

motor development

between 2-3 years, most children:

- ▶ Walk and run without falling;
- ▶ Carry a large toy while walking;
- ▶ Push and pull large toys;
- ▶ Climb and sit in a chair;
- ▶ Walk up steps without help;
- ▶ Scribble, favoring one hand;
- ▶ Eat using a spoon or fork;
- ▶ Dance;
- ▶ Show signs of toilet readiness.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen's House we:

- ▶ Play with large trucks and push toys inside and out;
- ▶ Chase and throw large balls or tennis balls;
- ▶ Dance with props like scarves, bells, and shakers;
- ▶ Provide plenty of dump and fill activities – loading manipulatives into trucks, buckets, and shape sorters;
- ▶ Color with markers, crayons, and chalk;
- ▶ Paint using brushes and other tools;
- ▶ Add challenging tools to sensory play;
- ▶ Play in lofts and small climbers;
- ▶ Go outside everyday.

guidance

at Gretchen's House we:

- ▶ Have consistent and appropriate expectations for children's abilities;
- ▶ Use techniques appropriate for individual children's development;
- ▶ Re-direct inappropriate behavior;
- ▶ Distract frustrated children;
- ▶ Model empathic behavior;
- ▶ Give children time away from the group (reading alone, perhaps) when they are disruptive or inappropriate;
- ▶ Balance quiet and active times to avoid overstimulation and combat boredom;
- ▶ Give children positive alternative behaviors when they act inappropriately;
- ▶ Recognize struggles and successes;
- ▶ Strive to make children feel powerful.

easy ways to make a 2-year-old feel powerful:

- ▶ Provide meaningful and appropriate choices whenever possible;
- ▶ Help children be responsible for taking care of their own belongings;
- ▶ Give them small jobs: putting dirty clothes in a hamper, etc.;
- ▶ Follow their lead in activity planning and implementation;
- ▶ Listen when they say “no”;
- ▶ Let children work through their tantrums rather than trying to placate them.

Active Learning at Gretchen's House



your child at
2-3 years:

**-joker-
-tester-
-worker-**

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cognitive development

between 2-3 years, most children:

- ▶ Build small towers with blocks;
- ▶ Find new ways to use objects (such as using a spoon for a shovel);
- ▶ Recognize some colors and simple shapes;
- ▶ Can remember what has happened in the past;
- ▶ Can take things apart (e.g., snap lids) and try to put them back;
- ▶ Enjoy creative art activities;
- ▶ Line up favorite toys or objects.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen's House we:

- ▶ Provide a variety of manipulatives and accessories for building projects;
- ▶ Play with puzzles, take-apart toys, and challenging toys to open and close;
- ▶ Provide stimulating props for dramatic play;
- ▶ Challenge children with problems and support their attempts to solve them. Say things like: "The paper is on the wrong side of the table. How can we color on it?"
- ▶ Tell stories that reinforce concepts and encourage participation;
- ▶ Store toys where children can select them without adult help.

language development

between 2-3 years, most children:

- ▶ Have a rapidly increasing productive vocabulary;
- ▶ Start dropping baby words and replacing them with "grown-up" ones;
- ▶ Speak in simple sentences "Mommy go bye-bye." "Sammy all done."
- ▶ Ask questions;
- ▶ Point to objects after hearing their names;
- ▶ Use adjectives "Big dog;"
- ▶ Can say their own name;
- ▶ Follow simple directions.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen's House we:

- ▶ Get down at the children's level to speak and interact with them;
- ▶ Maintain a positive verbal environment using tone of voice, word choice, and positive phrasing;
- ▶ Fill in the blanks when children are missing important words;
- ▶ Support children's transition to "proper" speech as they are ready;
- ▶ Read books with rhythmic text and rich language;
- ▶ Sing songs and fingerplays that allow children to fill in the blanks;
- ▶ Use **gender-neutral** terminology;
- ▶ Use rhymes and songs for transitions.

social-emotional development

between 2-3 years, most children:

- ▶ Are still more adult-focused than peer-focused;
- ▶ May develop fears;
- ▶ Show spontaneous affection for adults and companions;
- ▶ Alternate between independence and dependence on adults;
- ▶ Act contrary at times;
- ▶ Express interest in toilet learning;
- ▶ Show pride in their work;
- ▶ Resist change.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen's House we:

- ▶ Play with the children rather than supervise them, so we are available to problem-solve when needed;
- ▶ Do plenty of dramatic play to model appropriate behaviors and practice problem-solving skills;
- ▶ Acknowledge children's fears and offer healthy ways to cope with them;
- ▶ Support children's wishes to be independent or dependent at different times;
- ▶ Diffuse contrary behavior rather than getting locked in power struggles;
- ▶ Give plenty of warnings for transitions and interruptions like diaper changes.