

Fine Motor

Activities to Help Your Child Grow and Learn

Your child is becoming more skilled at buttoning and zipping clothing. He can use a fork and spoon to feed himself. He can spread soft butter, hummus, or jam on bread. He can hold a pencil or crayon with his thumb and two fingers and likes to draw. He may be able to draw circles or other simple shapes or letters.



Button-Up Bear

Let your child dress a large stuffed teddy bear or large doll. Make sure the clothes have a couple of large buttons or snaps to let your child practice small finger work. You might even find some baby shoes with Velcro or other similar closures. Tying or buckling shoes is probably too difficult right now. Say, "What a good Papa Bear you are!"

Beautiful Necklace

Cut small circles or flowers out of colored paper, and punch a hole in the center. Then, cut a large plastic soda straw into pieces. Let your child string the flowers and straw pieces with a shoelace. Show her how to make a pattern—flower, straw, flower, straw. She may not always repeat the pattern, but that is okay. Tie the ends, and she will have her own beautiful necklace!

Picking Peas

Buy a few fresh peapods at the market. Show your child how to find the peas inside the shell. Give him a few in a plastic container to shell for himself. When he is finished, rinse off the peas and eat them. Yum!

Sidewalk Artist

Let your child draw pictures on the sidewalk or driveway with colored outdoor chalk. You can also give your child a small paintbrush and let her paint a picture with water. The painting will be fun, and so will the magic of evaporation: "Where did your picture go?"

List Maker

Give your child a small pad of paper with a pencil or pen. Ask your child to help you make a shopping list. Let him write his own "words," and even draw pictures. When you get to the market, ask him to "read" his list. He is learning the magic of writing by putting meaning with his scribbles.

Little Snipper

Let your child practice cutting with safety scissors. Show her how to open and close the scissors while you hold the paper. Later, show her how to hold the scissors in one hand while she holds the paper with the other. At first, snipping edges is great progress. If she snips off a few pieces, save them in an envelope. Later, she can glue the little pieces on paper for a special art project!

Notes:



Don't Forget! Activities should be supervised at all times by an adult. Any material, food, or toy given to a young child should be reviewed for safety. Always watch your child during mealtime.