

Activities for Infants Week 7

Monday

Locate the Sound-As babies mature, they can begin to locate or localize where a sound or voice is coming from. When you are not in your baby's line of vision, make a soft sound or speak to them and then wait a few seconds to allow them the time to find you by hearing your voice or look toward the dog after they hear it bark.

Skills: Language, auditory processing, sound localization.

Frolic Play-Once a baby has good head/trunk control they often enjoy simple frolic play games such as bouncing on your knee or being lifted over your head into the air like an "airplane". When baby smiles and laughs it means "more"; if baby cries, take a break until baby feels secure again.

Skills: Gross motor, sensory/vestibular/movement, socialization.

Mirrors-Hang mirrors where he can easily see himself and others during playtime.

Skills: Sense of self, socialization, language.

Tuesday

Object Permanence-The understanding of object permanence is an important skill for babies. This means that something that is out of sight, is not out of mind, it still exists when it disappears. Very young babies do not understand this concept, as you will notice if you place a toy under their blanket, they will not search for it, but will simply turn to another toy that is within eye sight and reach. Older babies will start to know, when a ball rolls under the couch, it is still there and they will move toward the ball in an attempt to find it. You can help babies practice this skill by first partially hiding a toy beneath a cloth and helping them find it, and then eventually completely hiding a toy and encouraging them to find it. Remember the toy has to be motivating enough for a child to seek it out when it is hidden.

Skills: Cognitive, object permanence, problem solving.

Stand and Bounce-Hold your baby at the hips and help her stand and bear some weight on her legs. Let her straddle your leg on the floor if that helps. Encourage her to bounce in this position while you sing or talk to her.

Skills: Gross motor, weight bearing, language.

Stepping-When your baby is able to bear full weight on her legs, gently hold her at the hips and shift her weight by tipping her slightly to the left or right sides and see if she willingly takes a step. If she does, tip her to the other side and look for her to do the same stepping motion.

Skills: Gross motor, weight bearing, stepping, weight shifting.

Wednesday

Pat-a-Cake-Play pat-a-cake with your baby encouraging her to bring hands together at the center of her body in a clapping motion.

Skills: Fine motor, hands to midline.

Pull the string-Tie a ring or small toy to a string or use a store bough pull toy (supervised). Place the toy within sight of the child and demonstrate pulling the string to bring the toy closer to the child. See if he can do it on his own.

Skills: Cognitive, cause/effect, problem solving, fine motor, reach, grasp.

Pick it up Daddy-As babies start to understand cause/effect and object permanence they will start to drop toys, bottles, food off their highchair trays. This often becomes a fun game & although some parents tire of it quickly, it shows that a baby has learned an important skill.

Skills: Cognitive, cause/effect, object permanence, fine motor, reach, grasp, voluntary release.

Thursday

Roll the Ball-Sit on the floor a few feet from your child. Gently roll a ball his way. Encourage him to roll it back.

Skills: Gross motor, visual tracking, imitation, fine motor.

Baby Signs-Babies learn language by involving gestural cues. You can communicate with your baby and they can communicate back to you using gestures such as pointing. You can build in actual signs from American Sign Language to help your baby learn language. Babies as young as 6-7 months can sign such things as “eat, drink, more, hat, all done”. You can Google baby signs to come up with gestures that may be helpful to your child’s communication.

Skills: Language, gestural imitation, socialization.

Stair creeper-When supervised allow your child to attempt to climb up a few steps in a crawling position. Always stay behind him and help him come back down since this skill is much more difficult.

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

Friday

Stroller Push-Instead of riding baby in the stroller, let your child walk behind the stroller and push it to practice walking with support.

Skills: Gross motor, balance, independent walking.

In and Out-Let your child practice putting a variety of sizes and shapes of toys into boxes, bags, baskets, etc with various size openings. Also let them dump the containers back out and refill them again.

Skills: Fine motor, grasp, voluntary release.

Bounce-Hold your child's hands and let him bounce by bending his knees and returning to stand. You can repeat "bounce, bounce, bounce" or "jump, jump, jump" for him.

