

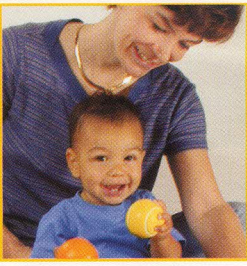
Puzzle Play

Can you put the ball in the hole?



You can invent a first puzzle for your baby by letting him put items in a muffin pan.

A simple coordination game gives your baby the opportunity to practice fitting objects together.



Why this is important

By placing items in a muffin pan, your baby gains skill in judging sizes and shapes with his eyes and testing them with his hands. He will enjoy holding the ball and fitting it into the pan. Each time he practices picking up the items in this simple puzzle and moving them, he learns more coordination.

What you do

- Look for objects around the house that will fit into the cup of a muffin pan. The fit needs to be fairly snug so it feels like a puzzle. Apples, oranges, and balls work well.
- Sit with your child and encourage him to explore the pieces in front of him. *You're putting the apple in the hole!*
- Follow his cues to determine his interest level. Allow him to use the pieces in other ways. *You took the ball out of the pan and now you're rolling it on the floor.*
- Try counting the pieces, talking about colors and textures, and describing your child's actions.

Another idea

Look for other opportunities in your day to offer your baby a simple puzzle game. For example, he may enjoy putting a rubber stopper in the sink or fitting the telephone in its cradle.

Let's read together!

Funny Fingers Circus
by Karin Blume