

Cognitive skills for babies by Alex Mead, OT, Taree Community Health

Cause and effect:

Playing with toys such as ball drop toys, toys with sounds, and toys that move when you touch them will help baby develop their cause and effect skills.



A variety of toys with contrasting colours (black and white, and bright primary colours) are good for stimulating your baby's brain. Babies also enjoy playing with objects you may already have in your household such as plastic cups and bowls, colanders, plastic or silicone kitchen tools, empty screw top bottles, etc. Always supervise your baby while playing with toys.



Object permanence

Games like peek-a-boo, and hiding toys under a cloth then having baby uncover them are good ways to develop object permanence skills.



When baby drops food off the highchair on purpose and then looks to you to pick it up....this is a sign that their object permanence skills are developing....not just a sign of cheekiness!!



Finger isolation and pointing

Reading 'touch and feel' books and encouraging baby to reach their hand up to touch different textures is a great way of developing pointing skills, while also learning about different textures.



Also encouraging babies to poke at toys (e.g. poking their finger in the dial on a toy rotary phone) helps develop pointing skills also. Pointing is an important cognitive skill that is linked with fine motor skills and communication.

