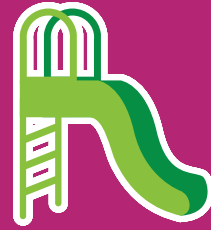


Kindermusik®



Big Back Yard



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The “Other” Milestones

As parents, we definitely notice when our children reach major developmental milestones—like crawling, walking, first word, first tooth, etc. Here are some other “milestones” that are just as important, but easier to miss!



Milestone: Your child deliberately turns a bowl of cereal upside down.

What it means: Your child is developing wrist control, which is necessary for just about everything we do with our hands.



Milestone: Your child’s new favorite? A pop-up toy.

What it means: Your child has figured out, *When I push that button, something will pop up!* In other words, cause-and-effect, or, *I can make something happen.*

Milestone: Your child pretends to have a snack with their teddy bear.

What it means: Pretend-play behaviors may not seem like much, but are actually signs that your child has acquired symbolic reasoning (e.g., the understanding that putting an empty spoon to your mouth is not eating, but represents eating).



Milestone: You say, *Don’t touch!* and your child doesn’t touch.

What it means: Your child is learning self-control! At long last, they understand that they are in charge of their own wants and actions, and can exercise (some) control over their impulses.



Milestone: Your child is obsessed with pushing, pulling, and throwing.

What it means: Your child is discovering the properties of weight, size, force, and mass! They are investigating questions of science, including which things do what, and how.



Every child is unique. If you sense that your child’s development isn’t proceeding typically, you should certainly talk to your pediatrician.

In the meantime, remember that development isn’t a race, and the best thing you can do to support your child’s intellectual and physical growth is to love them, provide them with a safe, stimulating environment, and spend time exploring the world together.



Big Back Yard

Playgrounds, parks, and yards of all shapes and sizes were made for play, play, play! Our bodies get a gross-motor “goose” when we go on pretend adventures in our Big Back Yard.



What We're Learning

Gross-Motor Development

Toddlers are all about discovering different movements and practicing their newfound skills! Gross-motor skills are what we use to control the actions and movements of the large muscles in the body (e.g., arms, legs, etc.). Walking, running, wiggling, twirling, climbing, and enthusiastic hand-clapping are all gross-motor skills that are fun to practice, repeat, and master—and they support the development of other skills, like coordination and balance, too!

Learning Through Movement

Children use movement to explore and interact with their environments—that's one of the ways they learn about the world! But movement does more than just provide a means to explore. It increases blood and oxygen flow to the brain, stimulates the release of chemicals that support memory and learning, and helps to create a network of neural pathways—an “information superhighway” in which the brain can store and organize information.

Chalk It Up

Maybe it's because it's so easy to hold with little hands . . . or because it's so easy to clean up. All we know is that colorful chalk unleashes the artist in all of us.

Indoor Chalk Play



1. Using construction paper and tape, create an indoor chalk raceway! Try some twisty-twirly roads for toy cars, trucks, and trains to drive on.
2. Cover a blackboard with chalk scribbles. Then give your toddler a wet paintbrush or sponge and let them create their own “painting.” (Where they “paint,” the chalk will be removed!)
3. Let your toddler decorate the inside of a big cardboard box, then give you a tour.
4. Using a roll of paper, tape a long piece to the wall (at your child’s height), then work together to make a mural. Or, draw your child’s outline and then color it in together!

Outdoor Chalk Play

1. Make “chalk flowers” of different colors on the sidewalk or driveway. Give your toddler a child-size watering can and then call out a color. You can say, *Water a red flower!* and your child can go pour water on the red one. Repeat until you’ve watered the whole garden.
2. Draw a long, winding train track on a sidewalk or driveway and let your little one chug-a-chug up, down, and around—on foot or on a wheeled riding toy.
3. Try this “toddler hopscotch.” Chalk a series of colorful circles, then hold hands and do your best to jump from one “island” to the next! (The size of and distance between your islands will depend on how proficient a “hopper” your child is.)
4. Outline your child’s name in block lettering in chalk, then offer chalk (or a paintbrush and a bowl of water) so your child can “color in” their name!



Classic Backyard Games, Toddler-ized

What can you play with a child who's too small for kickball, not ready for hopscotch, and can't throw or catch? It's time to toddler-ize some classics!



