



INFANT

Learning Games!

Children Learn Through Play

As you know, children of all ages learn through play. Here are a variety of fun games to play with your baby. Enjoy!

Searching for a Voice

Call your baby's name from a distance so he can practice locating your voice. This helps him learn how to locate the source of a sound.

What you do: Place your baby on his back and move to a position a few feet away. Speak his name softly several times until he attempts to turn toward the sound, "James, can you see me? I'm over here." Allow time for him to try to find you. He may not turn his head until he realizes he cannot see you in front of him. Smile, pick him up, and cuddle him when he successfully turns to look at you. If he cannot find you, move closer to him while you continue talking until he sees you. Move to another position in the room and repeat the game until your baby loses interest or becomes fussy.

Where Is It?

Move a toy out of sight, make a noise with it, and then return it. Seeing a toy disappear and always immediately return helps your baby begin learning that things are still there when they are out of sight.

What you do: Support your baby on your lap so that you can see her eyes. Hold a toy where her eyes are looking. Move the toy slowly and notice the way she follows it with her eyes. After a few moments, give her the toy to play with while offering kisses and encouraging words. "You watched Mommy move your keys back and forth and up and down." Keep the game interesting by changing the direction of the moving object and by using different toys. Choose a noisy toy and move it out of her sight after she has had success following a toy with her eyes. Observe how she reacts when she can no longer see or hear the toy. Make a noise with the hidden toy and then bring it out for her to see and play with.



*Activities should be done under the supervision of an adult or older sibling.

Please see below for some additional activities that you could try with your child.

Show Feelings

Smile and laugh to show your feelings as you raise your baby and say “up” or lower your baby and say “down”. Expressing your happiness encourages your baby to join in the expression, too.

What you do: Hold your baby around her chest and under her arms. Smile at her. Raise her over your head gently and slowly saying, “Up” or “Up you go.” Lower her saying, “Down” or “Down you come.” Then hug her close to your body. Maintain eye contact with your baby as you lift her up and down to help her feel connected to you. Smile, laugh, and talk so she can tell by your face and words that you have happy feelings about the game and that her feeling of excitement is appropriate. If this is new to your child, she may look a little worried or gasp when she is lifted high in the air. When she sees you smiling, she will begin to feel good about the movement. Go slowly so you do not startle her with movements that are too fast.

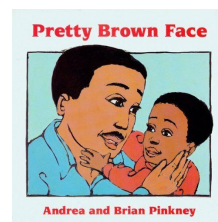
Look at the Beautiful Face in the Mirror

Touch and name parts of your baby’s face as she looks in the mirror. Your baby will gradually begin to recognize herself and her body parts as you point them out to her.

What you do: Sit with your baby or stand holding her in front of a mirror. Talk to your baby while she looks at her reflection. “See the baby? See Annie in the mirror?”

*Activities should be done under the supervision of an adult or older sibling.

If your child has not had many experiences with the mirror, she may be surprised to see you in two places. Acknowledge the new experience. “Yes, Mommy is holding you, and you see Mommy in the mirror.” Touch your child’s mouth and say, “mouth”. Try the game with different body parts, especially parts of her face, to help her recognize each one.

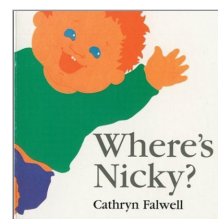


Suggested Book: *Brown Face*
by Andrea and Brian Pinkney

Where Did It Go?

Invite your baby to look for an object that he watches you hide. Because he sees you hide the object, over time he will understand that objects that are hidden can be found.

What you do: Show your baby a special toy. Talk about the toy and let him explore it while you keep it in your hand. Hide the toy behind your back or in your pocket making sure he watches. Ask about the toy. “Where did the doggie go? Where is it? Can you see it?” If he does not look for the toy or looks only at the place where the toy was, show it to him again before partially hiding it from view. Offer positive feedback when he finds it and bring it out for him to hold. “You found the dog! He was hiding behind Mommy’s back!” Repeat the game by hiding the toy in a new place.



Suggested Book:
Where's Nicky?
by Cathryn Falwell