



Handout Essential Child 1:2

Age-Appropriate Toys Birth to Six Months

During this stage babies are

- ✓ Getting used to the world outside the womb
- ✓ Feeding, sleeping and reacting to the world
- ✓ Reflex driven - the first few months- unconscious movements

At this stage, introduce

- ✓ Lots of interaction with baby to help this awareness of their world
- ✓ Talk, sing and read to your baby to help them learn about language
- ✓ Massage and touch your baby to help them learn about their body
- ✓ Use mobiles to stimulate vision
- ✓ Use tummy time to stimulate other senses eg lay baby on tummy and roll a ball past them, they will try to watch the movement
- ✓ A baby's toys should be interesting to look at, safe to mouth, easy to grasp, and fun to bang. They should stimulate the senses:
 1. Sight – unbreakable mirrors for tummy time, mobiles, play gyms, small soft toys,
 2. Hearing – music boxes, chimes, singing and talking/ reading, rattles,
 3. Touch – activity boards, different textures, soft balls, squeeze toys
 4. Taste – teething rings – at this age EVERYTHING ends up in the mouth- this is normal as they try to learn about things through this sense
- ✓ Toys should build small and large motor skills- everything at this stage is about getting them moving.
- ✓ Toys should encourage movement, neck and upper body strength and development of eye-hand coordination,
- ✓ When purchasing toys, check the label for age recommendations. If that is not available, consider the following:
 1. Is your child at the developmental stage for that toy?
 2. Is the toy a safe size that can't fit in the mouth or be shaped to fit into the mouth? (use a film canister to see if toy is too small)
 3. Is the toy sturdy to last?
 4. Is the finish on the toy non-toxic and unlikely to peel off?
 5. Are the ingredients of the toy non-toxic? (paints, crayons)
 6. Is the toy washable to reduce germs?
- ✓ Avoid buying toys with removable or loose parts, strings or cords that are longer than six inches, sharp points or edges, and decals or stickers that can easily come off.
- ✓ Avoid buying balloons. They can be sucked down a baby's throat and cause suffocation.
- ✓ Watch for an older sibling's toys. Remind older children to keep their toys away from the baby. Store these toys high or out of sight.