

Infant Activities (Birth-12 Months)

Social-Emotional Support: Rhythm of Gratitude

A mele (song) can help regulate your infant's emotions and signal to him that he is safe. Try singing Oli Mahalo (*gratitude chant*) when calming your infant at the end of the day. Your infant decodes words by the tones of your voice so using your own personal rhythm to this oli by Kēhau Camara will naturally cue your infant to its meaning. Sing, "Mahalo e Ke Akua (*Gratitude to God*), Mahalo e nā kupuna lā 'eā (*Gratitude to our ancestors*), Mahalo me ke aloha lā (*Gratitude with love*), Mahalo me ke aloha lā (*Gratitude with love*)." Your gentle tones and slow, steady rhythm will settle you and your infant into lōkahi (*harmony*).



Cognitive Development: Sticky Note Peek-a-Boo

Games like Peek-a-Boo teach your infant the cognitive skill of object permanence. Object permanence is understanding that things still exist even when you cannot see them. Try this variation on the classic game of Peek-a-Boo. Place small animal toys into a muffin tin. Then place sticky notes over some of the animal toys.



Show your infant how to use his fingers to lift the note and peek inside. He will have the same happy thrill as seeing your face peek-a-boo behind a blanket. Your infant is also learning to use his pincer grasp to peek under the sticky notes.

Playful Parenting: Umbrella Mobile

Sometimes being playful with your infant can also mean taking a rest together! Find an umbrella and tie some of your infant's small stuffed animal toys and bright colored objects to the inside frame out of his reach. Then place a cozy blanket under the playful umbrella for you and your infant to cuddle and rest on. Make up funny stories about the toys and animals floating up above. Your infant will enjoy looking at the colors and hearing the silly tones in your voice.



Toddler Activities (12-24 Months)

Social-Emotional Support: A Hui Hou Role Play

Stuffed animals are often treasured comfort items for your toddler. Give your toddler's favorite stuffie the extra kuleana (*responsibility*) to help her process anxiety provoking situations. Have your toddler and a favorite stuffie take turns blowing honi (*kisses*) of "A Hui Hou" (until we meet again.) Toddlers learn best by repetition so encourage lots of "A Hui Hou" practice with different stuffed animals. You can also play hide and seek with your toddler's stuffie and reinforce, "When stuffie goes away, she always comes back to us! Just like Mommy and just like Daddy!"



Cognitive Development: Brain Boost to Town

Got a long drive ahead with an antsy toddler? Prep this easy activity for the car and enjoy some quiet time while your toddler develops his hand-eye coordination and problem solving skills. Use painters tape to secure small animal figures onto a cookie sheet. Then show your toddler how she can "set the animals free!" Your toddler will focus intently on pulling the tape up, freeing the animals and then taking the tape off her fingers. This simple activity creates a wonderful cognitive challenge for your toddler while safely buckled up in her car seat!



Playful Parenting : I Am a Monk Seal!

When your toddler engages in physically active games, she is developing her self esteem! Physical movement creates awareness in your toddler's limits and also the challenges she can overcome. Be a role model of physical confidence and play this animal activity game together. Set a timer and complete an animal movement for 10 seconds with a rest in between. Sink into a low squat and snort like a wild pua'a (*pig*). Stand on your tip toes and flap your arms like a Hawaiian Hoary Bat. Army crawl across the floor like a Hawaiian Monk Seal.



Preschooler Activities (24-48 Months)

Social-Emotional Support: How Does Kitty Feel?

Sharing aloha with animals creates a sense of *lōkahi* (*harmony*) for your keiki. Understanding what an animal needs to thrive develops empathy and teaches your keiki how to live in *lōkahi* with other living things. If you are unable to have a pet in your home, you can still teach pono (*good*) interactions with animals who share your environment. Encourage your keiki to think from an animal's perspective. Chasing kitty may seem fun but it could also scare kitty. Always keep your keiki safe by supervising his interactions with any animal.



Cognitive Development: DIY Cardboard Matching Game

Matching is a rich cognitive experience for your keiki. It teaches him logical thinking about similarities and differences. Create an animal matching activity from cardboard. Cut out animal shaped bodies with slits at the bottom and various sized U-shapes for legs. Have your keiki help you paint and color the pieces. Then encourage him to match each animal body with its matching colored legs by sliding the U-shaped pieces into the slits. Give this activity an extra cognitive boost by inviting your keiki to be creative and make up unique animals with colors and patterns of his own imagination!



Playful Parenting: Animal Shadow Parade

Take advantage of a sunny day and put on an animal shadow parade! Collect various sized toy animals, masking tape, paper and crayons. Head outside and tape the paper down in a long line. Place the toys on the paper and use crayons to trace their shadows. Experiment by moving the animals in different positions and observe how that changes their shadow. Once you and keiki create a long parade of shadow tracings, remove the toys and decorate the shadows to fun music. Dance, sing and decorate! What a fun pretend parade!

