

12+
months

Laughing & Learning

Encouraging your child's
development through
creative play



alula

S-26
GOLD*

TODDLER

ENCOURAGING YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT WITH PLAY

Creative play is one of the most enjoyable and valuable things your child can do. It nurtures their learning and development, supporting healthy minds and bodies as they grow.

After their first birthday, your child will become more confident with physical movements and might be walking without much help if they haven't done so already. Their fine motor skills will improve and they will soon be able to do things like use a pencil or eat with a fork and spoon. They will understand words and develop their own way of communicating with you through sounds and gestures. They will also be able to recognise and name simple objects.

BENEFITS OF CREATIVE PLAY

PLAYING EVERY DAY:

- builds strong bones and muscles through physical activity
- improves gross and fine motor skills
- supports thinking and problem-solving skills
- develops language and communication skills
- develops social and emotional skills
- encourages self confidence and independence.

Whatever their age or ability, kids should be encouraged to get creative, be active and have fun! You can support your child by giving them time and space for unstructured or free play so they can go at their own pace, be spontaneous, use their imagination and work things out for themselves.

This brochure is designed to help you provide your child with fun and exciting activities that will give them the freedom to discover, learn and develop.

CREATING A FUN AND INSPIRING ENVIRONMENT

You don't need a lot of fancy toys to stimulate your child's development. The best kind of play for kids' learning is unstructured, free play as there are no rules and almost anything can become a toy. Children will entertain themselves for hours with simple objects that encourage them to use their creativity.

CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND GENDER WILL ENJOY PLAYING WITH SIMPLE TOYS, INCLUDING:

- Building blocks – these can be used to build towers, but can just as easily be a car or a cupcake
- Balls – whether they're bounced, rolled, thrown or kicked, these can be incorporated into many activities
- Cardboard boxes – almost every parent has had a new toy ignored in favour of the box that it came in
- Old clothes – hand-me-downs and other materials can transform your child into anyone they want to be
- Crafts – pencils, crayons, paint, paper, streamers, stickers and glue are the foundation of artistic play
- Everyday items from around the home – things like pots, pans and plastic containers can become drums while a shoe box can become a treasure chest. Your child will find a way to make everyday objects part of their game.

Always be careful that the toys you provide are not sharp or small, as these could be a choking hazard to your little one.



Imagination

INSPIRING CREATIVITY

Imaginative play is not only a joyful activity for your child, it also performs a vital role in their emotional and intellectual growth.

Role playing, made-up games, fantasy worlds, and imaginary friends all promote the development of thinking, learning and social skills that will help them cope with everyday situations.

By encouraging, and even participating in, this kind of play, you will be helping your child develop a sense of self, and make sense of the world around them. And you'll have a lot of fun together along the way!

FUN ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES

TELL STORIES

Make up your own stories and encourage your child to add their own ideas, characters or plot twists.

DRESS-UPS

A box of old clothes, handbags, hats and other items is great for encouraging kids to role play and express themselves. From astronauts to superheroes there's nothing your child can't become.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Paint, pencils and paper are the makings of a masterpiece. Add some empty toilet-paper rolls, plastic bottles and glue to open up even more creative possibilities.

ACTIVITIES THAT LET YOUR CHILD'S IMAGINATION RUN WILD

1–2 YEARS

Binoculars for little explorers

Make your own binoculars and let your little one explore the backyard or the house.

YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 empty toilet-paper rolls
- Sticky tape
- String
- Hole punch

Tape the two toilet rolls together side by side. Use a hole punch to make a hole on each side then tie the string to both ends to create a strap for your binoculars. Now your child is ready to go exploring!

2–3 YEARS

Build a playhouse

Kids love to use their imagination so why not build a playhouse that will become their own 'grown-up' house.

YOU'LL NEED:

- A large cardboard box
- Crayons, pens or pencils and other decorations

Cut off one side of the box then cut out some windows and doors. Let your toddler draw on bricks, window frames and other decorations. Then it's time to have all your child's favourite toys over for a house party.

Alternatively, a cardboard box can easily become your little one's car or boat – or a small table on its side with a blanket draped over the top can make a house, shop or school.



3–4 YEARS

Pretend cooking

While you prepare dinner, set up a table with plastic containers and utensils for your little sous chef to mimic what you do. Let them get messy by adding play dough or food dye and water.

YOU CAN MAKE YOUR OWN PLAY DOUGH WITH THIS NO COOK RECIPE:

- 2–3 cups flour
- 1 tsp food colouring
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup of water
- 2 tsp cream of tartar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup salt

Mix the dry ingredients then add in the oil. Add the food colouring to the water then slowly add together until the desired consistency is reached.



Movement

ACTIVE LEARNING

Physically active games help your child build strong muscles and stay healthy. They also promote the development of gross motor skills, like balance and coordination. In addition, these activities build self-confidence and self-esteem as they push themselves to achieve more difficult tasks.

Australian guidelines recommend that children from 1 to 5 years old be physically active for at least 3 hours every day for healthy development. This can range from quiet play on the floor to running and jumping, so it's not too hard to achieve. Of course, keeping up with them is a different matter!

