

HOW TO RAISE A *Curious Learner*

250+ Early childhood
Developmental Activities
included

PLAY BASED
LEARNING AT HOME

CHILD LED
LEARNING



VIDYA PANICKER

How to raise a curious learner

"I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious."

- Albert Einstein

**LEARN HOW YOU CAN MAKE LEARNING MORE FUN THROUGH
CREATIVE PLAY**

By

Vidya Panicker

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This book is dedicated to my son, Dhruv.

Acknowledgement

Motherhood gave me everything that I ever wanted in my life. From a super awesome son to a never-ending inner drive to make more out of my motherhood life. To make more out of my learnings. To make more out of the creative person inside me.

This book is dedicated to my curious son, Dhruv. He has inspired me in all possible way to write this book. He is behind all my ventures and all my success.

Shashank, my husband and my best friend forever for being there to take care of our little son while I was spending sleepless nights writing this book.

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About the author



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Introduction

“Millions saw the apple fall, but newton asked why”

-Bernard Baruch

This is such a simple quote with so much of deep meaning. There is no new learning without ‘curiosity’. It is this curiosity that will drive a child to learn and understand about his surroundings all along his life.

Kids are born as little explorers and all we need to do is to fuel their curious minds with daily dose of ideas by doing certain activities with them on regular basis.

These activities should be mainly focussed in overall growth of the child. They are more effective when it is done in their sensitive period, about which we have discussed in the coming topics.

Curiosity helps children to be more observant. And when they start observing, they will start analysing a situation/problem and will try to learn and explore more about it. This encourages a lifelong learning.

For children, everything is a wonder, everything is new. When conditions allow children to satisfy curiosity through safe, self-initiated, and playful exploration, learning occurs naturally. Children investigate and this helps in social, intellectual, physical, and ethical development.

This is when the child starts showing curiosity about his surroundings, they start asking questions to their parents/teachers.

This is when Early childhood education comes into play. Early Childhood Programs help children learn how to learn, how to develop solutions to problems. It teaches steps and processes while increasing confidence.

As parents and educators, we need to learn how to enhance a child’s learning of life skills from resilience to social interactions to having fun with life!

The developmental domains of Early Childhood

I am going to specify the seven developmental domains that you should be focussing on. All the activities and play based learning that I will be covering up in this book will cover each of these developmental domains.

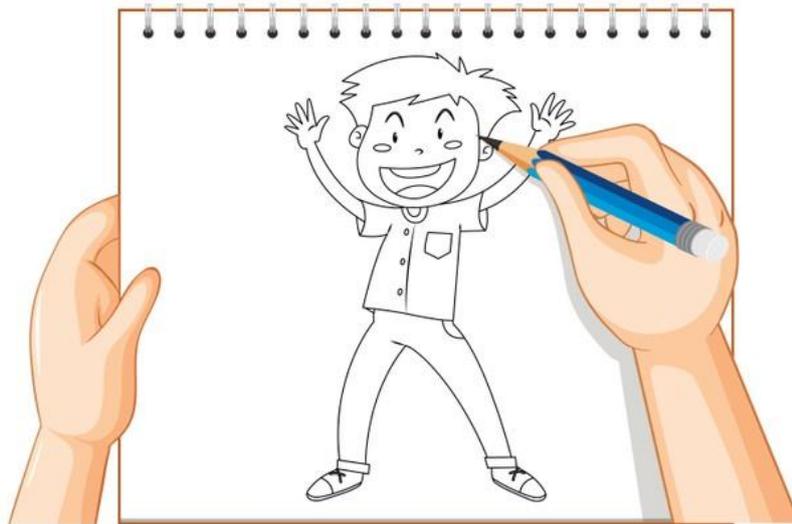


Gross Motor Skills



- Gross motor skills involve movement of large muscles of the body. For example, the muscles of arms, leg and upper body.
- It allows kids to do complete body movements.
- These skills impact balance and coordination of the body.
- These skills involve the coordination of neurological system of our body with the muscles.
- The gross motor skills also help in physical strength and reaction time of body.

Fine Motor Skills



- Fine motor skills are the ability to make movements using the small muscles in our hands and wrists.
- Children use fine motor skills in many activities like brushing their teeth, holding a pencil, using scissors, etc.
- Fine motor skills built on gross motor skills and are very complex.

