

Other things to try: 1a

Learning that objects still exist even when they can't be seen

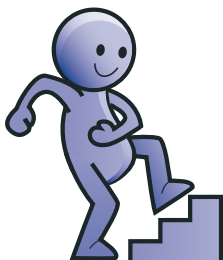


Why is this important?

Object permanence is about the developing realisation that objects continue to exist out of the immediate context. It is key to the development of language because lots of what we talk about, we cannot see at the same time.

What to do

- Roll a ball or favourite toy across a table. When it falls on the floor, show the child where it has gone.
- When a child drops things, show him/her where the object has gone.
- Hide behind a piece of furniture or the door perhaps; peep out regularly. Does the child move to find you?
- Show how pleased and surprised you are when the 'missing' thing is found!



Step up

- Wait to see if the child looks for the object without your guidance.
- Comment on people leaving the room and then coming back again.

Step down

- Two adults can play the hiding game: one to hide and one to take the child to the hiding place, see the hiding and then move away and wait for the first one to peep out. Using simple language, talk the child through the hiding game.
- Partially hide a favourite toy with a cloth. Encourage the child to uncover the rest. Slowly cover more and more of the toy until completely covered, then pull the cloth off!
- Partially hide an item under a cloth (e.g. a string of beads). Here, a child learns that items can reappear in their whole form and don't cease to exist when the whole thing isn't visible.

