

# At Arm's Reach

## Primary Objectives

- 6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
- 7a. Uses fingers and hands

## Why It's Important

When they are very young, children begin to move their bodies purposefully. You promote your child's gross- and fine-motor development when you provide them with experiences that encourage them to move, reach, and stretch.

## Materials

Blanket; basket of small toys

## What You Do

1. This activity is appropriate only for infants who are able to support their body weight enough for tummy-time activities.
2. Spread the blanket on the floor in an area where your child will be protected from other activity in the room.
3. Place your child on her tummy on the blanket. Show her a toy and describe it to her. *Look, I have a blue and white rattle.*
4. Put the toy on the blanket just at arm's reach for your child so that she has to stretch her arm out to grab it.
5. Give her time to shake, mouth, and touch the toy.
6. When she shows you she is ready for a new experience, place another toy just at arm's reach for her to grab.
7. Encourage her to use the opposite arm by placing the toy within closer reach of the arm she did not previously use.
8. Repeat the interaction for as long as your child is interested. Pay particular attention to her activity level. It is hard work for your child to lie on her tummy and reach for toys. You may notice that she is beginning to have a hard time supporting her head and neck, she is no longer reaching for objects, or she has an unhappy look on her face. When your child shows you that she is finished or that her body is getting tired, help her change position so she can rest her muscles.