

3-6 Months

- 1. Peek-a-Boo-**You can begin this game with your baby at a young age, by covering your baby's face gently with a cloth and then quickly pulling it off and smiling as you say "peek a boo!". As your baby gets older she will be able to pull the cloth off her face herself. You can also play by covering your own face with the cloth and then you or your baby can pull the cloth off. **Skills:** Object permanence, separation, socialization, language.
- 2. Help Me Roll-**Place your baby on her tummy on a blanket on the floor, place toys to her side and attract her attention visually. If she does not attempt to roll off her tummy in order to reach toys, gently lift a corner of the blanket to give her the momentum she needs to roll from tummy to back. Most babies roll tummy to back first and it is usually accidental the first few times. **Skills:** Gross Motor, trunk, neck, arm strength, Cognitive, motivation.
- 3. Prop to Sit-**Your baby will begin to strengthen his/her neck & trunk muscles in order to learn to sit with support from you and then soon he/she will be able to sit for small periods propping on his/her hands. You can place your baby on the floor and place pillows around her or use a Boppy pillow for support. Help her open her hands and place them on the floor in front or beside her so she can prop herself up and maintain a sitting position on her own. Gradually fade your support. **Skills:** Gross Motor, trunk, neck, arm strength, sitting balance.
- 4. Rock the Boat-**Place your baby in a hand/knee position over your lower leg, so your leg supports his tummy. Gently rock your baby back and forth in this position and sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" to get your baby used to weight bearing on his hands and knees which he will need for crawling. **Skills:** Gross Motor, weight bearing, sensory, balance, strength.
- 5. Texture Books-**Cloth books with textures & sounds are great motivators for young babies to touch and feel. If you don't have these types of books you can use cut up pieces of cloth, sponges or any household items with texture. Use these items supervised and help your baby open her hands to pat, rub, touch, grab and feel the items. **Skills:** Fine Motor, reach, grasp, sensory, tactile exploration.
- 6. So Big!**-When your baby is lying on his back or seated supported on your lap or a baby seat, gently grasp his arms and lift them above his head in a game of "So Big", as he gets older he will begin to imitate this motor movement on his own in response to you verbally saying "How big are you?", "So Big!". **Skills:** Fine Motor, language, imitation.
- 7. Let's Babble-**Your baby will start to move from cooing open vowel sounds to babbling consonant-vowel sounds as she approaches 6 months. When you are face to face with your baby, babble consonant-vowel sounds (mamama, dadada, bababa) and wait 15 seconds to see if she will attempt to imitate you. Repeat any sounds your baby makes whether she is cooing or babbling. You can do this while looking into a mirror with your baby too. **Skills:** Receptive/expressive language, turn taking, listening, imitation.

- 8. Baby Push Ups-** Since your baby has hopefully been practicing tummy time since birth, he is now ready to begin to push up on extended arms to lift his chest off the floor and/or reach for toys while on his tummy. Use favorite noisy toys, a mirror and fun sounds to encourage your baby to look up and push up while on his tummy. If he has trouble with this at first, you can roll up a small receiving blanket and place it under his armpits and place his arms/elbow in front of his shoulders over the blanket. This will encourage your baby to first prop on elbows and eventually push up on hands and lift his chest off the floor. **Skills:** Gross Motor, strength, endurance, coordination.
- 9. Neighborhood stroll-**Take your baby out for a stroll often, either carrying her or in a stroller. Be sure that your attention is focused on your child (no texting or phone calls!) and talk to your baby about anything and everything you see on your walk. She will most likely be wide-eyed as she gazes at her new big world. She will get exposure to new people, animals and objects she has never seen before. **Skills:** Receptive/expressive language, socialization, attention.
- 10. Num Num-**Most babies begin spoon feeding between 4-6 months of age. This is a whole new experience for a baby. Don't get discouraged if your baby turns away from the spoon, pushes the food out with her tongue or at first gags when presented with spoon feeding. Most babies just need a bit of daily practice to get the hang of it & remember at this age their formula or breast milk is still their main source of nutrition. If by 6 months your baby is continuing to have difficulty with spoon feeding, do consult your pediatrician or early intervention provider for support. **Skills:** Feeding, tongue movement, oral motor stimulation
- 11. Hands to Feet Game-**When your baby is on his back, gently raise his feet up where he can see them and recite "This Little Piggy" as you help him reach for & grasp his feet/toes. His ability to do this on his own shows he has strong abdominal muscles. You can place brightly colored socks or ankle rattles on his feet to entice him to reach for them. **Skills:** Gross Motor, strength, self- discovery
- 12. Reach & Grasp-**Young babies are just starting to reach toward, bat at toys and eventually grasp them. Give your baby as many opportunities as possible to reach for and secure toys on her own in a variety of positions (back, tummy, side, supported sitting). Use baby mobiles, baby gyms, or just hold toys out for her to reach toward. **Skills:** Fine Motor, reach, grasp, hand strength, dexterity.
- 13. Hand to Hand-**Soon your baby will become adept at holding small toys and rattles and now he will begin to transfer or pass toys hand to hand. You can encourage this skill by offering your baby a second toy toward the same hand he is already holding the first toy in. He may drop the first toy to reach for a second at first, but eventually will learn to pass the first toy to his other hand in order to grasp the second toy. **Skills:** Fine Motor, reach, grasp.
- 14. Shake and Bang-**Babies love toys that shake & rattle. Demonstrate shaking toys or use hand over hand guidance to help them shake. See if they imitate you and repeat "shake, shake, shake". When seated in a high chair they also like to bang toys on their trays.

