

Discovering My World: 16-36 Months

Actively exploring the environment helps your child:

- Boost her self-confidence
- Think and build on past learning
- Invent and discover new ways to do things

Ideas to try with your child:

- Experiment with play dough. Show your child how to roll balls, long snakes, or flatten like a pancake. See what happens when two colors get mixed. Simple recipes can be found at: <http://fun.familyeducation.com/sculpting/recipes/37040.html>
- Let your child experiment with fitting items together: tennis balls into a bowl, spoons into a plastic jar, or books inside a cloth bag. Get out the measuring cups and if she can put them back into one stack.
- Make music. This is noisy fun in the kitchen with pots, pans and spoons. What kinds of sounds can be made with different sizes of “drums” and “drumsticks”?
- Sandbox discovery! As she mixes sand and water and fills dump trucks and pails with sand, she discovers and experiments. Describe what is happening when she does this to build language.

If your child is struggling:

- Let your child help you as you go about your day: picking up the mail, placing fruit in the cart at the grocery store, or stirring the cookie batter. Praise her efforts as a helper.
- Take your child outside and watch bugs on the sidewalk, stomp in rain puddles or dig in the dirt. Watch carefully and describe what you are seeing her do.

Going further:

- Your local library is a great place to check for creative science and geography picture books and magazines. *National Geographic: Little Kids* is a wonderful series for discovering the world.
- Check out some science activities for babies and toddlers at <http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/science/activities/babies-toddlers/>

The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children’s best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for **children Ages 16 to 36 months** that parents can help improve at home.



Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012*: “Actively explore the environment.” Learning to learn, Ages-16-36 months, pg. 44