



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Focus: A daily routine to play, learn and grow

Plan your day with routines and special times

Message to parents and caregivers of children from birth to five years

Many parents and other caregivers now have to take care of their young children all day at home due to the closure of ECD centres and playgroups as part of the measures that Government put in place to combat the **COVID-19** coronavirus. No one could foresee this. In the next couple of weeks, the Department of Social Development, Department of Basic Education, UNICEF and other partners will work together to provide you with basic information and tools to support your child's early learning and development at home. These are based on existing programmes.

LET'S START WITH THE BASICS

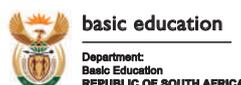
Though you did not plan to have your child at home, this is a **good opportunity** to support your child's learning and development. Try to include your child's learning and development into your daily routines.

This is also a good time to bond with your child while he or she is playing and learning, but **routines** help young children to feel safe in a time where everybody else worries.

Basic routine to follow every day

Mornings	Afternoons	Evenings
<p>WAKE-UP TIME Keep the wake-up routine in the mornings the same. Eat breakfast. Wash. Brush teeth. Get dressed for the day. During this time talk to your child (if old enough) about the plans for the day.</p> <p>GET ACTIVE Go outside (if possible) and do some playful physical activities. It can be anything. Walk short distance. Play with a ball. As long as the body moves.</p> <p>LEARNING TOGETHER Use this time to do a playful learning activity with your child (<i>we will share ideas during the weeks to come</i>). During this time you will guide your child to do something interesting in a playful manner. For example, take an old magazine or even an advertising brochure from a big shop. Go through it page by page and ask your child to identify certain things. For example, everything that is red, or every shape that is a circle. You need to adapt this according to his or her age.</p>  <p>This is a fun way to learn together.</p> <p>FREE PLAY Allow your child some time for free play. This means that he or she does (play) what he or she wants without your guidance. But keep an eye on your child to make sure that he or she is safe.</p> <p>STORY TIME Make time to read with your child or tell a story. Young children love stories, and it also helps them to learn new words and understand the world around them. Plan about 15 minutes for this. While reading the book or telling the story, allow your child to ask questions. You can also ask your child questions (not like a test).</p> 	<p>LUNCH TIME Eat together. Talk about healthy food. If your child is old enough, you may ask him or her to help you preparing lunch. You can also make this a playful learning activity. For example, ask <i>'what is the colour of the tomato?'</i> or <i>'what is the shape of the apple.'</i> Or ask your child to count with you how many spoons of oil you put into a pot... one-two-three!</p> <p>NAP TIME If your child is used to taking a nap after lunch - continue with this routine.</p> <p>LEARNING TOGETHER Use this time to do another playful learning activity with your child. During this time, guide your child to do something interesting in a playful manner. If you focused in the morning on shapes, try to focus in the afternoon on something else, for example the colour yellow. Or go outside to discover how different plants smell or feel like.</p> <p>FREE PLAY Allow your child some time for free play. This means that he or she does (play) what he or she wants to without your guidance. But keep an eye on your child to make sure that he or she is safe.</p>	<p>SUPPER TIME Eat together. Eat together. (see lunch time. You can do the same type of activities)</p> <p>TOGETHER TIME Everyone in the household is most likely at home during this time. Spend time with your young child, together with the rest of the family. Talk about the day. Other family members are encouraged to ask the young child what he or she did during the day.</p>  <p>BEDTIME Get ready for bed in the same way as you have always done with your young child. It is also a good time to talk together about the day. Ask your child what he or she thinks you should do together the next day. Tell your child a story that will ease him or her into sleeping.</p>
<p>Plan the early learning activities</p> <p>Plan about 10 to 15 minutes for this.</p> <p>Remember your child's age when doing an activity. He or she cannot concentrate for too long. Rather do less at a time, not more.</p> <p>Always keep it playful... this is how young children learn.</p>		<p>HEALTHY HABITS</p> <p>Teach your child how to wash his or her hands with soap and running water for 20 seconds. It is the best way to prevent the spread of germs and viruses.</p>  <p>The easiest way to know how long 20 seconds are, is to sing 'happy birthday' two times or to sing the first verse of our national anthem, Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika.</p>

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.



in partnership with the National Early Childhood Development Alliance (NECDA), the South African Congress for Early Childhood Development and the LEGO Foundation

Content based on the National Curriculum Framework for Children birth to four years



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Focus: Shapes around us

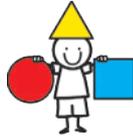
Let's look at **circles** and shapes that are **round**

Why young children need to learn about shapes

SHAPES are everywhere!

Learning about shapes is important for your child's early learning and development. Learning about different shapes forms the foundation of children's future learning. It is the first step to be able to understand and recognise numbers and letters by their shapes later. It helps children to identify differences while they learn to identify the features of each shape. It also builds their vocabulary.

(These are just some of the many reasons why shapes are important).

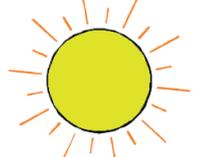


ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

In this activity you and your young child will look at the **circle** or shapes that are **round**. There are circles and other round objects everywhere! You can do this with your child many times and everywhere.

You need: You do not have to buy or collect anything to do this activity.

Ages: You can do this activity with most children in this age group. However, you will need to adjust it according to your child's age and ability.



Younger than 18 months

Point at an object in the house that represents a **circle** (for example a plate, a ball, an orange) and use the word **round** or **circle**.

Repeat often with the same (round) objects.

These activities are for ALL children, including children with disabilities



18 months to 36 months

Adjust these to the age of your child

Show the **circle** above and talk about the examples of **round objects** below the circle.

Ask your child to identify other objects in the house or the garden or sky (like the sun) that are also **round**.

Or **page through a magazine** or brochure together and discover everything that is round. Let the child mark it (if it is in a magazine or brochure that you can throw away).



3 to 5 years

The same activities as on the left can be done.

You can also ask them to walk on their own through the kitchen (or any other room) to see how many objects they can find that are **round**.

Or they can **cut out pictures** that are round from a magazine or brochure.

