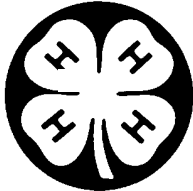


Project Suggestions



# 4-H I CAN DO...

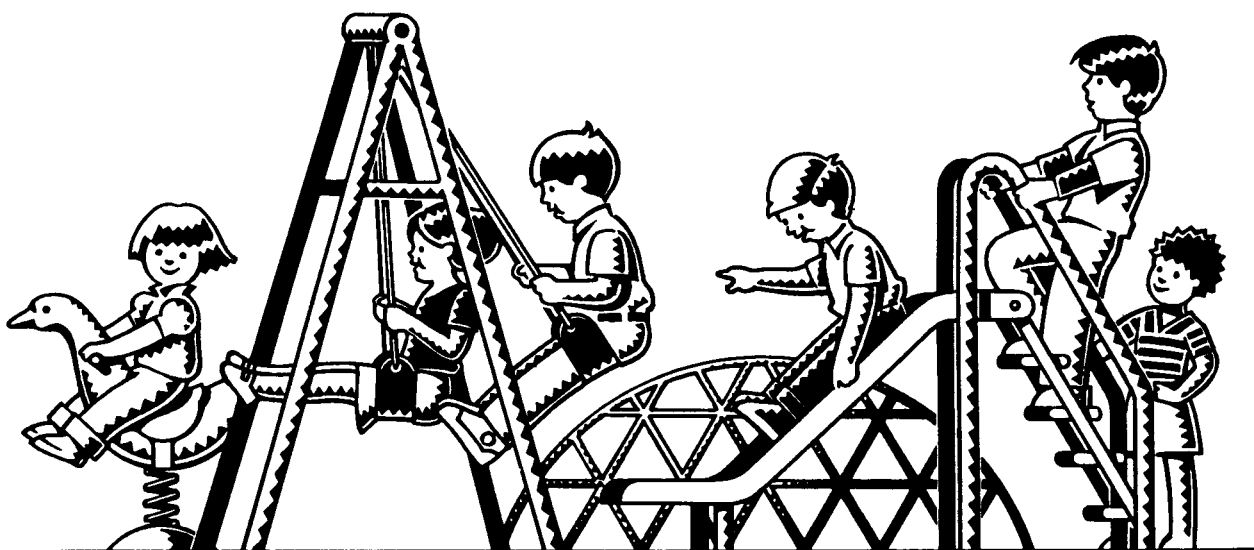
Alabama Cooperative Extension System / Alabama A&amp;M and Auburn Universities

If you are taking the 4-H Child Development Project, chances are you've already started babysitting. You probably like children and want to learn to care for them better.

Learning how children grow and change will help you better understand them. It will help you enjoy being around them more. As you learn about young children, you will also learn about yourself and how you grew and developed.

What is child development? A child goes through distinct levels of change, or development. These levels are physical (body), intellectual (mind), and personality and social development (getting along with others).

## Child Development



To learn more from your child development project, do as many of the suggested activities as you can. Check each one when you complete it. Use Leaflet YHE-223a, "Child Development Record Sheet," to keep a good record of your child development activities.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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If you have been around babies, you know how fast their bodies grow and change. For example, when they are born, they can't support their heads. Yet, when their muscles, nerves, and bones develop, they are able to raise and turn their heads. This development occurs only a few months after they are born. Sitting, rolling over, standing, walking, and reaching are other things they learn as their bodies develop.

Children in early childhood (3 to 5 years) like to walk, run, jump, throw, catch, bounce, hop, and climb. Older children (6 to 12 years) like to play organized games.

Even though each child develops at his or her own pace, we can see that they go through these stages. Many things can affect how they grow physically. One is nutrition, or eating the right kinds and amounts of food. Children who don't get good nutrition will have slower body development.

### Suggested Activities

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Find out what kinds of things pre-school children like to do. Ask for Leaflet YHE-63, "Growth And Development Of Preschool Children." It will help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. After reading Leaflet YHE-62, "Enjoying And Learning About Children," make a safe toy and play with a child.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Observe a younger brother or sister (or a neighbor's child) over a period of months. Keep a diary of the physical changes you observe.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Collect a bag or box of safe toys that most children will enjoy playing with. The toys should help children use their developing muscles, bones, and nerves.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Ask a nurse or other child development specialist what children can do at different stages. Make a chart about what you learn.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Find out some physical activities to do with a baby. Make a list.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Learn how to feed children, based on their physical abilities, in each of the following stages: baby, toddler, preschooler, first through third grader. Write a short report on what you learn.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Make a nutritious snack for a preschooler or first through third grader.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Take a 4-H or Red Cross babysitting course to learn how to care for the physical needs of a young child.

## **INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT**

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Human beings start learning the moment they are born, and they don't ever stop. Children learn by watching other people. Then they copy what they see. You've probably seen them copy your facial expressions or your movements, or copy what you say. Children also learn when they get rewards for pleasing someone. If a child pleases his parents and the parents reward the child, he or she is likely to do that action again. If the parent does not like what the child does, the parent may ignore the action or show displeasure; the child may be less likely to do the displeasing action again.

Children learn from people and objects around them. They can learn from you. It is fun to watch children learn new things.

### **Suggested Activities**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Read Leaflet YHE-62, "Enjoying And Learning About Children"; then do the following: Choose a book to read to a child. Make up a story to tell a child. Listen to music with a child. Sing a song with a child.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Find safe ways to entertain and teach children of these stages: baby, toddler, preschooler.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Play with a small child and listen to him or her talk, watch how he plays, and how she uses her imagination.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Make up stories or draw with a small child. Listen to how he or she describes things or people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Talk to a young child from a race or culture different from yours. See if you can find if the child has learned things different from what you learned.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Find out what a finger play is. Create one and try to teach it to a small child.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Teach a young child a new skill by letting him or her copy you. For example, teach how to tie shoe laces, write his or her name, or turn on a light.

## **PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

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Each child has a unique personality. David may sit with a puzzle for hours before he solves it. Mary may try the puzzle for a few minutes then walk away from it. What makes children turn out the way they do?

Parents, friends, brothers and sisters, teachers, and experiences affect how a child's personality develops. Even babysitters can have an effect!

Social development of a child involves learning to play and get along with others. This is called socialization. The child learns to make friends, to share toys, to wait his or her turn to go down the slide, etc.

Playing with children can be fun. You can also learn a lot by watching children play.

### Suggested Activities

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Go to a kindergarten and watch children play. Do they play with other children, talk with them, fight with them? Write down what you learned about how children play.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Volunteer to lead games for children at Sunday School, a school playground, or a friend's house. Learn which games children like.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Volunteer to help at a day-care center or nursery. Watch how the teachers help the children learn to get along. Write down examples of things you learn.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Practice showing love and support to young children.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Find out what can happen if children don't get emotional support, loving discipline, and security. Write a paragraph on why one of these is important in a child's development.

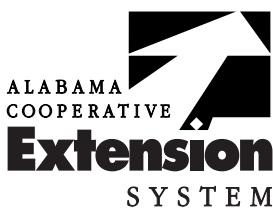
## SHARING WITH OTHERS

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Part of the fun of learning new things is sharing what you have learned with others.

### Suggested Activities

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Write a paper for school about some aspect of child development.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Give a talk about how children play and what they learn from play.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Teach a friend about what you learned from doing this project.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Set up an exhibit with a variety of pictures of children playing.



YHE-223

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**For more information**, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

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