

Learning While Bathing

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Bathing can be a time of exploration, conversation, confidence-building, and fun. During shared moments, children gain body awareness as they sit in a warm, safe tub with a trusted adult by their side. Being a follower and a leader at times, children imitate and initiate body postures, sounds, and words. Water and bubble play allows for scientific discoveries. Children begin developing self-care skills, while washing their bodies. Independence and discovery are fostered. Here are activity ideas to consider during bath time:

- Point to and label body parts. Count them, I.e., two eyes, one nose, etc. Discuss similarities and differences between adult and child bodies, including skin color and anomalies, such as scabs, moles or freckles. Discuss functions of different body parts.
- Make faces and encourage imitation. Then imitate expressions the child creates.
- Fill the tub with bubbles. Put the bubbles on different body parts and label them.
- Blow bubbles in the tub, either with bubble bath or a bubble mixture. Discuss the shapes.
- Make silly sculptures with bubbles and describe them. E.g., beards and hairstyles.
- Play hair stylist as you wash hair. Put wet hair into various styles. Together, look in a mirror and describe.
- Present water safe toys and discuss similarities and differences, such as what they do.
- Hide toys under bubbles. Say, *Where's the ____?* When it's found, say, *There it is! You found the ____!* Child hears the targeted label at least twice.
- Present people or animal figures to the child in the tub. Give them a bath!
- Gently splash water. Talk about the sounds created and what happens to the water. *Where did it go? Uh oh! Some went on Mommy. That's okay.*
- Drop objects into the water and watch the ripple effect. *Which objects float? Which ones sink?*
- Experiment with pouring. The tub is a great place to experiment with drinking from cups.
- Give your child a washcloth and/or a sponge to experiment with soaking up and squeezing out water. Discuss similarities and differences. *Which one is easier to squeeze?*
- Play with water whistles in the tub, making sounds by blowing the whistle with air, then through water. Discuss the different sounds created.
- Sing songs together. Make up silly ones.
- Together, make up a story. Take turns adding parts to the story.



***Enjoy time spent together, relaxing and sharing.
Be careful in the tub, but have fun exploring the properties of water,
and play, Play, PLAY!***

