



EXPLORER BASKET – FRUIT & VEG

Materials you need:

- 1 Basket, shoebox or shallow tray.
- Easy to grasp vegetables & fruit— Bananas, apples, pear, carrot, broccoli and cherry tomatoes work well.
- Bowls, baskets, or boxes for filling and emptying.

Setup for play:

- Leave the skin on the fruits and vegetables you have chosen but wash well.
- Place in basket or box and sit down with baby and toddler to encourage exploration.
- You might talk about texture, colour, how to eat & cook, same, different. Allow them to pick up, touch, investigate and try to taste.
- Keep it simple, if you have babies not yet crawling place some of the fruit and vegetables on a tray in front of them for reaching toward.



What are they learning with this activity?

As the children touch and investigate the fruit and vegetables they are learning to:

- Use hand/eye coordination skills and concentration
- Use their senses to explore and choose natural materials
- Understand lifecycles and how food gets to our plates
- Broaden their understanding of the world
- Manipulate small objects using pincer movements
- Strengthen fine motor muscles, visual motor integration and control
- Use descriptive language to name everyday items
- Explore, infer, predict and problem solve
- Challenge their sense of touch and sensory processing

Extending the play:

- Juice some oranges with toddlers using old style hand juicers to get those fine motor muscles working.
- Match seeds to the fruit or vegetables you are using then add some soil to a milk carton that has been cut in half, plant seeds together, provide paints to decorate the 'pot' and then let children take them home.
- Walk around the vegetable garden with the toddlers and go on a hunt for 'red' things or ask them to find 4 small tomatoes or 3 green vegies.

Be imaginative with what you have in the garden at the moment!