Cognitive skills



- Cognitive skills are how a person’s brain processes things.
- It helps to learn, reason, solve, hold attention, read or understand.
- The cognitive skills take up new information to the appropriate parts of the brain. It later helps to retrieve and use this stored information whenever it is needed.
- Cognitive skills are further divided into nine categories:
 - i. **Sustained attention:** This will help to focus on a single task for a long duration without moving around or leaving it midway.
 - ii. **Selective attention:** It will help them to decide where they should focus even with distractions around them.
 - iii. **Divided attention:** This helps them to do multiple tasks successfully at the same time.
 - iv. **Long term memory:** It helps them to recall information from the past.
 - v. **Working memory:** It is also known as short term memory and it helps them to retain points they discussed from a recent conversation.
 - vi. **Logic and reasoning:** It help them to solve problems.
 - vii. **Visual processing:** It helps to understand visual representations like graphs, flow charts, etc.
 - viii. **Auditory processing:** It helps to listen, interpret and use the information that is taken in through the ears.
 - ix. **Processing speed:** It helps them to do every task effectively with great speed.

Self-help and adaptive



- It helps children to do their daily activities like dressing up, brushing teeth, managing money, self-feeding, etc.
- These skills help them to take care of themselves without anyone's help.

Language



- This will include everything from alphabets, letters, phonics, speaking, etc.
- This further helps them to start speaking effectively.

Social and Emotional



- This will help them to understand themselves, their emotions, what they want, etc.
- This is important in building relationship with others as well.
- This will also help them to understand how others are feeling and how their actions can affect others.

Spiritual and Moral



- It helps kids to understand moral values and help them to understand what is right and what is not.
- This also includes religious studies in children.

Absorbent mind



What is an Absorbent Mind?

Let's see what Dr. Maria Montessori has to say:

"The child is not born with a little knowledge, a little memory, a little will power, which have only to grow as time goes on. We are not dealing with something that develops, but with a fact of formation; something non-existent has to be produced, starting from nothing. The wonderful step taken by the baby is to pass from nothing to something."

-Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind

What do we understand from this?

A child is born with nothing. They don't know how to walk, talk, understand, express their feelings or even process their surroundings. They have to learn everything from the scratch. This is why the period from birth to 6 years is the most important part of a child's life.

Dr. Maria Montessori believed that children have an inner pattern of development which can be further worked upon with the help of an observant parent/teacher through a series of activities.

From birth to 3 years, the child unconsciously learns a lot of things from his surroundings. This is when the child will try to imitate every action that he sees. After the age of 3 years, up to 6 years the mind becomes more conscious. This is when they start making sense of their learning and they show the urge to learn more.

This is called Absorbent mind, since in this period, a child experiences intense mental activity that allows them to "absorb" learning from their environment without conscious effort, naturally and spontaneously.

Sensitive Period



So now you understand what an Absorbent Mind is all about. These two periods (0 to 3 and 3 to 6) are known as sensitive period.

This is the strongest period in a child's life. They have immense learning capacity in this period. It is a period of psychological development. They show a lot of power in terms of learning in this period. But soon this special power disappears. Though the child continues to learn throughout his life, still it is exceptionally high in the sensitive period.

***“Children pass through definite periods in which they reveal psychic aptitudes and possibilities which afterward disappear. That is why, at particular epochs of their life, they reveal an intense and extraordinary interest in certain objects and exercises, which one might look for in vain at later age”
(Standing, Maria Montessori Her Life and Work).***

Children can easily learn new skills, languages, movements, etc in this period. One of the most important discoveries made by Maria Montessori was that of the sensitive periods. She based the majority of her method on these sensitive periods.

Order is one of the most important sensitive periods. When a child is between the ages of two and three, he needs order in his environment, otherwise, he will throw tantrums.

Sensitive period is that time when the child has an inner motivation to learn and understand new things. Once this period is over, then the child will still learn things, but not as easily as they do in this period.

We as parent should understand the child's need in this period and should cater to it.

We must prepare and provide the proper environment according to the needs of each stage of development. Our responsibility is to help the child take advantage of these periods and make the most of them while they last.

Play based learning



“Play is the highest form of research”

-Albert Einstein

A play-based approach involves both child-initiated and parent-supported learning. The parent encourages children's learning and inquiry through interactions that aim to stretch their thinking to higher levels.

Studies have shown that play-based learning is more effective than direct-instruction approaches, which are the traditional academic-oriented teaching styles.

Parent can expand vocabulary by talking with kids about what they're doing and offering them words for different things. Introduce new words related to what the child is playing or ask questions that encourage the kids to talk and think deeply.

This is a very effective way as your child will be completely involved and will absorb more than the usual teaching method. It helps to make a child communicate as well as listen effectively.

It also helps in building a healthy social and emotional habit in kids. Play and playful learning, foster this sense of creativity, and allow children to navigate so many scenarios in their lives—both real and imagined.

Involving children even in small activities like planting saplings, making sand castle, etc will makes them understand the cause and effect of all these processes.

Students who begin their education in an environment of playful learning and discovery emerge as more confident, imaginative and socially aware individuals. These children continue to approach their learning with the critical thinking and communication skills that make them curious, well-rounded, and successful members of their communities.