Repeat “bang, bang, bang” & encourage them to imitate you or use hand over hand help. **Skills:** Fine Motor, imitation.

15. **Explore Faces**-Young babies learn by exploration, so let your baby touch your face, hair, glasses, jewelry, beard, clothing. **Skills:** Socialization, tactile, fine motor exploration.
16. **Locate the Sound**-As babies mature they can begin to locate or localize where a sound or voice is coming from. When you are not in your baby’s line of vision, make a soft sound or speak to them and then wait a few seconds to allow them the time to find you by hearing your voice or look toward the dog after they hear it bark. **Skills:** Language, auditory processing, sound localization.
17. **Frolic Play**-Once a baby has good head/trunk control they often enjoy simple frolic play games such as bouncing on your knee or being lifted over your head into the air like an “airplane”. When baby smiles and laughs it means “more” if baby cries, take a break until baby feels secure again. **Skills:** Gross motor, sensory/vestibular/movement, socialization.
18. **Mirrors**-Hang mirrors where he can easily see himself and others during playtime. **Skills:** Sense of self, socialization, language.
19. **Mouthing Textures**-Provide many types and textures of rattles and teethingers so baby gets to experiment with a variety of textures on his lips, tongue and gums. **Skills:** Oral motor, sensory, feeding.
20. **Pivoting**-When baby is on his tummy on the floor place toys to the left and right sides just out of reach and encourage him to pivot his body by moving his arms and legs to secure toys. **Skills:** Gross motor, Fine motor
21. **Supported Stand**-Allow your baby to straddle your leg and gently place the baby in a standing position as he attempts to bear some weight on his feet. **Skills:** Gross Motor, supported weight bearing.
22. **Raspberries**-Babies like to stick out their tongues and make noise. Stick out your tongue and make “raspberry” sounds for your baby and see if she tries to repeat this sound. **Skills:** Receptive/expressive language, imitation.
23. **Visual Tracking**-Use your face, different size rattles and toys, both noisy and quiet and slowly move them from left to right, right to left and upward and downward and in an arc. Encourage your baby to first fixate visually on the face or toy and then visually follow it without losing sight of it. Noisy toys will be easier than quiet toys to start. **Skills:** Visual fixation & following, cognitive, attention.
24. **Watch it Fall**-Hold a brightly colored, noisy toy in your hand and attract your baby’s attention with it. Drop it to the floor in front of them, but do not move your hand. See if your baby looks down to find the toy or continues to look at your hand. Following the toy indicates an early understanding of object permanence, while looking at your hand shows your baby has not quite grasped this concept yet. **Skills:** Cognitive, attention, object permanence
25. **Food on Teething Toys**-Dip textured teethingers into jarred baby foods and allow your child to hold the toy and bring it to his mouth to suck the food off. This provides early

experience with getting ready for spoon feeding and introduces them to textures in their mouth. **Skills:** Self-feeding, oral motor, sensory exploration.

- 26. Anticipation game**-To get your baby to reach toward you when coming to pick them up, give them verbal & gestural cues, such as “I am coming to get you” and reach toward your baby giving her a few seconds to try to reach towards you before you pick her up. **Skills:** Socialization, anticipatory excitement, language.
- 27. Catch the boat/sponge**-When in his bath chair in the tub, use a small boat, sponge or other floating toy and encourage your baby to reach and try to grab it as it floats near him. **Skills:** Visual tracking, fine motor, reach, grasp.
- 28. Diaper Changes**-Change your baby’s diaper in different locations or different ends of the changing table, so she has something new to look at and distract her each time. **Skills:** Routines, socialization.
- 29. Follow with Your Eyes**-Walk around the room in eye sight of your child, challenge her to visually track your whereabouts without losing sight of you. If you go around a corner or behind something, make it very brief and reappear immediately with a “peek a boo” or “here I am” so she feels secure. **Skills:** Visual tracking, object permanence, language, socialization.
- 30. Bat/kick the bells**-Hang bells or other noisy toys from an elastic band (always supervise), and hold the band above your child when he is on his tummy, in sidelying, sitting in a seat or lying on his back. Encourage him to reach out and bat at and ring the bells and repeat the activity. You can also hold it near his feet in these position and encourage him to kick the bells with his feet. **Skills:** Gross/fine motor, reach, grasp, reciprocal kicking.