MORE FUN AND LEARNING WITH ROUND OBJECTS

DRAW A CIRCLE

Let your child **draw** a circle (don't worry if it does not look perfect) on a paper or in sand.

Ask him or her to draw a **face inside the circle** that shows how he or she feels.

Then **talk** about the feeling(s) that he or she has drawn.

THE CIRCLE TREASURE HUNT

Create a treasure hunt for children to **find** a certain number of hidden objects that are round in one room.

Give **younger children** a lesser number (for example 3) than older children.

Remember to make sure that the number of round objects to be found should not be more than what a child is able to count at his or her age.

Praise your child for every round object found. **Talk about** the object and what the purpose of the round object is, for example, "the plate is round and we eat our food from the plate".

Repeat these activities often. You can create many other activities about circles and shapes that are round.

Remember to keep it PLAYFUL and FUN. That is how young children learn.

HEALTHY HABITS

Teach your child how to wash his or her hands with soap and running water for 20 seconds. It is the best way to prevent the spread of germs and viruses.



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Focus for the Week 1: Staying healthy while we play and learn

Have fun! **Move** and **play** today!

PLAN YOUR DAY

WHY ROUTINES ARE IMPORTANT



A **daily routine** is important for you and your young child. Routines help children to **feel safe**

and secure, as there is some **certainty in their day**. This is especially during this time when we deal with **COVID-19** and the world may seem a bit upside down for your child (and maybe for you too).

Therefore, it is important that you plan your day – and **your child's day** – with activities and times that are consistent. In this way children will learn what to expect at various times of a day. *They do the same at an ECD centre or playgroup. It also gives children a sense of 'control' over their day.*

Routines also help young children to **learn important life skills** early on, for example brushing teeth, basic hygiene like handwashing, managing their time, responsibility and confidence.

REMEMBER: Your child is learning routines with you. They will not know and understand it immediately. **So be patient**, and where needed, a little bit flexible.

With your child is at home, **follow the same basic routine and times every day.**

For PARENTS

It is important for babies and young children to be **healthy and safe**. Children are better protected from the coronavirus (COVID-19) when they are **at home** because they do not come into contact with as many people.

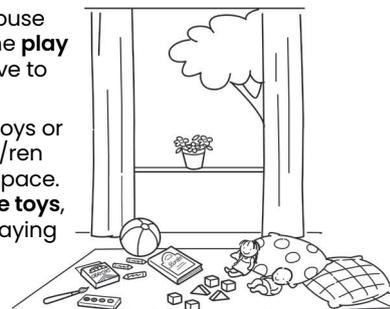
Today's colour is **RED**

Discover with your child all things red in the house.

CREATE A PLAY SPACE

Find a space in the house that you can make the **play space**. It does not have to be very big.

Choose a **few** of the toys or things that your child/ren can play with in this space. When you **change the toys**, she will think she is playing with "new toys".



Learning together is **FUN**

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)

Getting active in the morning

Teach or **sing together** the song with all the children: *Head, shoulders, knees and toes*. Do the actions while you are singing.

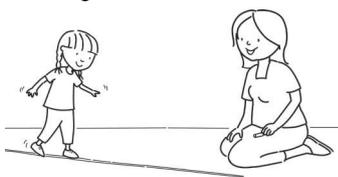
Singing is an important part of your child's language development. If any one of your children is unable to do the actions while standing up, let them do the actions, as best as they can, sitting down. Involve the baby in the song. A baby is part of the family and is able to learn from imitating the older children.

Younger than 18 months

When changing your baby's nappy **count words** e.g. one leg, two legs; one arm, two arms. **Say the words** and touch the baby's part of the body. As you talk to your baby she begins to learn how to count, what the names of the parts of her body are. *This helps her later in mathematics and languages.*

18 months to 36 months

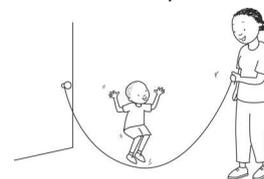
Draw a line your finger or a stick in the sand or fold a newspaper so that it makes a **straight line**. Help your child to walk on the straight line. Let her count her steps as she walks on the straight line.



Counting is very important start for learning mathematics. Walking on a straight line is a wonderful skill for developing the large muscles in her legs and arms as well as make a strong connection between her brain and her feet.

3 to 5 years

Jump the rope activity: Tie one end of a longish rope/wool to a tree or door handle and hold the other end, letting the rope lie on the ground. Your child stands on one side of the rope and **jumps over it with two feet together**. If there are other children, they will take turns. The rope gets lifted a little higher and your child jumps over it. Repeat the activity raising the rope until she finds it difficult to jump over it. Praise your child for effort and lower it slightly to end the activity with success.



If you have a child that cannot jump over the rope, let her hold the other end of the rope with you so that she is involved in the activity. **Children with disabilities** are able to be part of games and should not be sitting outside of the game.

READING AND STORIES

Reading and storytelling with your child help with the development of his or her **brain** and imagination. It teaches your child about **language** and **emotions**. It also makes the bond between you and your young child stronger.



Read and/or tell stories to them often. Let your child ask questions while you are reading and you should ask them some questions too (appropriate for their age), for example: "What character did you like most?" and "Why?".

Children learn new words and learn how to ask and answer questions, which is very important for developing language. Here is a link to a website (Bookdash) where you will find FREE storybooks for young children. You can download it on your phone now and read to your child:

<https://bookdash.org/books/>

HEALTHY HABITS

Enjoy playing outside.

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Focus for the Week 1: Staying healthy while we play and learn

Have fun! Learn about healthy habits

PLAN YOUR DAY

WHY WASHING HANDS IS IMPORTANT

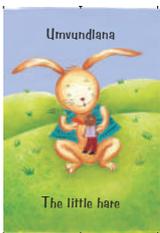


As part of the **morning routine** let your child wash his or her hands with soap and clean water for **20 seconds**.

It takes **20 seconds** to sing 'happy birthday' twice or to sing the first verse of our national anthem, *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*.

Let your child make hand washing an important part of the day.

