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**Connecticut's
Guidelines for the
Development of Early
Learning for
Infants and Toddlers**

Guidelines for the Development of Early Learning for Infants and Toddlers

Created for and funded by the Connecticut Department of Social Services

Under the auspices of the Zero to Three Infant Toddler Initiative

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Process

A workgroup of experts in the early childhood field was convened to provide assistance and guidance during the writing and reviewing process of Guidelines for the Development of Early Learning for Infants and Toddlers. Workgroup members reviewed numerous similar documents assessing content and format. This resulting document incorporates information gathered from many sources including :

- ❖ Head Start Programs Performance Standards and Guidelines, as well as standards and guidelines from other states;
- ❖ State programs such as Birth to Three and Parents As Teachers;
- ❖ Connecticut Department of Education Framework—Goals and Benchmarks;
- ❖ National Association for the Education of Young Children Guidelines;
- ❖ National Zero to Three;
- ❖ University of Connecticut Guidelines

The information in Connecticut's Guidelines for the Development of Early Learning for Infants and Toddlers is based on current research and best practices. The focus of Connecticut's Guidelines for the Development of Early Learning for Infants and Toddlers is to reach, inform, and support infant and toddler's primary caregivers, whether parents or childcare providers. The final draft will be reviewed during statewide forums by early childhood experts, as well as childcare providers and parents, prior to publication.

Early Learning Guidelines Workgroup

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Recommendations for the implementation of an integrated, developmentally appropriate and universally designed curriculum.

When planning activities and the set up of the child's environment (curriculum) it is essential to utilize a framework that is flexible, comprehensive, and linked to assessment and program evaluation activities.

A universally designed curriculum will ensure meaningful and successful access, participation and progress by all children and families regardless of need, ability or background. Daily partnerships between those serving young children, families and communities are essential.

The 1997 Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that all students (young children), regardless of disability, have access to the general curriculum, and to the opportunity to participate and make progress in that curriculum. An accessible curriculum means that all aspects of the curriculum (i.e., the goals, the content, the instructional methods, the assessments, and the materials) invite active participation of all children, in spite of disabilities or special needs.

Universally designed curriculum frameworks provide:

- Multiple means of representation. This principle ensures information is provided in various formats and at different levels of complexity, accommodating a range of ability levels and visual, auditory and kinesthetic needs.
- Multiple means of expression. This principle ensures children have a variety of formats for responding, demonstrating what they know and expressing themselves, and accommodating individual strengths, preferences, and abilities.
- Multiple means of engagement. This principle ensures various opportunities are present for arousing children's attention, curiosity, and motivation, accommodating a wide range of interests, preferences, and personal styles. Engagement is then maintained by providing various levels of scaffolding, repetition, and appropriate challenges to ensure successful learning.

As early care and education providers, your curriculum planning should be purposeful and embed learning opportunities that ensure children's broad outcomes and individually targeted behaviors are addressed during daily activities that in a manner that extends, modifies, or is integral to the activity in a meaningful way. (Pretti-Frontczak & Bricker, 2004).

Essential to assessment is the need for constant observation, documentation and interpretation of children's behavior. As early care and education providers, you need to determine which goals require specific support, what type of support children need to move toward that goal, and the circumstances under which support will be provided. Within every section of [Connecticut's Guidelines for the Development of Early Learning for Infants and Toddlers](#), you will find information and suggested activities that can support the development of a universally designed curriculum for infants and toddlers.

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Introduction

The early years of a child's life, beginning at birth, are learning years. During these years, the learning that takes place provides the foundation for all learning that follows. You—parent or primary caregiver—and the interaction you have with a baby are a vital part of this foundation. The caring, nurturing relationship you develop with a baby will have a lasting impact on a child's life.

In addition to rapid physical growth, a baby will be growing and developing in all other areas. Socially you will see the baby reaching out to others; emotionally the baby will be expressing feelings and learning to be comforted. Cognitively the baby will be figuring out how things and people work. The baby will develop new ways to communicate with you and the other significant people in the baby's life. It's important to remember that the skills the baby acquires in all of these areas, although acquired in a predictable pattern, are not achieved at the same time by all children. There is a RANGE of normal development. As you observe a baby, it's important to have an idea of what skills the baby is working on at each age. You will then be better able to support the baby's healthy growth and development. When you understand where the baby is in development, it will be easier for you to cheer the baby on and support the baby to take the next step. In a very real sense, you are a child's learning partner.

