

Occupational Therapy Parent Information: Early Thinking (perceptual & cognitive) Skills: Stage One

WHAT ARE THEY?

Thinking and problem solving for babies refers to their ability to use toys to learn about the world around them. It also includes learning concepts such as

1. "cause and effect" (that an action produces an effect: e.g. shaking a rattle makes a noise) and
2. "object permanence" (knowing a toy or person still exists even though you cannot see it/them).

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

These skills show that the child is learning from his experiences. They form the basis for ongoing development of thinking and problem solving. They help babies to make sense of their world and how to use toys in different and more creative ways



GREAT IDEAS

Cause and Effect

Look for opportunities for the baby to get a response from an action he makes. You can show him how to do these things or help his hand with yours.

Examples:

- Shaking a rattle
- Banging a toy or spoon on a surface
- Chewing on a squeezy toy
- Scrunching baking paper or cellophane

Object Permanence

Look for games to show your baby that toys go out of sight (e.g. fall off the high chair) and can still be found.

Examples:

- Peek-a-boo games: hide your face or baby's then slowly come out from behind the cloth
- Hiding part of a favourite toy under a cloth or container for baby to "find"
- Putting objects into shallow containers for baby to pull out.

EVERY DAY GAMES & TOYS

Great toys for developing thinking skills include:

- Rattles
- Wide open bowls to put favourite toys inside
- Squeezy toys
- Baking paper
- Cellophane



OTHER COMMENTS

YOUR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

Developed by Lisa Findlay and Imogen Fisher



<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.5/au>

© State of Queensland (Queensland Health) 2010.