BOOK OF THE DAY



The Little Hare is a book that helps parents and young children to describe issues related to illness and family support in a simple manner.

Download this book (its for free) on your smart phone. https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/SAF_publications_littlehare.pdf

For PARENTS

The correct way to prevent the spread of germs that are carried in droplets is by coughing or sneezing into your inner elbow, or by using a tissue to cover your mouth and nose. Put all tissues in the rubbish bin straight away, and wash your hands with either soap and clean water or an alcohol-based hand sanitiser.



Teach your child to do the same.

CREATE A BOOK CORNER

In the play space put a few books, magazines or even old brochures that can be "reading material" as well as a cushion or small blanket to make the **book corner**.

Show the child/ren the book corner and talk about the books that are there. Invite her to sit on the cushion and read a 'book' whenever she would like to.



Today's colour is **BLUE**

Look around in the house with your child for all things that are blue.

Learning together is FUN

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)

Getting active in the morning

Play the game "Follow the leader". Have your family take turns being the leader. The leader gets in front of the line with everyone else behind them copying the leader's actions. Wiggle your arms while walking, march, bunny hop, or any other similar action.

This game helps children to listen and follow instructions which is a very important communication skill which develops language.

Younger than 18 months

Baby **watches** and **listens** to simple songs about healthy activities, for example "This is the way we brush our teeth, wash our hands, stamp our feet".

Children understand words and language that they hear long before they start speaking. *By singing songs and doing the actions about healthy living, children will learn about how to care well for themselves.*

18 months to 36 months

Let's play House: Let your child take care of 'sick' dolls by keeping them warm and wiping their noses. Encourage her to use clean paper (small pieces) for each doll and to **throw the used ones in the bin** explaining **why** it is hygienic to do that.

Let her **wash her hands** after she has wiped their noses.



3 to 5 years

Let's play House: Older child washes and dries dolls and other play objects and squeezes out the cloth. She also washes the doll's clothes from time to time.

Not only does this help your child to develop her **fine motor control** (control and use of small muscle in the hands), but it also stresses the **importance of cleanliness**. While they are doing this, you can either wash or iron clothes for the family and sing / talk about what you are doing.

By playing 'House', children are learning how to think critically, solve problems and form concepts that help them to understand cause and effect, for example, if they wash the clothes then they will be clean and healthy.

BATH TIME



Put some **items in the bath** that she can use to pour water from one item to another. Pouring water from one container to the next helps her with her first understanding of Mathematics and Science as well as developing the skill of linking what her hand is doing and what she is seeing. While doing that, talk to her about the day.

Make bath time, FUN time! For you and your child.

HEALTHY HABITS

Wash your hands often to stay healthy!

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Focus for the Week 1: Staying healthy while we play and learn

Have fun! Learn about positions.

For PARENTS

WASH TABLES AND TOYS

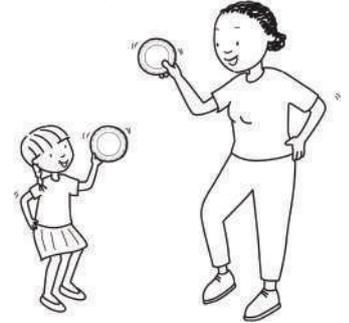
The Coronavirus (COVID-19) **stays on hard surfaces** for quite some time! Our **hands touch** many surfaces and objects every day. This is how germs and viruses get from these surfaces and objects to our hands – then when we touch our **eyes, nose or mouth**, these germs and viruses enter our bodies.

Make sure that you **wash** your table, the toys, door handles every day with soap and water. Involve the children in the cleaning of the tables and chairs and help them to understand how important it is to keep all the surfaces clean.

GAMES ARE IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN

When children play games, they learn so many different skills like:

- taking turns and sharing;
- solving problems;
- learning new words;
- how to play with others;
- how to count;
- making their big muscles and small muscles strong;
- how to balance;
- and many more



Today's colour is GREEN

Find everything in the house that is green. Your child can point out the object or bring it to you. If they don't know the name of the object, help them.

BOOK OF THE DAY



The **Amazing Daisy** is a book about a little chicken called Daisy, who wishes she could fly. All

the other chickens laugh at her daily flying practice. But one day something amazing happens.

Download this book (its for free) on your smart phone:

<https://bookdash.org/books/amazing-daisy-by-nozizwe-herero-siya-masuku-and-leona-ingram/>

SOURCE: Bookdash



HEALTHY HABITS

Read to your child every day.

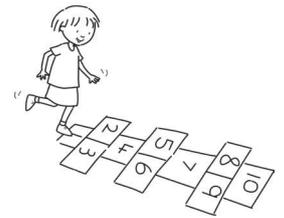
Learning together is FUN

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)

Getting active in the morning

Hopscotch: Hopscotch: Make a hopscotch grid with numbers from 1 to 5. For the younger children jump from one number to the next on both feet. Older children can try to jump on one foot. Babies can watch and enjoy the game being played. If there is a child with a disability, he or she can be involved in an appropriate manner.

For children it feels good to move and this is a fun and playful way to develop new skills. When playing hopscotch children learn to control different body parts and how to balance; they learn hand-eye coordination and spatial awareness (how far apart things are); they learn social skills, for example to take turns; and this game involves numbers and counting skills that are important for mathematics.



Younger than 18 months

While baby is sitting safely, let her **take objects** out of a tin/ basket and then put some back.

This allows your baby to use all her senses; hearing, smell, touch, seeing and tasting to link with the things around her.

BATH TIME

The end of the day can become quite hectic when you are trying to make sure that everything is done. You have been with the children all day long and all you want is some peace and quiet. Play some soothing music or sing some songs together so that you can settle your child before she gets ready to go to bed.



18 months to 36 months

Your child follows instructions, for example **stand next** to the table, stand in front of or behind the door. She **talks about** where she is standing.

It is very important that you child understands space, position and size as it is the foundation for future learning in Mathematics and Language.

3 to 5 years

Let an older child put objects into the **positions**, for example put a red block **next to you**; put a yellow block **behind you**; put the red block **on top of** the blue block; put the yellow block **in front of** the green one. She explains where the objects are, for example where is the red block? Next to me, in front of me, behind me.

