

Fun Things To Do With Your Child

Mirror, Mirror!



Look in the mirror with you child. Talk about each other's hair and eye colour.

Who is taller? Who is shorter? Can your child point to your elbow, shoulders, chin and neck. Recite the following poem and have your child act out the motions described.

I look in the mirror and who do I see!

A very wonderful, special me!

(point to self)

With pretty eyes all shiny and bright,

(point to eyes)

My smile shows my teeth, all pearly white.

(smile and point to teeth)

It certainly is great to be

This very wonderful, special ME!

(hug self)

By A. O'Connell

Homemade Finger-paint

Combine all-purpose flour with water to make a mixture that is the consistence of pudding. Add a little salt for texture. Use several drops of food colouring to tint the finger-paint.



Make Story Time Meaningful

When reading together, take turns pointing to the pictures and naming and describing the objects that you see. Ask questions such as these:

"What is the boy doing?", "Why is the girl wearing a coat?", "What colours do you see?" Have your child make up a story using only the illustrations. Stop the book in the middle and ask your child, "What do you think is going to happen next?"

When reading to your child, help him/her understand that words on a page are written from left to right. Place you child's index finger on the beginning word of the story. Then gently move his/her finger across the page as you read the first sentence. Continue in the same manner while reading the rest of the story. By reading to your

child, you will help him/her develop an interest in reading and books.

Taking Care of Books



Children learn respect for books by observing how adults handle them. Show that you value books by treating them with care and storing them in bookcases or appropriate places. Help your child learn proper ways to hold books and turn the pages. Remind your child to carefully replace books on the bookcase when s/he is through reading them.

Manners

Teach your child some simple manners such as saying "please" and "thank you" and saying "excuse me" when sneezing, bumping into someone, or interrupting a conversation. Set a good example for your child!

What's Gone?



Place four or five objects on the table in front of your child. Have your child look at the objects for 30 seconds. Then, have your child close his/her eyes. Remove one of the items and ask your child to name the objects that has disappeared. Take turns playing this game and increase the numbers of objects on the table as time goes by.

Keep it Dry



Show your child how to wipe his/her nose properly. Place tissue boxes in many locations around the house where they can be easily reached when needed. Teach your child to use a tissue or to sneeze or cough into his/her elbow. Give a lot of praise every time your child does this.

Buttons, Buttons



Give your child and adult sized sweater with large buttons and help him/her practice buttoning and unbuttoning. It's much easier for children to practice dressing skills on clothes larger than their own.

More or Less

During mealtime, serve your child and yourself uneven amounts of food. Ask, "Who has more juice?", "Who has fewer crackers?" Your child will eventually learn the words more/less, greater/fewer.

Wash and Dry



Stress the importance of washing and drying hands before meals and after going to the washroom. Make a special place for your child's comb, towels, brush, toothbrush and washcloth.

ABC's



Sing the "ABC" song often. Great times to practice are during bath time, play time, before bed, or while walking or driving. Your child will sing along and learn the names of the letters.

Count! Count! Count!



Have fun counting things around the house. Count the windows, chairs, beds, books, shoes, etc. Count stairs each time you use them. Count the steps to the mailbox or the sidewalk.

Scissors



Show your child how to hold the scissors. Give your child a piece of paper and allow him/her to snip it into small pieces. Use old magazines, newspapers or newspaper flyers and have your child cut out

pictures or letters that s/he sees. Remember to reinforce scissor-using rules: Cutting is to be done while sitting at a table. Your child will only use the scissors that you provide (blunt or rounded scissors). Any scraps go into the recycling bin and are not left on the table or the floor. Be sure to show your child the proper way to walk with scissors.

Following Directions

Give your child practice in following directions during daily household routines. For example, give your child directions such as, "Please bring me the newspaper.", "Please put the plate on the table.", "Please close the door." Add a second step and then a third step to the directions as your child's ability to follow improves.

What? Why? Where?

Encourage your child to think by asking questions such as, "Why do we take a bath (eat, sleep, wash our hands)?", "What do you do when we are thirsty (hungry, sleepy)?", "Where do we go to buy milk, fruit, stamps)?"

Ways to Praise

- ✓ That's really nice!
- ✓ Fantastic!
- ✓ That's great!
- ✓ Terrific!
- ✓ Wonderful!
- ✓ Thank you for _____!

Listening Walk



During a walk outside, stop and ask your child to listen carefully. Then ask your child to describe the sounds s/he hears.

'Put Me' Game

Give your child his/her favourite toy. Pretend you are the toy's voice and tell your child where to put it. "Put me *beside* the table.", "Put me *in front* of the chair.", "Put me behind the

couch.", "Put me between your feet.", "Put me beside the bed.", "Put me next to the door."

Shape Walk



Before going out for a walk, cut out a specific shape (circle, square, triangle, rectangle, diamond) from a piece of paper. Give it to your child and help him/her look for things that resemble the shape during your walk.

Feelie Walk



During a walk, stop several times to touch and feel different things such as a fuzzy leaf, prickly pine needles on a spruce tree, cool water, rough tree bark, or warm pavement. Let your child gather some nature objects along the way. When you return home, help your child make a nature collage.

New Faces



Give your child the opportunity to meet new children. Think about going to the park on a nice day or visit your local public library for story hours.

What am I?

While driving or waiting at the doctor's office or a grocery store checkout line, play this guessing game. Say, for example, "I live on the farm. I give milk and say 'moo'. What am I?" Or "I'm red and you can put me on French fries and hot dogs. What am I?" Or "I'm round, I can roll and I can bounce. What am I?"

What If?

Ask your child 'what-if' questions such as, "What if you were no bigger than your thumb?" Or, "What if your pet could talk?" Or, "What if you had wings?" Encourage your child to answer freely and accept all answers, even silly one, as 'correct'.

Make Playdough

You need:

- 2 cups plain flour (all purpose)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup salt
- 2 tablespoons cream of tartar
- Up to 1.5 cups boiling water (adding in increments until it feels just right)
- food colouring (optional)
- few drops glycerine (optional- adds more shine!)



Method:

- Mix the flour, salt, cream of tartar and oil in a large mixing bowl
- Add food colouring to the boiling water then into the dry ingredients (colour optional)
- Stir continuously until it becomes a sticky, combined dough
- Add the glycerine (optional)
- Allow it to cool down then take it out of the bowl and knead it vigorously for a couple of minutes until all of the stickiness has gone. * This is the most important part of the process, so keep at it until it's the perfect consistency!*

 - If it remains a little sticky then add a touch more flour until just right

Favourite Authors to Look For:

- ✓ Paulette Bourgeois
- ✓ Jan Brett
- ✓ Eric Carle
- ✓ Phoebe Gilman
- ✓ Mercer Mayer
- ✓ Robert Munsch
- ✓ Dr. Seuss
- ✓ Mo Willems