



Handout Essential Child 2:3

Body Awareness & Movement & fine motor development

Six to Twelve Months

Did you know?

- The body teaches the brain. Movement and play prepare the brain for learning. When children are engaged in physical activity, the cognitive parts of the brain are stimulated. The motor system is the first to develop and is functional before the sensory system is complete. The brain areas controlling movement of the head and neck muscles develop before those of the arms and trunk.
- Movement plays an important role in the baby's exploration of his surrounding environment. Baby begins to learn that he creates a certain motion and whether it was created outside of his body. From an early age, babies learn they can bang the crib against the wall so they learn they can make things happen.
- Rapid movement excites a baby while slow, rhythmical motion has a calming effect. Knowing how different movement patterns affect your baby can enable you to help guide your baby's development and influence his moods.
- Movement in a variety of directions provides the experience a baby needs to learn how to balance and gain control over his body. These movements include swaying (side to side movement), bouncing (up and down movement), and walking (back and forth movement).
- Movement also plays a part in discovery of the body. Body awareness is the process that a baby learns the names, movements, functions, and locations of body parts. This is acquired as they repeat new motor skills. He also develops an inner sense that one side of his body is different from the other side (laterality) and understands his relative position in space (spatial awareness).
- By this age they will be able to grasp and release objects, stack 2 /3 blocks, use a pincer grasp, pick up a cup by handle, poke at things with finger, transfer toys from hand to hand

Things to do at home...

- Tap your baby, clap, stamp feet to rhythms. This movement helps him gain control.
- Use songs that name the parts of the body. They help to teach the names of the body parts as baby discovers them.
- Plenty of time on the floor to explore! They will be rolling , then commando crawling then crawling by 12 mths.
- Massage using different types of touch and props (eg use a soft sponge.)
- Lots of large, safe objects to manipulate and mouth.
- Blocks, stacking toys to pass from hand to hand
- Sippy cup of water , solids to pick up and try (by 12 mths)
- Toys to bang and make noise