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| Understanding the world: The world | |
| Birth- 11 months | •Moves eyes, then head, to follow moving objects.  •Reacts with abrupt change when a face or object suddenly disappears from view.  •Looks around a room with interest; visually scans environment for novel, interesting objects and events.  •Smiles with pleasure at recognisable playthings.  •Repeats actions that have an effect, e.g. kicking or hitting a mobile or shaking a rattle. See also Characteristics of Effective Learning – Playing and Exploring, and Physical Development. |
| 8 – 20 months | •Closely observes what animals, people and vehicles do.  •Watches toy being hidden and tries to find it.  •Looks for dropped objects.  •Becomes absorbed in combining objects, e.g. banging two objects or placing objects into containers.  •Knows things are used in different ways, e.g. a ball for rolling or throwing, a toy car for pushing. |
| 16- 26 months | •Explores objects by linking together different approaches: shaking, hitting, looking, feeling, tasting, mouthing, pulling, turning and poking.  •Remembers where objects belong.  •Matches parts of objects that fit together, e.g. puts lid on teapot. |
| 22 – 36 months | •Enjoys playing with small-world models such as a farm, a garage, or a train track.  •Notices detailed features of objects in their environment. |
| 30 – 50 months | •Comments and asks questions about aspects of their familiar world such as the place where they live or the natural world.  •Can talk about some of the things they have observed such as plants, animals, natural and found objects.  •Talks about why things happen and how things work.  •Developing an understanding of growth, decay and changes over time.  •Shows care and concern for living things and the environment. |
| 40 – 60+ months | •Looks closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change. Early Learning Goal Children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes. |