

AGES 4 TO 5

- a variety of books with stories and poems – children enjoy picture books that allow them to make up their own story; they also enjoy dictating and drawing their own books
- equipment to help a child develop muscles or to run, skip and jump such as balls, climbers, wheel toys and jump ropes
- paper, markers, crayons, paste, scissors, collage materials and play dough for creative art expressions
- simple card and board games, dominoes and checkers that involve listening to and following directions
- props for make-believe play such as dolls, dishes, dress-up clothes, shoes and purses

AGES 6 TO 8

- a variety of books for the child to read
- a selection of card and board games
- a variety of materials for creative art experiences such as paper, markers, colored pencils, glue, scissors, collage materials, papier-mache, clay, a compass and ruler
- materials for imaginative play such as adult dress-up clothes and accessories or plastic construction sets
- a variety of mechanical toys such as train sets and cars
- large muscle and sports equipment such as gloves, balls, bats, basketball and hoop at proper height for the child's size and two-wheel bikes

WE'RE READY FOR YOUR CALL

For questions about childhood health and development, or for assistance in choosing a pediatrician, our pediatric nurses can help.

Call the St. Louis Children's Hospital Answer Line at 314.454.KIDS (5437) or 800.678.KIDS (5437).

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AGE-APPROPRIATE TOYS AND ACTIVITIES



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AGE-APPROPRIATE TOYS AND ACTIVITIES

Shopping for toys can be exciting and fun, but it can also be frustrating. There might be thousands of toys to choose from in just one store, and it's important to choose an appropriate toy for your child's age. When choosing toys, keep in mind the child's age and skill level.

Children under age 3 tend to put everything in their mouths, so you should avoid buying toys that may have small parts that pose a choking danger. Avoid toys that have sharp edges and points. Make sure that all directions or instructions are clear to you and, when appropriate, to the child. Always look for quality design and construction in all toys for children of all ages.

Plastic wrappings on toys should be discarded immediately; they could become a suffocation hazard. Toy boxes should also be checked for safety. Use a toy chest that has a lid that will stay open in any position when raised, and will not fall unexpectedly on a child. For extra safety, be sure there are ventilation holes for fresh air.

Careful toy selection and proper supervision of children at play is the best way to protect children from toy-related injuries. Here are some ideas of age-appropriate toys and activities:

AGES BIRTH TO 6 MONTHS

- bright, colorful objects to watch turning and moving
- a plastic mirror hung about 6 to 7 inches from the baby's face to attract attention and develop ability to focus
- sound-producing toys such as bells, squeakers and rattles to help develop listening skills
- soft, durable toys, such as small stuffed animals or dolls (be cautious of small parts, such as eyes and noses)
- picture books with sturdy pages and photographs of people and objects

AGES 6 TO 12 MONTHS

- toys to grasp, pick up, roll, push and pull
- small objects for banging, throwing and squeezing; objects should always be large enough to not fit through a toilet paper tube
- large containers into which the baby can drop toys, put things in or take things out
- sturdy books with pages to turn and bright pictures; read to your baby regularly
- simple mechanical devices such as busy boxes and pop-up toys

AGES 1 TO 2

- an assortment of balls to bounce, throw and chase including soft rubber and plastic balls that are large enough to not fit through a toilet paper tube
- four-wheel carts or wagons to sit on and move
- toys designed for fitting shapes into proper places

- a variety of toys to push or pull
- a variety of books with sturdy pages and brightly colored pictures

AGES 2 TO 3

- a variety of books with stories, short poems and nursery rhymes
- props for make-believe play such as dolls, dishes, dress-up clothes, shoes and purses (for both boys and girls)
- a variety of materials for creative art experiences such as crayons, markers, blunt scissors, paste, construction paper, collage materials and play dough
- a variety of small toys such as puzzles, small plastic building blocks that snap together, small wooden blocks and a selection of toys such as small people, animals and buildings
- very simple games encourage visual matching and memory skills
- equipment to allow large motor development such as climbers, tricycles and balls

