



## MY SENSES

### #1: Do You Hear What I Hear?

**SUMMARY:** Create opportunities together around the house or in your neighborhood to share experiences and activities that create an awareness of sounds and to help build your child's listening skills.

#### WORDS TO USE:

Babble	Laugh	Ring	Tap
Bang	Loud	Scream	Tick
Beat	Low	Screech	Tock
Clap	Music	Sing	Voice
Coo	Noise	Soft	Wail
Cry	Noisy	Song	Whimper
Giggle	Patter	Sounds	Whisper
High	Quiet	Splash	
Hum	Rattle	Splish	
Jingle	Rhyme	Squeak	

#### Activity #1: A Listening Walk

- Take a listening walk together around the house or in your neighborhood to share experiences and activities that create an awareness of sounds.
- Talk to your child about what you hear. For example, point out the sounds in your environment: a cell phone ringing, the ticking of a clock, the rain pitter-pattering on the window, a bird twittering, a person hammering, etc.
- Use as many words as you can to describe to your baby the sounds that you hear. Be sure to note whether a sound is jarring or comforting to your child, and act accordingly.
- Remember to avoid very loud and sudden noises and quit when your child is tired or fussy.

## **Activity #2: Make Your Own Kind of Music**

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

Baby Maracas from the kit

Cage Bells from the kit

Toddleriffic: Activity Songs for the Very Young – CD included in the kit

Give your child baby-proof instruments such as a mini-maraca or a cage bell from the kit to explore. Do the following:

- Give one mini-maraca to your child and you take the other.
- Describe the sound the instrument makes when shaken or tapped.
- Use the instrument to make different musical patterns. For example, hold the cage bell and shake it, 1 2 3 Pause. 1 2 3 Pause. Next, try, 1 2 Pause, 1 2 Pause. Or, Shake it fast. Then shake it slowly. Shake it loudly. Then shake it softly.
- Do the same activity above but use the cage bells from the kit.
- Pull out your pots, pans and wooden spoons. Let your child make music. Copy the musical patterns your child makes. Ask your older toddler to copy the simple patterns you make with your instrument.
- Play some of your favorite music and play your favorite instruments (real or homemade) together. Discuss with your child the different instruments you hear in a piece, how and when the rhythms change.

### **OTHER ACTIVITIES:**

- Read books together which explore sounds.
- Sing songs together every day. Choose all kinds of songs and make them up too.
- Sing or chant nursery rhymes together.
- Dance together to the various songs and activities of the *Toddleriffic* CD included in the kit.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Research has shown a connection between a child's sensory experiences and with brain activity and the development of perceptual and behavioral competencies.
- All early sounds, including music, influence the wiring in a baby's brain.
- The more words a young child hears in the first years of life, the faster he/she may learn language.
- Babies can remember patterns of sounds, such as the rhythm or cadence of a story read over and over, or the melody and words of a song.

## SUGGESTED READING:

E Boynton	Let's Dance, Little Pookie
E Boynton	Moo-Baa-La, La, La
E dePaola	Tomie's Little Mother Goose
E Katz	The Babies on the Bus
E Katz	What Does Baby Say?
E Mother	My Very First Mother Goose
E O'Connell	The Baby Goes Beep
E Saltzberg	Noisy Kisses
E Wells	Old MacDonald had a Farm



## MY SENSES

### #2: Time for Textures

**SUMMARY:** Provide an assortment of gentle, textured items to glide across different parts of your baby's body to help him/her learn about his/her own body and the world through touch. By using his/her senses, your child investigates his environment, learns to solve problems and make connections. Of course, remember how sensitive your baby's skin is and choose items that will not create discomfort.

#### WORDS TO USE:

Bumpy – having or covered with a small raised area or surface  
Wet – covered with or full of liquid  
Dry - not wet or moist  
Scratchy – rough and irritating  
Soft – smooth or fine to the touch  
Texture – the structure, feel, and appearance of something  
Tickle- a gentle touch that makes a person laugh

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

Fabric pieces (or article of clothing): velvet, corduroy, burlap, silk, vinyl, feathers, cotton, a sponge, etc.

#### ACTIVITY:

- Sit closely with your child and gather an assortment of textured items that you have tested on your own skin.
- Gently glide a fabric or item across your baby's body (especially the hands and feet). Talk about the textures and describe to your baby his/her reactions. For example, 'This cotton feels soft. (Child's name), do you feel the cotton on your cheek? Now I'm gliding the cotton over your knee and you started to smile. Your t-shirt is made of cotton.'
- Let your child play with the textured item as you supervise. Talk to your baby as he/she handles the item and encourage his/her vocal and physical expression.
- For older toddlers, encourage them to reach out and take or grab the fabric from you.

## OBSERVATIONS:

- The preferences for touch may vary from infant to infant. Therefore, it is important to know which types of touch (stroking, tickling, rubbing) are preferred by your child. If the baby responds positively to the touch of a fabric, by the way of making an eye contact or passing a smile, probably, he/she is comfortable with the touch.
- Be sure to stop when/if your child expresses a readiness to quit (fussing, crying, grimacing, etc.)
- Remember, a gentle hug can be the best kind of touch.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- The sense of touch is the most primitive and pervasive of the senses. It originates in the bottom layer of the skin called the *dermis*. Every bit of skin on the body is used for touching. Nerve endings in the skin send signals to the brain which analyzes them and your child feels the effects of the touch.
- In addition to providing tactile stimulation, using touch is a part of the communication process and making contact with others.
- Studies suggest that the sense of touch enhances the growth and development of the baby and increases his/her attentiveness to the rest of the world, apart from his/her mother.

