



## PLAY SKILLS

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Play is the way in which children learn about the world around them. It helps them develop their social, emotional and cognitive skills.

Encourage your child to play with brightly coloured or black and white toys, as this will help gain their visual attention. Hold them 20-30cm away from your child, so that they can start to visually follow the toy.

Use toys which make sounds and that are soft in texture. Ensure toys are the right size so that your child can easily grasp it in order to explore.

Your child may need handover hand encouragement to help them realise that they can reach out to touch or grasp the toy. When doing so, encourage your child to reach out equally with both hands.

Here are some ideas to help encourage your child to explore in early play:

- **Small rattles** - ones which are small enough for your child to grasp e.g. long thin handles.
- **Squeezing toys** - e.g. ones that can be squeezed or hit to make sound.
- **Cause and effect toys** - e.g. child presses button to activate sound/light/pop-up etc. The V-Tech, Playschool and Fisher Price toys are good examples of this, but there are many others available in high street stores.
- **Look and Follow** - Encourage your child to watch and follow toys/rattles and cot mobiles
- **Play Mat** – Use a play mat to give you child opportunities to explore in different positions e.g. lying on tummy, lying on back and lying on their side. Use the toys mentioned above to help them explore.
- **Toy Arch** – Encourage your child to look and watch objects suspended from the arch and reach out with hands to touch the objects.
- **Pat Mat** - this is a another way for your child to learn to explore whilst on their tummy and to start to learn cause and effect and explore with their hands..



Rattles



Play Mat and Mobile



Cot Mobile



Pat Mat