

Health & Physical Development

33 to 48 months



Continue with consistent routines for mealtimes and bedtimes.

Continue to introduce new foods to your child. It can take up to 20 times for a child to like a new food. Make a healthy snack together and discuss how healthy foods affect our bodies.

Encourage your child to use utensils to eat.

Encourage them to cut their food with the side of their fork. Talk about what utensil is best with which food. Spoon is for soft foods such as pudding/ice cream, fork is for solid foods, knife is for foods that require cutting.

Talk about the importance of sleep using child-friendly language: "Sleep helps you grow and makes you ready for the day." Sleep improves attention, behavior, learning, memory, and overall mental and physical health.

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Outdoor play: ride trikes/bikes, go for a walk, write with chalk on sidewalk, play with bubbles, "paint" the fence/house using water and paint brushes, etc.

Practice hopping, galloping, jumping with feet together, running and begin to teach skipping.

Practice throwing and catching. When beginning to catch your child will use their both arms and bring the ball toward their chest. As they become more balanced and agile, they will use their hands only. Throwing will begin with "flinging" of the object, then will involve more control using the arm and elbow, and eventually throwing overhand with some direction.

Play with assorted throwing objects such as different sizes and weights of balls, bean bags, balled-up socks, etc.

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Practice balance by putting a masking tape line on the floor. Begin with wider tape and get thinner tape as they progress. Practice using flat feet, toes only, and walking backwards.

Create a simple obstacle course to encourage walking, crawling, jumping, turning, and other large body movements.

Dance to a variety of songs: fast, slow, stop and go, loud, quiet.

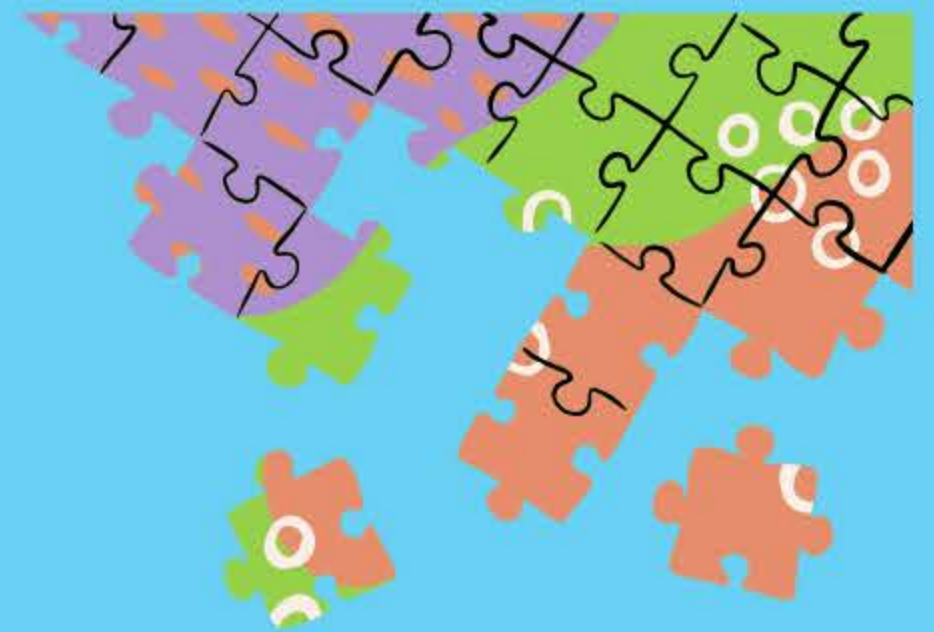
Play Simon Says using large muscle commands such as hop, jump, turn around, reach up, squat down, etc.

Go to the park or a school playground.

Practice on riding toys. Those that require feet to push and pull, those with pedals and three wheels, and those that require balancing using their feet.

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Provide 5–10-piece puzzles and eventually more pieces depending on your child's skills.

Build structures using toothpicks and mini marshmallows.

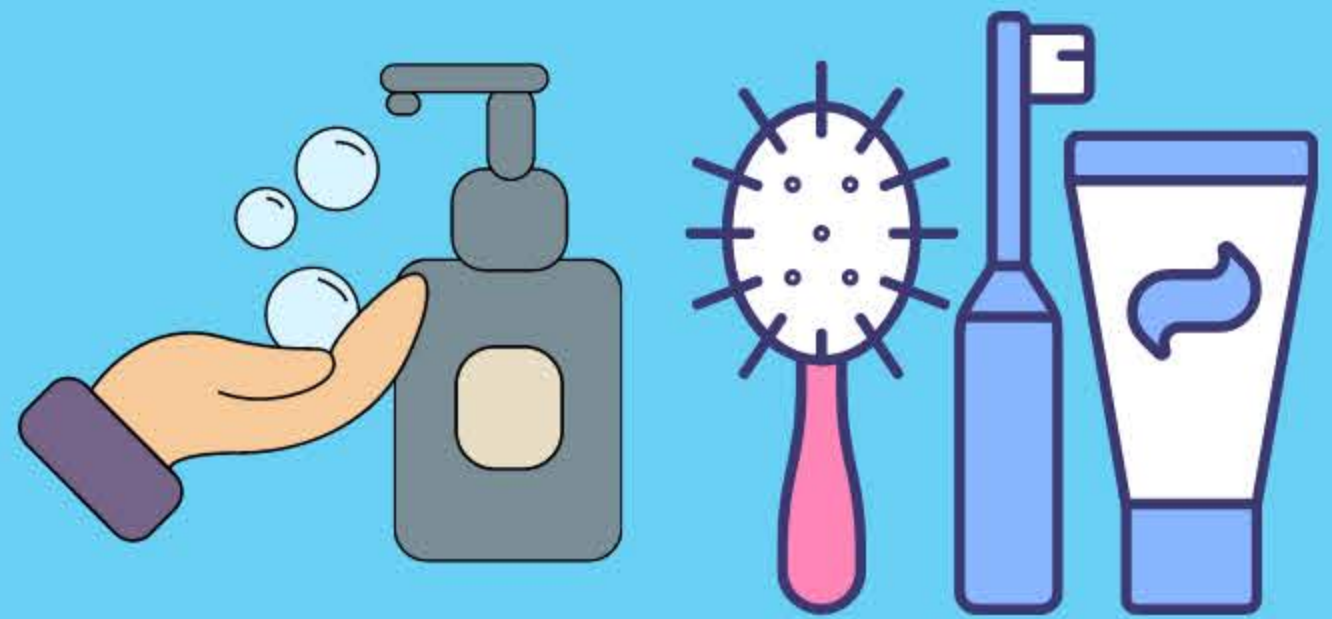
Practice stacking smaller toys or objects such as blocks, Legos, or a variety of sizes of containers/boxes.

Practice building finger and hand muscles by crumpling or tearing paper, peeling stickers, using stamps and stamp pads, beading, putting little objects in a row, squeezing sponges, etc.

Use assorted items that require finger and hand strength, control, and dexterity: utensils, scissors, writing tools, tongs, tweezers, magnifying glass, beading activities, working with playdough, etc.

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Continue practicing dressing using zippers, buttons, snaps, putting on boots/coats themselves, etc.

Encourage independence in hygiene skills such as brushing teeth, washing hands, blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing into their elbows, etc.

Talk about safety with your child: pedestrian, fire, playground, safety inside or outside, strangers, who can help you stay safe, dangerous objects, harsh weather, and what to do in dangerous situations.