

List of Interactive Activities for Children of Various Ages

0-6 months:

-Tummy Time: Place your infant face-down on a soft surface to encourage motor development (moving their head, arms, legs, etc.). Always be present during this activity. For infants that have a more difficult time staying face-down, check out a few tips by clicking the link below:

http://www.babycenter.com/0_tummy-time-how-to-help-your-baby-get-comfortable-on-his-bell_1439985.bc

-Narrate your day: Talk to your baby! If you find it difficult to talk to your infant, you can simply narrate what you are doing while you are with your baby.

-Read: Reading at any age is beneficial to your child. You may use simple board-books or bubble-books during bath time. Although at this age your child may be more interested in tasting the book, it is never too early to start reading!



Note: Bubble books are great to soothe teething as well.

-Infant Massages: Use baby oil to gently massage your infant to increase relaxation, nurture bonding relationships, and more. For specific tips on how to massage your baby and information on the benefits of infant massage, check out the links below!

<http://www.parents.com/baby/care/newborn/how-to-massage-baby/>

<http://www.infantmassageusa.org/learn-to-massage-your-baby/benefits-of-infant-massage/>

-“One Too Many” – Gather three small objects that your baby will find interesting, such as three small colorful blocks. Hand one to your baby and hand over the second one so that both of your baby’s hands are full. Try to hand over the third object. Your baby will have to decide to drop one object in order to take the third. Do not be surprised if your baby spends ample time trying to gather all 3!

-“Out of Reach” - Take an interesting item, such as a favorite or new toy, and set it down just outside of your baby’s reach (make sure the object is not so far that your child would lose interest). Your baby will try to wiggle and scoot towards the object (this may help make tummy time a more interesting activity).

<http://lovelivegrow.com/45-things-to-do-with-a-6-month-old-baby/>

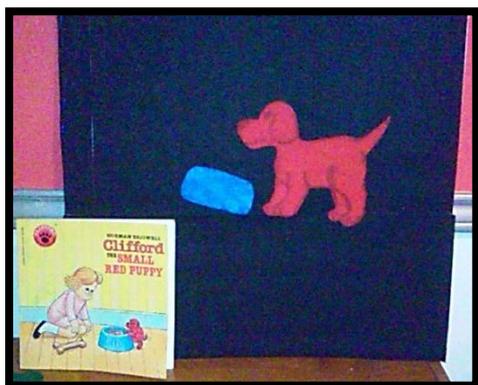
-Make a Texture Book: Use various textures such as felts, fabrics (silk, something rough, etc.), cardstock/construction paper, hole puncher and a ribbon (to hold the book together) to create a texture book for your little one to explore.

<http://www.imperfecthomemaker.com/2012/06/15-independent-activities-for-one-year.html>