BASIC ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES

DANCE TO THE MUSIC

Music gives your child the chance to move to the beat and develop their coordination. You can even try to learn the moves together!

PLAY OUTDOORS

Make time for outdoor play together. Parks, playgrounds and backyards are an exciting world for your child to explore. Kids can dig holes, play in the sand, chase bubbles, jump through hoops or run around with streamers or ribbons.

Preschoolers are ready for child-friendly sports equipment, such as balls, bats and tunnels to crawl through. By about 4 years of age, your child will be ready for their first bike.

BALLOON 'KEEPIE-UPPIE'

Punch it, hit it or kick it – just don't let that balloon touch the ground!



FUN WAYS TO GET YOUR CHILD MOVING

1–2 YEARS

Crawling maze

Make a tunnel using pillows and cardboard boxes for your child to crawl through.

YOU'LL NEED:

- Pillows
- Boxes
- Their favourite toy

Entice them to crawl their way to the end using their favourite toy or just yourself as their reward. When they get a little older you can place a few pillows in the way so they have to climb over them.

2–3 YEARS

Cowboys and cowgirls

Build your own hobby horse and let your little one gallop around the house.

YOU'LL NEED:

- Large sock
- Old newspaper or old rags
- Knitting wool
- Glue
- Broom handle or cardboard roll from inside gift wrapping paper

Fill the sock with scrunched up newspaper or old rags. Holding the sock upside down, glue on strands of wool from about half way down the sole over the heel and continuing on down the leg. Do you see his head taking shape? Draw on eyes, nostrils and a mouth, then slip the sock over the broom handle and tie securely. It's time to mount up!

3–4 YEARS

Spider's web obstacle course

Create an obstacle course using items from around the house.

YOU'LL NEED:

- Balls
- Boxes
- Buckets
- Chairs
- Hoops
- Pillows
- Wool

After carefully placing the obstacles, make things a little trickier (but not too tricky) by tying the wool around them to create a spider's web effect. Kids will love exploring under, over, through and around the course that you create. But they have to be careful – if they touch the spider's web, they're caught!



Thinking

EXPANDING MINDS

Cognitive creative play helps boost your child's mental development as they learn and understand new concepts and use complex thought processes.

During this kind of play, your child's brain is hard at work, constantly experimenting, solving problems and learning – and with the right kind of stimulus, they will start to recognise letters, numbers and patterns and be able to sort things into similar shapes and colours, providing the basis for early language and maths skills.

By the time they are 3 or 4 years old, your child will be able to remember and name a handful of colours. They will also start to understand more difficult concepts in more detail, such as big versus small, and time.

FUN ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES

PUZZLE TIME

Simple jigsaw puzzles are a great way to put brains into action.

BATH FUN

Bath time can be lots of fun for kids. Provide items that float and small containers so they can pour, splash and play freely. Plastic measuring cups in the bath allow your child to explore different volumes of water.

CARD GAMES

Memory card games, fish and snap, are great ways to play with your child when they get a little older.

CREATIVE WAYS TO KEEP YOUNG MINDS ACTIVE

1–2 YEARS

Shape sorting

Teach your little one to recognise different shapes and sizes using a homemade sorting box.

YOU'LL NEED:

- Shoe box
- Thick cardboard
- Scissors

Cut a square, triangle and circle of roughly the same size into the lid of the shoe box. Then cut as many shapes of a slightly smaller size as you like from the cardboard. Your tot is now ready to discover which shapes fit through the holes.

2–3 YEARS

What's missing?

Test your child's ability to remember objects with this simple memory game.

YOU'LL NEED:

- A set of objects e.g. blocks, different coloured pegs or pictures of animals

Place the items in front of your child then ask them to close their eyes. Remove one item and ask them which item is missing. As your child develops you can make things a little harder by using random items.

3–4 YEARS

Number maze

Use chalk on the pavement to create your own maze or you can develop numeracy by filling a page with different numbers and challenging your child to connect the same numbers.

Draw a grid on a sheet of paper and fill some of the boxes with the same letter so that they are all connected. Fill in the remaining boxes with other random letters. Your child has to join all the same letter.



Communication

FINDING THE WORDS

Every day your child is learning more and more new words to build their language and communication skills.

Playing games that require talking, listening and memory will improve their vocabulary and help them participate in conversations and express themselves more clearly.

These games teach toddlers the names of everyday things, and help them learn the difference between 'I', 'you' and other pronouns. By the age of 3 they will develop enough knowledge to construct basic sentences and understand simple conversations.

FUN ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES

READ WITH YOUR CHILD

Make reading part of your weekly routine. Soon your child will be memorising simple stories and 'reading' the story with you.

KARAOKE CAR

Play songs in the car and encourage your child to learn the words and sing along. Nursery rhymes teach language, rhythm and repetition. The alphabet song is a good way to start learning ABC's.

NAMING GAME

Point to an everyday item or body part and challenge your child to tell you what it's called.

