**Fun Games for Infants/Toddlers 0-1 Months**

**Imitation Game:** Hold your baby in front of you so your child can clearly see your face. Stick out your tongue & be amazed at how even newborn infants can imitate this facial gesture!

**Infant Massage:** Using baby lotion or baby safe oil and gently massage your baby’s arms, legs, back. Quietly talk or sing to your baby during the massage.

**Tummy Time Play:** Place your babyon the floor on a blanket or lie down with baby on your chest facing you. Encourage baby to raise his/her head/chest in response to the sound of your voice, the sight/sound of toys or the sight of himself/herself in a mirror.

**Response to Sound Game**: Move to your baby’s left and right side and call his name, shake a rattle or squeak a toy. Encourage baby to look toward the sound.

**Action Feet Game**: When your baby is lying on his back, grasp his feet/legs and pedal them in a bicycle motion. Sing or talk to baby.

**Please Touch Game**: Support your baby in sitting in front of you or hold them on your lap facing you or lie down beside them on the floor when they are in a sidelying position. Encourage baby to reach toward and touch/explore your face, hair, etc by reaching and grabbing.

**Story Time:** Start reading a bedtime story to your baby from birth onward. You can make up stories or read short books. It doesn’t matter what you say, your baby is absorbing every word, even though she cannot talk yet.

**I Can Move:**Very gently rock, sway or dance with your baby while holding her and supporting her head. If she doesn’t like back and forth movement, try side to side movement or up and down movement. Sing or talk to her softly while moving.

**Grasping Game:**Babies have a reflex that allows them to hold your finger or small toys. Place your finger or a small connector ring (from a baby gym or mobile) into your baby’s left hand & then his right. See how he is able to grasp onto your finger or the ring and how long he holds on before letting go.

**I Know My Name:**Help your baby learn his name using it frequently. Make up songs using your baby’s name or insert his name into stories. Using a consistent name or nickname helps baby learn his name.

**Peek-a-Boo-**You can begin this game with your baby at a young age, by covering your baby’s face gently with a cloth and then quickly pulling it off and smiling as you say “peek a boo!” As your baby gets older she will be able to pull the cloth off her face herself. You can also play by covering your own face with the cloth and then you or your baby can pull the cloth off.

**Help Me Roll-**Place your baby on her tummy on a blanket on the floor, place toys to her side and attract her attention visually. If she does not attempt to roll off her tummy in order to reach toys, gently lift a corner of the blanket to give her the momentum she needs to roll from tummy to back. Most babies roll tummy to back first and it is usually accidental the first few times.

**Rock the Boat-**Place your baby in a hand/knee position over your lower leg, so your leg supports his tummy. Gently rock your baby back and forth in this position and sing “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” to get your baby used to weight bearing on his hands and knees which he will need for crawling.

**So Big!-**When your baby is lying on his back or seated supported on your lap or a baby seat, gently grasp his arms and lift them above his head in a game of “So Big”. As he gets older he will begin to imitate this motor movement on his own in response to you verbally saying “How big are you?” “So Big!”

**Visual Tracking-**Use your face, different size rattles and toys, both noisy and quiet and slowly move them from left to right, right to left and upward and downward and in an arc. Encourage your baby to first fixate visually on the face or toy and then visually follow it without losing sight of it. Noisy toys will be easier than quiet toys to start.

**Let’s Crawl-**Place toys just out of reach of your baby and encourage a hand-knee position. You can help your baby assume this position if needed and even place your lower leg under his tummy if he has trouble maintaining this position. Gently rock back and forth and side to side to help your baby shift his weight, reach for toys and begin to crawl reciprocally.

**Bang, Bang, Bang-**Babies love to bang toys together and on surfaces. Demonstrate this task for them by holding two small toys in your hands and banging them together while saying “bang, bang, bang” or show your baby how to make noise on his highchair tray by banging toys onto a surface.

**Taking Steps-**Instead of holding your baby’s hands while he is stepping, kneel down so you are close to your baby and hold a broom or mop sideways in your hands. Get your child to grasp onto the broom handle and then slowly knee walk backwards as your baby takes forward steps toward you while holding the broom handle for support.

**Laundry Basket Stroll-**Fill a laundry basket with heavy items such as book and allow your child to push it around the floor on a smooth surface to practice supported walking.

**Over/Under-**Let your child crawl and/or walk over cushions, pillows and under tables, chairs, etc to challenge their balance and body in space awareness.

**Roll the Ball-**Sit on the floor a few feet from your child and demonstrate how to roll a large ball. Encourage them to roll it back and make a fun game of it. You can sing “roll, roll, roll the ball gently across the floor” instead of Row Your Boat.

**Dump & Fill-**Toddlers LOVE to dump and fill repeatedly, so provide them with varied containers and dump truck type vehicles to do so. They will help clean up, but probably as soon as everything goes into the box it will all be dumped out again!

