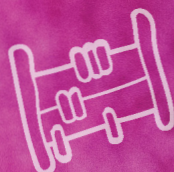
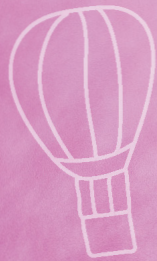


fun baby learning games

Activities to Support
Development in
Infants, Toddlers, and
Two-Year Olds

Sally Goldberg, PhD



fun
baby
learning
games

**Activities to Support
Development in
Infants, Toddlers, and
Two-Year-Olds**

Sally Goldberg, PhD

Copyright
©2018 Sally Goldberg

Published by Gryphon House, Inc.
P. O. Box 10, Lewisville, NC 27023
800.638.0928; 877.638.7576 (fax)
www.gryphonhouse.com

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or technical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior written permission of the publisher. Printed in The United States. Every effort has been made to locate copyright and permission information.

Cover photograph courtesy of Shutterstock.com.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The cataloging-in-publication data is registered with the Library of Congress for ISBN
978-0-87659-748-4.

Bulk Purchase

Gryphon House books are available for special premiums and sales promotions as well as for fund-raising use. Special editions or book excerpts also can be created to specifications. For details, call 800.638.0928.

Disclaimer

Gryphon House, Inc., cannot be held responsible for damage, mishap, or injury incurred during the use of or because of activities in this book. Appropriate and reasonable caution and adult supervision of children involved in activities and corresponding to the age and capability of each child involved are recommended at all times. Do not leave children unattended at any time. Observe safety and caution at all times.

Dedication

To my friend, Sue Augir:

Thank you so much for steering me in the right direction. It was your special touch of friendship and professionalism that helped me get this book back on track and ready for its final “meant-to-be” destination.

To my husband, Bob Elam:

Thank you for overseeing the “track.” It was your generosity and love that supported me in this part of my early childhood work, which is such a meaningful and important part of my life.



Acknowledgments

This book puts early play into a sequenced context. Whatever age or stage your little one is at, you will be able to learn about and then guide your child through it with precision. Guesswork is out, and confidence is in.

This handy resource is here today because of the many helpful people who chipped in with their time, energy, and resources. Marnie Cochran, who was in on the ground level when the book was conceived and begun, played a big role in the formative stage. Thank you, Marnie. Then years later, along came Stephanie Roselli, executive editor at Gryphon House, and she gets the biggest thank-you of all. First, she gave it her scientific touch and then followed that with her genuine stamp of approval.

Thanks also go to the many mothers who tried out the activities, gave me needed feedback, and even posed with their babies for photos. Thank you very much, Corin Wiser and your daughter Hannah, Amber Bloom and your son Tyler, Rayna Spector and your daughter Peri, Guadalupe Griffin and your son Gabriel, Christine Randhawa and your son Liam, Traci Krystyniak and your daughter Rileigh, and Patty Majerus and your son Tommy. Your practical advice, insight, and patient children all helped me a lot!

A finished product looks simple, but there are many dedicated professionals who work behind the scenes to improve quality in every way. Much appreciation goes to Melissa Henninger, content editor, who helped me raise the bar for excellence. Then along came Karen Sommerfeld, copy editor, who took the whole project to the next level with her good eye. Melissa and Karen, thank you both.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iv
Foreword by Victoria L. Grimes	vi
Preface	vii
Introduction	viii

PART I	Birth to One Year	1
	Chapter 1: Birth to Three Months	2
	Chapter 2: Three to Six Months	23
	Chapter 3: Six to Nine Months	42
	Chapter 4: Nine to Twelve Months	63

PART II	One Year to Two Years	85
	Chapter 5: Twelve to Eighteen Months	86
	Chapter 6: Eighteen to Twenty-Four Months	107

PART III	Two Years to Three Years	128
	Chapter 7: Twenty-Four to Thirty Months	129
	Chapter 8: Thirty to Thirty-Six Months	151

Epilogue: The Power of the Parent	174
References	175
Index	184



Foreword

I was an absolute sponge for parenting knowledge as I anticipated the birth of my first child. As the publisher of a parenting magazine, the resources available to me were bountiful. I read everything I could get my hands on! It was during this time that I was fortunate enough to meet Dr. Sally Goldberg.

Dr. Goldberg and I had an instant common bond—the aspiration to educate parents on the importance of early childhood education and nurturing. However, I immediately was intrigued by her refreshing perspective on parenting and the true essence of childhood. Her energy and commonsense approach are welcome alternatives to the numerous modish techniques and gadgets that bombard today’s parents.

I implemented Dr. Goldberg’s creative ideas with my firstborn. My son and I would spend time coordinating household items of the same color, creating musical instruments from plastic spoons and containers, and making our own flash cards. It was a wonderful moment when his prekindergarten teacher credited his advanced skills to the extra time I had spent with him! Now, my youngest son is also exhibiting an advanced skill level in school. Thank you, Dr. Goldberg!

