

Age-by-Age Brain Stimulation Activity Cards

Targeted activities for each developmental stage

0–3 Months

ACTIVITY	DURATION	BRAIN AREA	WHY IT WORKS
High-contrast card viewing	2–5 min	Visual cortex	Newborns see best at 8–12 inches in black/white
Skin-to-skin holding	20+ min	Limbic system	Regulates stress hormones, builds attachment circuits
Gentle tracking (move face side to side)	1–2 min	Oculomotor pathways	Strengthens eye muscles and visual tracking
Talk through diaper changes	3–5 min	Auditory cortex	Every word builds phoneme recognition
Varied music (classical, folk, nature sounds)	10–15 min	Temporal lobe	Develops auditory discrimination early

3–6 Months

ACTIVITY	DURATION	BRAIN AREA	WHY IT WORKS
Tummy time with toys	5–15 min	Motor cortex	Builds head/neck control, core strength for crawling
Texture exploration (fabrics, safe objects)	5–10 min	Somatosensory cortex	Different textures wire tactile discrimination
Mirror play	3–5 min	Fusiform face area	Develops self-recognition and social brain
Reaching games (dangle toys)	5–10 min	Parietal lobe	Builds hand-eye coordination and spatial awareness
Peek-a-boo	3–5 min	Prefrontal cortex	Teaches object permanence, builds prediction circuits

6–12 Months

ACTIVITY	DURATION	BRAIN AREA	WHY IT WORKS
Stacking and knocking down blocks	10–15 min	Motor cortex, cerebellum	Cause-and-effect learning, fine motor control

ACTIVITY	DURATION	BRAIN AREA	WHY IT WORKS
Crawling obstacle courses (pillows, tunnels)	10–20 min	Motor cortex, vestibular system	Cross-lateral movement wires both hemispheres
Board books with pointing/naming	5–10 min	Language areas	Builds receptive vocabulary before speech
Container play (put in, dump out)	10 min	Prefrontal cortex	Develops spatial reasoning and early problem-solving
Clapping songs and fingerplays	5 min	Motor + auditory integration	Rhythm processing linked to later reading ability

1–2 Years

ACTIVITY	DURATION	BRAIN AREA	WHY IT WORKS
Sorting objects by color/shape	10–15 min	Parietal lobe	Builds categorization, a foundation for abstract thinking
Outdoor nature walks (narrate what you see)	15–30 min	Language areas + hippocampus	Novel environments enhance memory and vocabulary
Simple puzzles (2–4 pieces)	5–10 min	Visuospatial cortex	Spatial reasoning predicts later math ability
Dance to music	5–10 min	Cerebellum, basal ganglia	Rhythm and movement integration, vestibular input

2–3 Years

ACTIVITY	DURATION	BRAIN AREA	WHY IT WORKS
Pretend play (kitchen, doctor, store)	15–30 min	Prefrontal cortex	Develops theory of mind and executive function
Drawing and scribbling	10–15 min	Motor cortex, visual cortex	Pre-writing skills, hand-eye coordination
Simple board games (matching, memory)	10–15 min	Prefrontal cortex	Turn-taking, working memory, impulse control
Building with blocks/Duplos	15–20 min	Parietal + prefrontal	Spatial reasoning, planning, fine motor control
Read-aloud with questions	10–15 min	Language areas + PFC	Dialogic reading builds comprehension 6x faster than passive

3–5 Years

ACTIVITY	DURATION	BRAIN AREA	WHY IT WORKS
Rhyming and word games	10 min	Left temporal lobe	Phonological awareness predicts reading success
Obstacle courses / Simon Says	15-20 min	Prefrontal + motor cortex	Combines inhibitory control with physical coordination
Cooking together (measuring, pouring)	15-20 min	Prefrontal, parietal	Math concepts, sequencing, fine motor all at once
Music lessons or rhythm instruments	15-20 min	Auditory cortex, cerebellum	Structured music training increases IQ by 2-3 points
Free outdoor play with peers	30+ min	Prefrontal cortex, limbic system	Negotiation, conflict resolution, emotional regulation

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