

## Helping my child learn through play: 12 to 24 months old

### IMAGINARY AND EXPLORATIVE PLAY.

Play Idea			How does it help my child?
<b>Pretend Play</b> 			<b>Helping my child learn through imitating</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraging the use of toys/objects that imitate adult activities (saucepans, hoovers, brushes, etc.)</li> <li>Inviting your child to 'help' with household tasks</li> <li>Imitating your child's actions, and then continuing play by adding additional steps (feeding dolls, pretend drinking)</li> <li>Playing dressing-up games with hats, shoes, etc.</li> <li>Adding descriptive words: "you're giving the teddy dinner! Teddy is hungry" "you are so kind"</li> </ul>
<b>Shape Sorter</b> 	<b>Mega Blocks</b> 	<b>Insert Puzzles</b> 	<b>Helping my child learn through exploring</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitating object manipulation, turning them around</li> <li>Encouraging problem solving and concentration</li> <li>Helping coordinate hands and eyes</li> <li>Stimulating visual perception (copying a structure such a train or a bridge)</li> <li>Playing to Identify and match pictures</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> To make it easier, model how to do it.</p>
<b>Crayons</b> 			<b>Helping my child learn through mastering their hands</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Painting or making marks with crayons.</li> <li>It helps develop strength and finger control.</li> <li>It is the beginning of hand preference.</li> </ul>
<b>Books</b> 			<b>Boosting my child's language</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pointing and naming pictures in books</li> <li>Talking about the story together while reading</li> <li>Encouraging imitating actions from the story (e.g. jump like the frog in the book, bark like the dog)</li> <li>Encouraging holding the book and turning pages</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Young children have likes and dislikes. Let them decide which books to read.</p>
<b>Football</b> 	<b>Push and pull toys</b> 	<b>Climbing</b> 	<b>Helping my child develop physical skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using a walker that is weighted on the front to promote and practice walking.</li> <li>Playing football to develop balance, coordination and kicking.</li> <li>Providing cushions or small and safe steps to climb under your supervision to develop strength and coordination.</li> </ul>

**Did you know?** Young children of this age will imitate much of the world around them. They learn through their experiences in their environment; for example, feeding themselves. Reading stories and naming objects is a great way to develop their language skills.

Play is how a child learns. This leaflet was created to provide ideas for activities which can support development of language, cognition and motor skills. The focus is not on specific brands of toys and this is not an extensive list. Development varies from child to child and if you have any concerns about your child speak to your GP or health visitor.

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## Tips to improve engaging in play with 12 to 24 months old:

### Building skills

#### Learning to play cooperatively



Promote spending time with other children.  
Let your child explore on their own but keep close supervision.

#### Encourage everyday skills



Encourage your child to use a spoon, and drink from a cup to promote independent self-feeding. Let your child help with getting dressed and undressed.

#### Language: chat with your child



Parents who talk more to their children help them develop larger vocabularies and more advanced sentence structures.

### Remember the importance of...

#### Imaginary Play



Let your child play with blocks, play kitchens, boxes, dolls, teddys, cars and trains.  
Encourage playing house, doctor or a make-believe tea party.

#### Pretend Play



When playing with your child, imitate his/her actions and then add interesting 'twists' such as inviting child to perform a new activity with the objects e.g use a napkin as a blanket

#### Social-Emotional Growth



Your child is learning to be more independent and "No" becomes his/her favourite word.

### Keeping your child safe...

#### Be there for your child



Be nearby while he/she plays and explores. Give your child the confidence to try new things and build independence.

#### Home Safety



Keep household chemicals and medicines out of reach.  
Lock away all dangerous items.  
Supervision is essential at this age.

#### Continue to avoid screen time



Some studies show that children who watch TV or have too much screen time can have poorer concentration and poorer language development.

**Did you know?** Children of this age have a lot of energy and can be fearless so they need close supervision. They need to learn about safety and have boundaries.

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