Like most caregivers, you probably have questions about how a child grows and develops. You want to know what you can do to encourage this development. That's what this manual is all about. It will help you understand what skills to look for as a baby grows and develops, how to interact with a baby and how to plan a supportive environment. This manual has been created to provide caregiving adults, whether you are the child's parent or caregiver, with important information and strategies to support infant and toddler growth and development—no matter what setting they are in.

The manual is organized into age ranges:

- ~ The child's first year is divided into 3 month segments, birth–3 months, 3–6 months, 6–9 months and 9–12 months. This is necessary in order to capture all of a baby's rapid growth and to highlight the important milestones that occur within the first year of life.
- ~ The child's next year is divided into two age ranges that are six months apart, 12–18 months and 18–24 months.
- ~ The focus then turns to the year between 2 and 3 years of age, when the rapid changes to physical growth begin to slow down.

Each age range is also divided into the four areas of infant and toddler growth and development: Personal and Social, Physical, Cognitive, and Language Development and Communication.

In each age range and area of development, you will find what to look for as a baby grows and develops. The sections are titled:

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See... a section which outlines her developments and the skills she is actively working on.

A Supportive Environment Includes... gives you information on how to provide an environment that supports her development.

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development... shows ways you can support a baby's development

Did You Know.....highlights current research or other facts that you might not be aware of.

At the end of each age range section you will find **suggested activities** that support healthy growth and development and a **close up look at interactions** between a parent or caregiver and the child being cared for.

Remember that good health and physical development also depend on a healthy diet of balanced meals and nutritious food, as well as adequate sleep, regular medical check-ups, immunizations, and dental care. For more information on meeting these needs, see **Caring for Connecticut's Children Volume 1**.

Guiding Principles

There are a number of principles on which the Guidelines for the Development of Early Learning for Infants and Toddlers are based and they are consistent with the principles outlined in The Connecticut Framework—Preschool Curricular Goals and Benchmarks and the State Board of Education Position Statement on Infants, Toddlers and their Families. The following are guiding principles:

- **Early learning and development are multidimensional and developmental domains or areas of development are highly interrelated.**

Development in one domain influences development in other domains. For example, children's language skills affect their ability to engage in social interactions. Therefore, developmental domains cannot be considered in isolation from each other. The dynamic interaction of all areas of development must be considered.

- **Young children are capable and competent.**

All children are capable of positive developmental outcomes. Therefore, there should be high expectations for all young children, regardless of their backgrounds and experience.

Infants and toddlers with disabilities should receive specialized, high quality intervention services and supports to meet their individual needs and ensure positive developmental outcomes.

- **There are individual differences in rates of development among children.**

Each child is unique in the rate of growth and the development of skills and competencies. Some children may have a developmental delay or disability that may require program staff members to adapt expectations of individual children or adapt experiences so that children can be successful in achieving a particular developmental outcome. Additionally, each child is raised in a cultural context that may affect the approach that the teacher uses with each child.

- **Young children learn through active exploration of their environment through child-initiated and adult-selected activities.**

The early childhood environment should provide opportunities for children to explore materials and engage in concrete activities, and to interact with peers and adults in order to construct their own understanding about the world around them. There should therefore be a balance of child-initiated and adult-initiated activities so as to maximize children's learning.

- **Knowledge of child growth and development is essential to providing quality educational experiences for children.**

Early care and education providers should have realistic expectations regarding child growth and development and agree on what they expect children to know and be able to do.

- **Families are the primary caregivers and educators of their young children.**

Early care and education providers should work collaboratively with families to ensure that children are provided optimal learning experiences. Programs must provide families with the information they need to support children's learning and development and create opportunities to learn about each family's expectations for their child, cultural differences, and values.

Families of infants and toddlers with special needs or developmental disabilities must be provided with information, resources and support in order to successfully advocate for their children.

Rethinking the Brain*

Old Thinking...

How a brain develops depends on the **genes** you are born with.

The **experiences** you have before age three have a **limited impact** on later development.

