

Activities for Infants Week 6

Monday

Please Touch Game: Support your baby in sitting in front of you or hold them on your lap facing you or lie down beside them on the floor when they are in a side lying position. Encourage baby to reach toward and touch/explore your face, hair, etc by reaching and grabbing.

Skills: Eye-hand coordination, fine motor skills, sensory exploration, socialization.

Story Time-Start reading a bedtime story to your baby from birth onward. You can make up stories or read short books. It doesn't matter what you say, your baby is absorbing every word, even though she cannot talk yet.

Skills: Listening, receptive/expressive language.

Mirror Play-When baby is on his back, tummy or side hold or prop a mirror in front of him so he can see himself. He will not yet understand who it is in the mirror, but the his reflection will capture his attention and gaze.

Skills: Sense of self, visual fixation/following, attention.

Tuesday

Find My Hands/Feet Game-Help your baby find his hands/feet, by placing brightly colored mittens or socks on or using wrist/ankle rattles (you can make your own by sewing bright shapes or bells to socks, mittens, but always supervise due to choking hazard). Bring baby's feet up while on his back so he can see them or bring his hands toward his face or together at his chest.

Skills: Self-discovery, visual attention, gross/fine motor.

Back and Forth Game-Begin face to face with your baby and coo and babble at her. Wait, give her time to respond or imitate and then do it again experimenting with open vowel sounds "oooh, ahhh, eee" and moving to consonant vowel sounds "mamama, bababa, dadada" as baby gets older.

Skills: Receptive/expressive language, social skills, attention span.

Rip it Up-Babies love paper and ripping paper can be fun. Save your old phone books and let your baby go to town ripping and tearing sheets of paper while supervised.

Skills: Fine motor, reach, grasp.

Wednesday

Song Time-Sing to your baby. Use traditional songs such as “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” or make up your own songs. Babies love music!

Skills: Language, listening, socialization.

Uh Oh-Babies attention is held by fun sounds and environmental sounds, one of the first sounds sometimes repeated by babies is “uh oh”. When playing with your baby and he drops something exclaim “uh oh!” or if he topples over while sitting or pulling to stand say “uh oh!” and eventually your baby will begin to repeat this fun sound.

Skills: Receptive/Expressive Language

Cause/Effect-When babies begin to understand cause/effect relationships, it means they know that their action causes a reaction and they are apt to repeat it. This is when your baby begins to push a button on a pop up box and toy pops up & he repeats it again and again. Or he finds the button on your phone that makes noise, or notices that flipping the light switch makes the lights go off.

Skills: Cognitive, cause/effect relationships.

Thursday

Mobile Fun-Use store bought mobiles or baby gyms with hanging toys, or make your own mobile using string & cut out bright shapes (always supervise this activity). Hold baby within reach of hanging toys and encourage him to reach toward & bat at the toys.

Skills: Fine motor reach & grasp, hand-eye coordination.

Scoop & Poke-Let your child practice with utensils for at least part of every meal. Some kids are able to poke food with a fork before they can scoop food with a spoon. Use hand over hand when needed.

Skills: self-feeding, fine motor

Furniture Climb-As your child grows he will naturally want to climb onto adult furniture and this is good practice for his motor skills. Allow him to climb onto low couches, ottomans, chairs and stools with supervision. If you have a child sized chair, help him to negotiate climbing into the chair and turning around to sit down properly.

Skills: Gross Motor, motor planning, strength, balance, coordination.

Friday

Bath Games-Help baby kick feet and splash in tub or help her pop bubbles in the tub. Gently rub a warm washcloth over baby's skin.

Skills: Gross motor, fine motor, socialization, sensory.

Blanket Swing-Use a large blanket and have your child lie down in the blanket, have one adult hold one end and another adult hold the other and swing the child gently back and forth while you chant or sing a song.

Skills: Sensory, vestibular.

On and off-Help your child learn to get on and off a small trike or rocking horse or to straddle your legs for a horsey ride.

Skills: Gross motor, motor planning, balance, coordination

Activities for Toddlers Week 6

Monday

Kickball-Toddlers are just learning to balance briefly on one foot in order to kick a large ball, provide opportunity to kick a stationary ball before working on kicking a rolling ball, which is much more difficult. A large ball is easier than a small ball to start with.

Skills: Gross Motor, one legged balance, coordination.

