

Fun with Toddlers: Pets Theme

Outings to Go On: Visit a pet store. Look at the fish, or the rodents, or the birds or reptiles. The pet store is just as educational as the zoo, and it's free! It's a great chance to talk to your child about animals, and to practice observation skills: "Can you find a yellow fish?" "Which is the biggest bird?" "These are all reptiles. What makes them different from the rodents we just looked at?" If you don't have a pet at home, don't feel like you have to buy anything. Most pet stores are used to parents coming in and hanging out with their children for a while. If you want, you could buy a bag of pet food to donate to the store's pet food drive. (Look for a donation bin at the front of the store.)

Toys to make for your child

Balloon Puppies. Take a balloon. Blow it up. Draw animal features on, add a string and you have an instant pet for your child to take on a walk! If you want to be fancy, you could use a helium balloon and fasten on "legs" made of accordion-folder paper – the home made version of the toy pictured.



Doggy ears (or kitty ears). Make a circle of paper that fits around your child's head and add ears, or turn a child's headband into the base for ears.

Songs to Sing

All the fish are swimming in the water

All the fish are swimming in the water. Swimming in the water, Swimming in the water

All the fish are swimming in the water (*make swimming motions with hands*)

Bubble, bubble, bubble, bubble...SPLASH! (*make hands larger and larger and big clap to SPLASH*)

[For more verses and hand motions, see http://wiki.kcls.org/index.php/All_the_Fish_Are_Swimming]

How Much is that Doggie in the Window

How much is that doggie in the window? The one with the waggly tail?

How much is that doggie in the window? I do hope that doggie's for sale.

[Search on YouTube for many videos of this song!]

Imagination Games to Play

The Dog House. Take a big cardboard box. Cut an arched doorway in it. Decorate it like a dog house. Add things to represent dog food dishes, dog bones, dog toys and more. Add stuffed puppies if you have them, and then let the play begin.

Pet Store. Set up a pet store with stuffed animals, and accessories for animals (food bowls, collars, treats, toys, and so on, and go shopping.

Books to Read

Roly-Poly Puppies by Elaine Moore. A counting book with a nice rhyming structure.

Pete the Cat by James Dean. Lots of fun Pete books, but the best is I Love My White Shoes.

Aggie and Ben by Lori Ries. Ben's dad takes him to the pet store to pick out a pet.

More ideas (and source citations) at: www.pinterest.com/bcparented and <http://gooddayswithkids.com/songs-and-activities/fun-with-toddlers/>