



Social and Emotional Development **Activity for 12 to 18 Months**

Cooperative Play

Engaging children in back-and-forth play with adults helps them get ready for playing with other children.

Materials

- Balls
- Trucks

What to do:

1. Sit on the floor opposite the child and only a few feet away. Roll a big, soft ball slowly toward the child so that he can easily catch it.
2. Hold your arms out and say, "Throw the ball. The child may be reluctant to give it up at first. You may have to make exaggerated motions to get the child to throw the ball. Show excitement at getting the ball and then immediately roll it back to the child so he will see he won't lose it completely if he throws it.
3. Repeat this many times and pause each time to see if the child will throw it independently. Provide a lot of praise when he does.

Variations:

- A. Toss or roll a knotted pair of socks back and forth.
- B. Toss a ball across the room and enjoy chasing it with the child. Be sure the child has a chance to "win."
- C. Play "parachute." Take one end of a pillowcase or towel while the child holds the other end. Show the child how to lift his arms "way up" to make the parachute go up, and then drop his arms to "make it go down." It may take several tries before the child understands the concept.

