



## **Month 5: Catching, Throwing and Kicking**

### **Infants**

#### **Bubbles!!!**

Lay your baby on her tummy and you lie facing her. Blow bubbles into the air (away from her face) and allow her to watch them. This encourages her to lift her head and be distracted while watching the bubbles. This may also encourage reaching to touch the bubbles.

#### **Hanging Game ("KICK IT!")**

Lay the infant on his back. Hang an object (balloon, ball, etc.) from a string and encourage the infant to hit or kick it by touching it to his feet or hands. This begins the muscle activation and strengthening in his legs and arms, while also working on lower and upper extremity targeting.

#### **Ball Watch**

Lay the infant on her tummy. You lie facing her. Roll a small ball slowly from side to side so she can watch it. Encourage the infant to attempt to touch it or grab it as it rolls.

#### **Baby Catch**

1. Sit on the floor with the infant sitting between your legs. Have another person sitting opposite you (they may also have an infant between their legs). Roll a ball between the infant and the person (or infant) opposite.
2. Same position as above. As the ball is rolled, lift his/her foot up and stop the ball when the ball comes close.
3. Same position as the previous two. As the ball is rolled, use both legs to catch the ball between her legs.

Once your baby has sitting balance, you can play this game sitting directly in front of your baby. This is a great way to begin early turn-taking. You roll the ball to your baby, and encourage your baby to roll it back to you. Start sitting very close to your baby and as strength and targeting improve, move away so that you are seated further away from your baby.

## **This Little Piggy**

Playing this game and games similar will create body awareness crucial for further development. Play it with your baby lying on his back, so that he has to lift his leg in the air to see his foot and toes. You can also play in sitting – it is best if your baby can see the toes as they are being touched, as this will assist in improving body awareness.

## **Walking Kick**

Once your child is beginning to stand, cruise or walk, begin to place a lightweight ball in front of her feet in her path, and encourage her to kick it forward, out of her way, as she walks. Even if your child is standing with support (while holding onto the couch or coffee table) you can still encourage kicking in standing.

### References:

Best Start. (2005). Have a ball: A toolkit for physical activity and the early Years. Toronto (ON): Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse

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