

Help Your Baby Learn - 13 to 24 Months

Month Thirteen

- Using a play phone pretend to have a conversation with your baby. Answer the sounds she makes.
- Observe what your child is doing and talk to him about it.
- Encourage your child to turn the pages of her books by helping her pull the pages apart.
- Help your baby place a round shaped object into a simple shape sorter or form-board.

Month Fourteen

- Encourage your child to drink small amounts of liquid from a cup without a lid.
- Say the name of the object when your child points to it.
- Show your child how to build a tower by using 2 or 3 blocks and encourage him to try. Larger blocks will be easier to balance at first.
- Put some of your child favorite toys and/or interesting household objects into cabinets or drawers that are at her level. Change the items frequently to maintain her curiosity.

Month Fifteen

- During stressful or hectic times permit your child to use a soothing object such as a blanket or stuffed toy.
- Speak to your child using parallel talk: say what your child is doing; name what he is looking at and playing with. (i.e. You are carrying the big red ball.)
- Provide pull toys and boxes that are easy to push and pull over the floor.
- Give your child a simple book about animals. Make the sounds of the animals together.

Month Sixteen

- Try to anticipate times that will be frustrating for your child. Be prepared with activities to distract her and redirect her attention elsewhere.
- Give your child simple directions to follow such as "Take off your hat", "Find your cup", "Bring me a diaper". Praise him when he responds.
- Provide many opportunities for your child to use her hands and fingers together. Play with play dough, squeeze water out of sponges and crumple paper.
- Give your child plenty of time to explore and experiment with different ways to use his toys or when learning a new skill.

Month Seventeen

- Disruptive behavior sometimes indicates a need for attention with a special person. Make time in your schedule to hold, hug, kiss, and cuddle with your child.
- When your child labels an object, expand on what he says by telling him what it does or how it is used.
- Let your child throw a ball, beanbag, or a rolled up sock into a laundry basket or a box to practice her aim.
- Allow your child to use blocks to build up, knock down, and build up again.

Month Eighteen

- Give your child access to child-size items like a broom, telephone, or pots and pans so he can imitate the things you do.
- Take your child to visit new places. Talk to her about the places she goes and the objects she sees or explores. Describe the things you do too.
- Use a large ball for your child to kick toward a goal.
- Allow uninterrupted time for your child to play with puzzles and interlocking blocks so he can build his attention span.

Month Nineteen

- Make a photo album with your child and have her point to or name people in the photos. Talk about recent experiences she has had with these special people.
- Recite nursery rhymes, poems, and songs, throughout the day.
- Dance with your child to music on tape, television, or the radio.
- Provide objects with moving parts like sorters, zippers, tape measures, radios, clocks, and items with buttons, latches, and switches. Give him time to figure them out but stay near if he needs help.

Month Twenty

- Give your child simple responsibilities such as emptying trash baskets, picking up toys, helping to put away laundry. Praise her for her help.
- Have your child point to and explain functions of his body parts-you see with your eyes, hear with your ears, smell with your nose.
- Use a short sturdy step stool to help your child practice stepping up and down. Hold her hand at first and then let her try on her own.
- Anticipate how your child will likely solve a problem. Stick close by to guide him and keep him safe. Provide help if he needs it. Applaud his successes.

Month Twenty-One

- Because of your child's emerging independence and due to a decrease in appetite your child may become a picky eater. Continue to offer small portions of each food you are serving. Remove the plate if she begins to play with her food. Serve healthy snacks between meals.
- Expand on your child's two-word sentences. When he says, "Car go", then you say, "The red car goes fast".
- Assist your child in learning how to get on and off a riding toy until she is able to do it alone.
- Play outside. Inspect the flowers, leaves, dirt, and rocks. Watch him closely; he may still use his mouth to explore these objects.

Month Twenty-Two

- Permit your child to feed herself, wash her own hands, and do other jobs you feel she is capable of managing.
- Make a scrapbook with your child, using magazines. Let him pick out picture he likes and then talk about them.
- To practice balance ask your child to bring a large ball or stuffed animal from across the room to you.
- Cut a cereal box or a foam place-mat into 2 or 3 parts for her to put together.

Month Twenty-Three

- Occasionally provide time for your child to be around children his age. He will enjoy playing alongside other children and observing them. He will not be able to share yet.
- Slow down the pace of conversation to allow your child to formulate a response. She needs more time to gather her response than an older child will. Be patient.
- Assemble a bean box. A lidded storage container filled with dried pinto beans and various measuring cups, bowls, and spoons to pour, stir, and fill with.
- Take your child to many different places such as the store, park, and zoo. Tell him all about the things he sees and experiences. Explain what things are made of and tell him how different objects are used.

Month Twenty-Four

- Give her many opportunities to take off her own clothes and shoes. Encourage her to help sort, fold, and choose the clothes that she wears.
- Listen attentively when your child tries to express himself. You should be able to understand about half of what your child says.
- Offer your child an assortment of blocks in different shapes, sizes, and colors to practice stacking, building, and balancing. Copy what she builds as a way to encourage her interest.

- Help your child to notice details in objects. Show him small objects in books and magazines, or on cereal boxes. Ask him to find and point to the same details.

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