How to start play based learning at home



Play based learning can be easily implemented at home as children are in a controlled environment with parents who are the best observers. We as parents have to handle only our children, unlike classrooms with many of them.

Here are some simple ways in which you can start practicing Play based learning at home:

1. Declutter

Sort out all your things in boxes. Put away the things that you don't need anymore. This will help you to take the toys and tools you will need for a certain activity. It will save a lot of time and at the same time will help you stay in peace.

2. Create a work space for your child

Keep everything in your child's reach so that he can pick whatever he wants, whenever he wants without your help. It should be very simple, organized, beautifully arranged and mostly made of natural materials. Find an area in a place away from distraction like television, phone, etc. and set up this small corner.

3. Get some stools

These stools which you can use in bathroom, kitchen, etc where he can stand and do his things all by himself. The stool need not be a fancy or costly one, it can just be a simple stool which will not skid.

4. Let your child choose

This should start right from the activities to even dressing. Let them choose and learn to make choices.

5. Have child sized tools

Starting from small sized bucket to mini brooms, dustpan, etc. The kids will enjoy to be involved and learn life skills at the same time.

6. Have some nice pictures on the wall

You can create some art by yourself, you can print it out or even buy from the market. Have these small frames/pictures on the walls in the height of your children.

7. Keep some source of music

Have a Bluetooth speaker or a regular speaker to just give some accessibility to music.

8. Have a low shelf

Something which the child can reach and pick things from it. It need not be fancy or costly, just a regular shelf without doors to open and close.

9. Teach your children to keep things back from where they have picked it

It becomes really difficult with small children but you can slowly start practicing.

10. Let them play freely

Let them have some time for free play and if they ask you to join in then follow their lead.

11. Try to add a little more vocabulary or description to your child's play

You can do this by showing them things that they choose to play with. Tell them what it is and describe more about how it looks, its colour, etc.

12. Follow the cues given by your child

Observe and understand what they want to learn, what interests them and then choose activities accordingly.

13. Add different colours and textures to their play

Play dough and paints are best suited for this.

14. Use household items for your play

Kids love to play with household items. Try giving them more of it and let your child enjoy with them as well.

15. Nature plays are the amazing way to indulge in play-based learning

It is something that you should practice. There are innumerable ways in which kids learn from nature. I have listed many activities regarding the same in coming topics.

Books can do magic



“Reading is the gateway for children that makes all other learning possible.”

– Barack Obama

There are very simple things that you can do to make your kid interested towards reading book. Trust me, this will not happen overnight and children will take their own time.

Remember one thing, if you have to raise a reader, be a reader first. Show them your love and care towards books and kids will reciprocate the same. Many people have this misconception that reading books to new-borns will not do any benefit to them as they will not be able to understand anything. But, do you know that reading to new-borns have great benefits. The content does not matter, what matters is your voice and how you bond over reading.

Research has shown that the number of words an infant is exposed to has a direct impact on their language development and literacy. But here’s the catch: The language has to be live, in person and directed at the child. It cannot be the one coming from television or mobile phones.

I have tried making it a bit more interesting by giving him a small reading corner (everybody loves to have a space for themselves, right?). This made him more interested in our daily book reading sessions and he takes initiative for the same.

How to create a reading corner?

1. Keep it low for infants/toddlers to move in and out easily.
2. Keep entire stock away and leave 2 to 3 books in their reading corner
3. Keep rotating these books on regular basis.
4. Let your child select his favourite from those books
5. Teach them to keep the book back in its place after using. Let them see and learn it from you.
6. Include reading time every day in routine.
7. Make it little special to keep them hooked. I try doing bookish plays for the same where I set up a small activity with elements that are shown in that particular book.
8. Make bed time reading a routine

How to introduce books to kids?

Reading books is a great way to introduce sounds, pictures, rhythms and objects to your baby.

It indeed has long term benefits on your child. Let me show you how reading can be effectively used at different stages of life.

0 to 6 months- We don't need texts. All we need are books with big, high contrast pictures. All your baby need at this point is Mumma cuddling and showing them books. You can try high contrast black and white cards as well for your child.

7 to 12 months- Here you can introduce small words which he uses in his daily life through books. You can show pictures and help him relate with real objects.

13 to 18 months- Here you can show books and ask them what it is. For example, show a page and ask, " Can you show me where is the doctor?" Make it fun!! This is actually when you can build interest in these little minds.

18 to 24 months- Let the child read along. Definitely the child can't read properly at this point, but when you making reading a routine then while reading out a book, you can give a small pause and let them guess what comes next.

Once the child is exposed to a good amount of reading in these two years then the child will automatically pick up and will be inclined towards reading. At this point, introduce them to different kinds of books on wide range of topics and make them feel more interested and connected to books.

How to introduce colours to kids?