## SUGGESTED READING:

E Boynton	Fuzzy, Fuzzy, Fuzzy! A Touch, Scritch and Tickle Book
E Boynton	Tickle Time!
E Katz	Ten Tiny Tickles
E Kunhart	Pat the Bunny
E Murphy	I Kissed the Baby
E Satzberg	Animal Kisses
E Yolen	Good Night, Little Bunny: a Touch and Feel Book



## MY SENSES

### #3: Explore a Tree

**SUMMARY:** Introduce your child to the natural world through sight, sound, and touch. It is never too early to give your child various experiences in his environment. The more general knowledge a child has of his world through experience, conversation, and the chance to explore now, the easier it will be for him/her to make connections between things and ideas, see patterns, understand cause and effect, and problem solve.

#### WORDS TO USE:

Rough- not smooth or level; having an irregular surface with bumps or grooves

Bumpy – very uneven; not smooth

Soft – smooth or fine to the touch

Hard – firm and stiff

Slimy – moist, soft, and slippery

Smooth – having a regular or even surface

Prickly – having small, sharp points

Wet – covered with or full of liquid

Dry - not wet or moist

Bark – the tough outer covering on the stems of shrubs, trees, and other plants

Branches – a part of a tree that grows out of the main trunk

Leaf – a flat and usually green structure attached to a stem and growing from a branch of a tree or a plant

Root – the part of a plant or tree that grows under the ground

Trunk – the thick, main part of a tree

Color Words – red, blue, green, brown, black, white, gray, orange, yellow, etc.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** One or more trees

**ACTIVITY:**

- Take a stroller walk with your child to a tree and explore its colors, textures, and smells.
- Point out to your child the basic parts of a tree: trunk, roots, branches, leaves.
- Place your child's hand on the bark and talk about how it feels (rough, smooth, and so on).
- Look for any bugs on the tree and point them out.
- Look at leaves, buds, knots, etc. Talk about the shapes, sizes and textures.
- Take a picture or draw a picture of your special tree throughout the year.
- Describe any sounds you hear in the tree: a bird whistling, a nut falling from a branch.
- Bring a tree field guide and read to your child about the tree.
- Return to the same tree throughout the seasons and point out the changes you see in the leaves, flowers, fruit, and so on.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- The external senses- vision, hearing, smell, and touch—drive emotional responses, which have an impact on learning.
- By exploring and investigating new things, the brain tries to connect the new experience to an already existing pattern, or the brain creates a new pattern to understand the new experience.
- The more experiences and opportunities to explore your child has from birth on, the easier it will be for him/her to understand the meaning of the written words when he/she is learning to read.

**SUGGESTED READING:**

E Berkes	The Tree that Bear Climbed
E Udry	A Tree is Nice
E Hoban	Look Book
E Linenthal	Look Look Outside!
E Slegers	Fall Leaves
J 582.16 G	From Little Acorns... A First Look at the Life Cycle of a Tree
J 582.16097 B	Trees of North America

© Harford County Public Library

**HARFORD COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**



## MY SENSES

### #4: Peek-a-Boo!

**SUMMARY:** Play one of the most basic learning games with your child – peek-a-boo! This fun activity teaches your child about object permanence—knowing that an item still exists, even when she/he can't see it.

#### WORDS TO USE:

Cover – to place or spread something over  
Find – to come upon or get by searching  
Gone- no longer present  
Here – in or at this place  
Hide – to put or stay out of sight  
Look - to direct the attention or eyes  
See – to view with the eyes  
There – in or at that place

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

Several of your child's favorite toys  
A small, light-weight blanket or scarf

#### ACTIVITY: Where Did It Go?

- Place a toy on the floor in front of your child. Point it out to your child and say, 'I see your furry bunny. Let's hide it!'
- Cover the toy with a blanket or a scarf so that it can no longer be seen.
- Ask your child, "Where did your bunny go?"
- Encourage your child to grasp the edge of the blanket or scarf and pull it off the toy. Help as necessary.
- Express your delight as you both discover the missing toy. Say. "Peek-a-boo, bunny! We found it!"
- Let your older baby lead the game by covering and uncovering a toy. Express your delight at your child's ability to cause the toy to disappear and appear (cause and effect).
- You can also duck out of sight and pop up and call, 'Peek-a-Boo!' Encourage your older toddler to imitate you.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- Playing basic games like Peek-a-Boo teaches children to engage in and interact with the world around them.
- Play also helps develop a child's imagination, dexterity, and physical, cognitive, and emotional strength.
- Play has also been shown to increase a child's ability to adjust to the school setting. It may even increase a child's learning readiness, learning behaviors, and problem-solving skills.

### **SUGGESTED READING:**

E Gomi	Peekaboo!
E Isadora	Peekaboo Bedtime
E Isadora	Peekaboo Morning
E Katz	Peek-a-Baby
E Sirett	Beep! Beep! Peekaboo!
E Sirett	Baby Loves Peekaboo!
E Wells	Peek-a-Boo