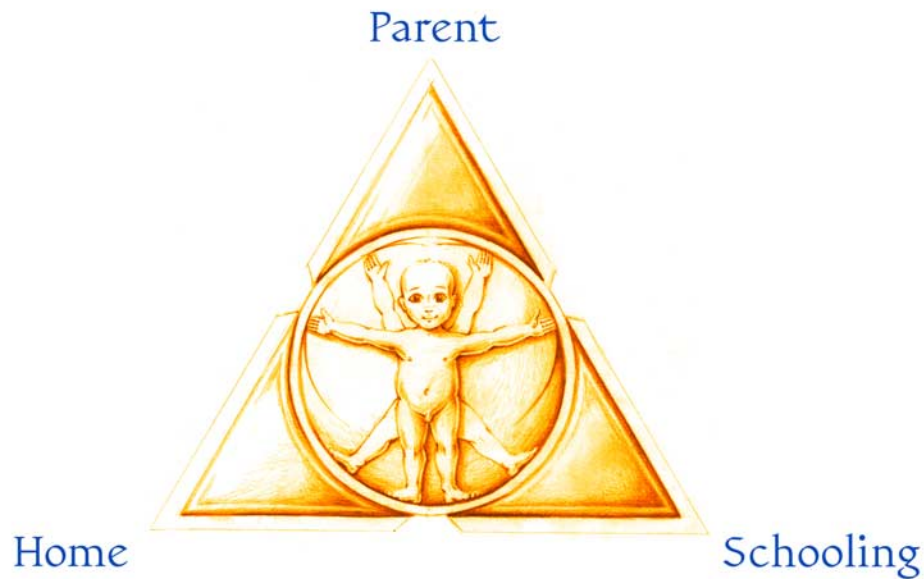


# Sample Activities From the 200+ Included in...



Randazzo/Montessori  
**Smart-Start**®

Learning Systems for Home and School

## MANUAL ONE: HOME START

*"The Explore and Learn Years"*

*A parenting manual for Birth to Age 3*

[www.smartstartkids.com](http://www.smartstartkids.com)

By Joseph D. Randazzo

*with Jack Mills & Joan G. Furci*

*"Read by the author"*

## MANUAL ONE: HOME START

### Developmental Milestones: “Explore and Learn Years”

#### The 200 Teaching Activities And Experiences

##### Getting Down To Business

Now that you know how your baby learns and grows best, and how you and your home affect that process, the time has come to get down to business and teach, or rather, connect your child to her many intelligences. Smart-Start’s 200 activities put this plan into action and start your child on a happy and fulfilling journey of a life time.

This connection occurs in many ways during the first three years of your child’s development and mostly through the normal, everyday interactions with her in your home and its environs. And you do it mostly by modeling and demonstrating those behaviors, feelings, abilities, and traits of character that you want your child to acquire from you and your home in the course of the next few years.

**Smart-Start** recognizes three main milestones or benchmarks of achievement that occur in your child... one for each of the explore and learn years...from birth to age three. The first milestone being Birth, for which you and your baby prepare during the first year...prenatal to 12 months of age.

The second milestone occurs during the second year, with your baby successfully feeding herself somewhere between 12 months and 18 months of age...it is called Weaning...and is a major step, on her part, toward a healthy and spirited independence...from you. Year three, a window of time from 24 to 36 months, sees your toddler, no



longer a baby, as a person in her own right, with a will to assert herself and her newly discovered EGO, the third milestone...a positive time for her to begin to think, to reason, and to create.

This third milestone year is one that sees you move from model and demonstrator to guide, tutor, and teacher...but, still, in all ways, a loving and supportive parent. And, Smart-Start is at your side, every step of the way.

Manual One, therefore, begins with an introductory to each of the milestones...previewing what you and your child can expect to occur growth and learning wise during its particular window of time. Each introductory is followed by activities and experiences to be conducted by you or to be shared with your child. These are the 200 activities of Smart-Start...activities in the form of simple, everyday experiences that will show you how, and why, and what, to teach your baby. They may be helpful household hints, anecdotes, or sage advice on diet or cooking. Or, they may be suggestions on teaching technique, just plain folk wisdom, developmental reminders, skill builders, or ego boosters.

Whatever the activity or experience, each will satisfy one or more of your child's basic needs...which in turn will connect to one or more of her intelligences. Each will indicate the materials needed, if any, to conduct the activity...and the window of time to best access the particular skill. Each activity will be followed by graphic icons representing the one or more intelligences to which that activity connects. And remember, each page of activities can be printed out and serve as a "lesson plan" for you to keep at your side as you conduct the lesson. There will be no audio or voice-over for the activities. And below the Intelligences developed, you can record the date that the experience was introduced. Now, let us move on to the first milestone, Birth.

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*Six to twelve month window*

## Crying over you

Crying lessens considerably during the latter part of the first year. It is still present as an emotion however, and your baby's cries can evoke mixed feelings in all who care for her...especially you. Crying can evoke feelings such as worry, anger, frustration and fear. Try your best to find out why she is crying...listen, look and feel for the reason. Exhaust all possibilities and you still may not discover why and that's fine. At this stage she has the right. She has a need to be comforted. Crying now is a reaction rather than the behavior that it was three months ago. Recognize that the older baby may have new causes for crying ...new fears, new anxieties...and all undoubtedly relative to being separated from you and those she loves the most. More than ever, now and for the next year, handle and cope with your baby's needs and emotions. Comfort her. Reassure her. Although she still cannot express her fears, her angers and her helplessness in words, ask your baby why she is crying and leave space for a response...sensitive handling now, will make life easier for all of you later on.

