

Occupational Therapy Parent Information: Early Thinking Skills: Stage Two

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. pressing a button 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 their experiences and 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:

- Banging a xylophone or drum kit with a stick
- Pushing a button to make a sound
- Pushing a button on a jack-in-the-box toy

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:

- Push a toy off the high chair and draw attention to it on the floor
- Hiding a toy under a cloth or container, then reveal them
- Putting objects into containers then showing baby inside the container.

EVERY DAY GAMES & TOYS

Great toys for container play include:

- Xylophones / drum kits
- Toys with push buttons or switches e.g. spinning carousels, "pop-up pets"
- Metal container with pegs: drop them in to make a sound and encourage baby to look inside
- "Pound-a-ball" toys where ball is placed in top and runs out the bottom
- Push button jack-in-the-box



OTHER COMMENTS

YOUR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

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