



Soft Tunnel Set

12-24 Months

Look At You!

POWER OF PLAY® ACTIVITY GUIDE



Primary Development Areas Addressed:

- Sensory-Motor
- Language

Number of Children

1	2-3	3-5	5-10
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Rationale:

Children are attracted to varied surfaces and terrains for exploring, challenging, and developing their physical abilities.

Environmental Set-up:

Place the *Soft Tunnel Set* on a soft, carpeted surface or other shock-absorbing surface (e.g. mats) in an open area free from other furniture or hard objects.

- Arrange the pieces into any combination desired
- Provide a safe surrounding that allows toddlers the freedom to explore
- Allow the toddler time for much repetitive play on Tunnel Set; repetition is fundamental to toddler learning!

Objectives:

- Improve postural stability and mobility
- Increase awareness of body and the space it occupies
- Enhance language related to body in space

Activity Overview:

Toddlers are naturally attracted to this unique piece of equipment. Provide physical support when needed but respect toddlers' drive for independence. Instead of directing their activity, verbally acknowledge what they are doing as they explore and repetitively experiment with the varied pieces. This empowers them to "take charge" and fosters their language development. For example:

- "WOW! You crawled UP to the top of the mountain."
- "Can you scoot down the BLUE stairs?"
- "I see you through the tunnel. You're crawling UNDER the mountain!"

Guiding Questions:

Look at this tunnel. Where do you want to go?

Maybe in or on or through or under or over the tunnel?

Development of sensory-motor postural control is essential for learning how to intentionally move through space. Intentional and skilled movement through space allows the individual to interact with the environment in support of higher learning. Repetition of movement patterns (pulling, climbing, stepping, walking, jumping, etc.) helps develop postural muscles, balance, and skilled movement. Development of these sensory-motor experiences helps organize and provide "food" for the developing brain, thereby supporting more complex learning.

Developmental Learning Outcomes:

Sensory-Motor/Physical Development:

- Improved walking and running skills through increased development of postural muscles
- Improved spatial awareness of body in space

Cognitive Development:

- Development of meaning and ability to initiate movements based on understanding of directional words/terms such as up, under, over, and through

Language Development:

- Development of language descriptive of spatial orientation (self in relation to tunnel set pieces)

Social/Emotional Development:

- Enhanced sense of security in space and gravity, resulting in greater emotional security

Activity Variation:

Soft shapes can be used separately or attached together into many different formations.

Individual pieces of the *Soft Tunnel Set*, or any of the Soft Play Climber pieces, may be used to create more complex obstacle courses that challenge the toddler's sense of control over gravity by providing opportunities for crawling, rolling, creeping or walking (over, under, through, between, etc.).

Resources:

We All Live Together (Vol. 2) Greg & Steve | Format: Audio CD for young children