### Intelligences developed:

*Social/Emotional, Communicative, Naturalist*

Date introduced    /    /

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*Twelve to twenty four month window*

## A roller coaster year.

A wide range of emotions...laughter and tears, love and hate, triumphs and failures, self-centered , anxious, fearful and funny...and feelings of affection and insecurity...ups and downs. Your toddler is entering the two-year period of time known as the see saw or roller coaster years...for her and for you. Years of inner conflict for her as she moves from dependence on you while fearful of being separated from you. Years when she'll be experiencing and demonstrating a wide range of emotions, for the first time in her very short life...and for the next 18 to 24 months. How you provide comfort and understanding, and how you approach the beginnings of a necessary discipline now...will pretty much determine the nature of her social and emotional development in the years to come.

### Intelligences developed:

*Social/Emotional, Communicative, Visual/Spatial*

Date introduced    /    /

*Twelve to twenty four month window*

## Building self-confidence

To achieve a strong sense of independence by age three, it is important to build up your child's self-confidence from an early age. Loads of love, attention and solid reinforcement are crucial responses to her successes, however small. Encourage a bit of risk-taking as she attempts new tasks around the house. Take an interest in her work and play activities, intervene only when help is necessary...avoid taking over or interfering needlessly.

### Intelligences developed:

*Social/Emotional, Movement, Visual/Spatial, Communicative*

Date introduced    /    /

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*Twenty-four to thirty-six month window*

## Match it up!

Two and three year olds love puzzles and matching games. A creative way to teach your child the concept of matching objects, is to use real life things that he can hold and manipulate. Get a basket and fill it with a number of small toys (plastic farm animals, pretend foods, socks of varying colors, etc.). Make sure you have two of each object and that each is big enough to discourage swallowing. Encourage your child to sort through the basket and make pairs. You can change the items and make the tasks more complex according to his developmental stage.

**Intelligences developed:**

*Mathematical/Logical, Communicative, Movement, Visual/Spatial*

Date introduced    /    /

*Twenty-four to thirty six month window*

## Dance to the music

It's important to continue exposing your child to music. Play a variety of pieces (from folk ballads to Mozart) while encouraging your child to dance. Supply props to further enhance your child's sense of rhythm and fun. Scarves, streamers, and dress up clothes add to the fun and to your child's creative expression.

**Intelligences developed:**

*Musical, Movement, Communicative, Visual/Spatial*

Date introduced    /    /

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## Moving On To Early Childhood

### The Magical Years...ages 3 to 6

It is truly magical. Almost overnight and somewhere between two and a half and three and a half, your toddler emerges a young child...not a baby anymore. The “terrible two’s” are over. The sometimes confused and often obstreperous two year old suddenly is easier to live with and more pleasurable to be with...and to love. The “magic years” of three to six are beginning.

During the next three years your child will continue to grow in mind, in body and in spirit. Smart-Start urges you to celebrate his accomplishments and to pursue the developmental agenda that marks these primary years called “early childhood.”

As “a person in progress,” your child will mature in many ways. As he controls and directs his bodily movements he will begin to lose baby fat and gain body muscle. He will learn the art of self-care and how to properly manage his body...and to be enthusiastic about the food to nourish it. He will master the toilet, manage his own bowel

movements and move successfully toward staying dry at night. He may still wake in the night, however...and need a reassuring visit from you. And, by the time he is five, he will surely throw a ball overhand and catch it when bounced...well, most of the time.

Socially and emotionally he will become more cooperative and more responsive to you, other adults and other children, as well...a perfect age to introduce him to a play group or nursery school...or start one of your own.

**Smart-Start** can show you how. Emotionally, he can now view you as separate from himself, as a person with needs and feelings of your own. Whether it be sympathy or empathy, he is beginning to understand how others feel.



He is ready to cope and deal more effectively with everyday stress and anxiety...and he can manage a good many things for himself around his home. He is interested in learning new things and in having new experiences, even as he becomes increasingly inventive in fantasy and pretend play. Because of your trustworthiness over the past three years, you have helped him build a trust in himself...the trust and the courage he needs to meet the social and emotional challenges of a broader world outside his home.

The magic to be found in thinking and learning new concepts during the next few years, appears to center on your child's language, his number usage, and his hand and finger skills. By age three he should have a speaking vocabulary of at least three hundred words and an understanding of hundreds more. And, if you chattered on and on and read to him on a daily basis during his first years, as Smart-Start urged you to do, he'll now be able to speak in sentences of five or six words, tell stories, and imitate most speech sounds spoken in your home...the tools for spoken thought and the sharing of creative ideas.

Your three year old is ready to master the precise finger and hand movements needed to grasp and manipulate the tools and utensils used to perform specific tasks, like building with blocks and playing with pegboards. Soon he will hold a crayon properly and pour water from one pitcher to another...dress and undress in clothing with snaps, velcro bands, large zippers and laces. By age four and one half, he will copy geometric shapes, write some letters in cursive script, cut and paste and model with clay...hop and somersault and swing and climb.

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Ponder the possibility of your four plus child naming 3 or 4 colors (correctly), counting and understanding the numbers 1 to 10 and having a better hold on the concepts of time and space. Most importantly, imagine a four year old who views himself as confident and “whole”...a person in his own right...a totality... involving his mind, body, and feelings.

All this can be the legacy of Smart-Start and the promise of the explore and learn years. If you and your child find yourselves ready, then join Smart-Start on the magical pathway to writing and reading...Language Kit I, ages 3 and 4. It promises a remarkable journey

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