

The Whole Child

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February

1. Gross motor skills

Play "follow the leader" with your child, taking turns to be the leader, performing actions which the follower must copy. Do actions like crawling, jumping, skipping, hopping, clapping hands, rolling, sitting. Use words to describe your actions too and have fun.

2. Fine motor skills

Manual Dexterity: Encourage your child to clip clothes pegs around wide-mouthed top of a large plastic bottle while you hold it, if necessary.

3. Visual skills

Visual closure: Pick a few different flowers and then carefully remove one petal from each flower. Place the flowers and the petals in front of your child and ask her to match the petals to the correct flower.

4. Auditory skills

Clap hands in time to the rhythm of some pleasant (children's) music. You can also create a mini-orchestra by letting your child use the following home-made instruments:

Drum – wooden spoon on an upturned cake tin or plastic container

Cymbals – two wooden blocks

Shaker – plastic bottle half-filled with rice

5. Mathematical skills

Counting Skills: Let your child count her body parts. Ask her questions like:

How many eyes (ears, noses, mouths, hands, feet, etc) do you have?

How many ears does the (dog/cat/doll/teddy) have?

6. Language skills

Active Language Development: Choose a storybook that has a lot of 'busy' pictures. Browse through the book and talk about new objects with your child. Enjoy reading together and building your relationship.

"You are not reading a book to a child; You are sharing a book with a child." (Jay Heale)

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7. Faith-building

Tell your child that you and your partner are not perfect parents. Moms and dads often make mistakes too, mistakes that disappoint and hurt children.

(If we were perfect parents, our children probably wouldn't really need a relationship with the Lord.) Encourage your children from a young age to let Jesus meet all their needs and give them the love and affirmation that they so badly need.

Allow God to heal you of hurts and disappointments in your own life, caused by your own imperfect parents.