

Denver Developmental Activities

From 3 to 4 Years

Available from:

Denver Developmental Materials, Inc.

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As a parent, you want to do all you can to help your child grow and develop normally. The Denver Developmental Activities on these pages answer the question you've asked, "What can I do to help?"

This is one of a number of brochures to help you help your child develop normally at different ages. The activities help your child from 3 to 4 years of age develop in four important areas: language skills and understanding, personal and social skills, control of large muscles, and control of small muscles and how to solve problems.

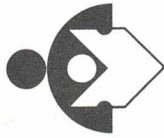
When you let your child set the pace for which activities he or she enjoys and is ready for, you'll both have fun. And you'll be helping your child develop trust in you and the world.

No two children grow at exactly the same rate, so some of these activities may be too easy for your child and some too difficult. I'm interested in discussing your child's development with you.

And remember—as much as you can, talk to your child, play with your child, and really enjoy your child.



Developing language skills and understanding:



Activities to continue —

- Read to your child each day and be sure that your child sees you reading books.
- Sing songs and say nursery rhymes with your child often.
- Encourage your child to say his or her full name, identify moods, describe things to you, and understand time.
- Help select TV programs and limit watching to no more than 1 hour per day. Watch with your child and be ready to talk about what is real and what is not real.
- Provide some quiet time when the radio and TV aren't on.

Descriptive naming — Put objects your child knows into a shopping bag. Ask your child to take them out one at a time and tell you something about each one.

Asking questions — Try to get your child to ask you questions. Keep your answers simple, but use more than one word to answer questions.

Telling stories — Encourage your child to tell a story about himself or herself, about a favorite thing, or about you.

Filling in the blanks — When telling stories your child knows, leave out a word once in a while (such as “Little _____ Riding Hood”). Ask your child to fill in the missing word.

Making “My Picture Book” — Glue photos of your child on a piece of paper or in a scrapbook. Ask your child to tell you what is happening in the pictures.

Understanding the concept of time — Use the words “before,” “during,” and “later,” and describe their meaning as you talk with your child.

Using opposites — Say a word and ask your child to say an opposite word — if you say “up,” your child should say “down.”

Introducing the alphabet — Draw capital letters of the alphabet on cards, one letter per card. Introduce your child to the letter “A.” Then, go on to the letter “B,” and so on.

Making comparisons — Help your child make comparisons such as shorter than, longer than, taller than, younger than, older than.



Developing control of small muscles and solving problems:

Activities to continue —

- Let your child play with harder puzzles and building toys and encourage drawing.
- Continue matching and sorting games with your child.

Cutting — Show your child how to use safety scissors. Give him or her large, simple pictures to practice cutting out.

Making story scrapbooks — Help your child make scrapbooks by drawing pictures or cutting pictures from magazines and catalogs. Show your child how to put them in order to tell a story. Then let your child glue the pictures onto sheets of paper, and write your child's story under the pictures.

Drawing and writing — Show your child how to make lines and circles into stick figures, houses, the sun or moon, letters, and numbers. Your child may want to learn to “write” the letters of his or her name.

Knowing numbers — Talk about numbers from 1 through 10. Draw these numbers on flashcards. Show your child one card at a time, and ask him or her to find the same number in a book, or magazine, or on signs.

Counting — Put beans or other small things into one row of “nests” of an empty egg carton. Show your child how to count out matching numbers of beans and put them in the opposite row of “nests.” (Be sure your child doesn't put the beans in his or her mouth and choke.)

Finger painting — Let your child finger-paint on a large sheet of paper or on a plastic-topped table.

Watercoloring — Buy a simple set of watercolor paints. Give your child the paints and a piece of paper. Watch how the colors blend together as your child paints, and talk about what you see.

Making collage shapes — Cut paper of different colors into triangles, squares, and circles. Talk about the differences in the shapes.



Developing personal and social skills:

Activities to continue —

- Hug and cuddle your child often.
- Soothe and calm your child by holding and talking to him or her when he or she is upset.
- Plan trips with your child to a park, zoo, or library.
- Play games with your child and have your child help with simple household tasks.

Buttoning — When your child can button large buttons, show him or her how to button smaller ones.

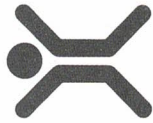
Eating — Encourage your child to eat with a knife, fork, and spoon.

Cooking — Let your child help with cooking by measuring, pouring, and stirring. Talk with your child about what the two of you are doing.

Bathing — Show your child how to use soap, water, and a washcloth to wash his or her arms and legs. Later, praise your child for bathing himself or herself.

Being praised — Praise your child for positive behaviors, such as trying a new task, helping someone else, or being cooperative.

Developing control of large muscles:



Activities to continue —

- Encourage climbing, running, jumping, balancing, playing ball, and riding a tricycle.

Playing catch — Use a ball like a tennis ball to play catch with your child. Sometimes bounce the ball to your child, and sometimes throw it back and forth.

Tightrope walking — Show your child how to “walk a tight-rope” using a long, straight line on the floor. Show your child how to use hands and arms to balance on the “tightrope.”

Hopping — Show your child how to hop on one foot.

Playing “Red Light, Green Light” — Have your child stand across the room from you. When you say “green light,” have your child tiptoe toward you until you say “red light” — and your child stops. Keep saying “green light” and “red light” until your child reaches you.