A **secure relationship** with a primary caregiver creates a favorable **context** for early development and learning.

Brain development is **linear**; the brain's capacity to learn and change grows steadily as an infant progresses toward adulthood.

A toddler's brain is much **less active** than the brain of a college student.

Rapid Early Development: These PET scans suggest that the brain of a one year old more closely resembles an adult's brain than a newborn's.

New Thinking...

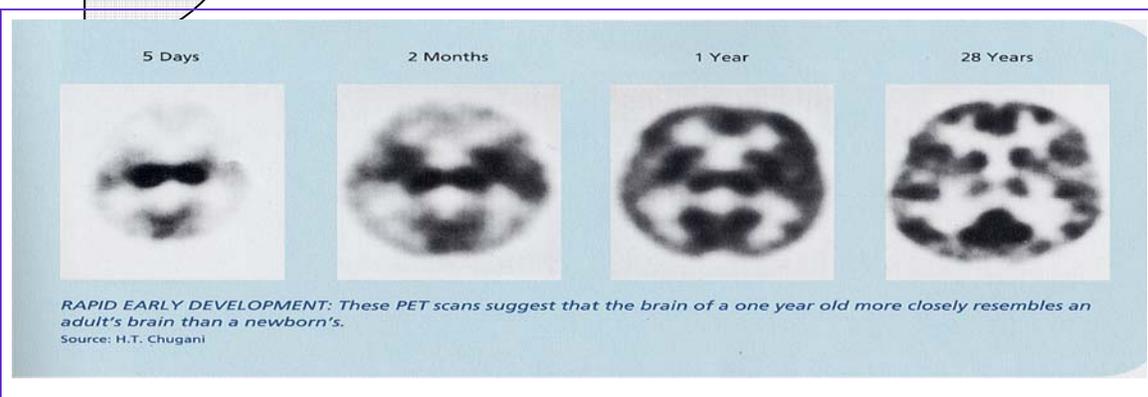
How a brain develops hinges on a complex **interplay** between the **genes** you're born with and the **experiences** you have.

Early **experiences** have a **decisive impact** on the architecture of the brain, and on the nature and extent of adult capacities.

Early **interactions** don't just create a context; they **directly affect** the way the brain is "**wired**."

Brain development is **non-linear**: there are prime times for acquiring different kinds of knowledge and skills.

By the time children reach age three, their brains are **twice as active** as those of adults. Activity levels drop during adolescence.



*The information on these two pages has been reproduced from Rethinking the Brain by Rima Shore, page 21. It is intended to set the stage for the information that follows and to support the healthy growth and development of all infants and toddlers.

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Starting With YOU

Whether you are a parent or an early childhood provider, **caring for a baby is one of the most important things you will ever do.** In order to do this to the best of your ability, it is important to take care of yourself as well. This means ensuring you are physically and emotionally healthy. Fathers, this means you, too.

Parents:

A baby counts on you to meet all her needs. While this time is most often an exciting and happy time, you may from time to time feel tired, frustrated or even sad with your inability to figure out what it is a baby needs and how to help soothe and comfort her. If feelings of sadness, frustration or fatigue persist for any length of time, it is important to talk to your doctor. This handbook includes a checklist of feelings to help you identify what you are feeling and assess whether you are experiencing mild blues, moderate blues or severe blues. It also suggests when to notify your health care provider and seek assistance.

Just as important as taking care of your emotional well being is taking care of yourself physically. Eating right, exercising, and getting adequate sleep are important so that you have the energy needed to care for your new little being who requires your attention around the clock. For those mothers who are breast feeding, it is important to remember that eating balanced meals is critical as you are the sole nourishment for your newborn.

As you are growing in your new parenting role, you may find it valuable and comforting to talk with and learn from other parents. Finding out about a parenting program or play groups where both you and your child can socialize with others may be of interest to you.