By three months of age, experts say most babies are able to see colour, with a preference for bright primary colours for brain stimulation. And your young one's ability to recognise different colours begins to develop around when he is about 18 months old. It is this time when they start picking similarities and differences in objects around them.

Let's understand about how colours can be introduced at each stage of a baby's life.

0 to 3 months- New-borns can only see Black n White. For this reason, its best to introduce high contrast Black and White Pattern cards to kids at this age.

3 to 6 months- You can slowly start introducing primary colours to your child's play time.

6 to 12 months- At this point, your baby's colour recognition is very well developed. So, now you can start adding more shades of colours in their play times or in their room.

1 to 2 years- This is the time when your child can speak out different colours and can identify and sort them properly.

Learning comes mainly with practice. We play and learn about colour in different way. Starting for doing small colour sorting activities to asking him questions like," What colour is this?". This goes on for all the random things that we come across.

And whenever your child makes a mistake, show him an object of the colour he mistook it with and ask him again. He will definitely correct himself.

Here are some songs that you can try out to teach colour recognition in kids:

- **Finger family with Colours**

Sing along this modified version of finger family song to teach them colour recognition. You can use colour stickers/puppet on each finger.

Red finger,

Red finger,

Where are you?

Here I am,

Here I am,

How do you do?

(Repeat this for all fingers with different colours)

- **Twinkle Twinkle**

Twinkle, twinkle yellow star,

How I wonder where you are?

Let's go looking here and there,

Let's go looking everywhere.

Twinkle, twinkle, yellow star,

How I wonder where you are?

(Repeat this for all colours. Try keeping colour paper stars cut outs in different corners of the room and ask them to search that colour star and bring it back to you)

- **Colour sharks**

Yellow shark, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo

Yellow shark, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo

Yellow shark, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo

Yellow shark!

(Repeat for all colours)

Linguistic development in toddlers



The way you can work on linguistic development is through reading books and trying some sing-along songs. Music plays a huge importance in your little one's life. It can start as early as the days when your they are inside your womb by talking to them.

There are innumerable songs for this which you can try out with your littles ones. But let me narrow it down to my top 10 that you should definitely try out.

Old McDonald had a farm

Kids starts making baba..coco...mama..sounds first. This sound helps them imitate such easy syllables.

Wheels on the Bus

Again a fun sound to imitate and sing. Kids love making sounds like swisshhh swisshhh...grrr..grrr.

Head, shoulder, knees and toe

Great song to teach body parts as well. I think its bit tricky for adults as well. Try it out.

Itsy Bitsy spider

This will also improve motor development which is a great start in itself to build communication.

If you are happy and you know it

This teaches a lot of directions and motor imitation with speech improvement.

Hokey pokey

Identifying body parts helps a lot in receptive language skills

Five little monkeys

Great way to teach behaviour and counting also.

This is the way we brush our teeth

This song is perfect for teaching them brushing routine. You can sing this complete song while their brushing time.

Baby Shark

Probably the first song I introduced to my child. Lovely songs on imitations and relations.

Hickory dickory dock

Helps in phonetics awareness as well. You can use it to teach concepts of time as well.

How to boost up your child's play time



Kids do not like uninteresting things. For that reason, learning can become boring for them at times. I have compiled here few games that you should definitely include in your child's play-based learning time. These activities will them more interested and they would sit for a longer time.

DIY activities - Make small craft items or paintings, etc with your child. This will help them to express themselves.

Nature's play - This can vary from a simple walk in the garden to treasure hunt in the park. It's important to connect kids to nature.

Try traditional games- Try out the old traditional games that we used to play when we were kids.

Dance-Just dance!! Go round round!! Hop around!! Do anything. But dancing does make your kid happy.

Music- I play music every time we are in our room. It just keeps playing in the background. It helps to calm down the mind.

But most importantly, **FREE PLAYTIME** also should be included. Here you should let your child play whatever he likes, however he likes, wherever he likes (but with monitoring from a distance).

Games to build attention span in kids



Is your little one always high on energy and have a sparrow's attention span? Well, this is a small fun way which you can include in your regular free time plays in order to improve the attention span of your kid.

Switch turns to be the leader/den (as we used to say in childhood days).

MOVE AND FREEZE GAME

Play music and freeze whenever the music is paused.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS GAME

Leader shouts out colours and kids have to listen and act up accordingly.

Red=Stop

Green=Move

Yellow=Hop

Blue=Walk backwards

You can include as many as you want to.

SPOT IT GAME

Tell any 2 to 3 clues (like shape, colour, etc) for an object that you can clearly see in your room. Ask the other person to point out the object by analysing the clues.

These are few games which we have tried with a whole big age range of kids worked best on little ones though.

Enjoy the game and don't make it look like a learning process...!!

