

Exploring

infants and toddlers




Capital District
Child Care Council

a tipsheet for parents and caregivers of children ages 0 to 2

Opening Tiny Eyes to the World

Babies least developed sense at birth is vision. Studies agree that babies color vision matures after two weeks and that they are still developing the ability to focus their eyes accurately until they are eight months old. It is important to be sure to keep baby's eyes busy throughout this time because it helps with other developing areas. By providing babies with attractive items to look at they develop curiosity, the ability to pay attention and concentrate, while bonding with their favorite adults.

- Pairs of colors that have high contrast, like black and white, are easiest and most interesting for infants to look at. Provide babies with black and white pictures or even draw large black simple shapes on paper for them to look at. Put black and white area rugs, blankets, or mats on the floor for babies to explore during tummy time. Keep in mind that different textures with these items are exciting for babies too.
- Give babies large printed patterns in black and white to give their eyes something with sharp edges to look at, like a chess board print.
- Give babies shatter-proof mirrors to look at themselves with. Talk with the baby about what she is seeing in the mirror.
- Allow babies time to look at familiar adult faces while they are being held. Faces are their favorite thing to look at and it is a wonderful bonding experience. The contrast around people's hairlines is also very interesting for their eyes to examine.
- Mirror a baby's facial expressions back to her during one-on-one face time.
- Move the baby's rattle from left to right, or up and down for her eyes to track the movement.



Babies learn about their world by what surrounds them and what they can interact with. Remember to get down on the floor and play with them to help them explore and grow.

- As babies start to see color better, bright colors like red, green, orange, and yellow tend to be seen first. Add bits of red into play or around the black and white objects for extra visual fun.
- Cover boxes or containers in black and white pictures for babies to play with.
- As babies grow, be sure to give them a variety of items to look at.