This helps your child to understand space, colours, numbers which are the foundation of Mathematics.



Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Focus for the Week 1: Staying healthy while we play and learn

Healthy food is fun and it helps us learn

For PARENTS

HEALTHY EATING FOR THE FAMILY

A healthy diet with lots of fruit and vegetables and enough protein (for example fish, meat, milk, eggs and beans) and grains (bread, rice, pap and oats) can help you build up your immune system. The immune system helps to protect you against diseases caused by, among other things, viruses like the Coronavirus (Covid-19). The immune system is the cells in your body that work together to fight and destroy viruses.



CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

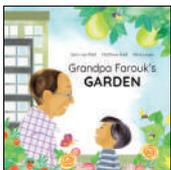
Young children start to **actively observe** their world and learn from it from the moment of birth. Children's understanding that objects differ in size, colour, shape, weight, smell and texture, introduces them to the discovery of similarities and differences (comparing). In this way they discover from an early age that things around them look, smell, feel and weigh different.

These concepts form **important foundations** (the knowledge and skills of the child) that will support the understanding of more complex concepts in language, mathematics and other areas later.

Today's colour is PINK

Find everything in the house that is pink. Your child can point out the object, or bring it to you. If they don't know the name of the object, help them.

BOOK OF THE DAY



Grandpa Farouk's Garden tells the story of Grandpa's garden and how Amir helps Grandpa in the Garden. But, then something happens to the garden.

Download this book (its for free) on your smart phone:

<https://bookdash.datafree.co/books/grandpa-farouks-garden-by-sam-van-riet-matthew-kalil-and-nina-lewis/>

SOURCE: Bookdash



HEALTHY HABITS

Always wash and dry the fruit and vegetables before you eat them. Always wash your hands too.



Learning together is FUN

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)

Getting active in the morning

Paper balls are fun. Put a few bowls outside and crush up some balls of newspaper. Let the child try to throw the 'paper balls' into the bowls. At first let her stand close to the bowls, and slowly increase the distance between her and the bowl as her skills improve. Praise and encourage her for every attempt.

Tossing the newspaper balls into the bowls is always fun and teaches her direction, distance and improves hand-eye coordination. This is also good as it exercises your child's arm and leg muscles.



Younger than 18 months

For babies on solid foods, cut a vegetable (like a carrot) and a fruit (apple or banana) up into bite-sized pieces. **Let your baby play** with the food, touch it, and lick it. Maybe she will even taste it.

This helps her to experience different textures and colours, which is very helpful later on when she is counting or describing what is happening around her.

18 months to 36 months

Cut the top of the **carrot** off and plant it outside, or in a pot to keep inside with your child. She can **watch the carrot top grow** over the next few weeks (remember to water it every few days). Often discuss with your child how the carrot grows (and if it does not grow, why not?). See below activities that you can do with each age group.

For 18 to 36 months

Young children like to dig in the soil, pour water and **get messy**. Children enjoy gardening (outside, or in a pot inside the house) and *it helps with the development of their small muscles that are important for writing and cutting.*

3 to 5 years

3 to 5 years

Explain to your child **what is needed for the carrot to grow**. Let your child draw in her own way how the carrot grows over the next few weeks. This is also an opportunity to **ask her to help you** prepare a salad for lunch. Make her responsible for putting the pieces of cut-up vegetables in the bowl after you have cut them up. Let her count the pieces of vegetables and name the different colours and textures.



All this helps in letting your child learn more words, which is very important for language development.

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.



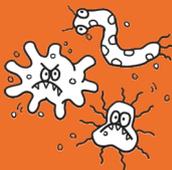
Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Learning about **healthy habits** is fun

For PARENTS

ABOUT GERMS

Even young children can understand the basic concept of germs. **Germs are tiny "bugs" that live on all things** and sometimes these bugs can make you sick. When you're sick, you won't have so much fun. Explain to your older children that these germs are called bacteria or viruses. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) is so small that you can't see it when you look at your hands, the top of the table or anything that you touch. That is why it is important to wash our hands regularly with soap and clean water to get rid of the germs.



MAKE PLAYDOUGH

Children like playdough. They like the way it **feels** in their hands and that they can squeeze it, poke it, squash it, pick it up and pat it down. Your child can **make anything** with the playdough.

Playing with playdough is an action and he or she is learning that his or her actions have results. It also helps to develop his or her large and small muscles as well as hand and eye coordination.

Playing with playdough is also a fun way to release stress.

See on the left side of the page a 'recipe' to make playdough



Today's colour is **ORANGE**.

Find everything in the house that is orange. Your child can point out the object or bring it to you. If they don't know the name of the object, help them.

BOOK OF THE DAY



I want to! This cute little baby knows exactly what she wants. She wants to eat, she wants to play, and she wants to read a book with Mama!

Download this book (its for free) on your smart phone:
<https://bookdash.datafree.co/books/i-want-to-by-mary-anne-hampton-sam-wilson-pippa-serritslev/>

SOURCE: Bookdash

Making playdough

You need:

- 1 cup plain flour
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup salt
- 2 teaspoons of cream of tartar
- 2 teaspoons food colouring.



Do this:

1. Mix all the liquids together and stir.
2. Mix all the dry ingredients in a bowl.
3. Make a well (hole) in the middle of the dry ingredients and add the liquid. Stir slowly until it forms a thick dough.
4. If it is too sticky use a little extra flour.

Learning together is FUN

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)



Getting active in the morning

Fun with colours: Take three socks of **different colours**; red, blue, yellow. Put the socks outside or in a room, a little distance away from each other. Start with your child standing on the yellow sock. Then give them **different instructions** that they need to follow like, for example "Jump to the red sock" or "Crawl to the blue sock".

This activity joins the skills for listening, following instructions and developing large muscles in their legs and arms.

Younger than 18 months

Collect **various items** such a yoghurt container or something similar, a plastic lid from cleaning products and a squirt bottle that you can put in the bath. Make sure that the items are **clean and safe**. Let your baby **play with these items in the bath**. Let her listen to sounds when water is poured from one contained to another.