Parents will revel in the fresh approaches offered in this unique “play-and-learn” system. Dr. Goldberg’s suggestions are a blessing for both the stay-at-home and working parent. When there no longer seems to be enough time in the day, her activities allow a parent to make the most of the precious moments of child-parent bonding. Dr. Goldberg shows us that we can allow our children to take the initiative in learn-and-play activities. It is a golden opportunity for creative play when the child is more intrigued by the box the toy came in rather than the toy itself. After reading this book, parents and caregivers will discover that their recycling bin is actually a treasure chest of toys waiting to happen. Parents and caregivers alike can teach invaluable skills while investing nothing more than some creativity and time.

Dr. Sally Goldberg is an inspiration to me both as a professional and a parent. To this day, I simply need to take a moment to refer to her writings and once again feel grounded in this whirlwind of new-millennium parenting. Thank you, Dr. Sally, for reminding us what a special gift parenting actually can be!

Victoria L. Grimes
Publisher
Today’s Family Magazine



Preface

This book is a theory- and research-based guide to playing with little ones. All activities foster development in one or more of five areas—cognitive, motor, social-emotional, language, and self-esteem; and each one includes information about the activity, how to do it, and why.

Each of the suggested activities has been carefully selected or specially crafted as a stellar way to encourage a particular skill or emerging milestone. Some you may recognize, as they are based on play interactions that have been passed down through the generations. A few are specifically designed for you to create your own unique add-ons. All are there for you to experience in your own way.

Throughout the book you will see that you are the key player. There is no machine that can take your place. You are vitally needed day in and day out to handle properly the wants and needs of the little ones in your care. When even the most challenging situations arise—problems that an outsider would never know how to fix—poof, you solve them. How? Easy. You are the parent, and you know how. Find out more about this concept in the epilogue, “The Power of the Parent.”

Many conveniences have come our way in the digital age. However, none has made the process of guiding children through all their years of growth and development any quicker, easier, or less complex. As a matter of fact, the human touch, both male and female, is still exactly as important to children as it ever was.

Introduction

The first three years of life are more important than most people think. They lay the foundation for all of life to come. Surprising as this may sound, research tells us that if a child has high verbal skills by the age of three, she will likely be successful in school by age six. I pass on to you these well-researched and highly valued concepts that appear often in the literature. First is that an enriched early learning environment in the first three to five years sets the stage for later success in school, and second is that the *R, S, and T* of parenting—reading, singing, and talking to young children—are key. Moreover, of all the input young children receive in the early years, it is high-quality and high-quantity language that seems to play the biggest role.

In the Far East, people plant Chinese bamboo. During the first four years, they water and fertilize the plant with seemingly little or no results. Then in the fifth year, they again apply water and fertilizer, and in five weeks' time the tree grows 90 feet in height. Many people in Asia know this story and see it as a metaphor for personal growth and resilience. It also helps them to understand how important it is to provide an enriched early educational environment for their children in the first five years. While each book you read to your child, each song you sing, or each individual conversation that you have does not in itself make a major impact, taken altogether they have great value and make a world of difference. Your child knows, and now you know too, that enriching her environment on a daily basis is exactly what is needed to give her the best start possible. Taking this important information into account, you have here in sequenced form well-researched and highly recommended activities that are geared specifically for infants, toddlers, and two-year-olds all the way up to age three.

There are five areas of development that emerge both independently and interactively throughout our lifetime—cognitive, motor, social-emotional, language, and self-esteem. Each one is briefly described below. Just as we all need to eat food from each of the five food groups, so it is necessary for a child to participate in activities from each of the five areas of development. While technology can enhance learning in all of these areas, hands-on interactive play is most important. Each activity has been designed to focus on one particular area, but they all affect each other at the same time.

- **Cognitive: learning about the world**

Through experiencing the environment in different ways, learning occurs. All of it takes place through the five senses—sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell.

- **Motor: using large (gross) and small (fine) muscle movement in a purposeful manner**

Through gross motor movement, full-body development takes place. Through fine motor muscle movement, finger and hand dexterity emerge. Gross-motor and fine-motor milestones are reached as large-muscle and small-muscle movements become self-initiated.

- **Social-Emotional: having appropriate interpersonal relationships and a growing sense of self**

Through a series of specific expanding relationships, almost like the concentric circles that form when a pebble hits a pond, a young person's self-concept keeps emerging. First and foremost is the parent-child relationship; that starts the whole ball rolling. What parents do in an ongoing fashion as they react with excitement over each little miracle of their child's unfolding development builds acceptance. In time, sibling relationships form and create strong allegiances followed by the grandparent, aunt, uncle, and cousin connections that instill loyalty. Last but not least are the associations that emerge with close friends of the family and teachers, babysitters, and various caregivers. Those relationships model commitment.

The major factor related to all of these relationships is that they provide a safe teaching environment. These people, who differ in personality, style, age, and interests, all love the child. Together they form a group that mirrors to her in a safe and protected way the variety of characteristics of people in the outside world.

- **Language: understanding in a receptive way from listening and reading, and expressing actively by speaking and writing**

Through activities in the cognitive, motor, social-emotional, and self-esteem areas, language expertise emerges. It also arises out of specific reading, singing, and talking activities. The richer the content of language parents and others use with their little ones, and the higher the quality of language they maintain with each other in front of the children, the better a child's language expertise will be.

