**Fun Games for Infants/Toddlers 18-36 Months**

**Little Helper-**Toddlers love helping their parents, so why not enlist them to remove clothes from the dryer, wipe up spills, dust or sweep the floor. It’s all good practice, makes them feel special and helps you out at the same time.

**Movers & Shakers-**Toddlers love making noise. Use an old soda bottle, oatmeal boxes, etc., Fill them with anything that makes fun noise. Be sure to seal the boxes tightly because some of the small items may be choking hazards. Kids can decorate the sealed containers with paints or markers and then you can sing “Shake Your Sillies Out” and begin making music.

**Paint with water-**Toddlers love to use large adult paint brushes and this can be done in a non-messy way by using water & a chalk board. Fill a cup/bucket with water and let your child paint with water. Outside, they can paint the house, fence or driveway, a great summer fun activity.

**Hit the Target-**Toddlers love to throw anything & everything, have your child play the toss game they can throw pairs of socks or soft balls into a box or laundry basket.

**Blanket Slide-**if you have hardwood or smooth non-carpeted floors somewhere in your home, you can use a large blanket, have your child sit on the blanket and pull or spin them around on the floor providing lots of giggles and fun.

**Kickball-**Toddlers are just learning to balance briefly on one foot in order to kick a large ball, provide opportunity to kick a stationary ball before working on kicking a rolling ball, which is much more difficult. A large ball is easier than a small ball to start with.

**Build it up, knock it down-**Many toddlers enjoy stacking objects, let your child stack up empty shoe boxes, cereal boxes, etc. See how many your child can stack, make it fun by encouraging him to knock them down. Talk about the color of the blocks & count when stacking.

**Who is that?-**Look in the mirror with your child and ask “Who is that?” or “What is her name?”, see if your child can answer with “me” or her name. Talk about what else the child may see in the mirror including Mommy or Daddy. Review body parts, stick out your tongue or move it side to side and see if she can imitate you.

**Family Photo Fun-**Pull out photos or photo albums and ask your child to identify people in the pictures including themselves.

**Label My Feelings-**Use pictures in books or magazines or make faces to demonstrate and label feelings of happy, sad, mad, frustrated, scared. Help your child recognize when he is feeling this way.

**Obstacle course-**Use furniture, pillows, blankets, etc to create an obstacle course for your toddler which requires him to walk, run, crawl under, crawl through, step over, step on, balance, throw, kick, jump and/or climb. This can be done inside or out.

**Treasure Hunt-**Gather some of your child’s favorite toys and a few objects and hide a few things in each room. Tell your child she is going on a treasure hunt & encourage her to hunt for the treasures you have hidden while you provide her with clues “Your favorite doll is behind the dresser” etc.

**What’s That Sound?-**Whether inside or outside, encourage your child to identify familiar and novel sounds by listening. For example, when the microwave bell rings ask “What was that sound?”, or when a fire truck passes by, or a motorcycle zooms by help your child identify the sounds by sampling listening and recognizing what they heard

**Let’s Talk Shapes & Colors-**During daily activities talk about the shapes and colors of objects. “There is a green pillow on the couch, can you find the other green pillow?” or “Your ball is round like a circle, your blocks are square, can you find me a round ball?

**What Do You Feel?-**Use a small box and place about three objects inside such as a block, car, toy, sock, spoon, etc. Have your child reach into the box without looking and feel the objects, ask your child to grab one object while his hand is still inside the box, and ask him, “What do you think it is?”

**What’s The Use?-**Find some everyday objects that are familiar to your child and see if he can identify the objects by their function. Place a ball, spoon, cup and shoe out in front of him and ask “Which one do you put on your foot?” or “Which one do you drink out of?” and see if he can tell you the object and its function.

**I Spy-**Play this game inside or outside with your child encouraging him to find things that are familiar by saying “I spy something that flies” and see if he can find a bird, or “I spy something that drives on the road” and see if he points to his toy car.

**Nature Walk-**Take a walk around your neighborhood or local park in different seasons and talk about what you see/find with your child. Talk about trees, flowers, cars, people, anything and everything you see!

**All About Me-**Use a mirror and ask “Who is that in the mirror” or “What is his name?” or “How old are you?” Help your child learn his sense of self, by learning to say his name and age upon request.

**Can You Do It?-**Encourage imitation of various facial gestures and/or body movements during play, such as raising both your arms above your head and then dropping one arm down and seeing if your child can imitate you. Or standing one leg briefly & then jumping twice. Or sticking out your tongue and then blinking your eyes. See if your child can copy your movements and then copy his too to make it a fun turn-taking game.

**Story Time-**. Encourage your child to find details in a picture book, for example instead of just asking him find the ball, ask him “what is under the tree?” and see if he tells you “a ball”, or “find the man who is wearing a hat on his head”. Challenge him with details.

**My Own Band-**Use store bought instruments or make your own using empty boxes, pots & pans with wooden spoons, paper towel rolls, etc. Encourage your child to make music and play or sing along with him. Beat on a drum and count “1, 2, 3” and see if he can imitate your pattern on the beat.

**Cardboard House-**Use a large cardboard box (large appliance boxes for refrigerators, stoves work great) and turn it upside down and cut windows & doors in it for your child. Allow your child to paint or color it with crayons or markers and use it as a playhouse.