

# Infant Activities (Birth-12 Months)

## Social-Emotional Support: Lōkahi Swaddle

Swaddling can bring infants lōkahi (*harmony*) when they are over-stimulated. It can also help infants sleep sounder. When you wrap your infant up, use a lightweight blanket to keep them from getting too warm. Place infants' hands up on their chest so they can self-soothe and put their fingers in their mouth. Your infant will feel safe in a swaddle as long as it is not too



constrictive. Be present and wish your infant well. He ali'i ka la'i, he haku na ke aloha (*Where peace is, there love abides also*). Pūku 'i, M.K. and Varez, D. 'Ōlelo No 'eau: Hawaiian proverbs and

Poetical Sayings. Bishop Museum Press. 1983.

## Cognitive Development: Pilina Kino

Infants love to reach for their manamanawāwae (*toes*) and pull them up their waha (*mouth*) to explore. This is a cognitive milestone for infants as they begin to understand how things move in relation to each other. Mālama i na keiki with a mele (*song*). Point to each body part and sing, "Two little maka (*eyes*)



to look around. Two little pepeiao (*ears*) to hear each sound. One little niho (*nose*) to smell what's sweet. One little waha (*mouth*) that likes to eat."

## Playful Parenting: Ho'oma'ema'e Time!

Infants make important brain connections when they observe familiar gestures by others. At 6 months of age, infants can begin to imitate behaviors. After snack time, get two damp washcloths and give one to your infant. Make an animated expression of excitement and say, "Ho'ema'ema'e (*time to*



*clean*)!" Take your washcloth and playfully wipe parts of your face. Encourage your infant to grasp the other washcloth and imitate you. It may not be with the same finesse as you but enjoy the moment of playful connection with your infant. Ho'oma'ema'e! All clean!

# Toddler Activities (12-24 Months)

## Social-Emotional Support: Pūliki for Teddy

Toddlers are exploring with their senses every day. When toddlers receive a loving, appropriate touch, brain function and learning improves. Mālama i na keiki with pūliki (*hugs*) during the day. Your pūliki can be a playful end to a game of chase or the best remedy for a frustrating moment. You can even create a pūliki corner in your home for your toddler to give and receive comfort. Place a large pillow or stuffed animal in a special area for your toddler to pūliki.



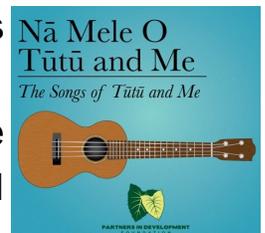
## Cognitive Development: Brush the Niho

Introducing age-appropriate self-care tasks is exciting for toddlers! Toddlers develop cognitive skills when they practice following the steps to a task. They may not be able to brush their own niho (*teeth*) yet, but they can assist by handing you the next item needed. Draw pictures of the steps to brush the niho and post it up near your bathroom sink. Point to each visual cue as you move through the steps. This will help your toddler make rich brain connections. Let your toddler be your assistant and kōkua (*help*) you with this important self-care task.



## Playful Parenting: I Lōkahi Ke Mele

Creative movement gives toddlers time to move their bodies and find lōkahi (*harmony*) with different beats and rhythms. They learn what their bodies can do and how to coordinate large and small muscles. Borrow keiki music from your local library and make up hula to the mele (*songs*). Encourage your toddler to le'ale'a (*be playful*) and take turns dancing hula to a quick tempo and then to a slow one. Notice the mele your toddler wants to repeat and say, "This mele brings you lōkahi! Let's hana hou (*do it again*)!"



# Preschooler Activities (24-48 Months)

## Social-Emotional Support: Countdown to Change

Preschoolers are more likely to feel *lōkahi* (*harmony*) when they have concrete information about changes to their routine. Prepare your preschooler for a new routine with a countdown paper chain. Write down positive things you will experience with this change on the strips of paper. Then connect the strips and create a paper chain. Tear off a strip each day and read it together to reinforce positive feelings on what's ahead. Your preschooler will be filled with certainty and *lōkahi* as they experience something new in their life!



## Cognitive Development: 'Āina Break

Preschoolers are developing cognitive skills as they learn to focus and problem solve through challenges. This is hard work and the path to *po'okela* (*excellence*)! Encourage an 'āina (*land*) break when your preschooler is overwhelmed or frustrated. Step outside together and *hanu mai* (*inhale*) and *hanu aku* (*exhale*). Point out how spending time outside gives the brain a break. Say, "The grass is helping you feel 'olu'olu (*calm*) again! Mahalo nui grass!" When your preschooler heads inside, their brain will be in a problem solving state and ready to tackle the challenge at hand.



## Playful Parenting: Kilo at Snack Time

Preschoolers are beginning to make connections that their senses help determine their personal preferences for things. Test out your senses together and make snack time playful. Pull out a variety of different food items to sample and snack on. Have your preschooler cover their eyes, touch the food and try to guess what it might be. Then take a moment to smell it. Finally have your preschooler taste it and see if they can guess what it is. Which textures, smells and tastes did your preschooler prefer? Now it's your turn to wear a blindfold!