Keeping hyperactive toddlers engaged



Well, toddlers are supposed to be hyperactive ones. There is nothing wrong in this. Its normal for children to have a lot of energy.

But hey!! This can be due to many other reasons as well.

- Runs in family
- Heavy sugar diet
- Artificial food colour, dyes
- Lack of outdoor activities
- Lack of physical exercise
- Lack of sleep

Our main focus should be definitely on trying out either energy draining games or else games that improve concentration skills in them.

Here I will share some games/activities to burn down the energy of hyperactive tot and improves their concentration level as well

Obstacle Trail- Keep few obstacles like cushions, a balancing board, zig zag tapes to follow, etc like a trail and make them complete that.

Transferring activity with a path- Kids love transferring things from one bowl to another. Play the same game, but by keeping the two bowls at a distance for them to run and reach.

Mattress hill- Keep a mattress slanting on a bed to the floor and let your toddler climb up and slide down

Active hopscotch trail- Draw a hopscotch with activity on every step (like jump 5 times, do a twirl, count reverse from 10 to 0 and so on)

Hitting the target- Use bowling pins and ball or just as simple as a tower of cups and ball. Ask kids to aim and throw on it.

Reverse Walking- Simply ask them to walk backwards. You can try out the same by giving them a path to follow back.

These are few of the activities you can try out. But, still remember one thing. KIDS ARE NOT KIDS IF THEY ARE NOT HYPERACTIVE.

Let them enjoy!!



Newborns & Infants

Finally, the wait is over and you have a tiny human in your hand. What should I do next?

There are many activities that will not only help you to bond with your child and also will help them to develop their hand eye coordination, motor skills and so on.

25 activities you can try with your new born:

- Cuddle time
- Listen to music
- Rattle
- Sound box using bean or stones in a bottle
- Air cycling
- Read a book
- Play peekaboo with hands
- Mirror play
- Give them different textures to touch and feel
- Hanging mobiles
- Slow dance
- Show actions while playing rhymes
- Balloon kicking
- Black and white simulation cards
- Explore different types of smells
- Sing to your baby
- Make funny faces
- Blow raspberries on their tummy
- Puppets with soft socks
- Let them kick streamer curtain
- Baby wearing
- Finger puppets
- Point and show body parts
- Interactive bed time with some stories and books



Tummy time is a very important activity for kids' development. We enjoyed tummy time to the fullest with some amazing activities.

These activities hold them in tummy down position for a longer period and also will keep them engaged.



20 activities for tummy time

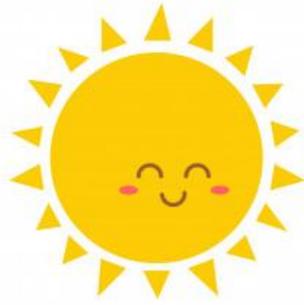
- Mirror play
- Small containers to stack
- Tissue paper wiggle. Keep them top of big sized tissue paper and it makes sound while they move around.
- Tie colourful pieces of clothes and let them pull them.
- Give them a whisk with colourful pieces of cloth stuffed inside
- Aluminium foil crushed and rolled into big balls
- Sensory board by sticking down different textures on a cardboard piece and letting them explore.
- A tray full of colourful and soft objects to explore.
- Many colourful balls in a pan and let them watch it roll
- A tray with water and some petals
- Sensory bottles different colourful objects inside
- Sensory bottle filled with water, oil, few drops of food colour and glitter
- Sensory bottle with pebbles or marbles (seal it well)
- Keep books open and folded (standing position) in a circle and keep your baby in the centre
- Stick a zip lock bag filled with colourful water with things filled inside it (you can use glitters, pom poms, ribbons, etc)
- A bottle filled with rainbow rice/pasta/coloured paper strips.
- Baby kept in centre of a Hula-hoop on floor (tie colourful fabric pieces, ribbons, etc to the hoop)
- Baking tray with different objects in them
- Tummy time on a bubble wrap stuck to the floor.
- Zip pouch with a paper and few paints drops inside it for a mess free painting.

Sitting and standing is one of the important developmental milestones for a child. There are many activities which can be done to make this transition smooth. Here are some of the activities that you can try out in this phase.

20 Activities for sitting/standing infant

- Sticky notes pulling from the wall kept at a little height where they have to reach out
- Small piece of tissue paper to tear
- Ribbons or scarfs hung at a height where they can play with it
- Hula-hoop with ribbons and fabrics tied with the kid in the centre
- Zip pouch filled with water beads stuck to the wall
- Washi tape pieces on the wall for them to pull out
- Sensory bins/trays with different objects
- Small bottles with different fillers inside for sound simulation
- Small bottles for stacking
- Tape a contact paper to the wall and stick small objects to it. Let them pull it out
- A bottle filled with ribbon. Make a small hole on the lid and let them pull it out.
- Play dough
- Obstacle course using small cushions, pillows and so on.
- Stack paper cups and let them break it
- Orange or banana to peel
- A cup and few popsicle sticks/straws/pompoms to transfer
- A bottle with a small mouth and some straws to put inside them
- Tape some animal figurines on a tray/wall and let them rescue it
- Taste safe paint (e.g., Yoghurt with food colour mixed)
- Sensory bags similar to the ones used in new born and tummy time stage.





