Small Motor
Things To Look Forward To

Here are some ideas for children newborn to three.

**Heads Up** (Newborn-1 month) - Your baby will have a clenched fist with fuzz and other debris inside. Pry his fingers apart, and collect the lint and hair. Your baby will hold an object for a long time, even forgetting that an object is in her hand.

**The Looker** (1-4 months) - The baby will grip on contact like a fly catcher. He is learning how to open his fingers. He drops his toys as a result of this newly learned behavior. He holds his toys longer because of muscle development. He has greater control of his grip. Provide toys and activities to enhance this learning and development. Play games during changing and feeding time.

**Creeper-Crawler** (4-8 months) - Your baby is learning the art of self-feeding by eating with fingers. Give baby small pieces of soft food. Fasten toys on a short 6 inch piece of string, and attach to the high chair tray. Baby will have fun tossing the toys off and reeling them back in again.

**The Cruiser** (8-12 months) - By now your cruiser can hold objects using her thumb and first and second finger. Your cruiser is either right or left handed, and both of you know which one it is. Help your toddler develop his eye-hand coordination by giving him lots of activities that involve sorting, stacking and picking up. The cruiser has better control of his body. He can sit alone and is learning to stand and walk. His balance is better developed, and he will enjoy playing with blocks and toys that he can manipulate with his fingers.

**The Walker** (12-18 months) - Your walker will enjoy learning how to put beads or macaroni on a string only to take them off and do it over and over again.

**The Doer** (18-24 months) - You might want to make a simple busy book with zippers, laces, large buttons, snaps and self-gripping closures. Your doer may enjoy spending time with all these different objects to manipulate. Your child will enjoy pasting different things onto paper or cardboard. Have an assortment of leaves or pasta for him to work with. He is about ready for one of his first math lessons—counting Cheerios as they are dropped into a plastic container. Another activity could be lining the Cheerios into rows.
The Tester (24-36 months) - Your three year old can focus on a task for as long as ten minutes if he is engaged in an activity that interests him. He has now learned how to manipulate scissors and enjoys cutting and pasting. Let him create his own collages or mosaics. Encourage his artistic endeavors and give direction when needed, but let him develop his own style of art. Your tester can do many self-dressing tasks because he has learned how to snap and zip. He may be able to button the button when they are big enough for his little fingers to grasp. Keep these little fingers busy with lots of creative and manipulative activities.