Frogs on a Lily Pad-Help children learn to jump forward & side to side, by cutting out big green circular shapes & taping them to the floor a few inches apart. Tell your child he is a frog and needs to jump from one lily pad to the next without jumping into the water. As he gets better coordinated you can move the

circles a bit farther apart.

Skills: Gross motor, jumping, coordination.

Let's Learn Colors-Use 4 large containers or laundry baskets and cut out a red, yellow, blue, green circle to tape on the front of each. Get balls in each of the 4 colors and make a game of throwing the same color ball into the same color basket.

Skills: Cognitive, color matching, language, gross motor, coordination.

Tuesday

Throw it to me-Toddlers at this age are starting to become more coordinated with their movements and should now be able to throw a ball about 3-5 feet to an adult with direction (instead of randomly).

Skills: Gross Motor, Fine Motor, grasp, controlled release, balance, coordination.

Mailman- Use some junk mail or let your child scribble on paper and seal it in envelopes. Place a different sticker on the outside of each envelope and place them around the house. Give your child a backpack or fabric bag and ask him to go around the house collecting the letters. Using a Kleenex or empty shoebox, cut a hole in the top for your mailbox. Then ask the child to sort through his bag and “find the letter to the horse”, “find the letter to the sunshine”, etc. and encourage him to find the correct letter with the matching sticker and drop it into the mailbox.

Skills: Cognitive, attention, memory, receptive/expressive language, following directions, fine motor.

Bead Stringing- No need to buy beads if you don't own a set. You can use dry rigatoni pasta or wagon wheel pasta and a shoestring or regular string to work on bead stringing. As a craft you can first color the pasta with paint or markers and later you can help your child sort colors or make patterns, but putting 2 green beads onto the string, then 2 red, etc.

Skills: Fine motor, cognitive, color matching/sorting/recognition, hand-eye coordination.

Wednesday

New Words-At this age young children are learning new words on a weekly, if not daily basis. Keep a word list on your phone or on your fridge so you can jot down any new words you hear your toddler repeat or try to say. This way everyone in your family can encourage the use of these words during play &

meals.

Skills: Expressive Language.

Sing the Missing Word-By age 2 most toddlers are quite familiar with certain songs such as “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” or “Old MacDonald”. To help your child learn to sing these songs on his own & to encourage language, sing a familiar song and leave out a word for your child to fill in. For example, “twinkle, twinkle little_____” and see if your child will spontaneously say “star” to fill in the missing word.

Skills: Language, memory, attention, rhythm/music.

Obstacle Course-Toddlers are developing balance & coordination skills & like to be active. Create an indoor obstacle course using pillow, stuffed toys, blankets, furniture or an outdoor course using old tires, logs, trikes, rocks, etc. Arrange objects so your child needs to crawl under, walk around, jump over, walk on and balance, slide, scoot, step, walk between, swing, etc.

Skills: Gross motor coordination, balance, motor planning, body in space awareness.

Thursday

Build it up, knock it down-Many toddlers are only used to stacking interlocking Lego types blocks. Instead use regular wooden blocks or stack empty tissue boxes in order to promote controlled release & balance during stacking. See how many your child can stack and then make it fun by encouraging him to knock them down. Talk about the color of the blocks & count when stacking.

Skills: Fine Motor, grasp, controlled release, balance, dexterity, cognitive concepts of color and number, language.

Family Photo Fun-Pull out photos or photo albums and ask your child to identify people in the pictures including themselves.

Skills: Receptive/Expressive language, sense of self, identification.

Friday

Pull it Through-Use a colander/strainer and craft pipe cleaners. Encourage your child to poke the pipe cleaners through the strainer and pull them through. This gets them ready for later activities like bead stringing & lacing cards.

Skills: Fine Motor, pincer grasp.

Roll the dough-Use store bought Play Doh or easily make your own from a recipe on the internet. Provide cookie cutters, a rolling pin or large wooden dowel for your child to get creative. Pretend you are baking cookies or let your child lead with her own imagination.

Skills: Fine Motor, sensory, tactile, imaginary play.

Who is that?-Look in the mirror with your child and ask “Who is that?” or “What is her name?”, see if your child can answer with “me” or her name. Talk about what else the child may see in the mirror including Mommy or Daddy. Review body parts, stick out your tongue or move it side to side and see if she can imitate you.

Skills: Sense of self, receptive/expressive language, imitation.