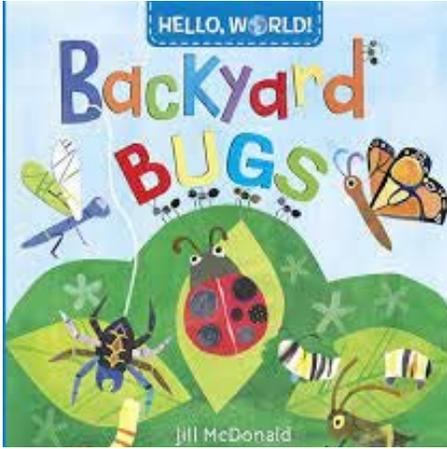


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Insects, Arachnids, Worms and Mollusks

Infant Activities

Social-Emotional Support: 'Ūhini Sees You!



Peek-a-boo does more than make your infant giggle. Seeing your face disappear and appear builds healthy attachment! Read "Backyard Bugs" by Jill McDonald, then set up a pretend backyard in your living room. Show your infant how you can be like an 'ūhini (grasshopper) and hide under a leaf, draping a blanket over your head. Then, "Peek-a-boo! The 'ūhini sees you!" Next time you are in the yard, turn over a leaf and see if any 'ūhini come out to say, "Peek a boo!"

Cognitive Development: The Shape of a Pinao



Has the pinao (Hawaiian Dragonfly) ever swooped by and caught your infant's eye? Bring the shape of the pinao up close and personal. Take a sheet of clear contact paper and outline the pinao on the non-sticky side. Tape the paper to the wall so the sticky side faces out. Give your infant pom poms to grasp and stick to the pinao. Your infant will likely enjoy the repetition of putting them on and off. Doing this develops fine motor skills while also getting a close look at the shape of a pinao!

Always supervise your infant with pom poms as they are a choking hazard.

Playful Parenting: Diaper Changing Fun



Photo: Courtesy of First Palette

Need a change of scenery while you change diapers? Turn clothespins into pe'elua (caterpillars) and pulelehua (butterflies) and hang them near your infant's changing area. Glue pom-poms on the pins to make the pe'elua bodies then glue paper wings on some and make pulelehua. Tack a ribbon to the wall and clip the pins on them. When your infant has a fresh diaper on, take a pulelehua off and flutter it over them. All clean! Ho'omaikai (All good!)

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Toddler Activities

Social-Emotional Support: Ho'omaika'i for our Insects



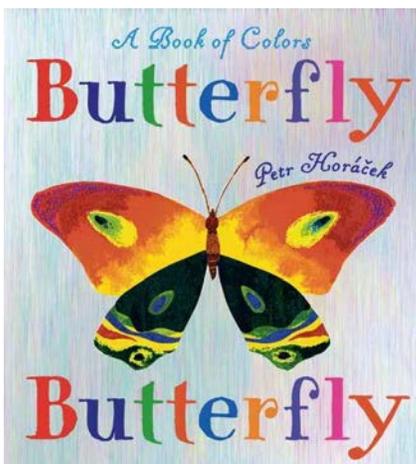
Everything has a unique role in our environment, including insects! Teaching your toddler to view insects with ho'omaika'i (honor, good) instead of maka'u (fear) promotes a social-emotional connection to the world around them. If your toddler feels tense when a bee buzzes by, put your hand on their back and take a deep hanu (breath) together. Say, "Bees help our plants! They are doing their job! Mahalo nui busy bee!" Your toddler will likely mirror your calm and positive outlook.

Cognitive Development: Fingerprint Insect Habitat



Turn your toddler's fingerprints into insects and create a habitat together! Have your toddler make fingerprints on paper with assorted colored washable paint. Once dry, use a black marker and add legs, antennae and wings to the prints. Draw rocks, trees, and rivers around the prints to create an insect habitat. Have your toddler add to the insect habitat by scribbling with crayons alongside you. Now take a walk in Hawai'i nei to see what you observe in your real life habitat!

Playful Parenting: Insect Story Time



Make reading about insects playful! Turn laundry baskets into giant insects. Cut large pulelehua (butterfly) wings from paper and have your toddler color them. Secure the wings onto the outside of a basket. Cut out long paper strips, color and fold accordion style to create 'ūhini (cricket) legs. Tape the legs to another basket. Invite your toddler to climb in a basket and be an insect while you read a related insect-themed book like "Butterfly Butterfly" by Petr Horacek or "The Very Quiet Cricket" by Eric Carle.

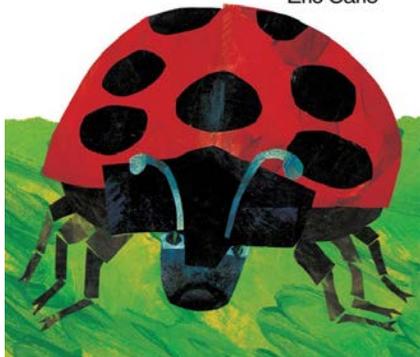
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Preschooler Activities

Social-Emotional Support: Ho'onauki Ladybug

The Grouchy Ladybug
Eric Carle



Teaching your preschooler to notice their feelings encourages social-emotional development. Read "The Very Grouchy Ladybug" by Eric Carle. After the story, ask your preschooler what makes them feel ho'onauki (grouchy) and what helps them feel aloha (friendly) again. Your preschooler learns best through play! Have them pretend to be a ho'onauki ladybug and find playful ways to help them get back to aloha again. Make up a joke or give a friendly ladybug honu (kiss).

Cognitive Development: Small Like a Hawaiian Blind Snake



Photo: Courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey

The Hawaiian Blind Snake is the smallest snake species and can be found in compost piles. Encourage your keiki to roll snakes out of playdough. Line up the snakes on a table and wonder with your preschooler how many pennies tall each one might be. Measure the snakes by lining pennies up alongside each one. How many pennies tall is the smallest snake? Do you think the Hawaiian Blind Snake is small like your snake? Notice your preschooler's responses and wonder alongside them.

Always supervise your preschooler with pennies as they are a choking hazard.

Playful Parenting: Let's Study Insects!



Developing kuleana (responsibility) in your preschooler can be fun! Pretend to be scientists who study insects in Hawai'i. Have your preschooler dress in clothes they think look like a scientist, e.g. swim goggles for safety glasses and a white shirt for a lab coat. Give them a clipboard and marker to record observations. Encourage your preschooler to draw the insects they notice outside. Collect a safe insect in a jar for a closer look then return it to the 'āina (land). It's fun to have kuleana studying insects in Hawai'i!