Toddlers

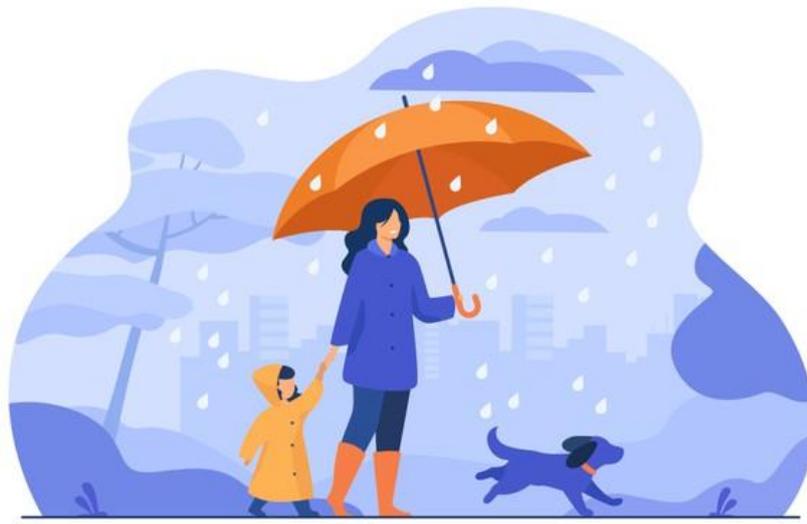


20 Spring time activities

Spring season brings a lot of good vibes. You get many options for nature/outdoor play in this season. With lots of plants growing around us, try to include them in some or the other ways in your play-based learning activities.

This is the best time to introduce your children to environment and its conservation.

1. Water tray filled with elements from garden like flowers, leaves, stem, etc
2. Make a bird feeder/ bird house
3. Paint a flower pot
4. Plant a sapling and watch them grow
5. Enjoy a nature scavenger hunt. List down few things and tell them to find it.
6. Use different types of leaves, twig, flowers etc as a paint brush
7. Make tissue paper butterflies
8. Paint on the pebbles
9. Make a playdough mix with some petals, seeds, leaves, etc added to it for texture
10. A sensory tray with some mud, flowers, leaves, etc
11. Corn starch with water and drop of food colour makes excellent chalk paint. Use them on the outdoor floor, walls or sidewalls
12. Make a flower art by sticking some flowers and leaves to a canvas/sheet.
13. Grow some microgreens in a small tray.
14. Leaf paint prints
15. DIY pinwheel
16. Sun catcher with some dried flowers and leaves
17. Make seed bomb by rolling some wet tissue paper and seeds. Let them dry completely and then you can plant them in your garden.
18. Freeze some flowers and leaves in water and let them play
19. DIY kite
20. Sorting with flowers, leaves, stem, buds, etc.



10 Rainy day activities to keep them busy at home

Rainy seasons are meant mostly for indoor plays. It is when you cannot set up to play, but still there are hundreds of ways you can keep your children at home and make them enjoy.

1. Build a fort with blankets, chairs and tables.
2. Play an indoor scavenger hunt
3. Build tallest tower with some paper cups and bottles
4. Make a DIY playdough
5. Wash your favourite toys (a bubble bath)
6. Play sorting game
7. Do a shadow play with a torch and some paper cut out puppets or simply use your hands.
8. Do a finger painting of a rainy day
9. Make a rain box by adding grains, pulses and cereals in a long bottle and hear them make sound
10. Make shapes with playdough



20 ways toddlers can enjoy painting

Painting can be an excellent way to aid development in toddlers. Painting aids your child develop mobility skills. They develop both mentally and physically.

Painting also relieves from stress, expands creative growth, enhances memory and problem-solving skills, works on motor skills and cultivates emotional growth.

Try the following painting activities with your children and they will enjoy it a lot.

1. Nature paint using flowers and leaves as paintbrush
2. Q-tip painting
3. Shaving cream with colour as puffy paint
4. Vegetable printing
5. Finger painting
6. Painting on a glass window
7. Painting on pebbles
8. Chalk painting the sidewalks
9. Mess free paint using a paper and paint inside a zip pouch
10. Bath time yoghurt-food colour paint
11. Sponge stamp painting
12. Pompom stomping
13. Painting on a mirror
14. Painting using toy car wheel tracks
15. Painting on a foil
16. Painting tracks with toy animals
17. Mess free painting with water
18. Painting using rolling marbles balls in a tray
19. Blow painting using straws
20. Multi colour drawing using many sketch pens/colour pencils/crayons tied together



15 winter time activities

Winter time is a beautiful season where you can indulge in some amazing activities. There are many Christmas themed activities which you can include as well. Here are some of the other activities which can try during winter season.