Red Light, Green Light: Grownups and kids line up at one side of the yard or park. Shout, *Green light* and all of the kiddos start to run. Shout *Red light* and the grownups swoop out, pick up their toddlers, and twirl them around.



Obstacle Course: Use rope or hoses to make a curvy path. Put a broom on the ground for jumping over. Place a lawn chair for crawling under. And so on! If you can, set up a sprinkler (or sprinkling can) to dash through at the finish.



Hot Potato: Make some water balloons! Use big balloons, but don't add too much water. (You want them full enough to handle easily but not so full that they'll break when they fall.) Roll them back and forth or pass them around in a circle.



Soccer: Set up two lawn chairs as a goal. Gather any large balls you have, set them up four or five feet from the chairs, and take turns kicking goals.



Got a toddler-ized game idea? Post it to your favorite social media site and tag @Kindermusik!

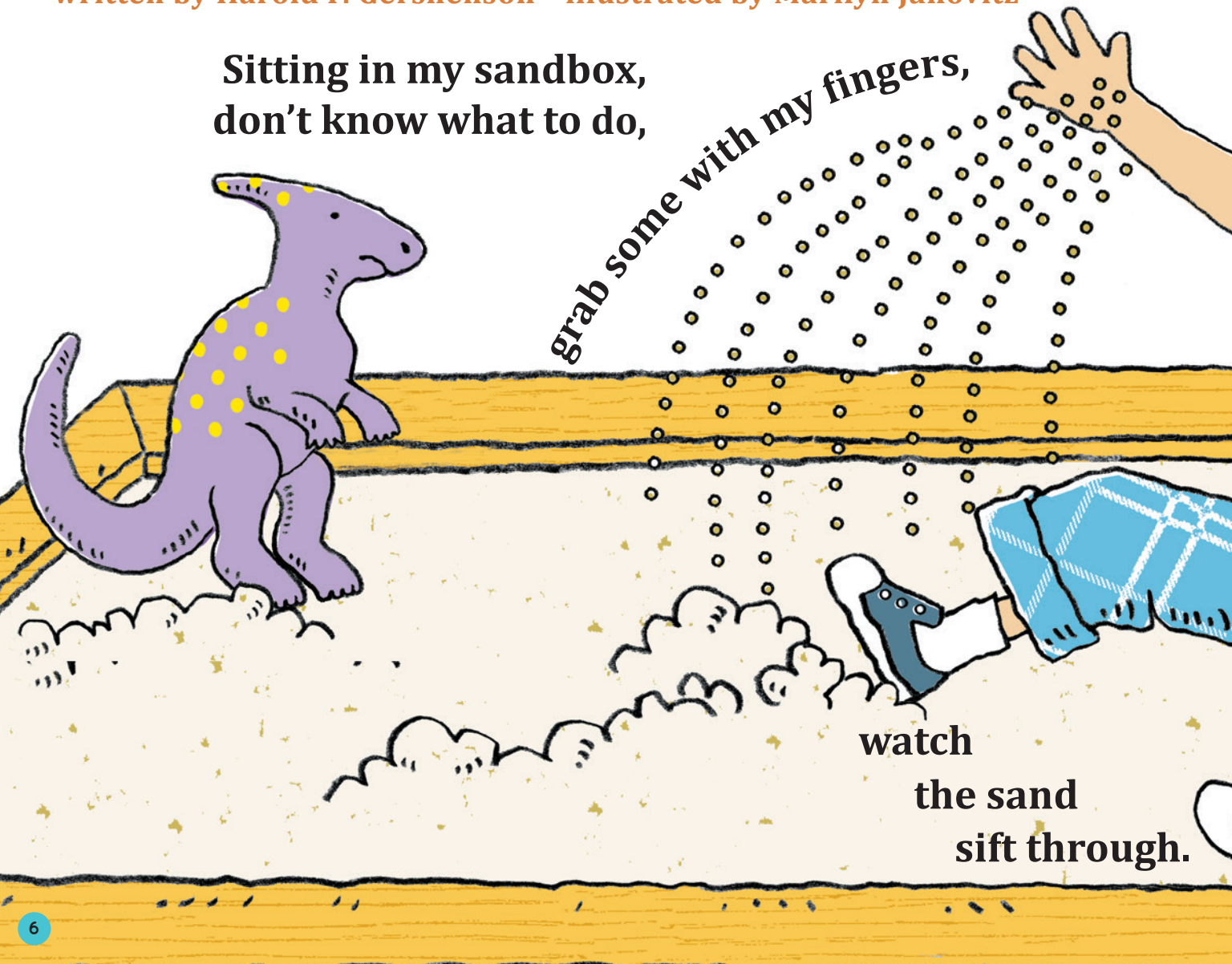
In My Sandbox

written by Harold P. Gershenson • illustrated by Marilyn Janovitz

Sitting in my sandbox,
don't know what to do,

grab some with my fingers,

watch
the sand
sift through.



You can listen to this story read aloud on your Home Album!



