

Tracking Toy: Watching and Learning

Instructions:

1. Glue or draw a black and white pattern on a paper plate.
2. Tape a stick to the back of the plate.
3. Show the contrasting object you made to your baby's face. Slowly move it a little to each side.
4. Keep the tracking toy about 12 to 15 inches from your baby's face. Slowly move it a little to each side.
5. Observe your baby. Continue to keep pace with the speed that her eyes move.
6. As she follows the toy with her eyes, move it horizontally. Then move it vertically in an arc over her head. What does she do?
7. Do this activity if she is engaged and interested. Repeat it again at any time.



Materials:

- Black and white patterns or black marker
- Paper plates
- Glue or tape
- Paint stick
- An object with contrasting colors (optional)
- Board book

How to extend activity:

- Model for family members how to move the toy slowly in front of your baby's eyes. They can give her an opportunity to reach for her toy and pull it to her mouth.
- Notice what the baby is watching when she is on her back. For example, if she is staring up at a bright ceiling light, you may want to adjust it, so it is not shining in her eyes.
- Your baby may enjoy watching a mobile move above her crib. Once she begins to sit, remove the mobile, it could be a safety hazard for her then.

What they learn:

Motor: Your baby is developing small muscles in her eyes as she follows the tracking toy.

Cognitive: Your baby is curious about objects with high contrast colors or black and white patterns.