ACTIVITIES THAT ENCOURAGE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

1–2 YEARS

Pet sounds

Have lots of fun with your child by pretending to be different animals!

YOU'LL NEED:

- Animal pictures

Show your toddler pictures of different animals and encourage them to name each one. Start with the sounds if they haven't learnt the words just yet.

2–3 YEARS

Find the matching letter

Help your child learn the alphabet with this simple finding game.

YOU'LL NEED:

- Pencil and paper

Write as many letters as you can on a sheet of paper. Circle one and ask your child to find a matching letter. Magnetic letters on the fridge are an excellent alternative.

3–4 YEARS

Fishing for letters

Make learning the alphabet and spelling fun by catching letters using a home-made fishing rod.

YOU'LL NEED:

- Thin cardboard
- Paper clips
- Sticky tape
- String
- Magnet
- Chopstick

Write letters on the cardboard then cut around each one and attach a paper clip. Stick one end of the string to the chopstick and the other end to the magnet using the sticky tape. Now your little one is all set to fish for letters! Start by identifying letters and build to spell simple words.



Socialising

LEARNING TO SHARE AND CARE

Playing with mummy, daddy and other children is a great way for your child to start interacting socially. They will get to experience new types of fun activities and learn from others.

Social games teach children concepts like sharing, compromising and helping others. They also help them develop emotionally, as they learn to deal with frustration, disappointment and things outside their control.

BASIC ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES

ROLE PLAY

Kids love to pretend to be teachers, doctors, shop owners and mums and dads, this helps to develop social skills. Playing librarians is a particularly good role-playing game as it introduces the concepts of borrowing and sharing.

PLAY OUTDOORS

Hide and seek, chasings, tag or tips is a great way for older children to play with younger children. Pair a younger and older child to work in pairs or let the young ones seek the older ones and work as a team.

KIDS' BOARD GAMES

Simple board games help introduce the concept of taking turns – and the importance of waiting patiently for theirs.

GROUP ACTIVITIES TO HELP YOUR CHILD SOCIALISE

1–2 YEARS

Sharing game

YOU'LL NEED:

- A few coloured balls or blocks

Give kids different coloured balls or blocks, and ask them to share them out amongst other people in the room.

2–3 YEARS

Puppet play

Make finger puppets so kids can invent their own characters and stories.

YOU'LL NEED:

- Pipe cleaners
- Pom poms
- Googly eyes
- Glue

Wind a pipe cleaner around your child's finger to make a cylindrical body. Glue a pom pom to the top and attach the eyes. Once you've got the hang of it you can get more creative with your creations.

3–4 YEARS

Treasure hunt

Create a series of clues for your kids to explore a number of obstacles and interesting places.

YOU'LL NEED:

- Pencil and paper
- Treasure

With a little bit of teamwork and help from mum or dad, they'll be able to find the hidden treasure at the end.

Overall

KEEP THEM ACTIVE

While it's important for children to have some quiet time, sitting still for long periods should generally be avoided. Apart from sleeping, children should not be inactive for more than an hour at a time.

- Encourage your child to walk part of the way instead of using the stroller
- Stop at rest areas on long car journeys so everyone can stretch their legs
- Ride a bike or use a scooter for short trips.

LIMIT SCREEN TIME

Watching TV and DVDs or playing games on computers, tablets or phones is something that should be carefully monitored, as it usually involves sitting still for long periods of time. Generally, children under 2 years shouldn't have any screen time at all, while those aged 2 to 5 years should have no more than an hour each day.

TIPS FOR LIMITING SCREEN TIME INCLUDE:

- Have rules around screen time, for example no TV before breakfast
- Make meal time your family time
- Don't have the TV running in the background
- Take an interest in what your child is watching or playing, and decide if it's age appropriate
- Keep bedrooms TV and computer free
- Limit your own screen time when your child is around
- Offer alternative activities, like the activities in this guide.



KEEP AN EYE OUT

Kids are individuals that will develop at their own pace, but parents should be aware of any signs that their child isn't engaging in activities as expected for their age. If you have any concerns about any aspect of your child's development, speak to a healthcare professional. Things you can look out for include:

- Difficulty concentrating on one task at a time
- Trouble learning at preschool
- Not responding to your voice or noises around them
- Not interacting with other people.

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Alula® Toddler
PlatinumCare
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EACH BUILT ON THE 4 KEY PILLARS OF THE ALULA® TODDLER AND ALULA® JUNIOR PLATINUMCARE COMPLEX™

These nutritious milk drinks contain a good source of age-appropriate vitamins and minerals to help support:



Growth and development – Contains vitamins A, D and iodine to help support childrens' growth and development



Cognitive function – With iodine and zinc, to aid cognitive function, as well as iron to help support childrens' cognitive development



Function of digestive enzymes – With calcium, which contributes to the function of digestive enzymes



Immune system function – Includes zinc, vitamin C, B₆, B₁₂ and D to support the function of childrens' immune systems

These assist when dietary intakes of energy and nutrients may be inadequate.



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