imitate your action.</p> 	<p>Hands on investigation is a great way to let this age group explore, learn, and find their own solutions. Even though Koala did not solve his own problem he was encouraged to explore once forced to so learning to problem solve through that led him to a wonderful adventure.</p>
Language/ Communication Skills	<p>Reading to your child, even if you just read the photos of a book, is a great way to build your child's vocabulary. These books pictures are great to point out the animals and make their sounds.</p>	<p>The sounds in this book are great way to work with silly sounds!</p> <p>The tap of the birds beak-Tap Tap Tap</p> <p>The falling of the tree-WHOMP</p> <p>The gentle breeze through the Koala's tree-blowing or whooooo</p>	<p>The Koala Who Could is a great rhyming book. Working with rhyming at this age is a great way to play with language. As you read, you can have your child help fill in words that may sound like they fit.</p>
Small/Fine Motor Skills	<p>Playing in the grass and feeling the different little things that can be found in the grass: rocks, sticks, twigs, is a great way to work on picking items up. You could also put a blanket down with a variety of outdoor items to work on picking up small items as well letting you control what they have access to.</p> 	<p>In one photo Koala has a leaf collection, picking up small items within environment such as leaves, rocks, dirt, sticks, twigs, flowers, etc, is a wonderful way for children to work on using their hands in play but also to feel a variety of textures.</p>	<p>A scavenger hunt outside is a great way to find a variety of items, animals, etc. that children can collect and manipulate. They can feel the textures, but this also provides them a little independence by them looking for the items on their own.</p>

	0-12 Months	1-3 Years	3-5 Years
Large/Gross Motor Skills	Working on independent movement, not just clinging to caregiver is hard for both baby and caregiver. Learning to roll, army crawl, crawl, and then cruise furniture begins to give children a small piece of independence just like Koala. They can move over a variety of surfaces to figure out how to adjust themselves for carpet, hard wood, laminate, etc.	Once Koala leaves the tree, he is able to go on adventures with his friends! Building an obstacle course of climbing, steps, tunnels, etc. is a great way to work on full body movement for a little one. Can be done inside or outside.	Climbing trees is a fun way to work on balance, reaching, footing, etc. Children would need parents watching over as they climbed, and if you do not have access to a good climbing tree, using playground equipment is another great way to climb-rock walls, ropes, monkey bars, etc. 
Self-Help Skills	Building independence begins as your child grows. They can start making choices about which bowl they want their food in, or which outfit they want to wear. Offering your child a spoon to help feed themselves begins the independence to eating.	Including your little one in cooking a meal increases, not only their independence but also that they might eat what they helped make. They can pour items into a mix, scoop up flour or other dry ingredients, or mix with a spoon. 	Having a go to spot of snacks such as a basket, bin, drawer, or cabinet allows your child to make their own choice, while you control what snacks go in there. Using visuals can help them understand how many snacks they may have without you having to repeat yourself over and over.
Social-Emotional Skills	Just like Koala the security of what he knew, kept him safe but he also never wanted to leave it. Preparing your child before you take them to a sitter, or have a sitter at your home is a great way to work on separation from you as their primary person. Babies know their mom's smell and leaving something that has your scent helps can help the sitter ease their frustration when fussy, that they may not be able to verbally say.	As your child grows, they become more and more aware of the people around them. They may have a "favorite" person beyond you. This may be grandpa or grandma, an aunt or uncle, cousin, or close friend of the family. They may choose that person at events to help make them feel safe.	At this age stranger danger becomes more appropriate to teach your child, who they should go to for help or with to play. You may allow them to play with another child at the park, while you observe on a bench to work on that separation. You may play with the children on the playground to help modal play and words when they get upset.

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

