

Helpful Learning Activities for Children 48-60 Months Old

Focus on: *Cognitive Development*

Finding Same or Different.

Take a pack of playing cards and choose four or five matching sets (with similarities in suit, number, or face). Lay the cards out face up, and help your child to find the pairs. Talk about what makes the pairs of cards the "same" and "different."

Learning Important Personal Information.

Encourage your child to learn her full name, address, and telephone number. Make it into a singing or rhyming game for fun. Ask your child to repeat it back to you when you are riding in the car or on the bus.

Let your Child Help you Prepare a Meal.

He can spread peanut butter and jelly, peel a banana, cut with a butter knife, pour cereal, and add milk (using a small container). Never give him a task involving the stove or oven without careful supervision.



Let Your Child Help Prepare a Picnic.

Show her what she can use for the picnic (bread, peanut butter, and apples). Lay out sandwich bags and a lunch box, basket, or large paper bag. Then go have fun on the picnic.



Make Bubbles.

Use 1/4 cup dishwashing liquid and 2 2/3 cups water. Use straws to blow bubbles on a cookie sheet. Or make a wand by stringing two pieces of a drinking straw onto a string or piece of yarn. Tie the ends of the string together to make a circle. Holding onto the straw pieces, dip the string in the bubble mixture. Pull it out and gently move forward or backward. You should see lovely, big bubbles

Make a Person.

Use playdough or clay plus sticks, buttons, toothpicks, beads, and any other small items. Start with a playdough (or clay) head and body and use the objects for arms, legs, and eyes. Ask your child questions about his person.

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Focus on: *Cognitive Development (cont'd)*

Nature Collection.

Go on a walk and pick up things you find. Bring the items home and help your child sort them into groups. For example, groups can include rocks, bark, or leaves. Encourage your child to start a collection of special things. Find a box or special place where he can display the collection.



Play "Circus."

Find old, colorful clothes and help your child put on a circus show. Provide a rope on the ground for the high wire act, a sturdy box to stand on to announce the acts, fun objects for a magic act, and stuffed animals for the show. Encourage your child's imagination and creativity in planning the show. Don't forget to clap.

Play a Counting Game.

Using a large piece of paper, make a simple game board with a straight path. Use dice to determine the count. Count with your child, and encourage her to hop the game piece to each square, counting each time the piece touches down.

Play a Picture Guessing Game.

Cover a picture in a familiar book with a sheet of paper and uncover a little at a time until your child has guessed the picture.



Play the "What Doesn't Belong" Game.

When you are setting the table for a meal, add a small toy or other object next to the plate and eating utensils. Ask your child if she can tell you what doesn't belong here. You can try this game any time of the day. For example, while brushing your child's hair, set out a brush, barrette, comb, and a ball.

Play the "Who, What, and Where" Game.

Ask your child who works in a school, what is in a school, and where is the school. Expand on your child's answers by asking more questions. Ask about other topics, like the library, bus stop, or post office.

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Focus on: *Cognitive Development (cont'd)*



Pretending To Be an Animal.

Encourage your child to use her imagination and become a kitty. You can ask, "What do kitties like to eat?" or "Where do kitties live?" Play along, and see how far the game can go.

Pretend to Open a Shoe Store.

Use old shoes, paper, pencils, and a chair to sit down and try on shoes. You can be the customer. Encourage your child to "write" your order down. Then she can take a turn being the customer and practice trying on and buying shoes.

Sorting Circles.

Cut out three small, three medium, and three large circles. Color each set of circles a different color (or use colored paper for each). Your child can sort the circles by color or by size. You can also ask your child about the different sizes. For example, ask your child, "Which one is smallest?" Try this game using buttons removed from an old shirt.

What Will Happen Next?

Play the "guess what will happen" game to encourage your child's problem-solving and thinking skills. For example, during bath time, ask your child, "What do you think will happen if I turn on the hot and cold water at the same time?" or "What would happen if I stacked the blocks to the top of the ceiling?"

Write and Mail a Letter to a Friend or Relative.

Provide your child with paper, crayons or pencil, and an envelope. Let your child draw, scribble, or write; or he can tell you what to write down. When your child is finished, let him fold the letter to fit in the envelope, lick, and seal. You can write the address on the front. Be sure to let him decorate the envelope as well. After he has put the stamp on, help mail the letter.



Write Your Child's Name Often.

When your child finishes drawing a picture, be sure to put his name on it and say the letters as you write them. If your child is interested, encourage him to name and/or to copy the letters. Point out the letters in your child's name throughout the day on cereal boxes, signs, and books.