



ACTIVITY 2: BASKET EXPLORATION

AGE: Infants and Younger Toddlers

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- A clothes basket or cardboard box to put things in
- Items from around the house to explore, such as:
 - » Wooden spoons
 - » Plastic jars with lids (such as recycled frosting containers or Tupperware)
 - » Measuring cups
 - » Small, soft pillows
 - » Small cardboard boxes
 - » Wrapping paper or bubble wrap
- Toys such as balls that are soft or make noise, stuffed animals, rattles, books and blocks
- A safe spot on the floor to play.



Please note: If your child is less than 12 months old, please make sure that the items you pick for this activity are large enough not to be swallowed and are safe enough to go into your child's mouth.

PURPOSE

Your baby or toddler loves to explore the things around them. Young babies start by looking at things and then exploring them with their hands and their mouths. Older babies and toddlers like to smell, poke, toss and put things in to see what happens. This activity will encourage your child to play with many different things you can find around your house and try out different ways to explore. This will help your child be curious and to explore, and to learn how to make different things happen through their own actions.

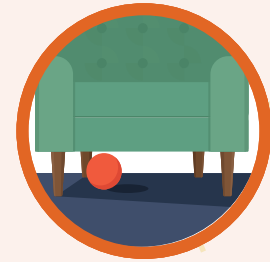


This activity relates to these elements in the **Approaches to Learning** domain of the VELs:

- Play and Exploration
- Initiative

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO!

1. Pick a few items and put them into a large cardboard box or clothes basket for your baby or toddler to explore.
2. Sit down with your baby and the box and encourage them to look into the box and see what is there. Allow your child to explore at his/her own speed.
3. As your baby takes things out and plays with them, comment on what you see them doing. For example, "I see you crumpling up the paper into a ball! It's making a crinkling noise, isn't it?," or "You've put the box on your head!"
4. Ask your toddler questions while they play, such as, "Where did the ball go? Did it roll under the chair?"
5. While your baby or toddler is playing, watch them to see what you can learn about how they explore and learn. What kinds of things does your toddler like to explore? How does your baby use his or her senses to learn about new things?



SWITCH IT UP!

Here are some different ways that you and your child can do this activity throughout your day together.

- You can do the same kind of activity in the bath using measuring cups, containers, small jugs and colanders. Supervise your child while they play with the different items in the water, and talk about what they are doing and learning while they play.
- As your child gets older, you can fill a small box or bucket with things like rice or beans and give your child cups, spoons, and containers to explore, dump and pour.



CHECK IT OUT!

Visit your local library and check out these books to read with your child.

- *Hide and Seek* – Taro Gomi
- *Round is a Tortilla* – Roseanne Thing
- *Not a Box* – Antoinette Portis
- *Where's My Teddy?* – Jez Alborough

Activity adapted from:

- *Why Do Babies Like Boxes Best?* Adapted from L.G. Gillespie, 2009, "Why Do Babies Like Boxes Best?," *Rocking and Rolling, Young Children* 64 (3): 48–49.
- Gronlund, G. *How to Support Children's Approaches to Learning? Play with Them!* The National Association for the Education of Young Children.