



15 DAILY EARLY LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN 0 – 3

Ages 0 – 3 are crucial times for a child’s early development. It can also be a hectic time for parents. But the good news is, there are some simple steps you and those who help care for your child can take every day to brighten your child’s future. Many of your daily activities, from getting dressed to household chores, are great opportunities for bonding and learning with your child.

Here are 15 things you can easily work into your daily schedule to create wonderful early learning moments with your child from birth to age 3. They are simple and anyone who spends time with the child can do them. They cover four areas of your child’s development: **speech and communication**, **thinking skills**, **social skills** and **emotional knowledge**.

1. PAY ATTENTION TO HOW YOUR BABY COMMUNICATES.

Babies let you know their needs and feelings through expressions, sounds and cries. Let them know you are listening to them, even if they can’t use words yet, by looking at them, nodding, picking them up or talking to them.

2. REPEAT THE SOUNDS AND WORDS YOUR CHILD USES.

Have back-and-forth conversations with them. This will help them learn. It also leads to better communication skills later on.

3. READ, SING AND TELL STORIES TO THEM.

Reading, singing and sharing stories help your child understand the meaning of new words and ideas. Pointing out pictures while reading helps them understand the connection between words and objects. Singing makes learning sounds and language patterns easier.

4. TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU DO TOGETHER.

Whether it’s playing, shopping or simply folding laundry, talking about what’s going on helps them understand the meanings of words and leads to better communication skills later on.

5. EXPLORE WAYS TO PLAY WITH TOYS IN DIFFERENT WAYS.

Touching, banging, stacking, shaking and interacting with toys and everyday objects in different ways helps them use their developing muscles and support all their senses in new ways.

6. TURN EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES INTO PLAYFUL LEARNING MOMENTS.

Use everyday activities like dinner time as a chance to learn about colors, textures and tastes. During bath time, talk about the ideas of sink and float, and wet and dry.

7. ENCOURAGE THEM TO FOLLOW THEIR INTERESTS.

Children are more likely to learn from activities that excite and interest them. Pay attention to what activities your child enjoys the most.

8. ASK YOUR CHILD QUESTIONS.

Get them thinking by asking questions. When reading a book, you can ask, “where is the doggie?” or “which balloon is red?” and have them point out the answers.

9. TALK THROUGH YOUR CHILD'S FEELINGS WITH THEM.

Help them understand what they are feeling by using words to describe what's going on. "You are really mad you had to get out of the bathtub now." This helps them learn to deal with their emotions and get better at sharing what is going on with them emotionally.

10. LET OLDER TODDLERS MAKE CHOICES.

Giving your child a choice helps them learn to make decisions. It can be simple choices like, "do you want to eat your snack before or after we take a walk?"

11. STAY CALM WHEN YOUR CHILD IS UPSET.

Learning to wait for something you want now, to share with others and to work out your problems with friends isn't easy for a toddler. It's natural for them to get frustrated and upset. When they are upset and see you stay calm, it helps them feel safe and get back in control.

12. GIVE POSITIVE COMMENTS WHEN YOUR CHILD DOES SOMETHING WELL.

This helps them feel good about themselves and more confident, and willing to try new things.

13. HELP YOUR CHILD BECOME A GOOD PROBLEM SOLVER.

Give encouragement and support that they need to be successful, but don't completely solve the problem for them. Let them figure things out when they can.

14. LET YOUR CHILD DO THINGS FOR THEMSELF.

As they get old enough, let them try things for themselves, like helping sort socks or putting their clothes away. This teaches them a feeling of accomplishment and independence. It shows them that helping others is something they can feel good about.

15. ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO KEEP TRYING.

They won't always get things right the first time. Help them continue trying with words like, "You're working so hard. You'll get it. Sometimes it takes a lot of tries!"



To find more ways you can help your child develop with early learning from 0 – 3, go to www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter