

**THE FIRST YEAR  
REACHING OUT, GRASPING,  
CHANGING THE WORLD**

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF MOVEMENT**

*Myelinization* is defined as "the development of a myelin sheath around a nerve fiber." This fatty coating serves as insulation protecting the messages from the brain to various muscles in the body, resulting in purposeful or coordinated movement. The newborn is only able to control the muscles of the mouth and the throat, eating and communicating. By the end of the first year a miracle has

occurred and the child can control the movements of the whole body; he has learned to grasp and release objects, to kick, to slither and crawl, to sit up freeing the hands for even more development, and is usually well on the way to standing and walking!

This is a two-way process; myelinization creates movement, but movement also increases the formation of myelin, so the more we allow our child to move the more we are supporting optimum development. A child is naturally driven to this important work and is happy carrying it out. Often it is the frustration of not being able to move

that causes unhappiness and crying. There are many modern inventions that get in the way of the natural development of movement so we must make sure that our child spends as much time as possible in situations where she can move every part of the body.

When the infant, who has been looking at a toy hanging above him and intuitively reaching for it, finally reaches it and makes it move, this is an exhilarating moment. Instead of just being cared for and acted upon, the infant has reached out and intentionally acted upon her environment. She has literally "changed the world."



**EUROPEAN TOY HANGER**

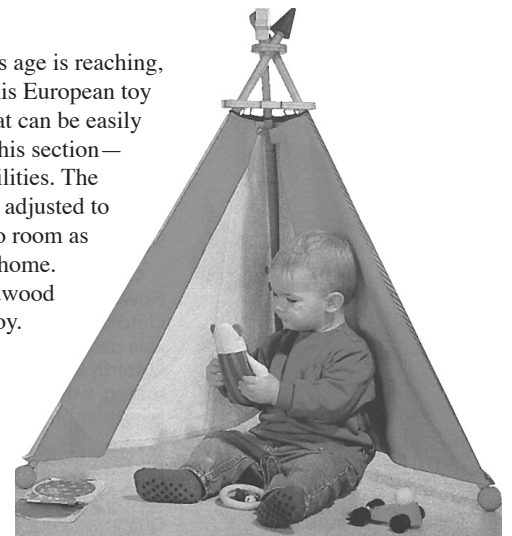
Among the most important work for the child at this age is reaching, grasping, releasing, and exploring sounds and textures. This European toy hanger is a great support at this time. It comes with a toy that can be easily removed and replaced with number of other hanging toys in this section—providing for a variety of textures, sounds and grasping possibilities. The three legs are held secure by rubber rings at the top and it can be adjusted to a variety of heights. It is easy to fold up and move from room to room as the child spends time with his family in different areas of the home.

The European toy hanger is made of light-colored hardwood so the hanger does not distract the eye from the hanging toy.

NOTE: As the child grows it can be turned in to a completely enclosed cave, tent, or play house with the washable drape that comes with the toy hanger—children LOVE this little hiding place. Made in Germany.

**BA123**

**\$114.00**

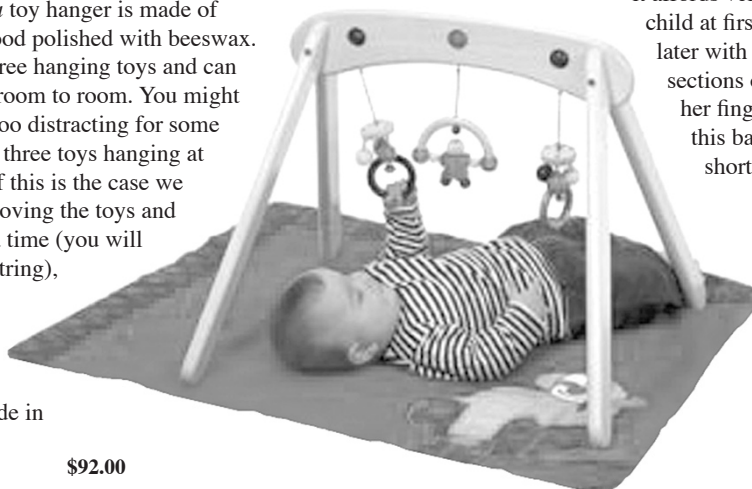


**MUSINA TOY HANGER**

The *musina* toy hanger is made of light-colored wood polished with beeswax. It comes with three hanging toys and can be moved from room to room. You might notice that it is too distracting for some children to have three toys hanging at the same time. If this is the case we recommend removing the toys and hanging one at a time (you will have to cut the string), and changing the toys as interest wanes. The base is 23.5" x 20". Made in Germany.