As **she reaches out** to touch the containers or the pouring water her small muscles and sense of touch will be stimulated as she feels the water pouring on her hands, legs, arms and back. **She learns playfully about sounds, textures and senses.**

HEALTHY HABITS

Get rid of germs,
wash your body well!

18 months to 36 months

Older children need to start to learn about important routines to **keep themselves clean**.

Let your child sit in the bath and pour water into a few different **containers**. Let her wet her hair with water from these containers. **Ask her** to indicate which container will hold the most water or the least water, or which containers can float or sink.

Understanding volume (how much a container can hold) and if something can float or sink is the start of understanding simple mathematical and scientific concepts, while she also learns new words. In this way bathing becomes a simple "science experiment".



3 to 5 years

At this age your child can be encouraged to **wash her whole body with soap**. Encourage her to squeeze the cloth or sponge. Talk to her about how important it is to wash properly in order to get rid of all the germs and to stay healthy. Let her **play with the containers** in her own way. When you are drying her body, talk to her about the different containers and what happened when they were in the bath, for example, "What happened when you put water into the cup?" "It sank!"

This conversation with your child will help her to understand simple concepts of volume (how much a container can hold), size (how big a container is) and weight (whether the container floats or sinks), which are simple science experiments. It also develops her language when she responds to your questions.

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Fun with leaves

For PARENTS

GET ENOUGH SLEEP

Getting enough sleep is important to keep healthy and strong. Children need to get enough and regular sleep. This helps with a child's ability to concentrate, behaviour, learning, memory and overall mental and physical health.

As a parent, also make sure that you get enough sleep.



STORYTIME

Start reading books with your children when they are very small. The 'roots' of language are developed in your baby's brain long before it is able to talk. Reading books aloud (or telling stories) with your young child is the time that you share to bond. When reading or telling stories, point at pictures when you use a certain word, for example, when you use the word orange, point at something that is 'orange'. Ask questions like: Where is the baby? Show me the orange? What do you think they are going to do next? In this way your child starts to develop a love for reading.

You can download many books from **Bookdash** onto your phone here: <https://bookdash.datafree.co/books/>. It is for free and does not use any data. Or visit **Nal'ibali** for more stories at <https://nalibali.org/story-resources/multilingual-stories>

Today's colour is **PURPLE**.

Find everything in the house that is purple. Your child can point out the object or bring it to you. If they don't know the name of the object, help them.

BOOK OF THE DAY



Sizwe's Smile tells the story of Sizwe who learns that a smile is something you can give away

without losing it.

Download this book (its for free) on your smart phone:

<https://bookdash.datafree.co/books/sizwes-smile-by-vianne-venter-genevieve-terblanche-and-lauren-rycroft/>

SOURCE: Bookdash

Let's wash hands

Washing your hands **regularly** with **soap** and **clean water** for **20 seconds** is the best way to prevent the spread of germs and viruses.

Teach this important habit to child from an **early age**.

Tip: The easiest way to know how long **20 seconds** is, is to sing 'happy birthday' two times or to sing the first verse of our national anthem, *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*.



Younger than 18 months

Gently bend and straighten her legs during nappy changes and at bath time. Do the same with her arms. **Talk to her** while doing this.

She is learning new words all the time, which will help with her speech development. This also helps her to bond with you which makes her feel safe.



HEALTHY HABITS

Read often, even if it is only for a short time.

Learning together is **FUN**

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)

Getting active in the morning

Walking on the pillows: This is a fun and really easy activity that helps children to develop the muscles in their legs and also helps them to keep their balance.

Before you finish making the beds, put a few pillows on the floor and get your child to walk on them, without falling off the pillow. If your child is just learning to walk or struggles to walk, help it by holding its hand.

Children love this!



18 months to 36 months

Go with your child into the yard where she can **sift sand** using a sieve. Your child can also pick up leaves in the garden.



This makes the muscles in the fingers strong which helps with **handwriting** later. Your child is also **concentrating** on what she is doing to get the sand through the sieve – shaking the sieve; picking up the leaves and putting them into a bin.

3 to 5 years

Pick **different leaves** from plants with your child. Draw an **outline of a tree** on a page (old newspaper or any other) and ask your child to stick the leaves onto a page with a tree outline.

Once it has done that, your child can count how many leaves there are on each branch. The discussion you have together can be about the **size** and **colour** of the leaves; which branch has the most leaves; which branch has the least leaves.

A creative way to learn counting, size and colours.



Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.



Tshwaragano ka Bana

Working together for children

Little hands matter

Let's play, learn and grow together



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Fun with counting

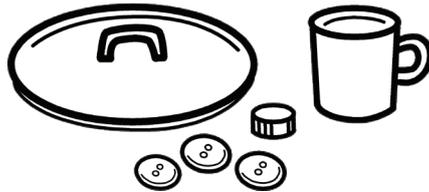
RING TIME

Sit in a circle on the floor with your children and other family members. This is also done in ECD programmes and is called 'ring time'. This is the time when everybody can **share some news** or what they think. Use this time also to talk about everybody's plans for the day. Use 15 minutes every morning to talk to one another. Talk about what is happening in the world in a simple way so that your children can understand. Try to give good news. Talk about what you are going to do during the day. **Give them a chance to ask questions.**

This helps to build your child's social skills like: talking to others, listening and following instructions. She will learn to value the time that you spend talking to her and letting you listen to her, if you **include this in your daily routine.**

Today's shape is a **CIRCLE**

Collect a few objects in the house that are **round**, for example, a pot lid, bottle top, mug, button. Discuss the size and colour, and count the number of things that you have.

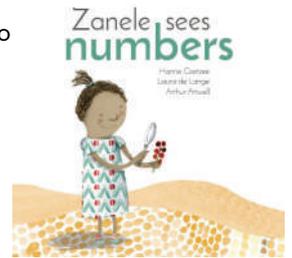


BOOK OF THE DAY

Zanele sees numbers is a story about Zanele who can't see the numbers that are everywhere around her.

