



## Birth–12 Months

### Cognitive: Problem-Solving<sup>1</sup>

**WHEN INTRODUCED:** Block 3

#### BEHAVIORS TO OBSERVE

- Selects a toy to play with from several options
- Shows a sign(s) of object permanence (awareness that an object exists when it cannot be seen or heard)

### EXAMPLES OF OBSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

Behaviors may be observed during a care routine, such as a mealtime or a diaper change; playtime; or during a guided activity, including a book sharing. Pertinent ELM activities (Cognitive) are cited in parentheses.

#### Selects a toy to play with from several options

- Choosing between two different toys
  - a doll and a bear (Block 6, Option 1)
  - toys of different size (Block 6, Option 2)
  - sound-making toys, such as an egg shaker and a caged bell (Block 6, Option 3)
- Making a choice between two similar toys with at least one striking difference
  - balls (Block 11, Options 1 and 2)
  - dolls (Block 21, Option 1)
  - cars (Block 21, Option 2)

#### Shows a sign(s) of object permanence

- Watching a caregiver move an object and looking for or finding the object
  - in a box (Block 3, Option 2; Block 14, Option 2)
  - under a climbing form (Block 3, Option 3)
  - in a caregiver's hand (Block 13, Option 1)
  - behind a low barrier (Block 13, Option 2)
  - covered with a scarf (Block 14, Option 1)
  - covered with a box (Block 14, Option 3)
  - covered with a cloth (Block 20, Option 2)



- inside a tube (Block 20, Option 3)
- in an object permanence box (Block 11, Option 2)

## EXAMPLES OF FOLLOW-UP LEARNING SUPPORTS

### Reintroduce

#### Selects a toy to play with from several options

- Offer two similar toys of interest to the infant on a tray or on the floor near the infant. Manipulate and briefly describe each toy. Invite the infant to pick one of the two toys to play with.
- Offer two different types of toys of about the same size, such as a toy with wheels and a toy without wheels. Demonstrate how each can be manipulated and encourage the infant to select one to play with.
- Repeat the Block 6, Option 2 activity that involves offering two soft toys—a large teddy bear and a small teddy bear—as play item possibilities. Manipulate and describe each. Encourage the infant to pick one. Adapt the activity by offering a different type of toy that you anticipate will be of interest to the infant. The toys should be similar except in different sizes.

#### Awareness that an object exists when it cannot be seen or heard (object permanence)

- Repeat a Block 13 activity option to provide experience in looking for and/or finding a toy duck hidden by a caregiver.
- Repeat an activity from Block 14 to promote skill in following and finding an object that disappears underneath something.
- Play a game of *Peek-a-boo* with an infant using a cloth (Block 20, Option 2; see What to Look For).
- Adapt the Block 20, Option 2 activity by selecting and hiding a small item of interest to the infant. Use several hiding places (one at a time), such as a bowl, cup, and basket.

### Reinforce

#### Selects a toy to play with from several options

- Repeat the Block 21, Option 1 tummy time activity with a nonmobile infant. This option offers two different dolls to the infant, with the possibility of putting each in a fabric of different color (see Block 18, Options 1 and 2).
- Place three different types of toys in front of an infant, such as a rattle, people figure, and animal figure. Encourage the infant to select one of the toys to play with.

# Guide for Observing and Individualizing



- Offer 2–3 similar toys of different colors or size, such as rings or nesting cups. Describe each toy as you manipulate it and invite the infant to select one to feel or manipulate. Describe the infant’s actions.
- Offer 2–3 similar toys with different textures and encourage the infant to pick one to play with. Toy possibilities include texture bears (Block 8, Option 1) and texture balls (Block 15, Option 2). Add challenge to the activity by offering one toy with a texture and one toy that is smooth, such as a texture ball and a smooth rattle ball. Describe each toy when you present it or when the infant makes a choice.

## Awareness that an object exists when it cannot be seen or heard (object permanence)<sup>2</sup>

- Play a game of *Hide and Seek* with an infant’s favorite toy. After showing the toy to the infant, place the toy out of the infant’s sight while the infant watches. Encourage the infant to find the toy. For an infant who can sit independently, consider hiding the toy behind the infant’s back.
- Engage the infant in finding an appealing toy twice, similar to the Block 13, Option 3 activity in which an object is first hidden behind a caregiver’s back and then behind a barrier.
- Offer a rattle ball or other appealing object for an infant to explore with the object permanence box (Block 11, Option 2).
- Repeat the Block 3, Option 3 activity of engaging the infant in finding a “lost” toy.

## EXAMPLES OF PORTFOLIO ENTRIES

*Selecting a toy to play with is an early experience in making a choice. On two days this week, I offered Hunter two different types of toys and encouraged him to pick one to touch, hold, or play with. The first time, Hunter looked closely at each toy as I described it. He didn’t reach for either toy. I then held out each toy for Hunter. He looked but did not touch either toy! The second time, Hunter reached for and picked up one of two different toys I offered. I talked about the toy he selected (a toy bear). He held and looked at the toy for about a minute and then put it on the floor. I will continue to offer Hunter experiences in making toy choices.*

*A big step in a young child’s thinking skills is awareness that an object or person exists even though the object or person cannot be seen or heard. Experts call this object permanence. Camila is showing early signs of this awareness. Several times this week I hid a toy while Camila watched me move the toy. Each time she found the hidden toy. I will offer Camila different types of experiences in finding something that she watches me hide.*

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## Endnotes

- 1 The categories and behaviors to observe are informed by the following source: Bricker, D., Capt, B., & Pretti-Frontczak, K. (2002). *Assessment, evaluation, and programming system for infants and children, 2nd ed., Vol. 2: Test, birth to three years and three to six years*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
- 2 Some Self-Regulation activity plans also promote object permanence. Examples: Blocks 3, 9, 21, and 25.