Early Childhood Providers:

During the hours when children are in your care you take on the responsibility of meeting each child's needs. The children rely on you as they rely on their parents to interpret their communications and provide the nurturing and support that matches that need. In addition you are responsible for communicating with parents, other teachers and center staff, and meeting many other expectations within your agency. The pressures from these demands can sometimes be overwhelming and frustrating. Caring for young children is a high-energy job and taking care of your emotional and physical needs is essential. Many of the suggestions mentioned above, such as eating right and getting plenty of sleep, are ways you can meet these needs. In addition, finding ways to relieve stress at work is important. Be sure to use the supports that are available to you such as your center director, educational, health or mental health consultants. Attend trainings that are offered and use them as opportunities to gain knowledge to support your practice as well as times to network with other early childhood professionals. Start a monthly meeting with other professionals outside of your agency to serve as a time to share strategies and resources for common issues and to support each other during challenging times. Finally, know when to ask for a break. Sometimes a few minutes away from the demands of the classroom or a social time outside of work can refresh you and have you ready to provide the best care possible.

Parents and professionals may find 2-1-1 Infoline is a valuable telephone resource of information regarding community services available to you. By calling 2-1-1 you can get connected to Child Care, Child Development (Birth to Three), Husky, and Care for Kids. You can also access the Infoline website on the internet at www.infoline.org. Some of the information and resources available to you include:

Counseling	Domestic Violence	Elder Care
Parent Education Programs	Legal Assistance	Disability Services
Health Care	Transportation	Emergency Shelter
Child Care Services	Basic Needs (food, shelter)	HIV/AIDS Testing
Substance abuse	Financial Assistance	Suicide Prevention
Crisis Intervention		Home Care

BIRTH TO 3 MONTHS

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**BIRTH
TO 3
MONTHS**

Personal and Social Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Social

A baby:

- may smile (reflexive at first)
- will smile at people who smile at her by the end of this period.
- begins to make eye contact
- watches and listens to people and things around him
- is soothed by your face
- observes people...the first sign of socialization.
- is comforted by being held and cuddled
- uses crying as a way to alert you to her needs.
- responds to being held—responds to sound and touch.

Infants communicate their feelings and needs **from the time they are born**. They use gestures, body movements, sounds and facial expressions. They use different cries to let you know they are tired, hungry or bored.

Feelings and Self-Awareness

A baby:

- shows satisfaction or dissatisfaction.
- may cry, avert face, or tense body when tired or over stimulated.
- does not yet differentiate himself from the world.
- may startle or cry out as a reflex action to sudden changes in bright lights or loud

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A lot of one on one time with you holding, cuddling, talking, singing, and rocking, etc.
- A baby will prefer faces, especially her caregivers, over all other stimulation—share in gazing back and forth with her.
- A safe and comfortable space for the baby separated from and out-of-reach of older infants or toddlers
- Musical toys
- Colored pictures at eye level
- Teething Rings
- Toys safe to suck on
- Squeeze toys to stimulate sucking, reaching, grasping
- A safe and secure environment where a baby's needs can be easily met – See [Caring for Connecticut's Children Volume 1](#) for specific information on promoting health and safety. This booklet is available on the Child Health and Development website



Personal and Social Development

BIRTH
TO 3
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Immediately respond to a baby's cries. As he becomes confident and develops trust that you will meet his needs, he will cry less.
- Put a baby in a safe spot where she can be part of family interaction but not be over stimulated.
- Call a baby by his name.
- Reinforce her emerging social behaviors by responding to her when she is alert.
- Respond to a baby's messages (efforts to communicate) and try to determine his real needs - remember that dissatisfaction is not always due to hunger.
- Always hold and engage in interaction with a baby when feeding her.
- Provide for adult-supported infant-to-infant contact when possible.
- Hold, cuddle, smile, talk to and laugh with the baby.
- Talk, sing and read to a baby frequently, especially during daily routines such as feeding and diaper changing.
- Tell him about everything that is going on around him. Note the sights and sounds he likes. These might be things that will help soothe him when he is in distress.
- Imitate and respond appropriately to a baby's sounds.
- Outwardly express your love, happiness and special bond to her.
- Carrying a baby around to different areas in the room and talking about what you both see increases his awareness of the environment.