1. Pretend play as Santa Clause
2. Make a winter themed sensory tray
3. Make DIY snow using baking soda and shampoo
4. Make snow storm in a jar. Add water, baby oil and white paint in a clear glass jar and add Alka Seltzer tablet to see them fizz.
5. Make a fluffy play dough using flour and body lotion.
6. Make a snow paint using shaving cream mixed with some glitter
7. Paint over crushed ice in a tray
8. Scoop out floating ice cubes from a tray filled with water
9. Do snowball counting/line-up or designing using white pom poms
10. Make a winter sensory bottle with water, a drop of blue food colour, white pom poms and glitters.
11. Make a DIY Christmas tree
12. Write a letter to the Santa clause
13. Decorate you Christmas trees
14. Make some stars for the decoration
15. Decorate some cookies



20 Summer activities

Summer season includes a lot of free play, a lot of outdoor games and a lot of fun. There are endless options that you can try out for the same. Here are some of the summer season activities that you should try out.

1. Collect sea shells
2. Paint on sea shells
3. Sensory tray with sand and beach elements
4. Paint watermelon and lemon on paper plate
5. Pretend play as ice-cream parlour using play dough and paper cup
6. Play with water balloons
7. Make a lemonade
8. Paint with water on the outdoor floor
9. Play hopscotch outside
10. Make fruit smoothie
11. Make a sand and glue art
12. Tie and dye a white t-shirt
13. Freeze water in a tray and paint on it
14. Make DIY popsicle
15. Make a water table for birds
16. Enjoy a bubble foam water table
17. Add corn starch, water and a drop of food colour. Freeze them in ice tray with a popsicle stick in it. Paint the floor with it
18. Go on a scavenger hunt with a magnifying glass
19. Use a spray bottle with water to make an art
20. Fill some small balls, pom poms, etc in a paper bag. Hang it and let them hit it like a pinata



Pretend play ideas

Pretend play happens when the child starts imitating a certain system. The child imitates the things that he sees. For example, a recent visit to a dentist can make a child pretend like a dentist with his dolls as his patients. He will try to recreate everything that he has seen there. He will try to communicate with those dolls in a gibberish language.

These pretend plays show a great level of benefits over a child's development. Here are some of the pretend play ideas that you can try out with the child. During these kinds of plays, the child not only develops creativity and linguistic skills but will also learn how the system works. They will understand how does a doctor/grocer etc work.

1. Bank
2. Dentist
3. Car garage
4. Restaurant
5. Police officer
6. Firefighter
7. Doctor
8. Veterinary doctor
9. Baker
10. Library
11. Class room
12. Prince/princess
13. Ice cream parlour
14. Child care centre
15. Grocery store
16. Laundry
17. Post office
18. Cooking
19. Construction site
20. Gardener



15 simple outdoor activities

Outdoor activities are a must for these growing children. They learn a lot when they go and play out. Here are some simple, yet fun activities that you can try out when you are enjoying in the outdoors with your child.

1. Find different types of leaves and trace them on a sheet of paper. You can also ask them to stick it on the sheet.
2. Cut grass using child safe scissor
3. Enjoy a sensory tray with water, flowers, leaves, etc.
4. Make sandwiches and have a picnic with your family
5. Sort the rocks according to their sizes
6. Make a collage using things collected from outside
7. Play “identify objects from A to Z”
8. Make a small tent
9. Identify floating and sinking objects collected from outdoors using a water bowl
10. Rub flower or leaves on paper to get their natural dye
11. Arrange twigs in order of their height
12. Take a flower and check how many petals it has. Then compare it with other flowers.
13. Draw a picture of your view
14. Make a garland out of the flowers and leaves that you have collected.
15. Make a small bouquet with flowers, twigs, leaves and whatever you can collect from outside.



10 Earth themed activities

These are some of the simple activities that you can try out when you are planning to do an earth themed activity. This can also be enjoyed on special days like World environment day, Earth day, etc.

1. Make seed bombs and watch them grow
2. Sort objects that can be recycled and those that cannot be
3. Make a DIY using waste materials
4. Read an Earth themed book
5. Make an Earth using cardboard
6. Learn about the different elements of Earth
7. Paint earth on pebble
8. Set a sensory tray to differentiate between land and sea animals
9. Make a DIY dry waste dustbin for all rooms
10. Do balloon stamping painting using blue and green paint.