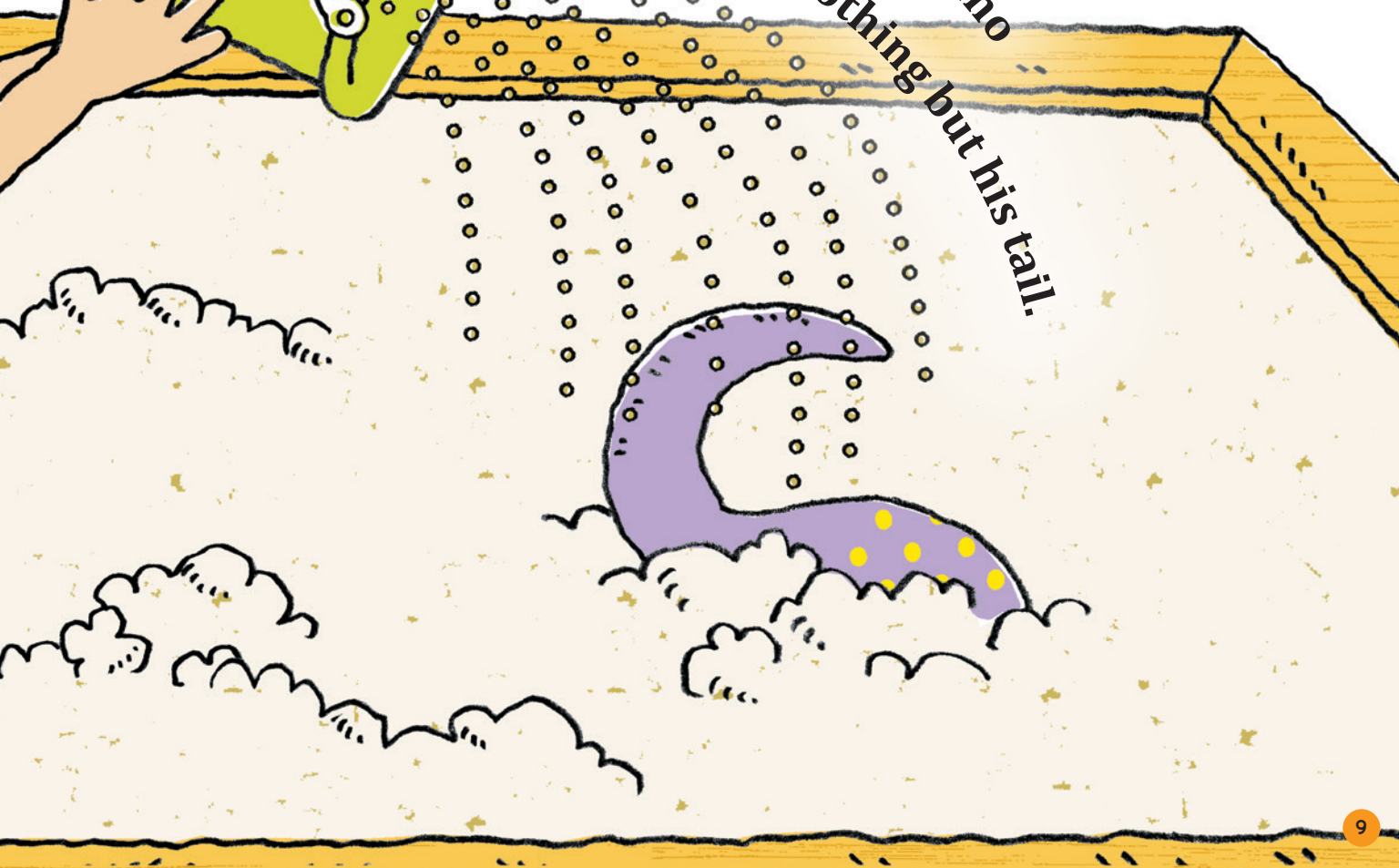
Kneeling in my sandbox,



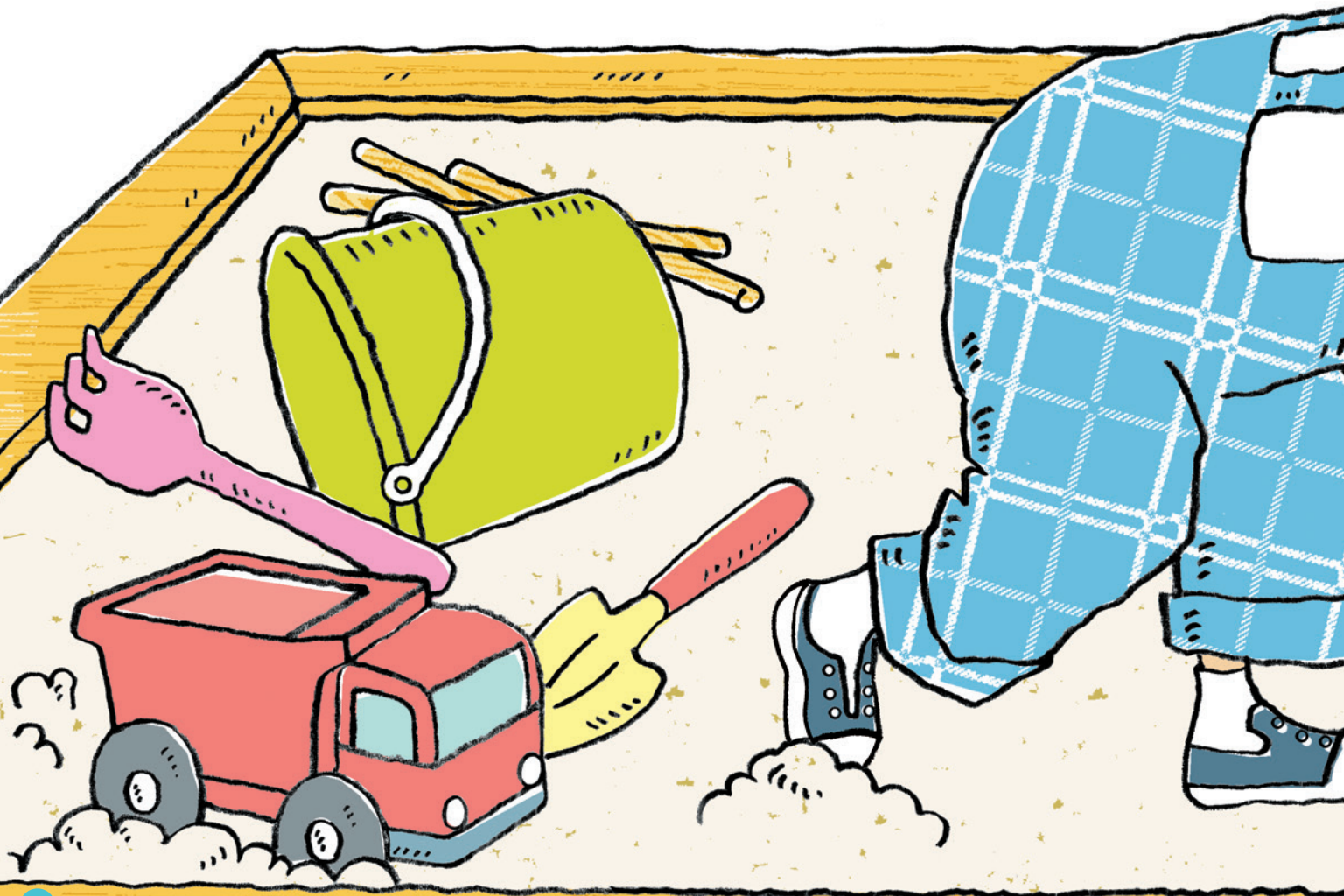
filling up my pail,



pour it on my Dino
'til there's nothing but his tail.



