



Social and Emotional Development Activity for 18 to 24 Months

Playing with Peers

These activities lend themselves to children playing cooperatively together.

Materials:

- Large box
- Digging utensils
- Toys

What to do:

1. Use a large box filled with about two inches of shredded paper with small toys mixed in. Place two children in the box for "sand" play with various digging utensils. Let the children dig and find the toys without interfering too much.
2. Help the child interact with other children in "Row, Row, Row, Your Boat" or "Choo-choo" games. Two children can sit facing each other holding hands and rocking together back and forth. The children also can hang on to one another at the waist and pretend to be a train, either sitting on stools or standing and moving on a "track" around the room.
3. Supply props that can help encourage two children to play together: blocks, dolls, a toy broom, dust cloths, phones, dress-up items, doctor set, play kitchen, play dough, sand, crayons, and toy cars and trucks. If the children need encouragement to interact with each other, suggest a script for them to play from everyday life: "Do you want to make cookies (play dough) for the dolls?" "Is it Elmo's (stuffed animal) birthday? Make a party!"
4. Suggest how two children can take their individual activities to play together: "Try pushing your car on Helen's line of blocks," or, "See if Sam wants to give your doll a ride in the truck."