Download the book for free: <https://bookdash.org/books/zanele-sees-numbers-hanrie-coetzee-laura-de-lange-arthur-atwell/>

SOURCE: Bookdash



Learning together is FUN

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)

Getting active in the morning

Sing together: Stand in a circle, or face each other, and sing the following song while doing the actions in it: "If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. If you're happy and you know it, and you really want to show it. If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands." Repeat with other actions such as: 'stamp your feet', 'nod your head' and 'turn around!'

Repeating songs will help to develop your child's brain, because she will learn new words as well as the order of the words. Do the actions while singing the song. Enjoy!



For PARENTS

GOOD NEWS!

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has upset the lives of children and their families as health systems crash, borders close, and schools and businesses shut down. The President instructed everyone in South Africa to stay in their homes for 5 weeks.

The good news is that there are many countries working together to keep children healthy, learning and protected from sickness and violence, no matter who they are or where they live. Many organisations are working together to promote facts over fear, and to provide trustworthy guidance to parents, caregivers and educators. You can get the latest information at <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/>

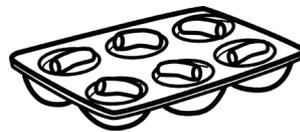
Younger than 18 months

When you bathe your baby or change her nappy, **let her hear counting words.** The words are said at the same time that baby feels that part of the body being touched. For example, "Whose five fingers are these?"; "Whose ten toes are these?" It is important to repeat the words.

This activity lets your child develop her listening skills, as well as prepare her for one-to-one matching, which she will do later. She will become aware of her body parts.

18 months to 36 months

You need an **empty egg tray**, as well as a few items from the house, that will fit into the hollows of the egg tray. These could be macaroni pieces (about 6) for example. **Ask your child** to place one macaroni piece into each hollow and to count each time she puts one in. If she cannot count to six, assist her.



3 to 5 years

During the day let your child **count while doing daily tasks.** She can count out the number of spoons or forks needed for the family for breakfast, "One for Mommy. One for Daddy." and so on. Later on, she will remember how many are needed without going through the list of people.

Think of as many situations as possible to involve her in useful counting activities. For example, "How many apples do we need for everyone in the family?"



With this activity your child will learn one-to-one matching, as well as the value of numbers. She will also gain more self-confidence, because she will be

HEALTHY HABITS

Cough and sneeze

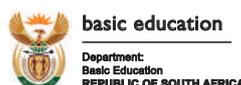


into your **elbow** please

Praise her while she does this activity.

In addition to developing listening skills and preparing her for one-to-one matching (one macaroni piece per hollow), she is also developing the small muscles in her fingers and linking what she is looking at with what her hand is doing.

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.



in partnership with the National Early Childhood Development Alliance (NECDA), the South African Congress for Early Childhood Development and the LEGO Foundation

Content based on the National Curriculum Framework for Children birth to four years



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Let's play with shapes

SHAPES

Shapes are everywhere! Learning shapes does not only help children to identify and organise what they can see, they are the basics they need to understand and forms the base for reading, writing, mathematics and science. *The same skills that they learn by identifying different shapes in the early years, are the skills that they will use to identify the differences in shape between letters and numbers.*

A young child who is able to understand the differences in shapes is better able to notice the differences in shapes of letters. This helps not only with reading but also with writing.

Shape activities can help young children develop problem-solving skills. When a child recognizes the features of a square, it can match it with the square-hole on a toy. Shape recognition can also help when putting together puzzles. If the child pays attention to the shapes of the pieces and the shapes of the openings in the puzzle, it can work out the correct spot for each piece.

For PARENTS

CORRECT INFORMATION

There are a lot of stories going around. Some may not be true. Be careful where you look for information and advice!

Get the correct information about the **coronavirus (COVID-19)**. Speak accurately about the risk of COVID-19 based facts and the latest official health advice. Remember to use **age-appropriate language**, watch their reactions and be sensitive to their level of anxiety.

You can look at 'COVID-19 coronavirus explained to parents of young children' that is available at <https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/reports/covid-19-coronavirus-explained-parents-young-children>.

Today's shape is a SQUARE

Put as many objects that are **square** in the house on a tablecloth like a square cushion, slice of bread, handkerchief or a square biscuit. Talk about the shape of these items.



BOOK OF THE DAY

Singing the Truth: The story of Miriam Makeba

tells the story of the amazing life of a little girl who grew up to use her gift of singing to help bring freedom to South Africa.

Download the book for free at <https://bookdash.datafree.co/books/singing-the-truth-by-louwrisa-blaauw-jade-mathieson-and-bianca-de-jong/>



SOURCE: Bookdash

Learning together is FUN

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)

Getting active in the morning

Shape-hunt game: A fun way to help your child learn shapes is to make a shape-hunt game. Choose a shape, for example a **square**, and ask your child to look around in the house or outside for objects that match that shape.

For young children, do this in one room only. For older children, you can ask them to find objects of the shape anywhere in the house or yard. You can also page through an old magazine with your child and 'hunt' for the shape in the pages. Enjoy hunting and remember to have fun!

Younger than 18 months

Let your baby explore toys or objects that have lines and other **shapes**.

This helps babies to make the link between what their eyes can see and what is in their hands. They also try to reach for the object and pick it up. This helps to develop the small muscles in their hands and fingers which helps with writing. Seeing and touching helps to develop the senses.

18 months to 36 months

Ask your child to put different **shapes** into a shape sorter that has at least 4 shapes including a **circle**, a **triangle**, a **square** and a **rectangle**. It is important to include a square and a rectangle, which look and feel very similar, but are different shapes.



3 to 5 years

Cut the following shapes out of cardboard (you can use an old cereal box or similar): two **circles**, five **triangles**, five **squares**, three **rectangles**, two **heart-shapes** and three **diamond** shapes. Draw each of these on a piece of paper. Give the cut-out shapes to your child and ask it to sort shapes that are fairly similar according to a picture of the shape that you drew.