- **Self-Esteem: starting with self-awareness, it develops into self-worth**

Similar to language development, self-esteem develops from specific adult input. Here is the key—do whatever you can to make a child feel valued, needed, and important. "Please help me with . . ." and "Thank you for . . ." are perfect examples. The first sentence includes the magic word *please* that shows respect, and the second example has the two magic words *thank you* that convey appreciation. Combine *please* and *thank you* with a valued, needed, and important task, and you have a formula for creating inner strength.

An extension of this concept is unconditional love. Parents should keep this coming no matter what happens. Back to one of those child-development mantras: "What you think of your child is what she will think of herself."

A Word about the Activities

This book is designed to be a full program of activities for your child. Unlike most other early play-and-learn books, this is a prescriptive program that includes background information about each activity, how to play it, and why it is important. In addition, after each explanation, there is a short reference to research that is related to the described interactions.

The whole book can be used from the point of view of age, stage, or interest, making it ideal for use in fostering typical development, providing early intervention, and adding enrichment. In addition, while maintaining the fun and excitement that go with all general play, each activity is also designed to be individualized. With this book's primary purpose being guidance, each chapter starts with developmental information related to that particular age and stage. All guidelines are based on averages and explained according to commonly accepted descriptions from current educational theory and research.

Although technology is likely to play a role in your child's life, it is by no means necessary at this early level. On the contrary, hands-on, interactive experiences are necessary. These are not only more meaningful to your little one than reacting to a screen, but they are also just as much fun, if not more. In addition, they are an absolute must for well-rounded, normal development. This whole play-and-learn program has been carefully designed around basic cognitive, motor, social-emotional, language, and self-esteem learning opportunities that are missing from most of the high-tech play that is so prevalent and available for young children today. While some experiences with technology are valuable, many are at the same time limiting when it comes to thinking deeply, using fingers and hands, socializing appropriately, listening and speaking, and simply feeling good about yourself from the inside out.

The activities are organized into sections by age range. Within each age range, the activities are ordered by stage of development. To select an activity, first start with the child's age. If your child seems to be developing typically, go directly to the age-appropriate chapter. Find an activity that you think would be fun and beneficial to your child and play it together.

The milestones listed in the age ranges are the ones that are generally accepted by educators to be associated with those ages, but are not restricted to them. Therefore, it is perfectly acceptable to work on milestones from different age groups with your child. If you think your child is functioning either above or below her age range, use the index to find activities that support the appropriate milestones. Because every child is different and because each child develops at a different rate in different areas, you are likely to find some activities in one age group and other activities in a different age group.

Choosing activities by milestones is also excellent for children with special needs. Often they have functioning levels in one or more areas below their age range. If that is the case, you will be able to find appropriate activities easily, without being restricted to the recommended age. In addition, if



you are working on a specific milestone and go directly to it in the index, you can be sure that all activities suggested will be beneficial for enhancing that particular milestone.

Even though the activities are presented by age range, most are not limited to that period. Many can be used over and over in the same or different ways as your baby grows. Reading books, singing songs, and playing simple games are all examples of appropriate activities for children all through the early childhood years. What will grow over time is the extent to which your child will be able to participate in the particular activities.

If you are looking to enrich or just enjoy one of the five areas of development—cognitive, social-emotional, motor, language, or self-esteem—start looking for activities in one age range. Then, if the level seems too high or too low for your child, go to that same area of development in another age range until you find a group of activities that you think will be both helpful and fun for your child.

The major purposes of each activity are both playing and learning. Because these two processes go hand in hand, this guided-play program makes it easy for you to find appropriate play activities that will spur your child on toward positive development. Once you start using the activities and establish an enjoyable play routine, you are likely to experience increased parent-child bonding and a growing positive relationship with your child. These early experiences will have a lasting effect on you, your child, and on your whole parent-child relationship.

Play with your baby and the learning begins!

Fun Baby Learning Games features 200 research-backed activities to do with your child from birth to age three. As you play together, you will be helping your baby learn new skills, grow cognition, and pass developmental milestones. All the activities included will help your child's development in these areas:

- Cognitive skills
- Motor skills
- Social-emotional skills
- Language development
- Self-esteem

Each activity includes all the info you'll need: how to do it, necessary materials (if any), and a short summary of the research on why the activity is beneficial. Your baby will thrive as you enjoy one-on-one time together, playing and learning.



Sally Goldberg, PhD, also known as Dr. Sally, is a professor of education, author, and magazine writer. She authors a blog at www.earlychildhoodnews.net. Dr. Sally worked as an instructor of early childhood education on the adjunct faculties of Nova Southeastern University, Barry University, and the University of Phoenix. Well-known for her tools and strategies for self-esteem development, she is a national conference presenter and a frequent guest on TV and radio. Sally earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Cornell University and a PhD from the University of Miami.


Gryphon House
www.gryphonhouse.com

GH 10542

U.S. \$24.95

ISBN 9780876597484



52495



9 780876 597484