

### Shared Attention with a Pat Mat: Touching and Observing

#### What to do:

1. Create a pat mat by filling a bag 1/3 with water. Drop in easy-to-see objects that float. Drop in easy-to-see objects that float.
2. Tape the bag closed. Seal another bag around it and place it on the tray.
3. You can place your baby in a highchair or on the floor - anywhere s/he can reach the pat mat.
4. Encourage your baby to touch the mat and make the objects move.
5. Talk with him/her about what s/he is doing, feeling, and seeing. For example: "You are making waves. See the pink lid go up and down? How does that feel? Oooh, the bag is warm."
6. Allow your baby to play as long as s/he is interested. Repeat this activity again and again over the next few days.

#### How to extend activity:

Everyday items in your home and outdoors are new to your baby. Talk about what you and your baby are doing when you diaper, dress, and feed them. Take advantage of these one-on-one times together to build him/her understanding of language.

#### Materials:

- 2 Zip-top freezer bags
- Objects that float (lids, sponges, or corks)
- Duct tape
- A tray with sides (optional)
- Cardboard chubby book, cloth book, or vinyl book



#### What they will learn:

- **Cognitive:** Your baby is learning that s/he can make things move. This will lead to understanding cause and effect later.
- **Social emotional:** You and your baby are looking together at the objects. This is called shared attention. It builds attachment because s/he learns how special s/he is to you. As your baby does things over and over, her brain creates memory pathways.