

Tummy Time

- Encourage tummy time between the ages of 3-6 months.
- Tummy time enables a baby to develop the upper body strength and motor patterns needed for pre-crawling motions.
- When you crawl, you move your right hand and left knee forward together, then the left hand and right knee. This motion activates fibers that connect the brain's left and right hemispheres.
- The better developed these fibers are, the better connected the two hemispheres will be. (Jill Stamm, 2007)
- Encourage your baby to lift her head to see herself in a mirror. If the mirror has a colorful border, encourage her to look at this too.



Vision Development

- The Cortex, or outermost area of the brain, receives data for further processing. This data goes to the proper area of the cortex, such as the visual-processing area.
- The Cortex is important for several reasons. This area of the brain processes information and stores memory.
- The brain takes note of great contrasts. Young babies will pay closer attention to those objects that are clear, deep, or have sharp contrasts.
- Research has shown that before six months of age, high contrast colors such as black, white, red, and yellow are best to maintain a baby's attention.
- A newborn sees sharp contrasts of darks and lights. When your face comes in close to your baby's, it is your eyes, mouth, and hairline that stand out the most.



Choose books that are interactive.

Books stimulate auditory and visual connections in the brain.

Reading stimulates the parts of the brain that process and store language.



Vision Development in Infants

“School-Family-Community partnerships are linked to student achievement and school success”

(Van Roekel, 2008).

Attention Building

*Some Scientists believe that excessive early TV watching may help explain the rise in ADHD cases. (Dimitri Christakis, M.D., Child Health Institute)

*New studies have shown the babies and toddlers learn better from live people than from people on a screen. They recommend starting screen time slowly during the preschool years. (Christakis, Rivara, & Zimmerman, 2004)

*Attention building activities encourage a child to carefully observe the world. Children with good visual discrimination and focus of attention learn better.

Attention Builders for Infants (0-6 months)

Read books to your baby. Choose a board book with simple, bright, and colorful photographs. Name objects in the book. Bright colors capture an infant's attention, thus exercising the ability to maintain attention. This activity also stimulates parts of the brain that process and store language.

Attention Builders for Babies (6-18 months)

Have your baby reach out and shake a rattle that you hold in front of them. This stimulates motor and visual development. Reading interactive books with flaps exercises small muscle groups needed for holding a pencil. Reading also develops vocabulary words and concepts. Scooping and filling containers stimulates parts of the brain that process spatial reasoning. This is great for eye-hand coordination and hand-wrist coordination required to hold a pencil.



Toys that help develop visual skills:

Building Blocks

Bumpy Balls

Rattles

Soft Mirrors

Board Books

Family Photos

Peek-a-boo objects

Sorting Buckets

Nesting Toys

Attention Building

Attention Builders for Toddlers (18-36 months)

Using objects of varying sizes, practice placing them inside each other from largest to smallest. Through repeated exposure to varying sizes (depths and widths), toddlers begin to understand volume. Matching shapes and sizes, such as two little spoons and one big spoon, helps children learn to discriminate, categorize, and group objects. This visual development can later be used to help with discrimination of small differences in things like letters and numbers.

**The cognitive processes
required for imaginary play
are more demanding than
looking at flashcards
(Lew-Williams, 2016).**