



Tip: Always layer activities with lots of language, interaction, and imaginative play.

Craft, Fine Motor Skills and Pretend Play: YOU'VE GOT MAIL

All Ages: Make the conversation simpler for the younger children and use simpler envelopes. You can also add some folded pieces of paper which the child will unfold and fold back.

Materials needed: Old shoe box, junk mail

What to do: Make a mailbox by decorating an old shoe box or cardboard box and cutting a slit in the top. Fill it with your junk mail for your child to open. "Not only does this develop fine motor skills as she opens the envelopes and takes out what's inside, you can use it to teach your child basic concepts,". "Talk about the pictures, colours, and letters; help her sort it by size, shape or colour; or count the pieces. You can also layer in imaginative play by playing post office, or playing store with the coupons."

Variation: Pay postman pretend play: Use pretend stamps, and ask the child to deliver the letters to the people in the house. Next round, ask them to collect letters and mails from people and post it back in to the mailbox. Use a cap and add a bag for the child to collect mail in.

Skills learned: Develops an understanding of basic concepts, fine motor skills

Pretend Play - DRESS-UP TIME

All Ages

Materials needed: Old clothes, costumes

What to do: Haul out a pile of old clothes and let your child play dress-up.

Older Children - Can enact characters you make up for a story or something they are familiar with
Younger Children - Children have developed a sense of humour after 1 year of age, Wearing things don't match or adding an accessory which is odd such as oversized hats or glasses will surely tickle their funny bone. Try going about your regular household chores wearing such items, it's surely going to follow up with lots of fun and laughter.

Skills learned: Creativity, imagination, language skills, and social development



Craft - DECORATE A CRAYON CARRIER

The goal of this activity is to Use things that are created by children. If you don't want to make a crayon carrier, it can be a pencil stand or anything else that is used at home. When children see their creations being used, especially by adults in the house, they will feel very proud of themselves! 😊

All Ages (it doesn't have to be crayons, it can be anything that they are used to carrying around or using at home)

Materials needed: A resealable Ziploc bag, glue stick, pompoms, crayons

What to do: Cover a table with newspaper then set the supplies in front of your little one. Let your child use the glue stick to coat the Ziploc bag, then help him stick on the colourful pompoms. When the bag dries, have him fill it with his crayons. Next time you go to a restaurant, whip out the carrier and let him show off his creation. The child be excited to use their creativity again.

Skills learned: Motor planning, creativity

Game: TOY HIDE-AND-SEEK

Materials needed: Toy

What to do: Hide a toy somewhere in the house, and ask your child to find it. Explore with them, Say **Hot** when they are closer to the object they are seeking and say **Cold** when they are going in the wrong direction. As they get closer try adding to the drama by saying.... Hottttt hottttt hotttt.....VERY HOT or the opposite VERY COLD.

Older Children: Activity 1: Revise measurement vocabulary such as More/Less, Very, Not as much/Too much.

Activity 2: Revise Positional directions by directing child to the object. Examples: on top of, below, under, above, to the right, to the left, behind, in front of etc.

Younger Children: Activity 1) Restrict the activity to a smaller area and give clearer directions. Show them the object they are seeking first. Build vocabulary by helping the child describing the objects such as the colour, size etc.

Activity 2: This is a great sensorial activity. This activity will be good in a darker room. Use torch lights for the search, or hide several objects at one time and search using only torch lights.

Skills learned: Listening, problem-solving, social skills, and memory



Game: SIMON SAYS

All Ages – Give directions as per the child's understanding. With younger children give simpler directions, With older children you can use multiple directions in one command. Use some music in the background for this game to make it more fun.

What to do: Start out with simple directions—"Simon says, touch your toes"—then graduate to silly, more complex routines ("Simon says, tug on your left ear, then your right ear").

Variations: You can also encourage your child to jump, skip, catch something, and more.

Skills learned: Gross motor skills, following directions, and receptive language

Game: ALL ABOARD

Ages: Younger Children

Materials needed: Towel or blanket

What to do: Have your toddler sit on a towel or blanket and gently pull her around the room. Pretend the blanket is a train or a boat and that you are stopping at different places, like the zoo or wherever your imaginations take you.

