

CREATIVE SENSORY PLAY
~FOR BABIES AND TODDLERS~

WRITTEN BY
HONEY BROWN

Creative Sensory Play ~For Babies and Toddlers~

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~ INTRODUCTION ~

I am Honey. I am the wife of Jonah and the homeschooling mama to 5 wonderful children. As my twins are turning one and seeking more sensory adventures, I set out to find some inexpensive ways to meet their needs. Some of these ideas may seem obvious, but sometimes in the busy-ness of life we can overlook the simplest things. Get creative, explore, and have fun with your baby.

Honey

- SAFETY WARNING -

Please use caution and common sense when trying the ideas mentioned in this book. Never leave a baby or toddler left unattended with any of the sensory toys mentioned.

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~ LOOKING AND SEEING ~

SHOW YOUR BABY THE WORLD

Show your baby all the sights and colors of the world we live in.

PLAY PEEK-BOO

I know it is traditionally called peek-a-boo, but we love the term peek-boo. Our little girl absolutely adores this game. She will hide herself in curtains and play with her twin and they both laugh and giggle.

BUBBLES

I love bubbles. All of my kids love bubbles. Blow bubbles for the kids.

Fill the sink with a bit of water and lots and lots of bubbles. Play and have fun.

Fill a bucket with bubbles and let the babies play. I usually fill my kitchen sink with lots and lots of bubbles and skim some off the top. Then I put those bubbles in a bucket in the living room for the babies to play with.

Fill the bath with lots and lots of bubbles.

LOOK AT BOOKS

Make your own books to share with your baby. You can make books about any topic you want.

You could use those little photo albums from the dollar store to create little books for your babies.

Some ideas for books could include: colors, shapes, your family, fruits, vegetables, animals, alphabets, and numbers.

Visit second hand stores and gather cheap board books.

Visit the library to borrow some board books.

Create scrapbooks to look at with your babies (the big kids will like these also).

USE SIGN LANGUAGE

We started using simple signs in our home to curb some screaming that was happening with our son. He would be all finished his food, but not be able to communicate that he was finished without smacking the spoon, sending food flying and letting out loud screams. He was not ready to talk yet, but he was ready to communicate. He can understand the signs and he can sign some of them. The common signs we are using include: all done, eat, more, milk, down, and up. These have been working very well for us with the twins, so well in fact, that I wish we had used them with all of our children. Signs can easily be found on the internet.

CREATE A SENSORY BOTTLE

Fill a plastic water bottle with water. Add glitter. Glue the lid shut. Your baby can have fun tipping the bottle up and down, rolling it around on the floor, and chasing it across the room.

MAKE A FELT BOARD

There are many different ways that you can do this, but one way is to print out pictures from your favorite coloring book or story book (or website) and laminate them. Then put some velcro on the back. These can be used to create stories on a large piece of felt.

MAGNET FUN

Make magnets from pictures cut out of magazines or catalogues. Glue the pictures onto card stock and laminate them. Then attach a large magnet to the back. You can use the magnets that are meant for the backs of business cards if you want.

LOOK IN THE MIRROR

Spend time looking in the mirror at each other.

LOOKING FUN

Put colorful windsocks and streamers out in the yard where you can see them blowing in the wind (preferably from a window). Have some looking fun on a windy day.

WATCH THE BALL

Get a postage tube and having rolling rubber balls back and forth.

BABY MOBILES

Create some baby mobiles for the baby to look at. They can be in a theme or just random brightly colored objects.

Purchase a circular plastic clothes dryer with the clips attached and attach different things to it.

PICTURE BOXES

Cover a box with plain paper. Add pictures of people, flowers, animals, and other things. Let baby explore the box.

PUPPETS ON A STICK

Cut pictures out of magazines and glue them onto card stock. Glue them on to craft sticks. Have a puppet show.

A MATCHING GAME

Take cardboard or index cards or card stock and trace cookie cutters. Use the cookie cutters to match to the shape that you drew.

~ MAKING BEAUTIFUL MUSIC ~

SING SONGS

Sing songs with your baby. Sing baby songs, sing big people songs. Sing anything.

TALK TO YOUR BABY

Babies love to chat. Talk to your baby as much as you can.

READ TO YOUR BABY

Read to your baby. I mentioned reading books in the previous section. Read books that rhyme or have a sing song type of story.

MAKE SHAKERS

Create shakers from plastic bottles and beans and dry peas.

RINGS AND RIBBONS

Take a length of wide ribbon and tie on mason canning jar rings at random intervals. The babies will love it.

CLOTHES PEG TOSS

Take wooden clothes pegs (the kind with no springs) and play toss into a tin.

PLAY MUSIC

Put on some music and dance.

POTS AND PANS

Empty out the cupboards and play with the pots and pans.