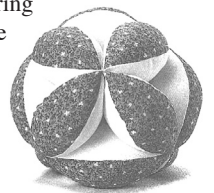
**BA212**

**\$92.00**



**PATCHWORK FOLK BALL**

A ball just like this one is one of the toys made during the Montessori Assistants to Infancy course—a valuable hanging, kicking, grasping toy. Hung above the infant it affords very interesting exploration as the child at first kicks the ball with her feet and later with her hand, finally grasping the sections of the ball and exploring it with her fingers. When she is ready to crawl, this ball offers an attainable incentive because it rolls but a short distance.



It has quite a history of tradition with quilt makers in the United States because it has been a favorite toy for many years. It is made by an Appalachian crafts group in Kentucky, of a variety of cotton fabrics. The large *patchwork ball* is 5.5" in diameter and the small, 3." To use as a hanging toy fasten it to the toy hanger with a piece of elastic, string, or ribbon.

**BR15 Large Patchwork Ball \$13.00**  
**BR240 Small Patchwork Ball \$11.00**



# FIRST YEAR - REACHING OUT, GRASPING, CHANGING THE WORLD

## TOYS THAT AID THE NATURAL DEVELOPMENT OF MOVEMENT

In this section on "reaching out, grasping, and changing the world" and in the following sections of *The Joyful Child* you will find toys that call forth a wide variety of movement possibilities for the child. Each rattle, grasping toy, toy, puzzle, and other piece of material has been chosen for a specific purpose. It is up to the adult to watch carefully to see that the challenge is not too easy as to be boring, and not too difficult to cause frustration and giving up.

Hanging toys will need to be rotated to keep the child interested and happy, or

you may want to arrange to have hanging toys in more than one place in the house. When the child is "working" we must be careful to respect the activity and not to interrupt him, just as we would not want to be interrupted if we were engaging in important work.

Observation and respect for concentration begins now, but will continue for many years in our relationship with our children.

## NATURAL MATERIALS FOR TOYS

In our twenty+ years of providing materials for infants and children we have gone through several periods of seeing

toys taken off the market, recalled, because of potential danger to children. There are constant arguments between toy manufacturers, government agencies, and environmental and child-safety groups about the use of plastic chemicals which may be toxic to children. We prefer the conservative view.

We recommend giving children toys made of wood or fabric. Avoid plastic objects unless you are sure they have been produced in countries where people are very careful about what materials are used in making toys and other children's products.

NOTE: All of the toys on these two pages can be used as hanging toys with the toy hangers on page 7.



### HANGING STAR

All the child has to do is reach or hit the soft cloth star and the little bell inside will sound. Later he will be able to grasp it and make the sound. It is 6" in length. Produced in China by a German company.

(\*) BR020

\$11.00



### TRIANGLES

Providing a new way to explore new shapes, these interlocking triangles entice the child and make an interesting sound clicking together when the child learns to grasp. They will provide endless exploration later as the child discovers how they are linked. Each colored wooden rod is 2.3" in length.

(\*) BR033

\$13.50



### LINA JUMP-UP

The wonderful thing about this toy is that, when it is hanging from the *European* toy hanger (page 7), the child can reach up and grasp the wooden bead, pull, and the hanging toy's arms and legs fly up as though she is dancing. Made of flat wooden panels, natural wood on the back, bright colors on the front. With the legs down the whole toy is 12.5" long. From Germany.

(\*) BR070

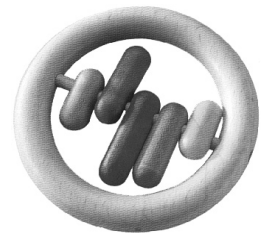
\$20.00

### SALTO

Before the child is able to sit up and explore this with both hands, this, and other small wooden toys, can be hung from a grosgrain or other sturdy ribbon from the ceiling, for the infant to reach for and learn to grasp. The Salto ring is just the right size for grasping practice. It is a natural wood ring with colored clappers, 3.6" in diameter. Made in Germany, hardwood, and bright colors.

BT025

\$15.00

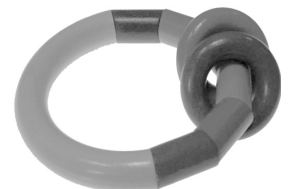


### RAINBOW RING

Another interesting toy for the infant to reach for, with feet and hands, and later to practice grasping, shaking, and releasing. This little gem from Germany is half natural light wood, with 6 colored cylindrical beads and two colored rings. The outside is 3.5."

BR045

\$13.00



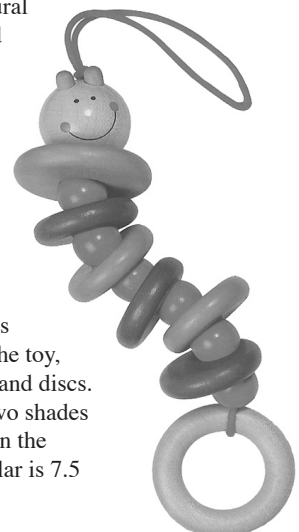
### RATTLING CATERPILLAR

When the child can get a grasp of this toy she can practice shaking and pulling the toy, stretching the elastic that holds the beads and discs.