Skills learned: Balance, pretending

Language, Self-Control and Expression: BODY TRACING

Materials needed: Large piece of paper or lots of newspapers, crayons

What to do: Have your child lie down on a large piece of paper and trace the outline of his body. "Because the child has to lay still to be traced, he learns self-control. "You can show him where the two eyes, nose, and mouth go, but if your child just wants to colour all over it, that's fine. Don't impose anything on him, just let him have fun with it."

Variation: If your child doesn't want to lie still, don't force him. Start with tracing just his hand or foot, or tracing your hand and foot.

Older Children: Colour and make your own features, Draw patterns and buttons on clothes. Spend some time colouring or decorating as the child pleases.

Younger Children: The adult can draw, the child can help identify the body parts

Skills learned: Sense of self, self-control, and identifying body parts/language skills



Game: STOP! GO!

All Ages

What to do: Play games that involve starting and stopping, such as "Red light, green light."
Developing self-control will eventually help children negotiate, compromise, and work out conflicts without losing their temper.

Older Children: Variation: Do your exercises or create an obstacle course, The child continues the circuit as long as the light is green. They stop when it is red.

Younger Children: Variation: Play Music and dance. As soon as the music stops, the child has to stop.

Skills learned: Self-control

Art, Collage, Language: EXPRESS YOURSELF

Ages: Older Children

Materials needed: Facial features cut out of magazines, paper, glue stick

What to do: Cut out different noses, eyes, hair, and other features from old magazines, and give them to your child to glue on to a blank paper circle. Encourage her to make funny creatures or silly faces. "Talk to your child about the pieces and how to glue them down, but don't be too directive with it," "Ask a lot of 'wonder questions,' like "I wonder what would happen if you put the pieces down without the glue?" and 'I wonder why the glue is getting all over the table?' Childhood is about learning new facts and applying them to theories, so help them make theories."

Variations: Let her rip up the pieces or color on the collage with crayons after the glue has dried.

Skills learned: Creativity, language

Game: BALL PASS

Ages: Younger Children

Materials needed: Play tunnel, softball

If you don't have a tunnel, take a yoga mat, roll it up and tie a string around it so it doesn't open up - Use it as a tunnel.

What to do: With you and your child at opposite ends of the tunnel, take turns lifting each end to roll a softball back and forth. "This can take some trial and error for your kiddo to get the hang of, but it's great motor planning practice and takes teamwork.

Skills learned: Motor planning, understanding cause and effect, teamwork



Music and Drawing: DRAW YOUR FAVORITE SONGS

Older Children:

Materials needed: Paper, crayons

What to do: As you sing one of your child's favourite songs, draw a simple picture of what is happening in the lyrics, then hand your child the paper to draw something else mentioned in the song. For example, Mother would sing "The Itsy-Bitsy Spider" to her son, first drawing the spider and then having him draw his version of the rain. Go back and forth until the song ends.

Younger Children:

The adults can do all the drawing. This is a great way for children to get a visual reference of the words in the rhymes.

Skills learned: Language skills, creativity, storytelling

Pretend Play: A LITTLE CONVERSATION – This a great activity for understanding what your child thinks and believes. During doll play, the role is reversed as the child is now the parent to the doll or the toy. The child will imitate the parents' actions and use similar behaviour that they have been used to.

Tip: You may observe something that may amuse you or even concern you. Please remember children are very impressionable at this age, so this is a good way to see what thoughts your children have along with having lots of fun.

All Ages

Materials needed: Doll or plush toy

What to do: Hand over the doll or toy, and encourage your child to hold, talk, dress, and take care of it. Talk to the doll the way you would talk a child, and encourage your child to do the same.

Younger Children: Children who do not talk can imitate actions and listen to the adult as they learn to care for the doll. This encourages social emotional skills.

Skills learned: Social, language and fine motor skills, creativity, and imagination