Skill building activities



20 activities for Gross motor skills

Gross motor skills can be improved well by giving your children maximum opportunity to move around and make movements in his body. Here are some of the simple activities that will help for the same.

1. Hopscotch
2. Hand and feet hopscotch
3. The floor is Lava game
4. Aiming a target
5. Following a trail
6. Jumping games
7. Tossing a frisbee
8. Kid's yoga
9. Sack race
10. Kicking a ball
11. Balancing games
12. Waddle like a penguin
13. Bike riding
14. Jumping over a rope
15. Obstacle course
16. Carrying a small ball/pompom in a spoon
17. Playing with a hula hoop
18. Jumping jacks
19. Imitate animal walking
20. Going up and down the stairs



30 activities for Fine motor skills

Fine motor skills can be refined by doing activities that makes the use of small muscles in their hands and fingers. Here are some activities that you can try out for the same.

1. Make different shapes with play dough
2. Use paper hole punch
3. Playing with Q tip
4. Stacking button/coins
5. Dropping coins into a piggy bank
6. Folding paper
7. Wrapping yarn around an object or unwrapping it
8. Using droppers or pipettes
9. Using stamps
10. Tearing paper
11. Lacing a button
12. Stacking small cups/caps
13. Putting straws/toothpick on a play dough
14. Using stickers
15. Using paper clips
16. Picking up floating runner bands using a stick
17. Pricking toothpick on a sponge
18. Pulling out peg clips
19. Using scissors
20. Making shapes with pipe cleaners
21. Using nuts and bolts
22. Tracing
23. Spooning
24. Cutting something
25. Stacking or arranging dominos
26. Stamp painting with pom poms
27. Spray with a spray bottle
28. Erase chalk drawings with water and paint brush
29. Push small beads into a play dough
30. Line up small objects on a line of tape



25 activities you can practice in kitchen

1. Wipe the table with a cloth
2. Wash the dishes
3. Pick up herbs, fruits or vegetables from garden
4. Make a salad
5. Learn to wear an apron
6. Put waste into the dustbin
7. Make a sandwich
8. Squeeze juice out of lemon
9. Break the eggs into a bowl
10. Whisk egg
11. Peel a hardboiled egg
12. Use a pestle and mortar
13. Roll dough
14. Cut shapes of dough
15. Sieve the flour
16. Spread butter/jam on a bread
17. Wash fruits and vegetables
18. Use a peeler
19. Help in setting up the table
20. Make juice/lemonade
21. Peel garlic
22. Chop some easy vegetables
23. Empty the dishwasher
24. Put utensils in their correct places
25. Help to arrange things bought from grocery



Things that you can collect
for doing activities



Sensory bin fillers

1. Dry grains
2. Dry lentils
3. Dry beans
4. Uncooked Pasta
5. Flour
6. Oats
7. Ice
8. Oobleck (flour + water)
9. Cotton balls
10. Pom poms
11. Rocks
12. Leaves
13. Shaving cream
14. Small bottles
15. Sand
16. Leaves
17. Flowers
18. Gelatine
19. Cooked pasta
20. Soapy water
21. Buttons
22. Coins
23. Stickers
24. Ribbon
25. Magnet
26. Cork
27. Twigs

28. Seeds
29. Kinetic sand
30. Yarn
31. Fabric pieces
32. Balloon
33. Beads
34. Yarn
35. Q tips
36. Feathers
37. Sponge
38. Plastic cups
39. Confetti
40. Bubble wrap
41. Sea shells
42. Foil paper
43. Water beads
44. Shredded paper
45. Cardboard pieces
46. Play dough
47. Wooden pieces
48. Rubber bands
49. Lego
50. Food colour



Materials that can be used for scissor practice

1. Straws
2. Leaves
3. Paper
4. Foil
5. Streamers
6. Fabric pieces
7. Old book/magazine
8. Tissue paper
9. Yarn
10. Thin cardboard
11. Play dough
12. Ribbon
13. Grass
14. Flowers
15. Shredded paper

A letter to all parents from my heart

Isn't it nice to see how your little one grow and develop each and every day?

From a tiny infant who can only lie on their back, cry when they are hungry, sleepy, tired, etc. to a super energetic and hyperactive toddler who will not sit in a place for more than a minute.

All children are different!!



All children develop at their own pace and in their own way. It is normal for children to experience developmental spurts in certain areas and slow spots in other areas of their development over time.

All children have different strengths and vulnerabilities. We, as parents or their first educator should be able to observe them, their growth, their strength and weakness. This observation will help us a lot go nurture them and give them what they need.

Make the best out of their sensory period. Enjoy with them, play with them and help them learn all that will make them grow as a strong and independent individual in the future.

The future of our kids is in our hand! nurture them and let them break the cocoon and fly off like a butterfly.