CLAP YOUR HANDS

Clap your hands in different patterns. Clap to music.

KEYS

Collect old keys, put them on a key chain and let the baby make music with them.

DRUMS

Use an empty coffee tin and wooden spoons to make your own home made drum kit.

CRINKLY OLD SOCK

Stuff an old, but clean sock with something crinkly. Tie a knot in the end.

~ USING MY MOUTH ~

FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Try a variety of different fruits and vegetables to give your baby many different sensory experiences. Look for foods that will be wet and juicy, crunchy, or soft and squishy.

HORNS AND WHISTLES

Collect some horns and whistles at the dollar store and blow away. Baby may not be ready for blowing, but he will sure enjoy it when you blow.

RHYMES

Read rhymes with your baby. Make up your own rhymes. Be silly and have fun.

BUBBLES

Blow bubbles again. This was mentioned earlier.

~ TACTILE ADVENTURE ~

CUDDLE

Cuddle your baby. Spend as much time as your baby will let you snuggling and cuddling.

TICKLE

Tickle your baby. Enjoy listening to them laugh and giggle.

ROCK

Rock your baby to sleep. Rock your baby for comfort. Rock your baby for fun.

DANCE

Put on some funky music and dance away. Dance with your baby. The twins will sway or do little dance when we put on music.

TACTILE ADVENTURES

Explore different textures: soft, furry, rough, smooth, bumpy, etc.

You can use the following materials: suede, silk velvet, fake fur, satin, cotton, sandpaper, burlap, felt, cotton, velour, terrycloth, tissue paper, sponges, paper, empty tins with lids, velvet, fur, lace, towels, cardboard, fine sandpaper etc.

SENSORY QUILT

For all you sewing mamas out there, you can create your child a wonderful sensory quilt. Sew different types of fabrics together to create an amazing tactile adventure.

TEXTURE BOARD

For those of you that don't sew, here is another idea. Make a texture board by gluing different materials to a piece of cardboard or wood.

TEXTURE BLOCKS

Make some great texture blocks by gluing different fabrics and materials onto wooden blocks.

TEXTURE BOOK

Take scraps of different textures and glue them into a book.

WATER PLAY

Have fun playing in the water with your baby. You can use measuring cups, funnels, ladles, jugs, eye-droppers and squirt bottles can be used.

You can practice: pouring, scooping, filling, mixing, emptying, and many other useful skills.

SAND PLAY

Sand play can be conducted much like water play. Give your baby containers with holes poked in the bottom to make a sieve. You can use funnels, plastic buckets, etc. Have fun.

FINGER PAINT

Introduce finger painting. You can finger paint with pudding if you are worried about paint being eaten.

BALLS

We have many different types of balls in all shapes and sizes. The babies love to play with balls. They have even learned to roll the ball back and forth.

SCARVES IN THE BUCKET

Cut a circle into the lid of an ice cream container. Cover the edges of the circle with tape to soften them. Fill the container with different colored scarves. Baby will have lots of fun pulling them out, then stuffing them back in.

BLOCKS

Make your own blocks. There are many different types of blocks that you can create for your baby.

Play with wooden blocks.

Stack alphabet blocks and make towers.

COLORING

Create many different opportunities to color. Use crayons, felt pens, jumbo crayons, etc.

STACKS AND STACKS

Collect plastic lids from various containers to make your own set of stacking cups. Hairspray, shaving foam, cooking oil, and dairy whip containers all have good size lids. Make sure you wash them well before use.

BEAN BAGS

Create or collect bean bags made out of different textures. Toss them in to tins. Play catch with them. Knock down pop bottles with them.

PLAY DOUGH

Pull out the play dough and roll it around in your fingers (keep it out of your mouth). Smash it and bang it. Feel it squish in your hands. Try your hand at rolling pins and cookie cutters. For a variation, try adding some glitter or a scent to your play dough. There is an abundance of home made play dough recipes on the internet, why not try making some yourself?

~ WHAT'S THAT SMELL ~

YOUR FAVORITE SMELLS

What are some of your favorite smells from over the years? Explore these smells with your baby.

GUESS THAT SMELL

Put some cotton balls in film canisters. Put a few drops of a scent on each cotton ball.

You could use: perfume, mint leaves, vanilla essence, spices such as cloves, cinnamon or ginger, or vinegar.

Attach the lids securely and poke a small hole in the lid so they can be smelled. Sit your child on your lap and let them smell each one.

PLAY DOUGH

Play dough revisited. Create smelly play dough by adding different scents.

You can create your smelly dough by making your dough from scratch and adding Kool-aid packs (smelly and colorful).

You can add other scents like mint, lemon, lavender, vanilla.

Thank you for purchasing Creative Sensory Play ~For Babies and
Toddlers~ from <http://www.sunflowerschoolhouse.com>.