

# Parry Sound District Best Start Network

## Month 4: Upper Body Development Activities

### Infant

#### **Infant Reach**

Place your child in either prone (on tummy) or supine (on back) position on a soft mat on the floor.

On Tummy/Prone position: Place several attractive toys in front of your child (as far as reaching ability). This will allow the child to make a choice of which toy is the most attractive. By reaching for a toy he/she will be working all back muscles as well as neck, chest and arms. Reaching will improve segment coordination and timing.

On Back/Supine position: Hang several toys above infant's body. This will stimulate the infant to reach up to the toys, therefore improving the strength and coordination of the arms.

#### **Crawling**

If the infant is able to crawl, have the infant navigate through several objects that may be interesting to him/her. Incorporating objects that will attract the infant will motivate him/her to reach/grasp/move/etc the objects. Through or into boxes, over or under favorite toys, over cushions or over your legs are all examples of ways that will motivate the infant to move farther.

#### **Push-Ups (For Older Infants)**

Gently support baby under the chest and hips. Lift his/her body carefully. The infant's hands will extend and remain on the floor and will support his/her upper body with the arms. Note: it is important to support the lower back and not allow him to arch his back.

#### **Patty-Cake & Clapping Games**

Sitting directly in front of your child on the floor, or while your child is seated in a high chair, play clapping games and Patty-Cake with your child.

References:

SPARC: Sports and Recreation New Zealand. (2008). Upper body development: Climbing, hanging and swinging. Active Movement.