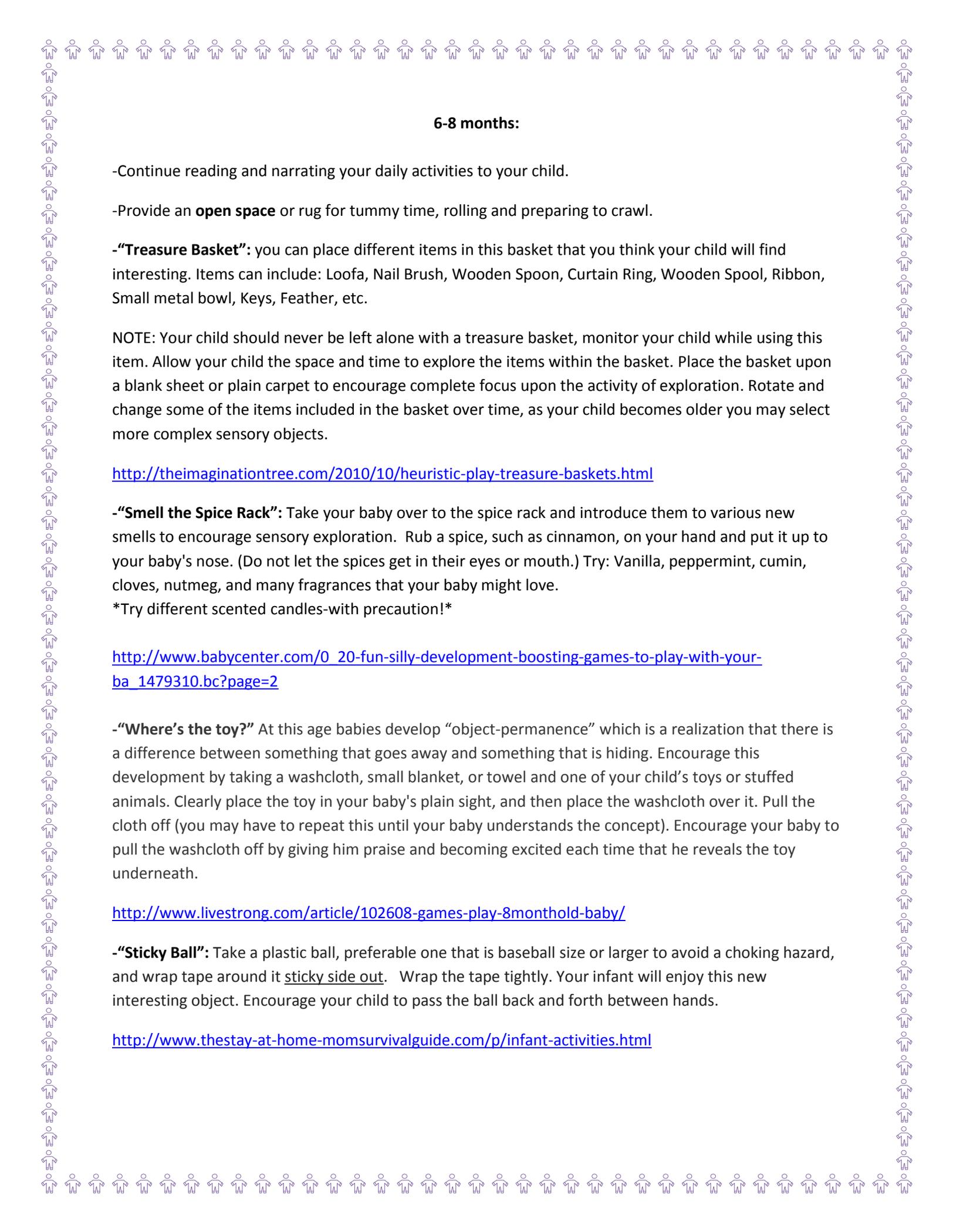


-Make Varied “Sock Puppets”: Use tube socks, googly-eyes, glue, and other felts/cutout fabric pieces to create a puppet for your child to love!

-Create a “Felt Board”: Use felt-glue to adhere felt to a poster-board to create a felt-board. Using different felts you can trace and cut-out different characters from favorite books, animals, people, etc. You can use this felt board during story time and your child will love to create their own stories using their felt characters as they grow older. The felt characters easily adhere to the created felt-board.



You could also look online for different character templates to make tracing and cutting the shapes easier. Simple shapes, numbers, and letters also make great felt pieces for older children.



6-8 months:

-Continue reading and narrating your daily activities to your child.

-Provide an **open space** or rug for tummy time, rolling and preparing to crawl.

-**“Treasure Basket”**: you can place different items in this basket that you think your child will find interesting. Items can include: Loofa, Nail Brush, Wooden Spoon, Curtain Ring, Wooden Spool, Ribbon, Small metal bowl, Keys, Feather, etc.

NOTE: Your child should never be left alone with a treasure basket, monitor your child while using this item. Allow your child the space and time to explore the items within the basket. Place the basket upon a blank sheet or plain carpet to encourage complete focus upon the activity of exploration. Rotate and change some of the items included in the basket over time, as your child becomes older you may select more complex sensory objects.

<http://theimaginationtree.com/2010/10/heuristic-play-treasure-baskets.html>

-**“Smell the Spice Rack”**: Take your baby over to the spice rack and introduce them to various new smells to encourage sensory exploration. Rub a spice, such as cinnamon, on your hand and put it up to your baby's nose. (Do not let the spices get in their eyes or mouth.) Try: Vanilla, peppermint, cumin, cloves, nutmeg, and many fragrances that your baby might love.

