




Toys from Round the House

Here are some everyday household items that make fine playthings. Noted are activity uses.

-Beginnings-A Practical guide for Parents and Teachers of Visually Impaired Babies, by Sheri Moore

<p><u>Cooking Utensils:</u> Pans and pots, colanders, cookie sheets, loaf pans, muffin tins, pie pans, mixing bowls, measuring cups.</p> 	<p><u>Activities:</u> Put things in and take them out, bang together or bang with a spoon, stack and nest, compare sizes and shapes. Use in sand and water play.</p>
<p><u>Brightly Colored Plastic Dishware:</u> Cups, bowls, plates, freezer containers.</p> 	<p><u>Activities:</u> Stack and nest, compare colors, and sizes, and shapes. Use to get your child to look, put things in and out. Also use in sand and water play. Put ice cubes in to teach about cold and melting.</p>
<p><u>Empty Plastic Bottles and Containers:</u> Margarine tubs, egg shaped containers, cottage cheese and yogurt containers, shampoo bottles, dishwashing liquid bottles, gallon plastic milk jugs, cold cream containers, water bottles.</p>  <p>(if you seal rice or beans inside a container, make sure your baby cannot break the seal and possibly choke on the contents. Do not let him play with lids or caps smaller than 1 ½ inches in diameter.)</p>	<p><u>Activities:</u> Make homemade rattles by sealing, with colored tape, rice, nuts, pebbles, or beans in containers. Use for reaching and general play. Make scent jars by putting cotton balls soaked in such scents as perfume and vanilla extract in containers and sealing them. Use for learning to distinguish smells. Work with bottles and tops. Use to put things in and out and for screwing lids on and off. Compare colors and shapes and sizes. Use in sand and water play.</p>

Empty Food Cans: Coffee cans, standard size cans



(Do not let your baby play with cans which have any type of sharp edges or burr which may scratch.)

Activities: Sing or talk into, like a megaphone. Bang together or bang with a spoon. Stack and Nest. Make a home rattle by sealing rice or beans in containers. Use for reaching and general play. Use in Sand and water play.

Small Empty Boxes: Milk cartons, shoe boxes, cereal boxes, baking soda boxes, small jewelry boxes, egg cartons, oatmeal boxes.



Activities: Stack and nest. Put things in and take them out. Make homemade rattle by placing rice and beans inside and taping securely. Use for reaching and general play or suspend from mobile. Make a toy for your child to look at by covering with shiny foil, textured contact paper, tape, construction paper or fabric, or brightly colored, bold patterned design. Use for reaching, general play.

Large Boxes and Paper Bags: Appliances boxes, packing boxes, paper bags of various sizes.



Activities: Fix up boxes as a special place for your child to crawl in and out by cutting “doorways,” “windows” and by covering inside and/or outside with bright bold patterns. Put soft carpet remnant inside. Put things in and take them out. Make a puppet by coloring, or taping, or gluing on brightly colored paper or fabric scraps to make a puppet’s face and body. Make a grab bag by putting two familiar objects in a bag. Name one object and allow baby to dig for it.

Carboard Tubes: paper towel tubes, foil or plastic wrap tubes, toilet paper tubes, large tubes used to hold fabric bolts or copper rolls.



Activities: Sing or talk into, like a megaphone, roll on the floor. Cover a tube with brightly colored and boldly patterned contact paper, wrapping paper, tape, fabric, or shiny foil.

Pie Tins, Paper Plates



Activities: Make a shaker by placing rice or beans between two paper plates or foil pie tins secured together. Decorate with bright patterns and colors. Use for reaching or use a tambourine.

Foil/Mylar



(Supervise your baby so he does not chew and swallow bits of the foil. Blinking lights should not be used with a child who is seizure-prone; they may induce a seizure)

Activities: Crumple into shiny balls for your child to reach for and toss. Cover other play materials to create a visually interesting surface. Tape foil on the walls in the corner of a room and hang colored lights so their light is reflected. Position your child's crib so he can see the display.

Colored Paper, Wrapping Paper, Contact Paper, Wallpaper Sample Books, Construction Paper, Posters



Activities: Cover play materials to make them more visually interesting. Braille labels on contact paper and use for the child's things. Tape or hang paper on a wall near your child's crib or play area to provide something to look at. Fluorescent colors are particularly bright and good for drawing your child's attention.

Fabric Scraps: Flannel, satin, felt, corduroy, and so on.



Activities: Introduce your child to different textures by having him touch them. Also rub on his or her body with fabrics that feel different-flannel, satin, felt, corduroy. Name body parts you touch. Make a multi-textured mat for your child to lie on and feel the difference in fabrics sewn together.

Cover play materials to make them more interesting to look at and touch. Compare colors, textures, and patterns.

Cotton Balls/Pom-Pom:



Activities: Increase your child's body awareness by stroking a part of his or her body with cotton ball. Have the child reach for the cotton. Name body parts.

Tape or glue to other play materials to make them more interesting to touch. Scatter on the floor for your child to find and reach for.

Paint Brushes of different sizes, Soft Hairbrushes, Dishwashing Brush, Feather Duster, Paint Roller, Pot Scrubber, Powder Puff, Kitchen Sponges.



Activities: Increase your child's body awareness and accustom him to different textures by gently stroking his or her body with these items. Let the child use them to touch different body parts you name them.

Smart Phone, iPad/Tablet, or Radio



Activities: Occasionally play music for your child, preferably in a variety of styles and rhythms. Have the baby locate and reach or crawl toward the sound source.

Record baby's cooing and laughing on a phone or recorder and later baby's early talking. The child will enjoy hearing it and may "talk along" with the dialogue.