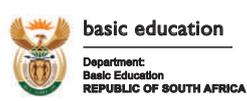
HEALTHY HABITS

If you **COUGH** or **SNEEZE** cover your nose and mouth with a tissue please (*throw the tissue away after using it*)



It is very interesting to see how the child will try and try until it finds the right hole. This shows you that your child is learning to solve problems. Its concentration and persistence also improve as it tries to fit the shape into the hole.

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.





Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Let's play and sort

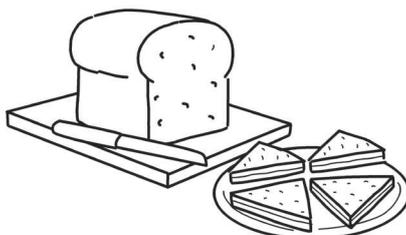
ABOUT SORTING

Sorting is one of the early mathematical skills. Children know that there are some things that are the same and some that are different.

Getting practice with sorting helps your child to understand numbers, grouping of numbers and sets of numbers when it gets older. Some people say that a child first matches one thing to the same thing. Sorting is when they put many things together that are the same and have the same name. In other words, your child matches one block with another block and can sort out all the blocks into a pile.

Today's shape is the TRIANGLE

Make an effort today to point out all the things in the house that have the shape of a **triangle**. When you make sandwiches, cut the sandwich into triangles and talk about the points and the lines of a triangle.



BOOK OF THE DAY

Small Bird's Big Adventure is a story about *Small Bird* and his adventures. *Small Bird* loves the Giant. But where is the Giant? Read the story to find out what happened.

Download the book for free at <https://bookdash.datafree.co/books/small-birds-big-adventure-wesley-van-eeden-nick-mulgrew-jennifer-jacobs/>



SOURCE: Bookdash

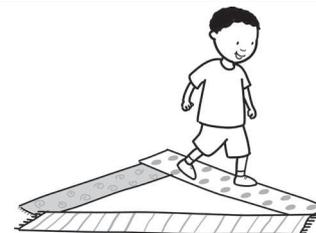
Learning together is FUN

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)

Getting active in the morning

Keep moving: Young children need a lot of movement to grow. Put three scarves on the ground to form a triangle.

Ask your child to do **different actions while in the triangle**. Ask him to walk from one point to the next one, without stepping off the scarves. When he or she gets back to the starting point, you can change the action to crawl, hop or run. *Your child develops its large muscles and learns what makes a triangle.*



Younger than 18 months

Give your baby things to develop his senses: soft toys, hard blocks or beating pots as drums. He will begin to see, feel, smell and taste things that are the same and those that are different.

Just letting your child experience these objects will help him to recognise the differences and similarities. When your baby gets older, he will begin to put two objects with the same colour together. *Matching is a step before he or she can sort.*



18 months to 36 months

Ask your child to collect things that are **red, blue and yellow** in the house. These can then be sorted by putting all the reds, blues and yellows together.

You can also ask him to **put those with the same name together**, for example all the apples together, the bananas together and the blocks together. He can sort and put them into a pile.

This helps your child to learn new words: same and different. It also develops the small muscles in his or her fingers and hands when picking up and putting down the objects.

3 to 5 years

Cut out pictures and advertisements from magazines and newspapers and glue/stick them onto firm cardboard, like *Omo/Skip* boxes. Some pictures must be of the same things.

Ask your child to **sort the pictures that are the same** (and have the same name) together. She will then put them into separate piles: all the balls in one pile; all the chocolates in one pile; all the chairs in one pile. *(Keep the pictures so that you can use them on another day).*



For PARENTS

QUESTIONS, and more questions

Your child is listening to conversations about COVID-19 and wants to know more.

Listen to your child and answer truthfully.

He or she is developing critical thinking skills which are important to help him or her grow and learn. If your child asks you a question it shows that it has a good bond with you.

Questions that have no right or wrong answers are called open-ended questions.

Ask your child open-ended questions like: What is your favourite colour? Have fun asking questions.

HEALTHY HABITS

Ask meaningful questions that are interesting to your child!

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.



Let's play, learn and grow together



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Let's go **measure** and have **fun**

MEASUREMENT

Cooking is a great measurement activity for children of all ages. It gives children many opportunities to learn how to count, measure, add and guess. Even at a young age she might just be watching and listening to you as you prepare a meal. She could be encouraged to help you with the cooking by simple counting, filling, stirring and pouring. Measuring at such a young age builds a foundation of information for future mathematics learning.



Today's shape is the **HEART**



Bend a toilet paper roll into a heart shape. Put a little coffee in a small dish with a little water. Stamp a bunch of hearts onto paper. If you have items with hearts, show your child and talk about the shape.



BOOK OF THE DAY

Vuyo is a book with no words (only pictures) about a day in the life of a baby called Vuyo. 'Read' each page with your child and make up a story for each picture. Ask him what he thinks is happening in the pictures.



Download the story for free at: <https://bookdash.datafree.co/books/vuyo-by-michelle-preen-mieke-van-der-merwe-jessica-janutsch/>

SOURCE: Bookdash

Learning together is **FUN**

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)

Getting active in the morning

Squishy sponges: Give your child some soaking wet cloths or sponges with which to play outside. Let her wash part of an outside wall or bench, or even stamp wet cloth or sponge-shapes onto the wall. Show her how she can squeeze the cloth or sponge to make the water come out - this builds physical skills in her hands and fingers. These 'important' tasks, like washing the wall or bench, will help her feel like a helpful member of the family. As with all water activities, please watch her carefully as she plays.



NEW



ECDmobi is a **FREE** application (App) that provides parents with ideas to support their children's learning through play according to their age. It is fun and playful and based on the DBE's *National Curriculum Framework for Children birth to four years*. You can find it in the **Google Play** (search for ECDmobi) or the **DBE's Cloud** at: <https://dbecloud.org>. Registering on **ECDmobi** is **FREE**.

For PARENTS

PLAY AND READ

Play is one of your child's basic needs. Even when they are sick, they want to play! Even when your child is sick, she will want to play, even though she is fighting an illness. However, if you are sick with coughing or a fever, remember to wash your hands very often with soap and clean water and cough into your elbow. If you cough into a tissue, make sure that you throw the tissue away. Even though you are sick, your child will want to play with you. Read her stories, play quiet games as you build up your energy. Wear a cloth mask that you made yourself.

