



Australian Government
Department of Education,
Science and Training

Activities to do with babies



Children learn through play and it is vital to their development.

Babies in particular learn about the world through their senses. A stimulating, sensory environment enriches this process and offers unique opportunities beyond their normal experiences.

All children benefit enormously from sensory stimulation and they continue to learn through using their senses.

Activities to explore the human body

1. Babies are very sensitive to touch. Their touch receptors are comparatively close together. Therefore, babies love gentle massage and the feeling of different textures such as feathers, silk and cotton. Try touching their skin with different materials, taking care not to scratch or injure their skin with harsh, cold or hot objects.
2. Stimulate multiple senses to help babies develop their sensory organs. For example, place coloured plastic counters or dried beans in an empty plastic jar. Seal the jar very well so the small items cannot be swallowed. When the child shakes or rolls the jar, they see the items move around and hear them hit the sides of the jar. They will eventually connect that the sound is being caused by the plastic counters hitting the jar.

Activities to explore physical phenomena

1. Bath time is great for finding out about the properties of water. Playing with containers, watching them fill with water and seeing if things float or sink, pouring water over the baby all helps them understand the nature of water.
2. Also during bath time, point out the bubbles and watch them appear and disappear. Pour water from a jug over their arms and body so they can see and feel the water. This helps older babies develop the concept of 'permanence of objects'.