



Month 5: Coordination Skills Infant Activities

Foot Grab

Place funny booties or colourful socks on your child's feet and this will encourage her to grab her feet and toes. She may want to kick her legs and play with her feet.

Hands Together

Between the ages of 2 and 4 months, gently clap your child's hands together in front of their face when they are lying on their backs or sitting on your lap.

When they are sitting on their own (around 6-7 months), give your child plastic bottles, pots, pans and blocks to bang together. Give your child a spoon or toy hammer and show them how to tap or hit the pot lid, plastic container or the floor.

After 6-8 months of age, your child's hands are becoming stronger and are ready for a challenge. Provide pop beads or mega blocks that your baby can pull apart and try to push back together (this is a little trickier). Cut a hole in a plastic lid of a large, empty container. Show your child how to push small toys through the hole, open the lid and dump them out. You can demonstrate how to open using one hand to hold the container and the other to pull the lid, and then let your child give it a try, but they may need hand over hand assistance for success, just remember to use two hands! Allow your child to crumple and rip paper, which also helps your child in using two hands together.

Baby Yoga for Crossing Midline

These positions were adapted from 'Itsy Bitsy Yoga' by Helen Garabedian. Before starting yoga make sure you and your baby are dressed comfortable and ready to move. Remember don't force movements, your baby will tell you when it's far enough.

Twinkle

With baby lying on her back, entice her to grasp your thumbs into her palm and hold her hands. One hand will bring one arm up so it looks like she's raising her hand to ask a question and the other hand will bring her other arm down by her side or waist. Using slow movements and alternating arm position with each word of "Twinkle, twinkle little star."



Brain Builders

This yoga position helps to integrate the right and left side of your baby's body. Start in the same position as in *Twinkle* holding your baby's wrist with one hand and the other hand holding the opposite leg. At the same time move the right hand and left knee inward so they meet or almost meet near her belly button, making sure her shoulders stay on the floor. Remember to move slowly, you are facilitating your baby's movements not forcing them.



Happy Song

In this yoga movement you move slowly, sing, touch and label body parts. This allows your baby's arms to move across their body. Actions to the song are in italics.

If you're happy and you know it, touch your head!

Hands touch the top of your baby's head

If you're happy and you know it, touch your eyes!

Hands lightly touch your baby's eyebrows

If you're happy and you know it, touch your neck!

Hands lightly touch your baby's neck

If you're happy and you know it, touch your tummy!

Place baby's hands on her tummy

If you're happy and you know it, touch your legs!

Hands touch your baby's legs

If you're happy and you know it, touch your feet!

Hand touch your baby's feet



Yogi Yogi

This is the yoga version of the Hokey Pokey! This activity continues to help the right and left sides of your baby's body and brain to work together. With baby in your lap, have baby facing out (it's great if you can do this in front of a mirror). Hold your baby's hands and complete the following actions (in italics) with the words sung like the Hokey Pokey.

You put your left hand in

Bring baby's left hand away from her body

You put your left hand out

Bring baby's left hand back by her side (crossing midline)

You put your left hand in

Bring baby's left hand away from her body

And wiggle it about

Wiggle baby's left hand actively

You do the Hokey Pokey

Hold both of your baby's hands up toward the ceiling, and move them up and down

And you turn yourself around

Hold baby's hands and twist her from side to side by bringing each of her hand to touch the opposite knee

That's what it's all about!

Clap and show your baby how much fun this is!

Continue with the right hand and try both feet too.



Twistee

Sitting with your little one on your lap her back on your chest. Hold your baby's hands and guide her right hand to her left knee, then her left hand to her right knee. Repeat 6 to 8 times. And don't forget a big hug when you're done!



Train

With baby sitting on your legs and facing you. Hold your hands together. Slowly start to pull your right back towards you as your left moves forward, keeping "chugging" by alternating arms back and forth like the wheels on the train. Don't forget to make the train noises when "chugging" along: "Chug a-chuga – choo –choo!" As your baby becomes familiar with this let her lead the movements and the singing.



Clapping Bubbles

For a quick and easy bilateral coordination game, Clapping Bubbles is as good as it gets. You will need bubbles which you can buy or make by mixing 4 cups of water, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup light corn syrup, and 1 to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of dishwashing liquid (let the mixture settle for several hours). Blow the bubbles in the child's direction aiming high, low and side to side. Show the child how to bring hands together "clapping" to pop the bubbles.

Sticking Ball

You will need masking tape to wad up and make a small ball out of. The ball should be at least 2 inches in diameter. On the outer most layer, wrap the tape so that the sticky side is facing out. Demonstrate placing the tape ball on your own hand and then pulling it off using your other hand. Then place the tape ball on your child's arm or hand and because the tape ball will stick to the child's arm or hand, he will reach across his body to remove it with his other hand.

To make this activity easier for younger ones...

- Place less tape on the outermost layer of the ball to decrease the amount of force needed to pull the sticky ball off.

- Use scotch tape instead of masking tape to decrease the amount of resistance needed to pull the sticky ball off.

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