

**Monthly Message:  
Strengthening  
Families**

**KENTUCKY  
GOVERNOR'S  
OFFICE of  
EARLY CHILDHOOD**



**Holiday activities to  
help your children  
learn and grow!**



**A**ll families celebrate the holidays differently, but they are usually full of family, friends and traditions. Parents usually dedicate a lot of time preparing food or picking out gifts, but there are many activities you can do with your children that will help them learn and grow throughout the season.

Take advantage of your time off from work and your children's time off from school to interact and work on new skills. It's a good idea to remind yourself about what behavior is normal and predictable from your young children and what kind of activities are appropriate for different age-groups. Here are a few ideas to help you get started!

# Help your children learn & grow!

Ages  
0-6  
mo.

Your baby will begin his or her development by learning to open and focus their eyes. They will begin responding to their name and your voice. Your baby might begin to babble and will use their fingers to grab, hold, and shake objects. As development continues, they will learn to grasp smaller items and may begin to move around by creeping along on their belly.

## Activity: Touch Tour

Treat your baby to a bird's eye view of the world. Take advantage of the brightly colored Christmas decorations and carry your baby around at your eye level and name objects as you touch it. Include things like ornaments, lights and pictures of loved ones.

Ages  
6-12  
mo.

Your child will continue learning how to move their body, and will begin crawling and pulling up to move along furniture, or may begin walking. Be careful about what holiday decorations you have around the house. Consider putting less fragile ornaments closer to the floor and more important ornaments closer to the top of your tree.

## Activity: Unwrap It

Babies love to unwrap boxes, and you can cater to that joyful activity by wrapping a few specifically to be torn open before Christmas and the day of. You can even wrap empty boxes for your child to unwrap.

Ages  
3-4

Building towers and drawing shapes are just some of the developmental milestones your child will reach in his third and fourth year. Aside from buttons, he will begin dressing himself, can speak in simple six-word sentences, and will continue to develop motor skills.

Ages  
1-2

As your child grows into their first year, he or she may begin to stack, bang, and place objects inside others. They might begin scribbling and using a sippy cup. Their walking and running skills will also become more steady and established.

## Activity: Jingle Bells

Your toddler will love to move when motivated by the sound of a jingle bell. Sew 2 or 3 bells onto a strip of elastic that will fit comfortably around each ankle. Stand back and watch the fun begin while your toddler experiments with the sounds and moves about. Store the bells out of reach and examine with each use to make sure they cannot come off. Add music to speed things up and slow them down. Take them with you on errands. You will bring Christmas joy to everyone within ear shot!

Ages  
2-3

As your child's language continues to develop, they will begin using two-word sentences and will know and understand upwards of 50 words. He or she will also show an interest in playing with children his own age.

## Activity: Sing A Song

Sing holiday themed songs with your children with richly rhyming words. Sing the same songs over and over. Toddlers differ in their ability to carry a tune or learn song words. Others cannot carry a tune yet, but they bounce, march, and dance around to the rhythms. Encourage other family members and children to sing along!

## Activity: Kitchen Shapes

While you spend time cooking this holiday season, challenge your child to find certain shapes by searching kitchen drawers or looking around the room. Call out a shape, such as circles, and see how many items of that shape your child can find. For example, our child might spy plates or cookies.