

Playtime plus for babies

What is the practice?

The very best types of games and early learning opportunities include ones in which a young child's behavior causes an object to respond in an interesting, engaging way.

- Arrange baby's play area and materials so that his actions cause objects and toys to do interesting things.
- For young children with disabilities, allow plenty of time for them to realize that their actions are causing an interesting response.



A gleeful smile signals the happy realization that baby's own pushes bring this musical toy to life.



A traditional baby rattle, a ringing toy phone, and a tin washtub drum delight these active little ones.

How do we do it?

Place play materials within baby's reach so that touching or playing with them produces pleasing, interesting responses. Toys and other objects that produce happy sounds, movements, lights, and other effects at baby's touch are examples.



This little fellow realizes that every time he pushes the button, he gets to hear his favorite music. He can hardly wait to sway, clap, and sing along!

See it happen

- Focus on one action that the child can do by him/herself, or with a little assistance. Examples might be a leg kick, a hand wave, or a particular vocalization.
- Make sure an interesting reward occurs right after the child's action. For example, each leg kick might be followed by the movement of a jingling mobile, or each vocalization might trigger a sound-activated toy to dance.
- WAIT for or encourage the child to repeat the action and see that the enjoyable response follows right away each time.
- WAIT, and repeat the "game" as often as the child repeats the focus action.

Is it working?

- Does baby repeat the behavior many times?
- Does she recognize there is a connection between HER action and the desirable response that follows?
- Does she express delight (smiling, cooing, clapping, etc.) when the response occurs?

