

# Activities for Infants/Toddlers at Home – Issue #1



Affiliated Services  
for Children & Youth

## FINE MOTOR ACTIVITIES

### **Paper Towel Holder Activity**

Items Needed:

Metal stand up paper towel holder  
A variety of items such as thick bracelets, napkin rings, plastic shower rings, large wooden rings, wrapping paper, cardboard tubes cut into rings, cookie cutters.

Your child may enjoy placing items on to the post of the paper towel holder. Some will be able to remove them as well but may need an adult to assist them.

### **Scarf Play**

Materials:

Scarves!

The transparent ones are awesome because babies can still see through them.

Process:

Provide a few scarves to explore.

Presenting them in a basket or container will make it more interesting and inviting.

Encourage peek-a-boo play.

Put on music to encourage babies to move with the scarves.

### **Pompom Sort**

Materials needed:

- Large pompoms
- Container for the pompoms
- Large spoon
- Veggie tray (sorting tray) or a few containers

Process:

Provide the materials on the floor or at a table.

Toddlers can explore the pompoms.

Offer the spoon and encourage scooping from the bin of pompoms to the sorting tray.

## SENSORY ACTIVITIES

### **Bubble Sensory Bag**

Use a large Ziploc bag and fill it with a cup of water. Squeeze about a teaspoon of dish soap inside the bag. Seal it while removing as much air as possible. Secure the top of bag with duct tape and tape the top of the bag to a window or floor using masking tape. Invite your little one to touch, pat, squeeze the bag in order to create bubbles inside.

### **Oil and Water Sensory Bag**

Use a large Ziploc bag and fill it with a ¼ cup of water. Squeeze about a ¼ cup of baby oil inside the bag. You can add in some food colouring of your choice. Seal it while removing as much air as possible. Secure the top of bag with duct tape and tape the top of the bag to a window, floor or highchair tray using masking tape. Invite your little one to touch, pat, squeeze the bag in order to explore what's inside.

### **Texture Bags**

Texture bags can be created by filling a Ziploc bag with different items. Once filled, they can be taped to the ground for your child to explore. Tape them using packing tape or duct tape on all sides. Filling options could be: straws, pompoms, plastic jewels, buttons, or beads. Due to the small pieces, these bags need to be explored with adult supervision.

### **Wash Bin**

Provide your child with a low bin filled with warm soapy water, a dish cloth or a cleaning brush. Allow them to wash their toy cars, babies, animals, plastic dishes, etc.



## HEURISTIC PLAY

*Heuristic play is a term that was invented by child psychologist, Elinor Goldschmeid. The term Heuristic play describes the experience babies and children have when they play with and explore the properties of objects found in the real world. Giving babies the opportunity to engage in heuristic play stimulates all of their senses and creates a rich learning experience.*

### **Heuristic Play Treasure Baskets:**

A Heuristic Play Treasure Basket can be used with infants, typically starting when they can sit up independently. The treasure basket is a low-sided round basket filled with objects from the real world. These objects can come from a variety of household items or items found in nature.

One way that infants make connections and learn about the world around them is through sensory-motor development. During this stage of development, infants have a primal instinct to explore objects through mouthing and handling. Providing a Heuristic Play Treasure Basket to your baby will provide them with a mentally stimulating experience that will activate the growth of their brains.

The beauty of a Heuristic Play Treasure Basket is that you likely have some, if not all, of the items you need already! Heuristic Play Treasure Baskets can be made with household items or items found in nature. Here are a few examples of items you can include in your treasure basket:

- **Paper/cardboard objects:** Egg boxes, notebook, sturdy cardboard tubes, grease-proof paper.
- **Wooden objects:** Door wedge, small turned bowl, dolly pegs, egg cup, wooden egg, spoons, curtain rings, coaster, bracelet, block, napkin rings, dowel, empty salt, and pepper cellars.
- **Leather, textile, rubber, or fur objects:** Small knitted toy, bean bag, piece of flannel, velvet powder puff, bags of herbs, a bag of lavender, leather keyring, coloured ribbons, leather purse.
- **Rubber objects:** Ball, bath plug with chain, soap holder, doorstop, coaster.
- **Metal objects:** Honey drizzler, an egg cup, curtain ring, egg poacher, measuring spoons, tea strainer, whisk, powder compact, bells, lemon squeezer, small bowl.
- **Natural objects:** A lemon or orange, coconut shell, grass rope, sheepskin, pumice stone, loofah, shells, pine/fir cones, driftwood, avocado stone, large pebbles.
- **Brushes:** Scrubbing brush, pastry brush, baby's hairbrush, nail brush, makeup brush, paintbrush, shaving brush, wooden toothbrush.
- **Other objects:** small vanilla essence or food coloring bottle, hair rollers, small mirror, scent bags, bone shoehorn, ceramic bowl.

### **Health and Safety Precautions:**

- Do not use keys as items for heuristic play as these frequently have lead and other heavy metals in them which can be ingested if mouthed.
- Avoid items made of pewter as this is also high in lead.
- If you are using leather objects, make sure they are genuine leather, and not imitation leather (which is made of PVC, and is very toxic for babies to be mouthing).
- Use a film canister to test objects to make sure that they are not a choking hazard (anything that fits into the canister is small enough for a child to swallow or choke on).
- Before offering items to your baby, give everything a good wash and rinse.
- Check the treasure basket regularly for broken objects.

\*information taken from <https://www.littleacornstomightyoaks.co.uk/blog/2013/12/02/heuristic-play-part-i-the-treasure-basket>