

Personal-Social

Activities to Help Your Toddler Grow and Learn



Your toddler is becoming very independent. He will want to do everything by himself, even if he isn't quite able. He wants things *now* and quickly becomes frustrated if that doesn't happen. He enjoys playing close to other children but is not really able to share just yet. He likes to initiate simple household tasks and can put some of his toys away with help from you.

Baby Bear Beds

Make a bed for your child's doll or a stuffed animal using a shoebox. A small piece of cloth or a dishtowel makes a blanket or a pillow. Your child can help her baby go to bed at night. She can read a story and tuck him into his new bed. Don't forget a kiss!

Play Dates

Your child needs your help playing with others but enjoys being with other children. Stay close by when he is with other children. Have a lot of the same kinds of toys to help the children cooperate. Several trucks, cars, and dolls are easier to share than one of each kind. Let him know when he plays well with another child: "You gave the car to Jamie—you *shared*."

Dress-Up Time

Make a bag or box with simple dress-up clothing, such as hats, shoes, a purse, and other special clothes that are easy to wear. Your child may need some help but will have a lot of fun pretending. Don't forget to let her look in the mirror: "Look at that big girl all dressed up. Is that Mia?"

Playing House

Make simple playhouse furniture for your child. Turn a box over and draw burners to make a stove. Place a plastic tub or dishpan on another low box or table for "washing dishes." Add a doll, stuffed animal, plastic plates, cups, a dish towel, and some safe cooking utensils. Your child can "cook" at his stove while you cook dinner. Follow your child's lead. Talk and have fun!

Picnic Outing

Find a place to have a picnic with your child. The park or playground is fun, but your child will have fun even if the picnic is inside your home. Let your child help prepare some simple food and drinks for the picnic. Maybe the stuffed animals would like to join you. Let your child practice feeding herself.

Washing Hands

Help your child learn all of the steps in washing hands. You can do this before or after meals, before bedtime, and after going potty. Stay close by while he learns to stand on a stool, turn on the water, wash hands with soap, and rinse and dry hands with a towel. Singing a song makes it fun: "This is the way we wash our hands, wash our hands, wash our hands. This is the way we wash our hands, before we eat our food."

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 toddler during mealtime.