

# Treasure Baskets

A baby's brain is growing fast, developing in response to her surroundings through the senses of touch, smell, taste, hearing, sight, and movement.

## What is a treasure basket...?

The treasure basket is a collection of everyday objects chosen to stimulate the different senses. It is one way of giving babies a wide range of experiences that help the brain to make connections and develop – and helps to keep them happy! Babies learn from the treasure basket by looking, touching, sucking, licking, banging, picking up and dropping. It gives babies the chance to explore and decide for themselves what they want to play with. Babies' curiosity about the contents of the treasure basket means that they will often concentrate for longer and longer periods of time.

## What you will need to make your treasure basket...

- A treasure basket should not tip over too easily
  - Fill the basket with objects, so that your baby has plenty to choose from
  - Babies often want to put everything into their mouths. Make sure that everything you choose for the basket is safe
  - Everyday items from around the home are best. The purpose is to offer interest through smell, taste, sound, touch and sight (eg colour, form, length, shininess). A basket could contain:
    - Natural objects – fir cones, big shells, large walnuts, pumice stone, fruit: apple, lemon, orange, etc
    - Objects made from natural material – woollen ball, little baskets, wicker balls brushes (test bristles are firmly attached)
    - Wood – rattles, spoons, egg cups, bowls, pegs, napkin rings
    - Metal – spoons, tin lids, tea strainer, garlic squeezer, bunch of keys
    - Odds and ends – small purses, small cardboard boxes, inside of kitchen rolls, baby mirrors



## Using the treasure basket

- Sit nearby and watch to give your baby confidence. There is no need to talk or intervene unless your baby clearly needs attention
- Make sure that your baby is seated comfortably and safely, with cushions for support if necessary
- Check the contents of the basket regularly, cleaning objects and removing any damaged items
  - It helps to change some of the items in the treasure basket from time to time