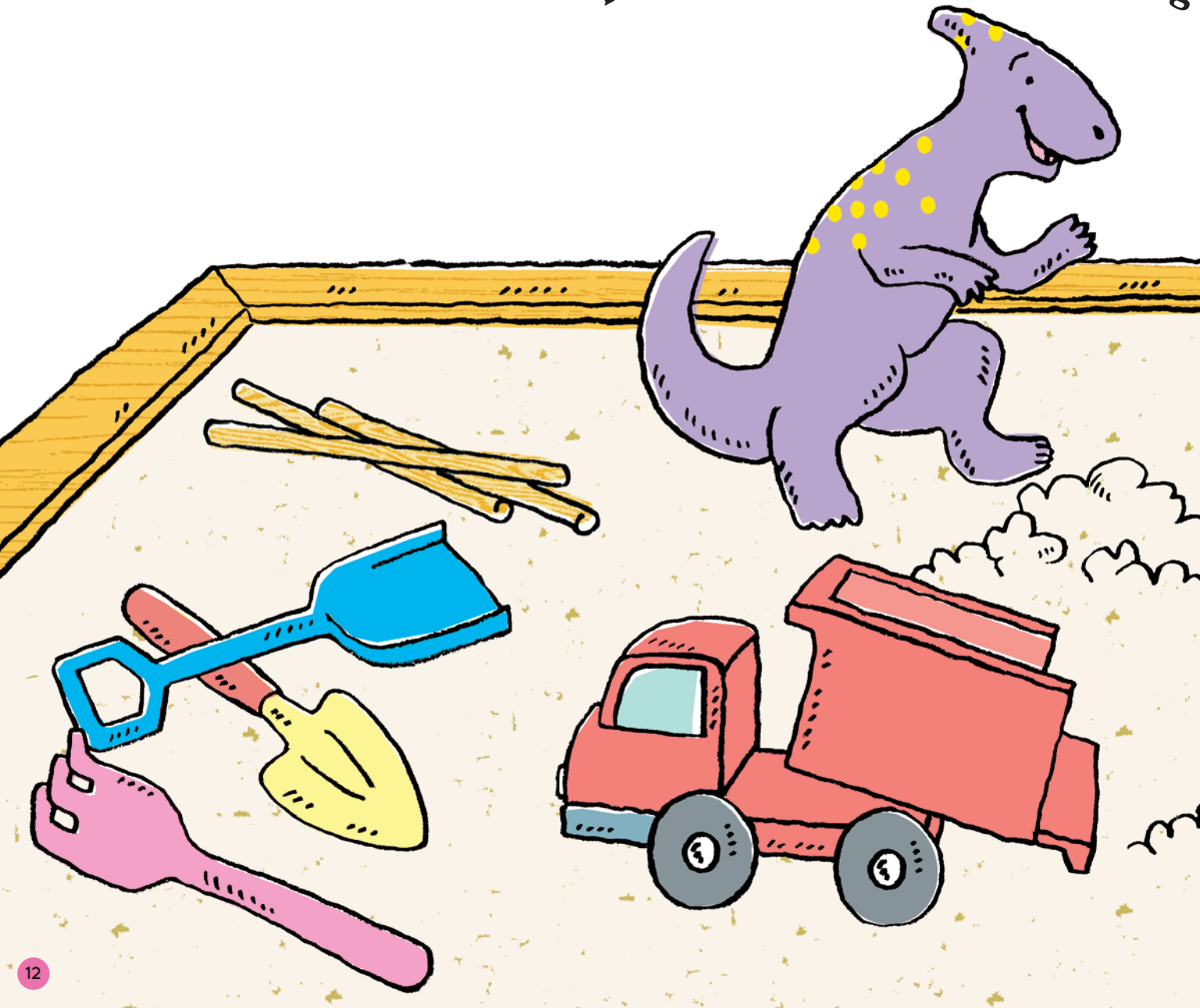
Standing in my sandbox, dig a hole down deep;





Dino jumps right over,
with a mighty leap.

