



Words You Can Use

Cause and effect: Understanding an action can cause something to happen. When a baby pushes a ball and it rolls away, he is learning that his action caused the ball to roll.

Mastery play: Play that is an opportunity to practice skills and ideas. When toddlers pour water into containers they are practicing, or learning to master, their pouring skills.

Object permanence: Knowing that an object, or a person, exists even when he or she is out of sight. Understanding object permanence begins around 8–10 months and may be accompanied by separation anxiety.

Open-ended materials: Toys that can be used in many different ways, toys that encourage imagination such as blocks, pieces of fabric, water, and sand.

Rough and tumble play: Play that involves contact between children sometimes in the form of chasing and wrestling.

Scaffolding: When adults support a child in learning a new skill. When a baby is learning to walk, adults often help them (scaffolding) by holding her hand before she is able to walk by herself.

Separation anxiety: When a baby has a difficult time leaving, or separating from, his family or caregiver. These fears can begin around 8 months and intensify between 10 and 18 months.

Symbol: A symbol is a word or an object that stands for something that is real such as when a toddler uses a block as a phone.

Zone of proximal development: The difference between what a child can do alone and what a child can do with adult help. For example, a child who cannot walk yet will first be able to walk with the help of an adult.