



POWER OF PLAY® ACTIVITY GUIDE



Primary Development Areas Addressed:

- Sensory-Motor Development

Number of Children

1 2-3 3-5 5-10

Rationale:

Children of this age thrive on practicing crawling, walking, and/or climbing. Providing a fun, stimulating environment for such activities curtails the drive to do so in less safe situations.

Environmental Set-up:

Place *Hannah's Hideaway* in a corner wall area on a soft, carpeted surface or other shock-absorbing surface (e.g. mats).

- Remove other furniture or hard objects from the general area of placement
- Allow children the opportunity to explore the *Hideaway* in their own way and time
- Place a bucket of ping-pong balls or small noise-making balls on the top level of the *Hideaway*
- Sit on the edge of the *Hideaway* and shake the bucket or draw the child's attention to the contents of the bucket

Objectives:

- Develop gross motor skill competency in sitting, on all fours and in upright positions
- Provide opportunity to practice attaining and transitioning between prone, supine (lying on back), sitting, kneel-standing, and standing while maintaining balance and equilibrium
- Experience purposeful cause and effect

Activity Overview:

Pre-toddler/toddlerhood is a time of intensive practice of crawling, walking, and climbing. *Hannah's Hideaway* provides a safe opportunity to practice crawling, walking, climbing, and stepping. By placing an intriguing small bucket of balls on the top tier of the *Hideaway*, the child can be enticed to climb up to the "top of the mountain" to explore what is in the bucket. Once sitting on top of the "mountain" the child can dump the balls down the "mountain" and watch the effects of her/his behavior, and then go back down the mountain to retrieve the balls.

Guiding Questions:

What's in the bucket? Climb up to see what's in the bucket. What happens when a ball falls off the mountain?

Implications for Brain Development:

Spinal cord/brain stem sensory-motor activity stimulates higher cortical/cerebral centers into activity. This begins the process of development of higher cognitive function. Large muscle (gross motor) activities on *Hannah's Hideaway* provide important opportunities to organize sensory-motor experiences in the brain as the child strives to reach competence in an upright position. With greater sense of competence comes a greater capacity to engage and manipulate more purposefully with the world, thus increasing neuronal connections and expanding cerebral capacity.

Developmental Learning Outcomes:

Sensory-Motor Development:

- Increased ability to manipulate own body
- Increased ability to transition from one position to another (prone to sitting to kneel-standing to walking, etc.)

Cognitive Development:

- Experience cause (movement of balls) and effect (noise/action of balls falling to floor)

Language Development:

- Develop internal language of spatial directions (e.g. up, down, over, around)

Social/Emotional Development:

- Increased development of trust in oneself and perception of the environment

Activity Variation:

Play some of the child's favorite music as the child is playing on the *Hideaway* to support organized movement and rhythm

Resources:

Dorman, Helen, & Dorman, Clive. Hutchings, Tony (Illustrator). (2003). *Okami: Climbs a Tree*. Nevada City, CA: Dawn Publications.