

# 20 ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT AGES 1-2

## SCIENCE & DISCOVERY

01

### FIREWORKS IN A JAR

Fill a clear jar with warm water, then in a separate small cup, mix a few drops of different food coloring with oil. Gently pour the oil mixture into the jar and watch as the colors slowly sink and spread out like tiny fireworks exploding underwater! This activity is a mesmerizing way to introduce little ones to the concept of density and how oil and water don't mix, all while enjoying a colorful display.

02

### BALLOON BEARD

Blow up a balloon and draw a fun face on it with a marker. Rub the balloon on your hair or a wool sweater to create static electricity. Then, sprinkle some pepper on a plate and slowly bring the balloon close. Watch as the pepper jumps up and sticks to the balloon like your balloon buddy is growing a funny beard! This activity is a playful way to introduce early science while sparking curiosity and giggles.

03

### DIY LAVA LAMP

Fill a clear bottle or jar about two-thirds full with vegetable oil, then add water until it's almost full (leave a bit of space at the top!). Add a few drops of food coloring and watch as it sinks through the oil to the water. Now for the fun part, break up an Alka-Seltzer tablet and drop in a piece. Sit back and watch the colorful bubbles dance around like a homemade lava lamp!

04

### MAGICAL MILK COLOR EXPLOSION

This science experiment is as mesmerizing as it is easy! Just add a few drops of food coloring to a dish of milk. Dip a cotton swab into some dish soap, then touch it to the milk. Like magic, the colors scatter and swirl, creating a vibrant rainbow of patterns that dance across the surface.

05

### RAINBOW BRIDGE

Take two cups of water and place them side by side. Grab a paper towel and draw a rainbow on each end using washable markers. Place one end of the paper towel in each cup, letting the middle hang between them. Watch as the water travels up the paper towel, carrying the colors with it and creating a beautiful rainbow bridge! This is a great way to introduce little ones to color blending and water absorption while sparking their sense of wonder.

# CREATIVE ARTS & CRAFTS

06

## FINGER PAINTING

Spread a large piece of paper on a flat surface and add a few dollops of washable, non-toxic finger paint. Let your little one explore the paint with their fingers, smearing, dabbing, and mixing colors freely. This simple activity supports fine motor skill development, hand-eye coordination, and creativity

07

## PUFFY PAINT

Create your own puffy paint by mixing 1 cup of shaving cream, 1/4 cup of white glue, and a few drops of food coloring in a bowl. Let your little one dip a paintbrush or their fingers into the mixture and create colorful, textured art on thick paper. As the paint dries, it stays fluffy and raised, adding a fun sensory element to their masterpiece. This activity helps develop fine motor skills, encourages creativity, and introduces early sensory exploration.

08

## ANIMAL MASKS

Cut out the center of a paper plate, leaving just the circle outline. Cut out some ears from the center you cut out and attach them to the top. Then, paint or color your mask to bring your animal to life! Attach a popsicle stick to the bottom for a handle, and now you have your very own animal mask to wear and play with! This activity encourages creativity, fine motor skills, and imaginative play.

09

## FLASHLIGHT DISCOVERIES

Create a fun shadow box by taking an empty tissue or shoe box and cutting out the top and one side to create a "stage." Then, cut a hole in the opposite side from where you made the initial cuts. Place some animal toys or other shaped toys inside the box and turn off the lights. Shine a flashlight through the hole and watch as the shadows appear on the wall. This activity encourages curiosity, teaches cause and effect, and helps develop visual tracking.

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## COTTON BALL ART

Glue cotton balls onto a piece of paper, or use them to create a fun design or picture. You can help your child form shapes like clouds, animals, or any imaginative scene you come up with! Next, thin out some paint with water and give your child a medicine dropper to drop colorful paint onto the cotton balls, watching the colors spread. This activity helps develop creativity, fine motor skills, and color recognition

## SENSORY ACTIVITIES

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### SHAKE SHAKE SHAKE

Fill clear bottles with rice, beads, or colorful water for a safe and fascinating sensory activity, and glitter or tiny toys for extra fun. As your baby shakes or rolls the bottles, they'll explore different sounds and movements, helping develop visual tracking. This activity also offers opportunities to introduce new words like "shake," "sparkle," and "color."

12

### HOMEMADE SNOW

Create your own fluffy snow by mixing 2 cups of baking soda with 1/2 cup of white hair conditioner (adjust as needed until it feels soft and moldable). Pour the mixture into a large bin or tray and let your little one explore! They can scoop, squish, and mold the snow with their hands or use small toys for imaginative play. This activity encourages sensory exploration and fine motor skill development.

13

### WATER SENSORY BIN

Fill a shallow bin with a few inches of water and add safe, engaging items like plastic cups, floating toys, sponges, and measuring cups. Encourage your little one to splash, pour, and explore the water with their hands and tools. Talk about the textures, temperatures, and movements they experience. This activity supports sensory exploration, fine motor development, and cause-and-effect learning.

14

### SQUISH AND SQUEEZE BAGS

Create a sensory experience by filling a Ziploc bag with various materials like hair gel, shaving cream, or colored paint. You can also add small items like buttons, glitter, or beads for extra texture. Seal the bag tightly and let your little one squish, poke, and explore the different sensations. This activity helps develop fine motor skills, tactile exploration, and introduces cause and effect as they see how the materials move inside the bag.

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### HOMEMADE SAND SENSORY BIN

Mix 4 cups of flour with 1/2 cup of baby oil and mix them together to create homemade sand. Pour the sand into a clear bin and let your baby explore the soft, grainy texture by running their fingers through it. Add small toys like plastic animals or shells to encourage scooping and pouring. This activity supports sensory exploration, fine motor skills, and language development as you describe the texture and objects together!



## ACTIVE PLAY

16

### TUNNEL CRAWL

Create a simple tunnel using a soft blanket draped over furniture. Encourage your child to crawl or walk through the tunnel. This activity supports the development of motor skills, and also helps improve coordination, spatial awareness, and strength. You can make it more fun by adding toys or objects inside the tunnel for your child to discover along the way.

17

### TOWER TOPPLERS

Turn stacking into a fun and educational game! Use building blocks, plastic cups or Magna tiles to build towers and knock them down with a ball, car or even your hands. This simple activity helps toddlers develop hand-eye coordination, spatial awareness, and problem-solving skills, all while having a blast!

18

### BABY'S FIRST HIKE

Build a mini obstacle course with pillows, chairs, or boxes. Guide your child to crawl, climb, or walk to navigate through it. It's a fun way to encourage physical activity and problem-solving.

19

### BALLOON TOSS UP

Encourage your baby to stand and take steps by blowing bubbles just out of reach. Place them near a chair or stable object for support as they stretch or take steps toward the floating bubbles. As they try to reach or pop the bubbles, they'll be practicing balance and taking steps without even realizing it. This fun activity helps develop coordination and gives them the motivation to keep moving!

20

### FREEZE DANCE

Turn on some upbeat music and have a dance party! Hold their hands and encourage them to stand and dance, helping them practice walking. Pause the music at random times and shout, 'Freeze!' to see if they can balance on their own for a few seconds before you start dancing again. It's a playful way to boost listening skills, rhythm, and self-control.