A natural wood ring and 6 discs in two shades of color give the experience of focusing on the differences in one color. Rattling Caterpillar is 7.5 inches long. Wood, from Germany.

BR010

\$17.50



During these very early sensorial and impressionable months of life, we can enrich the child's experience by providing a variety of interesting textures. The difference in weight, texture, and the subtle expressions of natural materials—silk, cotton, wool, wood, metal—is valuable in clothing, bedding, furniture, and toys.

These ideas are not new but have been intuitive for many years. The philosopher Roland Barthes writes in *Myths of Today*:

*Toys of today are usually produced by technology and not by nature. They are made by the complicated mixing of*

*plastics, which is . . . ugly; they take away the pleasure and sweetness of touching.*

*It is very dangerous that wood is progressively disappearing from our lives. Wood is a material that is familiar and poetic; it gives a child a continuity of contact with a tree, a table, a floor. Wood does not cut, does not spoil, does not break easily, can last for a long time and live with the child. It can modify little by little the relationship between the objects which are timeless. Now toys are chemical and do not give pleasure. These toys break very soon and they do not have any future for the child.*

**FIRST RATTLES AND TOYS**

In every culture and throughout time, adults have noticed the attraction infants have to objects to grasp and play with. With these favorite toys, hung within his reach, or placed just within reach on his bed or mattress, the child becomes fully aware of his ability to reach out and touch or grasp, to create sound with rattles, to practice the important work he was meant to do. Provide a wide variety and change them often to keep the child happily busy.

Our role in creating the environment in which the child can fulfill his potential is very, very important.

**GIRALI**

Another good hanging rattle for the infant to bat and then grasp. At first the child will just be pleased with the rattle and clack of the colorful wooden balls, tubes and rings, but eventually be challenged to move the rings back and forth. The spheres at the corners are dark blue, the rods natural wood color, and the rings red, yellow, and green. It is 4.75 inches wide. Made in Germany.

**BR100 \$16.00**



**STERLING SILVER RATTLE & BAG**

Here is our most popular baby shower gift, and the most precious rattle we know of. Instead of giving an infant a silver cup as that very special first gift, we recommend giving him something beautiful and special to WORK with. This sterling silver rattle is made in the Southwestern United States by the creators of beautiful silver and turquoise jewelry.



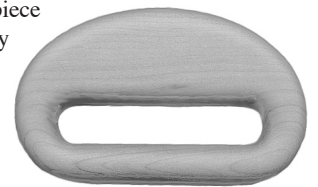
Each rattle is hand-etched with a different design on the ends. The tiny, tinkling, delicate sound it makes is very pleasing to the infant. The handle is the perfect size, two inches long, and just the right thickness for tiny hands. The total length of the rattle is three inches. The silver rattle comes in the loveliest bag we have at the time you order—either a silk brocade bag from India, or a handquilted zip bag made by the Hmong people of Southeast Asia. Authentic silver rattle made in the USA.

**BR06 \$53.00**

**TWO-HAND RATTLE**

This lovely rattle is one of our longtime favorites. It is large enough to be held by both hands at once and so gives the baby a chance to practice letting go while still holding on with the other hand. The hand-oiled wood grain makes it look like a piece of art. Starting with a single block of wood, this rattle is lovingly shaped, then carefully cut in half, filled with beads which make it rattle, and securely glued back together, even the grain of the wood exactly matching up. Finally it is sanded and rubbed with oil. It comes in a box and makes a beautiful baby gift. 4.5" x 2.5". Made in the USA.

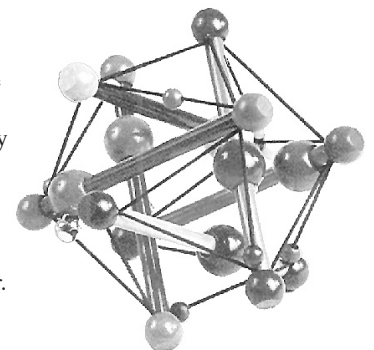
**BR18 \$21.00**



**SQUISH**

This exciting multidimensional toy can be hung above the child from the toy hanger at first, and then will inspire hours of exploration when the child learns to sit up and play with it. Infants are fascinated by the colored wooden rods and balls, the way the pieces can be moved, the balls sliding along the rods, and the stretchy cord that holds the toy together. *Squish* is an engaging toy, enjoyed by children of all ages and safe for infants. It is 6" in diameter. Safely made in China for a USA Company.

**BT04 \$17.50**



(\*) = new items