Try different scented candles-with precaution!

http://www.babycenter.com/0_20-fun-silly-development-boosting-games-to-play-with-your-ba_1479310.bc?page=2

-**“Where’s the toy?”** At this age babies develop “object-permanence” which is a realization that there is a difference between something that goes away and something that is hiding. Encourage this development by taking a washcloth, small blanket, or towel and one of your child’s toys or stuffed animals. Clearly place the toy in your baby's plain sight, and then place the washcloth over it. Pull the cloth off (you may have to repeat this until your baby understands the concept). Encourage your baby to pull the washcloth off by giving him praise and becoming excited each time that he reveals the toy underneath.

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/102608-games-play-8monthold-baby/>

-**“Sticky Ball”**: Take a plastic ball, preferable one that is baseball size or larger to avoid a choking hazard, and wrap tape around it sticky side out. Wrap the tape tightly. Your infant will enjoy this new interesting object. Encourage your child to pass the ball back and forth between hands.

<http://www.thestay-at-home-momsurvivalguide.com/p/infant-activities.html>

8-12 months:

Continue: Reading, Narrating, and Expanding prior activities such as the treasure basket.

-Organize similar toys into smaller baskets rather than placing all of them in one basket/ large toy box to encourage your child to begin to categorize items and clean up after himself.

-Create a Safe Obstacle Course! If your baby is beginning to crawl, scoot, or perhaps even walking, they will enjoy the challenge of having to move over things. (This fun, safe, and affordable activity is great for developing their gross motor skills too!) Items may include: Pillows, phone books, tired parents, laundry, etc.!

http://www.babycenter.com/0_20-fun-silly-development-boosting-games-to-play-with-your-ba_1479310.bc?page=3

-Sensory Balloons: Create sensory balloons by placing differently textured items: corn, rice, pinto beans, etc. into a balloon using a funnel. Tightly knot the balloon so the contents will not spill out. You may draw faces on the balloons to catch your child's attention. Have your child feel the different contents of each balloon.



<http://www.creativeplayhouse.mumsinjersey.co.uk/2012/05/sensory-balloons-toddler-stress-balls.html>

-"Can of Ribbons": Use an empty wipes container or small can (coffee can or other small can with a plastic lid). Cut an X or holes into the lid and round out the edges if you use something other than a wipes container. You can place ribbons of different colors and textures or other items that are large and easy enough for your child to reach in and take out.

*You can continue this activity as your child grows by replacing the items with smaller, yet safe, materials that require more concentration in order to grasp (such as pom-poms).

<http://mamaot.com/2013/07/30/toddler-fine-motor-activity-with-pom-poms-and-a-cool-whip-container/>



-"Bath-Time Fun!": Try this activity during bath time. Use a gentle water pistol or other squirt toy. Ask your baby to locate different body parts. For example, "Where is your tummy?", and answer by gently squirting the body part ("There's your tummy!"). For more ways to make bath time exciting for your little one, go to:

<http://www.bathactivitiesforkids.com/2012/12/bath-time.html>

12-18 months:

-Stack & Pour! : Use a large basin, cups and containers of various sizes, a funnel, and a spoon or two. Lay out the cups, containers, funnel, and let your toddler watch as you scoop up water, sand, or cornmeal from one to the other, or into a larger container. Show them how to stir the water with the spoon.

-Egg Carton Sorter: Use an empty egg carton and items such as pom-pom balls of different colors to create a simple puzzle or sorter for your child. Show him/her how to sort the pom-poms. At this age, your child may be unable to correctly identify the colors, but introducing them to this hands-on activity will help them become familiarized with the concept as you expand it based on their developmental needs. <http://www.education.com/activity/article/egg-carton-color-sorter/>

As your child gets older, create a counting game using pinto beans or other objects (counting bears, beads, etc.) Assign a number to each egg place-holder in the egg carton and help your child add the correct number of beans in each holder.

