

Pre-School

A preschooler's "job" is to play and young children learn best through playing. The following are some ideas of ways to play with your child to help your child develop age appropriate skills. Remember to let your child take the lead, too, though and teach you new ways to play, as well! Remember to supervise your children and help them with these activities, and that not all of the following suggestions may be appropriate for your child.

Preschool Games and Activities:

- Stacking blocks or other items to form a tower
- Building with large interlocking blocks such as Duplo bricks
- Stringing noodles and cereal on pipe cleaner. You can also string beads, cereal, and noodles on a lace or dental floss, which is more challenging.
- Play-Doh—roll it out, flatten it into a pancake, use cookie cutters and stampers to make designs, form a snake, roll the letters of your child's name, squish Play-Doh "bugs", etc.
- Cardboard books—encourage your child to turn the pages one at a time, ask your child to point to items on the page, etc. Try to choose short books with fewer words, and remember it is not necessary that you read every word on the page! Talk to your child and engage your child in the book.
- Color (scribble!) pictures with your child and encourage them to repeat or name the colors of the crayons with you. Short, broken pieces of crayons work well to develop the small muscles of their hands. You can help hold your child's hand on the crayon if he or she has difficulty holding a crayon independently.
- Magna Doodles are great for children with a tendency to mouth crayons or other objects or break crayons, while still letting your child develop scribbling, drawing, writing, and fine motor skills.
- Color Wonder products are great for allowing kids to practice coloring without the mess!
- Puzzles and shape sorters are great for developing problem solving skills and visual perceptual skills. Start with puzzles with 6 pieces or less. You can also cover incorrect spaces to allow your child only 1-2 choices until they better understand.
- Scooping and pinching games with spoons, tweezers, clothespins, etc. help develop hand strength and coordination. Children can scoop sand, dried beans/rice/pasta, etc. They can use tweezers and clothespins to pick up cotton balls and other small items. Or they can simply practice squeezing the clothespin open.
- Sidewalk chalk can be used to make obstacle courses and mazes for children to follow to work on direction following, sequencing, and coordination.
- Ball activities such as rolling a ball, tossing a ball at a target, and hitting a ball off a T develop visual motor integration skills and coordination.
- Playgrounds/outdoor equipment—climbing, swinging, sliding, etc. develop the sensory systems and strength and coordination.

Apps—use should be limited and only with adult supervision

- Dexterity Jr.
- Bugs & Buttons
- Bugs & Bubbles
- Interactive Alphabet
- Match Blitz