

Infant Activities (Birth-12 Months)

Social-Emotional Support: Grateful Fingers



Finding small moments to connect with your infant brings closeness and a sense of security. Share your grateful spirit by sitting your infant on your lap and taking her hand in yours. Take one finger at a time and massage/ wiggle each one while sharing something you are grateful for in the moment. It can be feeling your infant's body against yours or having the quiet moment to simply sit together, etc. End with a wiggle on the thumb and whisper to your infant, "I am grateful for you!"

Cognitive Development: Brain Boosting Veggies

Did you know that leafy green veggies have vitamins that boost positive brain activity? For infants ages 10 months and up, incorporating green veggies into daily meals helps your infant to get used to a variety of smells and textures. Infants have a more sensitive palate than adults so blending new veggies into milder ones like potato can decrease the potency of new tastes and smells. This can help make trying new veggies a positive experience for both of you!



Playful Parenting: "I Am Going to Eat You Up!"



Enjoy playful bonding time with your infant when he is alert and rested. As you cuddle, say in a playful tone, "I am going to eat you up!". Pretend to eat him up by giving his 'opu playful honi. Enjoy the moment but be sensitive when your infant sends signals that he is pau. He will often let you know when he is done by looking away or beginning to fuss. Watch for his cues and end on a playful note with your bellies FULL to the brim with joy and aloha!

Toddler Activities (12-24 Months)

Social-Emotional Support: Belly Breathing



Teaching your toddler how to take deep breaths can help him get through moments when he is frustrated. Having something concrete to focus on shows your toddler how his breath connects to his body. Have your toddler lay down and place a small stuffed toy on his belly. Have him slowly inhale and notice the toy moving up, then exhale and observe the stuffed toy move back down. Encourage your toddler to try and keep his stuffed toy balanced on his belly while slowly taking those deep belly breathes.

Cognitive Development: Take Out Lunch

Packing up for a picnic at the beach? Have your toddler kōkua with the preparation. Cut large and small pieces of foil for your toddler to problem solve and pick the right sized foil for each food item. Figuring out how to wrap different shaped foods challenges your toddler's mind and fine motor control of her fingers. When you get to the beach, have your toddler try to remember what is wrapped in the foil before opening it to eat. So much learning wrapped up in one activity!



Playful Parenting : Run for Color



Movement is the best way to put a smile on your toddler's face! Beginning to recognize colors and their names is exciting for a toddler. Draw large circles of different colors with sidewalk chalk on your driveway. Name each color while pointing to the different circles. Then challenge your toddler to "run to the color" when you call out it's name. You can also play this game by using the Hawaiian words for each color or drawing different geometric shapes.

Preschooler Activities (24-48 Months)

Social-Emotional Support: Appreciation Meal



Cover your dining table with craft paper and have keiki draw special place settings for each member in the 'ohana. Encourage keiki to draw pictures to express her appreciation for each 'ohana member. You can prompt keiki by saying “Draw your favorite thing to do with sister.” or “Decorate my setting with my favorite colors.” Keiki will produce a visual reminder of appreciation and it also serves as a terrific conversation starter when you sit and eat together!

Cognitive Development: Mindfulness and Movement

Teaching keiki how to slow down and pause develops the part of the brain that is associated with learning and memory. However, keiki are not developmentally ready to be still for long periods of time. Take mindfulness to the backyard! Walk slowly with keiki and notice the small details in your environment. Feel the textures of the different leaves and rocks. Look up and notice the different shapes of the clouds. Listen and count how many sounds you hear. Smell the special scents of the various flowers. Say to keiki, “It feels good to stop and pay attention to things around us.”



Playful Parenting: Pool Noodle Tag



Finding ways for keiki to socially interact and play outdoors with others while maintaining a safe physical distance can be challenging. This activity gives your keiki experience playing with others while still practicing safe distance. Play the classic game of tag but use pool noodles to gently “tag” each other. Although the noodles are soft and bend, stay involved in this game and remind keiki to gently tag others below their waist as he chases!