



Dramatic Play

Things To Look Forward To

Here are some ideas for children newborn to three.

Heads Up (Newborn-1 month) - Make faces for your newborn. She will love seeing the different faces and soon start to imitate your simple actions such as sticking out her tongue. Hold your baby up to the bathroom mirror. Soon she will realize that when she moves, the baby in the mirror moves too. Place a plastic or stainless steel mirror in the crib securing it to the side spindles, or place a mirror securely on the wall in the changing area. Dance with your newborn. She will experience the rhythm which she will be using later for skipping, running and hopping.

The Looker (1-4 months) - Use “Grandma’s Glasses” as a changing time song/game with your baby. Continue with the dancing and the mirror games. Play peekaboo behind a handkerchief.

Creep-Crawler (4-8 months) - Play a mirror game. While holding your baby in your arms, look into the mirror and change your facial expressions. Make a happy face, sad face, silly face, etc. How does your baby respond to the different expressions you make? Some simple props such as a ring of old keys and a soft baby brush will keep baby busy. There are probably other things around the house that your creeper will enjoy playing with. Make sure that you have child-proofed your house with cupboard and drawer latches. A bright bottle of floor cleaner may look like something fun to play with. Get down on your hands and knees and crawl through your house looking at the world through the eyes of a four month old. What do you see that could be a potential danger to your infant? Correct the hazards immediately.

The Cruiser (8-12 months) - Your Cruiser will enjoy various “kitchen capers.” Have a drawer or basket with plastic bowls, wooden spoons, etc. for your baby to play with. While holding baby, play the start/stop dancing game. Have someone else stop and start the music while you dance together. Your baby will learn to anticipate your actions.

The Walker (12-18 months) - Children at this age do not have a fully developed sense of imagination, but instead they are discovering who they are. Start collecting a “costume trunk” with wigs, hats, gloves and clothing from the attic or thrift stores. Dress-up will be fun for years to come. Your child may find clothes and self-dressing to be a very important part of his/her life. By eighteen months, most toddlers can remove a simple garment such as sweat pants and cardigan sweaters. Your walker will copy animals that he has seen or heard about. Don’t be surprised if your toddler suddenly becomes a dog or cat. This is also the age of beginning to imitate adults.

The Doer (18-24 months) - This is the age of the beginning of a blooming imagination. Your Doer doesn’t have to have the real thing to play. A cracker can be a car and a cardboard box can be a train. The broom makes a wonderful stick horse and the dish towel is the perfect Superman cape. Your child will want to dress-up with little assistance from you. Don’t be surprised if your child demands to remain in the dress-up clothes all day – even if they are on backwards. The fact that the child dressed him/herself makes it special. An obsession with hats or capes, etc. is normal for children this age.

The Tester (24-36 months) - Your three year old can act without props. This is the age of charades. Your child can pretend to be anything he has seen or done. Ask your three year old to describe what it would be like if he was a giant, a tiger, a dinosaur or a bird, etc. Even though your three year old can act without props, it is also the age where props are necessary for other forms of dramatic play such as store or house. He may also need an occasional suggestion for their use as well as an audience or customer in their playtime. Your living room may become a “store” complete with empty salt boxes, egg cartons, and milk bottles. Old purses and wallets complete with play money make playing store more fun.