Activities for Children 36 - 48 Months Old

ASQ-3™

Make a book "about me" for your child. Save family pictures, leaves, magazine pictures of a favorite food, and drawings your child makes. Put them in a photo album, or glue onto sheets of paper and staple together to make a book.	Make a bird feeder using peanut butter and bird seed. Help your child find a pine cone or a piece of wood to spread peanut butter on. Roll in or sprinkle with seeds and hang in a tree or outside a window. While your child watches the birds, ask her about the number, size, and color of the different birds that visit.	Grow a plant. Choose seeds that sprout quickly (beans or peas), and together with your child place the seeds in a paper cup, filling almost to the top with dirt. Place the seeds 1/2 inch under the soil. Put the cup on a sunny windowsill and encourage your child to water and watch the plant grow.	Before bedtime, look at a magazine or children's book together. Ask your child to point to pictures as you name them, such as "Where is the truck?" Be silly and ask him to point with an elbow or foot. Ask him to show you something that is round or something that goes fast.	Play a matching game. Make two sets of 10 or more pictures. You can use pictures from two copies of the same magazine or a deck of playing cards. Lay the pictures face up and ask your child to find two that are the same. Start with two picture sets and gradually add more.
While cooking or eating dinner, play the "more or less" game with your child. Ask who has more potatoes and who has less. Try this using same-size glasses or cups, filled with juice or milk.	Cut out some large paper circles and show them to your child. Talk with your child about things in her world that are "round" (a ball, the moon). Cut the circle in half, and ask her if she can make it round again. Next, cut the circle into three pieces, and so forth.	During bath time, play Simon Says to teach your child names of body parts. First, you can be "Simon" and help your child wash the part of his body that "Simon says." Let your child have a turn to be "Simon," too. Be sure to name each body part as it is washed and give your child a chance to wash himself.	Talk about the number 3. Read stories that have 3 in them (The Three Billy Goats Gruff, Three Little Pigs, The Three Bears). Encourage your child to count to 3 using similar objects (rocks, cards, blocks). Talk about being 3 years old. After your child gets the idea, move up to the numbers 4, 5, and so forth as long as your child is interested.	Put out several objects that are familiar to your child (brush, coat, banana, spoon, book). Ask your child to show you which one you can eat or which one you wear outside. Help your child put the objects in groups that go together, such as "things that we eat" and "things that we wear."
When your child is getting dressed, encourage her to practice with buttons and zippers. Play a game of Peekaboo to show her how buttons go through the holes. Pretend the zipper is a choo-choo train going "up and down" the track.	Practice following directions. Play a silly game where you ask your child to do two or three fun or unusual things in a row. For example, ask him to "Touch your elbow and then run in a circle" or "Find a book and put it on your head."	Encourage your child's "sharing skills" by making a play corner in your home. Include only two children to start (a brother, sister, or friend) and have a few of the same type of toys available so that the children don't have to share all of the time. Puppets or blocks are good because they encourage playing together. If needed, use an egg or oven timer with a bell to allow the children equal time with the toys.	Listen for sounds. Find a cozy spot, and sit with your child. Listen and identify all of the sounds that you hear. Ask your child if it is a loud or soft sound. Try this activity inside and outside your home.	Make an adventure path outside. Use a garden hose, rope, or piece of chalk and make a "path" that goes under the bench, around the tree, and along the wall. Walk your child through the path first, using these words. After she can do it, make a new path or have your child make a path.
Find large pieces of paper or cardboard for your child to draw on. Using crayons, pencils, or markers, play a drawing game where you follow his lead by copying exactly what he draws. Next, encourage your child to copy your drawings, such as circles or straight lines.	When reading or telling a familiar story for bedtime, stop and leave out a word. Wait for your child to "fill in the blank."	Make a necklace you can eat by stringing Cheerios or Froot Loops on a piece of yarn or string. Wrap a short piece of tape around the end of the string to make a firm tip for stringing.	Listen and dance to music with your child. You can stop the music for a moment and play the "freeze" game, where everyone "freezes," or stands perfectly still, until you start the music again. Try to "freeze" in unusual positions for fun.	Make long scarves out of fabric scraps, old dresses, or old shirts by tearing or cutting long pieces. Use material that is lightweight. Hold on to the edge of the scarf, twirl around, run, and jump.

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