

Infant Activities

Birth-12 months

'Okakopa | October

Social-Emotional Support: My First Visit to the Kauka



Building relationships with community helpers begins the first time you meet your infant's kauka (doctor). In traditional Hawaiian culture, the 'ohana entrusted their kauka for healing. Take time to get to know the medical professionals who care for your infant. Ask questions that help you understand your well baby visits. Feeling calm at the kauka's office sends an unspoken message of pu'uhonua (safety) to your infant that the kauka is a safe person to trust.

Cognitive Development: Slide, Wipe and Laulima!



At 6 months, infants move from shaking items in their hands to sliding and rolling them across surfaces. Use this developing cognitive skill as a way to practice laulima (cooperation) after manawa 'ai (meal time). Cut up a sponge into various sized pieces. Then show your infant how the sponges slide and wipe off the high chair tray. Your infant can practice sliding different sized sponges back and forth. Connect this new skill to helping laulima after manawa 'ai is all pau (over).

Playful Parenting: The Three M's to Hawai'i



The moana (ocean), makani (wind) and manu (birds) were the three M's that brought life to the Hawaiian Islands. Pretend you are your infant's island and they are the 3 M's that bring life to you! Have your infant feel the current of the moana by gently bouncing and swaying them on your legs. Then lift them high and low in the sky to ride the breeze of the makani. Last, hold their hands and move their arms up and down like the flapping wings of the manu. Embrace your infant with aloha like the islands embrace you.



Toddler Activities

12-24 months

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Social-Emotional Support: "Yes!" to Independence



At 12 months, you may hear your toddler use the word "no" more often. This is simply a sign that your toddler is developing independence. Role model "Yes!" responses when your toddler shows independence in a helpful way. When bath time is pau (finished), have your toddler use a special "laulima (working together) bin" to load up bath items while you drain the water. Notice and say, "Yes! That was helpful!" "Yes!" responses acknowledges your toddler's emerging abilities.

Cognitive Development: Community Helper Teams



Toddlers are beginning to understand how to categorize and group things. Use your toddler's hands and create different colored handprints with non-toxic paint. Draw teams of different community helpers practicing laulima (working together). One handprint can be red fire-fighters working together to put out a fire. Another handprint can be green lo'i farmers caring for the kalo together. Point out how different teams laulima to do great things for our community. Mahalo community helpers!

Playful Parenting: Recycled Paper Sensory Bin



Rather than throw out used paper, have your toddler help you tear it into small pieces. Fill up a large bin or small plastic pool with your shredded paper and add bowls, tongs, and measuring cups to the bin. Hide small toys in the bin and encourage your toddler to scoop and dump to clear the way and find buried treasures. Then put in a call to the construction workers for kōkua (help). Use toy trucks or pretend to be the workers who come and clear the roads!



Preschooler Activities

24-48 months

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Social-Emotional Support: We Mahalo Our Community!



Gratitude helps keiki understand other's feelings and improves overall social interactions. Show your appreciation for your community helpers by making a mahalo sign for your front yard. While you draw and decorate your sign together, ask your keiki questions about what they think a police officer's main job is or what a lifeguard might need in order to help someone at the beach. Then laulima (work together) to hang the sign on your fence to show your appreciation!.

Cognitive Development: Ki'i Pōhaku Play



Hawaiians carved ki'i pōhaku (images in stone called petroglyphs) to document things that were significant. Play a ki'i pōhaku based guessing game with your keiki at the beach. Have your keiki use the handle of a shovel or a stick and draw items that represent meaningful parts of your island community. Say, "Let's draw something you noticed when we were mauka (inland)? How about here? Makai (ocean)?" Enjoy your keiki's carvings and encourage your keiki to tell you all about them.

Playful Parenting: Recycle Bin Race



Get your bodies moving and have fun while organizing your recyclables. Place one bin for plastic bottles and one for aluminum cans in your driveway. Then challenge your keiki to sort the cans in their proper bin quicker than you sort the bottles. You will get extra steps by running back and forth sorting recyclables, and keiki will get practice coordinating their gross motor muscles! Good luck with your recycle bin race!