Younger than 18 months

Baby crawls and **experiences distance**; he explores objects and experiences 'big and small', 'heavy and light' and 'depth' as he reaches into cupboards to grab an object.

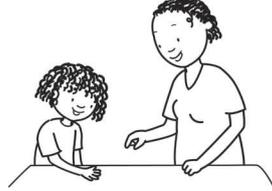
Fill a few empty containers that can close (empty cold drink bottles for example) with something that makes them a little heavier. Rice can be quite fun, as it will also make a sound. Make sure the container is closed tightly.

Your baby develops his large muscles when he crawls. He will be hearing, seeing and feeling different shapes, colours and sounds, which will help him later in developing his understanding of 'big' or 'small'.



18 months to 36 months

Give your child the opportunity to **measure things** using different objects. She can use her hands to measure how long the table is. When she is done, she can say, "The table is 6 hands long."



She can practise measuring different things around the house with her hands, a spoon or with some string. Each time let her say how long the object is, for example, "The bed is 10 spoons long." She can also measure how many cups of water go into a bowl. Again, let her say, "There are 3 cups of water in the bowl."

Doing measurements in a playful manner is a fun way to learn and understand the meaning of words, while it also lays an important base needed for mathematics.

3 to 5 years

Find a space on an empty wall where you can **measure the height of your child** (or all the children in the house).

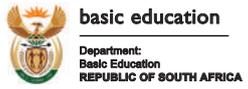


Make a mark at the height of the child. Talk about 'tall', 'taller than', 'short', 'shorter than.' You can then ask them to line up in a row from the tallest to the shortest. Discuss who is the tallest and who is the shortest. She will begin to understand the concepts of 'height' and 'comparison', which will give meaning to language. It will also develop an important base for mathematics later on.

HEALTHY HABITS

Do things together as a household.

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.





Let's play, learn and grow together



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Listen, touch, smell, watch and taste is **learning**

NEW KNOWLEDGE

Children are **born curious** and their brains are ready to learn from the start. They gather new knowledge about *'their world'* by using all their senses: listening, watching, smelling, tasting and touching. This is how young children explore new things, particularly while you **nurture** them and while they are **playing**. Allow your child to explore new things by touching objects (that are safe), listening to your voice and stories, smelling fruits and vegetables, through a variety of playful activities. This is how they learn about the world around them *with you in a playful manner*.

For PARENTS

KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE

Keep at least **one (1) meter** distance between yourself and anyone else. The droplets from a sneeze or cough cannot travel that far in the air. Avoid touching people unnecessarily. In crowded places like shopping centres, places of worship, community gatherings and others, we are very close to other people. Lots of people touch the same surfaces that we do, cough and sneeze and are very close to us. This creates opportunities for germs and viruses to spread very quickly. If you can, avoid these places or go at times when there are not many people. This is called **social distancing**.

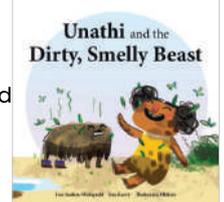
Today's item of furniture is your child's **BED**

Let your child help you make up her bed. Talk about each item: bed, sheet, blanket, pillow. Have fun while making the bed.



BOOK OF THE DAY

Unathi and the Dirty, Smelly Beast is a very funny story about something that is following Unathi... Read and find out what is following Unathi.



Download the book for free at: <https://bookdash.datafree.co/books/unathi-dirty-smelly-beast-jess-jardim-wedepohl-jon-keevy-thokozani-mkhize/>

SOURCE: Bookdash

Learning together is **FUN**

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)

Getting active in the morning

Tin can telephone: Wash two empty cans. Make a hole at the bottom of each can with a nail or another sharp object (do this as parent). Put one end of a long piece of string through one of the holes. Tie a knot in the string on the inside of the can and do the same with the other can. The cans are now linked to each other.



Hold one tin can and give the other to your child. Explain to her that she must speak into the open side of the can. The person who is listening must keep the open side of the can next to her ear. Walk away from each other until the string is tight. Start by asking her a question like: *What is your name?* Help her in the beginning to understand how it works (switching between ear and mouth, depending on whether one talks or listens). **Enjoy having conversations with your child and have fun!**

Younger than 18 months

Play with baby: Hold your baby in your arms while feeding and let your child stare at you. Later she will reach up to touch your face. Keep looking at her and make gentle sounds or speak and sing softly.

All these activities help with her development. The muscles in her arms will grow as she reaches up to your face. Remember **you are the first "object"** that your baby recognises by staring at and touching you.

18 months to 36 months

Where's the ball: Take a number of *vegetables* from your home (potato, onion, bean, carrot, tomato) and talk to your child about the items. Let him tell you what the vegetables feel and smell like. Put these vegetables into a bowl and **add a plastic item**, about the size of a tomato (for example, a small ball). Blindfold him lightly and then ask him to find an item in the bowl that is not a vegetable or a fruit. When he finds it while still blindfolded, ask him why it is not the same as the others.



This activity develops his language skills and also helps him to understand that things feel and smell different. He will learn words like smooth, rough, small, long. Make this a fun activity for both of you.

3 to 5 years

Visit to the Zoo: Explain to your child that a zoo is a place where people keep all kinds of animals and that people visit zoos to learn more about these animals. Explain to her that she and you are going to make your own zoo.

Assist her to collect as many **pictures of animals** as possible from old magazines, newspapers and pamphlets. She could also draw pictures of animals. Put these pictures up all over the house or in the yard.

Now the two of you are ready to go to the zoo. Pack a small bag with some biscuits or fruit and small bottle of homemade cooldrink or water. Start walking 'through the zoo' (the house) and **stop at**

each picture to talk about the animal. Ask her what she knows about that animal. When you come to a nice space in the zoo (any room or area in your home), stop and have a picnic while talking about what you have seen thus far.. This is a fun way for her to learn new things.



If there are other children in the house, let them join the trip to the zoo.

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.

