

# DENVER DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES

18 TO 24 MONTHS

This side 18-24 months  
Over for 2-3 years

These activities are designed to help your child with the following basic skills:

## Small muscle and problem-solving skills.

### Activities to continue:

- Encourage your child to play with blocks and nesting toys, and to draw with crayons, water-based felt tip pens, and finger paints.

**Identifying Sizes and Shapes** – Cut holes of different sizes and shapes into the top of a shoe box. Give your child things to put through these holes.

**Puzzles** — Give your child simple puzzles with only two or three pieces. These can be bought or made by pasting a picture on a piece of cardboard and cutting it into large shapes.

**Modeling Dough** — Give your child “play clay” and show him or her how to pull, pound, and squeeze it into different shapes. Modeling dough can be bought or made. (Mix 1 tablespoon of salad oil with cup of water, then stir in 2 cups of flour and 3/4 cup of salt. Add food coloring if you want, and store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.)

## Speech and language.

### Activities to continue:

- Sing songs and tell nursery rhymes to your child. Try to get your child to join in.
- Talk to your child a lot, using short sentences, and read to your child each day.
- Encourage your child to tell you about things that (s)he does and sees.
- Provide some quiet time when the radio and TV are not on.

**Television** — Let your child see quality TV programs for children. Limit watching to *no more than 1/2 to 1 hour* per day. Watch TV with your child, and talk about what you see together.

**Following Directions** — As you talk to your child, begin to give such directions as, “Bring me the *red* sock,” or “Put your cup *on* the table.” If you need to show your child what to do, describe it in simple words.

**Picture Books** — Look at books and magazines often with your child. Try to get him or her to tell you what is happening in the pictures you look at together.

## REMEMBER:

Talk with your child — Play with your child —  
Enjoy your child!

## Large muscle strength and coordination.

### Activities to continue:

- Encourage your child to run; walk on tiptoes; play in water; kick, throw, and catch a large ball; and walk up and down stairs.

**Jumping** — Show your child how to jump, getting both feet off the floor at the same time. This is different than jumping off a low step. If your child needs help, hold hands for a few jumps. Or let your child try to jump over something like a small washcloth.

**Balancing** — Show your child how to stand first on one foot and then the other. (S)He may need to hold on to your hand or a chair when (s)he first tries this. Try to get him or her to turn loose and balance longer and longer each time you play this game.

**Riding Toys** — Let your child try riding toys of different types. Begin with toys that are pushed along by the child's feet on the ground.

**Moving to Music** — Young children love to move to music. Show your child how to swing, clap, and “dance” as you enjoy music together.

## Love, self-care, and socialization.

### Activities to continue:

- Hug and cuddle your child often.
- Plan outings with your child to stores, playgrounds, zoos, airports, etc.
- Soothe and calm your child when (s)he is fussy.
- Try to get your child to undress without help, to pick up toys, and to help with simple household chores.
- Encourage self-feeding with spoon and fork, and include your child in family meals.

**Cooperation** — Show your child that cooperating with others can be fun. Build with blocks, ice a cake, or put train tracks together.

**Buttoning** — Give your child a “button, zipper, and snap” book or toy. Or give your child old clothes that have large buttons, zippers, etc. Show your child how to fasten the items.

**Interactive Games** — Try to get your child to play games with another child such as “house” and “hide and seek.” This way (s)he will learn how to take turns with others.

**Playing House** — Make a play house for your child. Cut out windows and doors from a large cardboard box, such as a box that held a stove, or something big.

**Dressing** — Let your child put on any of his or her own clothing that (s)he can. As (s)he learns to do this, slowly give less help.

**Separating** — Begin to let a neighbor or relative watch him or her for short periods of time. This will help your child learn that you will return for him or her.

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