

Holding and Dropping

Would you like to hold your rattle?

Offer toys that your baby can close her hand around.

This encourages her to use her hands to grasp and release objects.



Why this is important

When your baby learns to grasp, she begins a lifelong process of working with her hands. Hand skills such as buttoning a shirt, cutting with scissors, and writing with a pencil all begin with the ability to close her hand around an object. Young infants hold toys tightly because they have a gripping reflex. They do not yet know how to open their fingers. As your baby begins to move her fingers more purposefully, she will learn how to grasp the toy and intentionally release it. Dropping it shows she is making progress!

What you do

- Choose a toy that the baby can close her hand around easily, such as a soft animal or a rattle. Hold the toy so the baby can see it. **Remember to keep small objects out of her reach to avoid choking hazards.**
- Touch the toy to the inside of her hand so that her fingers close around it, as you describe it. Let go of the toy so that she can feel herself holding it. *This is your fuzzy lamb.*
- Repeat the game each time she drops the toy. *You dropped the fuzzy lamb. I will get it for you. Feel how soft the lamb is!*
- Encourage her to use each hand to hold the toy. *What about your other hand? Can you hold your rattle with this hand?*

Another idea

Vary the game by using objects with different textures. *Here is a bumpy rattle. Here is a smooth hippo.*

Let's read together!

My Fuzzy Farm Babies
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