Playing in my sandbox, dumping



out my truck,

mix it up
with water,

make a
yucky
muck.





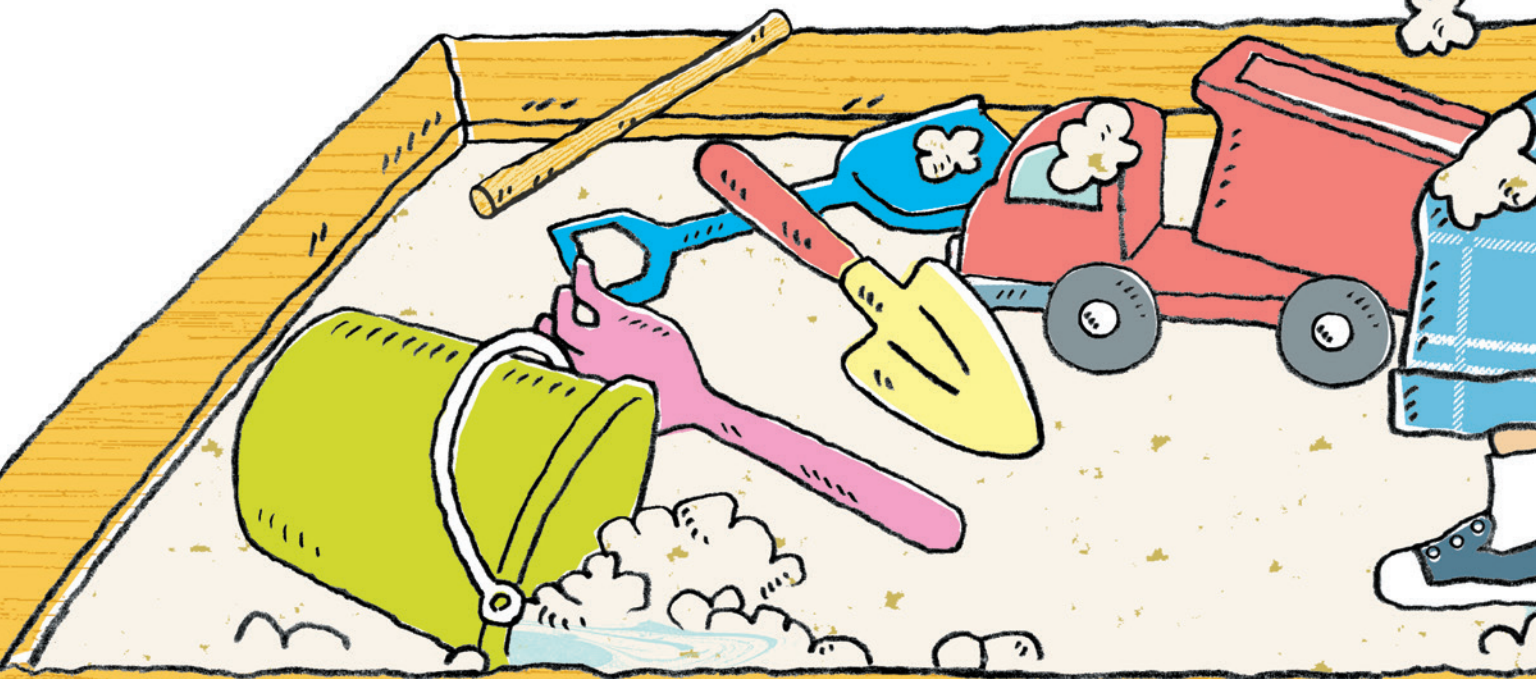
Sitting in my sandbox, stirring with a stick,
give some to my Dino,



let him have a lick.

Jumping in my sandbox,

reaching for the sky;





sand is flying here and there;

I got some in my eye.

Climbing from



my sandbox, got to head on back;

Dino's getting hungry; go in and eat a snack.





We believe in every child's unique potential. Kindermusik combines the power and joy of music and movement to create transformative learning experiences. Join us as we unleash the potential and sense of wonder found in every child.

kindermusik.com

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