Skills: Gross motor, sensory, language

Activities for Toddlers Week 7

Monday

Walk and Carry-Toddlers are continuing to refine their walking skills, so once your child has been walking for a few weeks or month you can begin to encourage him to carry a large ball or stuff toy while walking. This will help bring his arms in toward his body and help him work on walking balance without having to use his arms (often out to sides for new walkers in what is called "high regard") to help stabilize himself.

Skills: Gross Motor, balance, coordination, strength, stability.

Squat and Stand-Practice having your child go from standing down to a squat position to pick something up off the floor and then then back up to standing again. Place a bunch of small toys on the floor and stand above your child holding a small basket or box. Encourage your child to bend down into a squat position to pick up a toy and then stand up and drop the toy into th basket. Eventually your child should be able to do this task without needing his hands to touch the floor while squatting or returning to standing.

Skills: Gross motor, squatting, strength, balance, coordination, fine motor, reach, grasp, release.

Dance, dance, dance-Toddlers love to move & music is a great motivator so put on your favorite tunes and shake it up with your child. See if he can imitate arm movements, leg movements, spin in circles, etc.

Skills: Gross Motor, balance, coordination, listening, rhythm, music appreciation.

Tuesday

Cheerios in the Bottle-Need entertainment for after a meal at a restaurant? Use a trial size bottle with a small opening and bring a container of puffs or Cheerios. Show your child how to drop the Cheerios into the bottle and invert the container to dump them out again. This dump and fill activity with a very small container can provide 15 minutes or more of entertainment.

Skills: Fine motor, neat pincer grasp, wrist rotation, cognitive, attention.

One Step Commands-Toddlers are good at following simple directions, but not complex ones and not directions with more than one step. Practice having your child follow simple one-step commands such as “Get your cup”, “Find your shoes”, “Put it on the table”. If she can easily follow one step command then you can begin to work on two step related commands such as “Get your cup and put it on the table” or “Pick up your book and put it on the shelf”.

Skills: Receptive/Expressive language, listening, following directions.

Body Parts-Play a game of body part identification by pointing, using a mirror or singing “Head, Shoulders, Knees & Toes”.

Skills: Cognitive, identification, memory, receptive/expressive language.

Wednesday

Yours & Mine-Once your child knows and can point to a few body parts you can begin to work on having her identify your body parts and learn the words “yours”

and “mine”. Says “Where is your nose?” and encourage them to point to their own nose and then say “Where is my nose?” and see if they point to your nose.
Skills: Receptive/expressive language, cognitive, identification, memory.

Puff, puff, Blow-Use whistles, kazoos, pinwheels to work on blowing with strengthens lips, mouth, jaw. Or place cotton balls on a table and have a race to see who can blow theirs off the table first.
Skills: Oral motor strengthening, language.

My tongue can wiggle-Place dots of peanut butter to the sides of your child’s mouth and above or below his lips. Have him look in the mirror. See if he can use his tongue to lick the peanut butter.
Skills: Oral motor skills, tongue movement and lateralization.

Thursday

Label My Feelings-Use pictures in books or magazines or make faces to demonstrate and label feelings of happy, sad, mad, frustrated, scared. Help your child recognize when he is feeling this way.
Skills: Social-emotional development, language.

Obstacle course-Use furniture, pillows, blankets, etc to create an obstacle course for your toddler which requires him to walk, run, crawl under, crawl through, step over, step on, balance, throw, kick, jump and/or climb. This can be done inside or out.
Skills: Gross Motor, balance, coordination, following directions, language.

Treasure Hunt-Gather some of your child’s favorite toys and a few new/novel objects and hide a few things in each room. Tell your child she is going on a treasure hunt & encourage her to hunt for the treasures you have hidden while you provide her with clues “Your favorite doll is behind the dresser” etc.
Skills: Listening, following directions, language.

Friday

Tell Me What to Do-At this age many parents feel like all they ever say to toddlers is “no, stop, don’t”. Instead of telling your toddler what not to do, tell them WHAT to do. For example, instead of saying “don’t jump on the couch” say “Feet stay on the floor” and instead of saying “No throwing your cars” say “Cars drive on the carpet.”
Skills: Following rules, listening, promoting good behavior.

Pudding Paint-Use any flavor pudding or even yogurt to finger paint on paper or your child's high chair tray. This way you don't need to worry if the hands go into the mouth.

Skills: Fine Motor, sensory, tactile.