

# Infant Activities (Birth-12 Months)

## Social-Emotional Support: Bedtime Pilina

Bedtime bonding forms an intimate pilina (*connection*) of trust and aloha with your infant. Swaddling your infant in a quiet room with warm lighting sets the stage for pilina. Repurpose old holiday lights and a thin branch from your yard to create a DIY nightlight. Simply wrap the lights around the branch and allow them to dangle. Tie string to the branch and hang the light from a hook in your infant's room. *(Always make sure all hanging cords are out of your infant's reach.)* When it's bedtime, turn the lights on which will cue your infant that it's time to rest. His room will sparkle like little fireflies in the sky!



## Cognitive Development: 'Ele'ele Keo'keo Story Time

Images in 'ele'ele (*black*) and ke'oke'o (*white*) not only support your infant's visual development, but stimulates your infant's brain. The eyes and brain work together when gazing at these colors, creating critical brain connections. Watch your infant fixate on 'ele'ele and ke'oke'o when you borrow "Hello Bugs" by Smriti Prasadam from your local library. Your infant sees clearly between 8-12 inches away so enjoy cuddling him on your lap while you read this book together. He will have the best seat in your hale (*home*)!



## Playful Parenting: Wiggle and Wink

When your infant gazes at your face, he is learning to decode the tone of your voice and your unique facial expressions. Be playful and lift your infant up so you are both facing the bathroom mirror. Wiggle your nose and say, "Ihu (*nose*)! You have one too!" Then blink your eyes and say, "Maka (*eyes*)! My maka are brown just like yours." The movement of your ihu and maka will catch his attention and bring a smile to your face!



# Toddler Activities (12-24 Months)

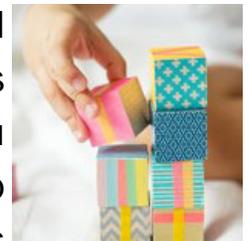
## Social-Emotional Support: Flutter Little Pulelehua!

Research shows that spending time in nature renews your energy so you can focus on your keiki. Make your next outdoor adventure extra joyful by making pulelehua (*butterfly*) wings! Collect pua (*flowers*) with your toddler and press them in a heavy book until dry and flat. Then cut out pulelehua wings out of clear contact paper. Have her decorate the wings with the pressed pua then seal with another sheet of contact paper. Use a glue gun to attach elastic straps to the wings and watch your toddler flutter in the yard!



## Cognitive Development: Ho'omau Through Frustration

As your toddler master how to walk and talk, her personal independence begins to bloom as well. These emerging skills can bring newfound frustration. Allowing your toddler to ho'omau (*persevere*) through a frustrating moment is hard, but vital to your toddler's critical thinking skills! If your toddler gets frustrated over a task like stacking blocks, pause and wait for 60 seconds instead of coming over to stack the blocks for her. This may be just enough time for your toddler to ho'omau and try another way. When she does, simply notice and say, "You figured out a way to stack your blocks! Ho'omau!"



## Playful Parenting : Big and Little Sandy Steps

Head to a sandy beach with your toddler and encourage her to take tiny "tip toe" Hawaiian Happy Face spider steps and then big "flat foot" elephant steps along the shore. Don't forget to be playful and make the same steps alongside your toddler! Look back at the prints you both created and encourage your toddler to notice which ones are big and which ones are little. Can she match your elephant prints with hers? Are they same-same or different? Now have a Hawaiian Happy Face spider race right up to the water and cool off those toes!



# Preschooler Activities (24-48 Months)

## Social-Emotional Support: Ho‘o Hoaloa Through Distance

It's natural for your preschooler to be interested in hoaloa (*friendship*) with other keiki his age. If you are limited with face to face interactions and want to try a virtual playdate for keiki, puppets are a great way to pretend play and socially connect through a screen. Try a themed playdate to draw on commonalities. Got bug lovers? Have each keiki make a simple bug puppet with paper, crayons and glue prior to their virtual playdate. Then let the "bugs" talk stories and enjoy their special hoaloa together.



## Cognitive Development: Bugs Up Close and Personal

Use a recycled plastic bottle to create a bug lab so you and keiki can get up close and personal with the insects around you. Cut an opening in the bottle with an utility knife then have keiki create a temporary habitat in the bottle with leaves and branches. (*Keep sharp objects out of keiki's reach.*) Tape a small piece of screen over the puka when keiki is pau. Then collect insects to study and place them in the jar. Encourage keiki to tell you about his observations. Don't forget to gently release the insects back to their habitat when lab time is done!



## Playful Parenting: Would You Rather?

Need a new idea to get through a long drive with keiki? Take turns playing "Would You Rather?" Ask keiki, "Would you rather be a koa caterpillar or a koa butterfly?" or "Would you rather be a bug that lives makai (*ocean*) where it's warm or mauka (*mountain*) where it's chilly?" Encourage keiki to look outside and help come up with options to quiz you! This interactive game sharpens the executive function of your keiki's brain and gives you a glimpse of his individual preferences. "Wouldn't you rather" have fun on your trip to town?

