

The Whole Child

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May

1. Gross motor skills

Balance: Encourage your child to hop on the spot on one leg. By the middle of his second year he should be able to do this. He should also be able to walk backwards quite easily by now.

2. Fine motor skills

Manual dexterity: Encourage your child to play in the sand. Make sand castles together. Bury a small object like a coin in the sand and let her look for it. Sand play also encourages imagination and develops tactile perception.

3. Visual skills

Visual sequence: Encourage your child to build an alternating pattern with two different colours of construction blocks. Alternatively, this could be done by threading alternative coloured beads on a lace. Later on, for variation, do two of each colour at a time.

4. Auditory skills

Auditory Discrimination: Encourage your child to play along to music with drums (a wooden spoon on an upturned bowl) rattles (rice in a plastic bottle) or to play the xylophone, if you have one.

5. Mathematical skills

Numerical relations: Clap your hands once or twice. Ask your child to tell you how many times you clapped. To make it more difficult, clap behind your back so she can't see. For variation, ask her tell if you clapped 'many times' or once. Repeat the game, letting your child clap.

6. Language and thinking skills

Numerical relations: Talk about animals and objects that are opposites;

- An elephant is big but an ant is small.
- A tree is tall but a child is short.
- A brick is heavy but a feather is light.
- The mug is full but the glass is empty.

Talk about things that are few, many, light, heavy, short, tall, high, low, fast, slow, long, short, thin, thick, etc.

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7. Faith-building

Encourage your child to say prayers with you. At first glance, this may seem to be just a ritual, but your child is watching what you do, hearing what you say and learning that you are speaking to someone who is invisible. You are including her in a relationship with your Lord, whom we pray, she will one day accept as her Lord and Saviour too.