



Building Blocks to Brighter Futures

Resources to Help Make Sure All Our Kids are "AOK"

Helping A Baby Grow Through Play

Why should you play with your baby?

- so your baby can grow strong muscles
- babies learn to laugh and make noises
- to help your baby talk
- learn to play with other babies
- babies learn through touch
- they learn to sit, stand, and walk through play
- babies love one on one time with caregivers
- babies learn through seeing objects



Ways to play with your baby

- talk, read and sing to your baby
- make eye contact when you talk to your baby
- gentle touch, cuddle and hug your baby
- tummy play several times a day
- provide toys/household items in bright contrasting colors
- babies like soft toys in different shapes
- get on the floor and play with your baby
- provide a safe play area



For more information, please visit the Kane County Health Department's website at kanehealth.com/aok.htm or call 630-208-3801



TIPS FOR PLAY

It is only natural to want the best for your baby. This does not mean you have to buy the most expensive, technologically advanced toys on the market for them to play with.

Play has an important role in building social skills and communication, creativity and problem solving. Babies learn the skills necessary for physical and emotional development such as developing motor skills, responding to touch, taste, smell, and most importantly, learn trust and positive self-image while playing.



Allowing your baby the opportunity to explore may be the best developmental tool we can give them as a parent. Young babies explore by putting everything in their mouth. Older babies explore by looking, feeling with their hands, and reaching for unfamiliar objects.

It is important for parents to provide a safe environment for a baby.

- ***Crawl through your house to get a baby's-eye view.
- ***Remove anything that is dangerous to your baby.
- ***Be aware that babies reach for things such as an electrical cord attached to a hot iron or toaster, the draw string used to pull the blinds up, and handles to hot cookware on the stove.
- ***It is natural for babies to have the curiosity to touch things. Never yell or hit baby for wanting to touch. Instead, find safe items for your baby to explore with you by their side.
- ***Small toys and other household items could be a potential choking hazard. If the toy can fit through a toilet paper roll, it is too small for your baby to play with.
- ***Teach older siblings and children the dangers of small toys and the need to keep small toys out of reach of the baby.

The best thing you can do is take your baby out of the stroller, swing, bouncy seat and place them on the floor.

- ***Stay on the floor with your baby
- ***Teach older brother or sister to help
- ***Use gates for safety
- ***Let them begin to explore their new surroundings
- ***They will learn about the world around them.
- ***Read books; your public library is a good source



You are your baby's best friend and first toy!

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