



Physical Health, Well-Being, and Movement Skills Activity for Birth to 6 Months

Napkin Tent

This activity gives infants practice in the instinctive skill of grasping something when the palm of the hand touches it. This can be quite exciting to babies because they are making something happen. Cognitive learning takes place when infants begin to notice cause and effect. Gross-motor skills also are involved as they twist to one side and reach. Intentionally letting go is a skill that comes later. Watch for it to begin!

Materials:

- Large cloth dinner napkin

What to do:

1. Place the infant on her back on a clean blanket on the floor.
2. Place the napkin so that it sticks up like a tent, off to one side of the infant but within reach. (Most babies face their head to the right most of the time, so you might place the napkin on that side.)
3. Observe as the baby notices the scarf, turn toward it, and reaches for it. If the palm of the baby's hand touches the object, her fist may close over it instinctively. The material is easy to grasp, and the child can pull it over her face without danger and explore this new object.

Variation:

- Use different colors and patterns of napkins.

Safety alert! Don't use flimsy crepe, organdy, or silky textured scarves. They can block the nostrils when they fall on an infant's face.