-“Stick ‘em”: Use masking tape or Velcro strips, to stick some of your baby's toys to the ground (hard floors work best). Pretend that the item is stuck and that you need their help. Your baby will work at unsticking the stuck toy. Change the locations of the toys and ask baby to help you find the stuck toys!

<http://www.babble.com/baby/15-activities-to-play-with-your-9-12-month-old/>



-“I’m gonna get you!”: This one never gets old. As baby becomes more mobile, encourage their physical development by playing chase (whether baby is crawling or walking).

- Painting! : Use non-toxic children’s paint, newspaper (or anything else that may work to cover the work area), construction paper (or any type of paper), and perhaps some paint brushes (though optional). Join in on the fun and help your little one create prints of their hands on the paper. Identify the colors as your child explores this sensory activity.

<http://www.craftychild.com/finger-painting.html>

NOTE: A plastic coffee cup with a lid makes a great no-spill paint holder.

http://www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk/want-to-do-more/reuse-more/reuse-action#.VIIO-tLF_Ak



-Bubbles! : Blow bubbles and encourage your child to chase and try to pop them. Count the bubbles as they are released. You can add food coloring to the bubble mixture to create differently colored bubbles. Name the colors as they are released. If paper is available, help your child blow the colorful bubbles onto it to create fun bubble art!

18-24 months:

Continue: Reading and narrating your daily activities. Expand your child's treasure basket.

-“Pom-Pom Drop”: Tape empty toilet paper rolls to a wall/area that is easy for your child to reach. Create a pattern in which a pom-pom may be dropped in and may continue to fall through several toilet paper rolls. Your child will enjoy dropping the pom-poms and trying to figure out where they will end up. You can continue this activity with older children by creating a color sorting activity.

<http://handsonaswegrow.com/toddler-pom-pom-drop/>

<http://ppppizzazz.blogspot.com/2013/03/pom-pom-blue-fun-for-toddlers.html>

-“Pipe-cleaner Bracelet-Making”: Begin by tying a knot at one end of the pipe cleaner to serve as a place holder. Show your child how to make a bracelet by using large beads to bead pipe cleaners. This activity helps your child develop fine motor skills.



You can expand this activity for older children by attaching a piece of tape/paper with an assigned number to each pipe cleaner. Older children can practice counting by beading the correct number of beads per pipe cleaner.

<http://www.rockabyebutterfly.com/2012/02/hands-on-counting-activities.html>

-“Beanbag Basketball”: Use several small beanbags and a large container, such as a laundry basket or trash can. Join your toddler on the floor and hand him a beanbag. Show him how to throw the beanbag into the basket. Note: A small hula-hoop also works and would not be thrown over by the bean bags.

http://www.babycenter.com/0_lets-play-beanbag-basketball_10309535.bc

-“Everyday Matching”: Many everyday items (socks, spoons, shoes, mittens) can help your toddler learn about matching. Hold up an object and ask if he or she can find one like yours. Name the objects while playing the game.

-“Show Me”: Use this activity when reading to your toddler. Ask him or her to find an object in a picture. Take turns. Your child may even tell you their own version of the story.



24-36 months:

-Continue reading, narrating, and expanding your child's treasure box!

-**Animal Matching Activity:** purchase different animal figures of any sort. Print images of the different animals to match the animal figures. Glue the images to index cards or cardstock. Your child can practice matching the image to the figure.

<http://danaspinkribbon.blogspot.com/2013/02/50-montessori-activities-for-2-year-olds.html>

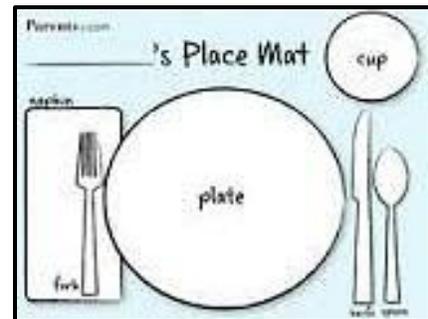
-**"Button Snake":** Create a button snake by cutting out squares of felt of various colors. Attach a button to the end of a ribbon. Tie the opposite end of the ribbon to serve as a place holder. Make holes in the middle of each fabric square large enough for the button to go through. Show your child how to "button" the fabric squares. This activity stresses fine motor development and may require some practice before your child is able to do it on their own.



