

# Brain Building Activities

For parents and their children

ages 1-2

## Singing While You Change

Sing one of your favorite children's songs to your child while you change him/her, but put their name in the song: "Row, row, row (your child's name), gently down the stream..." Or "Rock-a-bye (your child's name) in the treetop..." Encourage him/her to sing along too.



### Brainy Background

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Your child is learning new words and sounds when you sing. The more meaningful and playful words he/she hears, the more he/she will appreciate language. This will help your child learn more words to use when he/she begins to talk.



## Sponge Sensations

When you're doing the dishes, let your child play with a clean sponge in a place where he/she won't get everything wet. Your child will love the texture. Show him/her how they can squeeze and absorb water with the sponge. Ask your child to describe this experience.



### Brainy Background

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When your child feels new things and hears new words in conversations like these, he/she is building connections in his/her brain that are the foundations for reading and math. Your child is learning from your words and actions, especially when he/she is having fun!

## Funny Faces

After brushing your child's teeth at night, play a silly game together in the mirror. Ask your child to make a funny face and then imitate him/her. Then switch and have your child imitate your silliest face. There's no limit to how much fun you can have together!



### Brainy Background

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Taking turns imitating each other gives your child practice paying attention to your silly face so that he/she can copy it. Paying attention helps him/her concentrate and focus—important skills when it comes to learning and solving problems.



## Toothy Wonder

When you're brushing your child's teeth, look in the mirror together. Talk about how your teeth are the same and different from his/hers. For example, you have more teeth, and bigger teeth, but you both can make funny faces. Follow your child's lead and talk with him/her about what he/she notices.



### Brainy Background

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Comparing things that are same and different will help your child sort his/her experiences into categories and make connections—skills that are important in reading, math and science in the future. This also builds his/her connections with you!