<http://happyhooligans.ca/button-snake/>

-**Piggy Bank/Coin Purse:** Use spare change around the house for your child to practice dropping coins in a bank that is easily opened from the bottom. You can use a small coin purse to keep the coins in after your child has completed the activity.

-**Table Setting:** Take a plain cloth placeholder large enough for you to trace a plate, a cup, and utensils onto the placement using a permanent marker: Show your child how to set a table by placing each item in its correct "traced" spot. This activity can be completed at each meal time!



For a free printable placemat template, click the link below!

<http://www.parents.com/fun/printables/other/table-setting-place-mats/>

-**"Outfit of the Day Basket":** Encourage your little one to clothe themselves by providing a complete outfit for them in an easy to reach area or basket. Show your child that this is where he/she will find what to wear every day. Your little one can practice putting on his/her shirt, pants, and socks (with supervision and a little help of course).

-**"Pom-poms in a cup":** Use clothespins, pom-poms, and a plastic cup for your child to practice "pinning" pom-poms and placing them in the cup. The pinching and releasing of the clothespin helps develop fine motor skills. <http://handsonaswegrow.com/strengthen-fine-motor-skills-clothespins/>



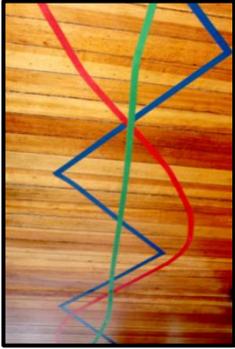
-**"Colorful Colander":** Show your child how to insert pipe cleaners into the holes of a colander to help develop fine motor skills.

<http://www.sweethappyife.com/2011/activities/fun-activities/pipe-cleaners-colander-busy-toddler/>

36 Months+

-Continue: reading, narrating, and expanding the treasure basket!

-"Walk the Line"- Use colored duck-tape to create fun patterns on the floor for your child to walk on/through. This activity helps children improve their balance.



<http://handsonaswegrow.com/fun-kid-activity-lines-of-colored-tape/#.T26f7XhuHzI>

-"Fruit Faces": Encourage your toddler to enjoy eating healthy by making snack time into a creative and yummy activity! Use any combination of bananas, apples, pears, kiwis, grapes, blueberries, segments of orange or tangerine, etc. Show your toddler how to make a face using the pieces of fruit (for example: blueberries for eyes). Some toast and peanut butter or other spread could also be used as a base (or head) for the fruit face!



*You can also use vegetables to make "Veggie Faces" or draw patterns on a disposable plate and have fruits/veggies ready for your child to use as fillers. <http://www.educents.com/50-things-to-do-this-summer>

-"Cereal Counting": Using a small cup for you and another for your child, and bits of cereal or fruit, take turns placing one piece of cereal or fruit in your child's cup ("One for you") and one in your cup ("one for me"). Take turns. Dump out your child's cup and help count the pieces.

-"Categorizing": Create two different categories or groups of things, people, or animals using cut-out pictures from magazines. For example, you may make two groups such as dogs vs. food, toys or clothes. Use two boxes (a shoebox or any other container would work) to place a picture of a dog in one box and of food in the other (or whichever categories you choose). Have your child put additional pictures in the correct box whilst helping him or her learn about different categories.



-"Feather Color-Sorting Activity": Use assorted clay colors and matching feathers, googly eyes, and orange felt triangles to create the bodies of differently colored birds in which your child can stick the matching feathers to. <http://www.fantasticfunandlearning.com/feather-color-sorting-and-fine-motor-activity.html>

-"Easter-Egg Alphabet Sorting": Take a permanent marker and write the capital letters of the alphabet on the top halves of the Easter-eggs. Write out the lower-case letters on the bottom halves (make sure that the colors of same letter halves match!). For older children you can mix up the colors so that the activity will be slightly more difficult.

<http://www.momto2poshlildivas.com/2012/04/play-to-learn-5-fun-ways-to-play-learn.html>