Did You Know:



- Responding to an infant's cues (cries, gestures, facial expressions, etc...) makes her feel important and tells her she is a good communicator. This builds a positive sense of self and a desire to communicate more. (Healthy Minds)
- Infants can be helped to calm by rocking, patting, singing, swaddling, and letting them suck on hand or pacifier.
- **Babies need to become attached to at least one person who provides them with security and love. This first and most basic emotional attachment is the start for all human relationships.**

BIRTH TO 3 MONTHS

Physical Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Large Muscle Development

A baby:

- will lift her head briefly. Continue to provide support for her head while unsteady. A baby's primary task is head control.
- can turn head to clear nose for breathing and turns head toward sounds.
- most arm and leg movements are reflexive and are not under a baby's conscious control

Small Muscle Development

A baby:

- often clenches his hands.
- grasps objects placed in her hands due to reflexive action. By the end of this period, a baby will use her hands independently and purposefully to bat at and grasp objects.
- gazes at objects, especially faces and begins to coordinate eyes.
- brings objects to his mouth.
- follows moving objects with her eyes by 3 months and enjoys watching her own hands as she moves them through the air.
- receives comfort and satisfaction from sucking which has now become voluntary. Allow a baby to use his thumb, fist, or pacifier to meet these natural sucking needs.
- responds to sound (see language section) and touch. A newborn's sensitivity to touch is well developed at birth.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Avoidance of sudden noises, bright lights or changes in position at first. These can be very startling.
- Put the baby to sleep on his back to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Use a firm, tight-fitting mattress in his crib. Remove all soft items. Slats on crib or playpen must be 2 3/8 inches apart or less to prevent strangling. Never use a waterbed, sheepskin or pillow. Remove a hanging mobile once he can reach it with his hands. Always keep one hand on the baby when you are diapering him.
- A mat, rug, or blanket in safe space to lie unrestricted: room to move around
- Few toys are needed as environment is stimulating enough.
- Faces are interesting and so are bright colors and contrasting colors i.e. black and white.
- **Soft toys** that a baby can grasp work better than rattles or hard toys at this age because he cannot voluntarily let go of the toy and can bang himself in the face.
- Mobiles on the crib, musical toys, colored pictures at a baby's eye level
- Avoid leaving a baby in a swing or car seat for too long. This keeps her away from your much-needed loving touch.
- Holding, talking to or softly singing or humming to the baby while he is breast feeding (or bottle feeding) helps to create a warm, responsive and secure environment for him.

Physical Development

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Use observation to determine a baby's needs.
- Provide a feeling of security when necessary . Wrap the baby in a blanket and place him in a small enclosed space – your arms, a bouncy seat, crib. Swaddle a baby to help calm and comfort him.
- Provide peace and quiet and a minimal amount of stimulation – people familiar to a baby (parents, caregivers, other children) provide enough stimulation.
- Hold or place a baby 9–12 inches from your face; this helps keep you within her visual field.
- Don't worry if a baby's eyes wander independently or if he looks at you out of the corner of his eye in the early months. This is normal. (Brain Wonders)
- Hug and rock a baby in your arms. Gently stroke her head and skin. Remember to watch for cues about what kinds of touch and how much touch she likes. Be aware that babies do feel pain and will cry in response to it.
- By 2 months a baby enjoys looking at you – Be expressive, widen your eyes, move your mouth, slowly move your head from side to side so he can follow your face. (Brain Wonders) Encourage a baby to follow an object with her eyes, i.e. a stuffed animal –10 inches from her face.

Did You Know:

Baby's Amazing Reflexes (Growing Child, p. 4)

Reflex	Description	Disappearance
Walking/Stepping	When Baby is held upright under her arms, with her head supported, she will lift one foot after another in a walking/stepping motion, provided her feet are barely touching a flat surface.	2 months
Moro/Startle Reflex	While lying on her back, if Baby is startled by a loud noise, or if her head suddenly drops slightly, she will arch her back, hold back her head, extend her arms and legs and then draw them in toward her body.	2–3 months
Rooting	When Baby's cheek is stroked near the corner of her mouth, she will turn her head toward the touch, open her mouth and make sucking movements.	4 months
Palmar Grasp	When Baby's palm is stroked with a finger, she will immediately grasp the finger tightly.	4–6 months
Tonic Neck Reflex	When Baby's head is turned to one side while lying on her back, her body will assume a fencing posture, with one arm flexed and the other arm extended on the side toward which her head is facing.	5–7 months
Babinsky Reflex	When the sole of Baby's foot is stroked, her toes will first fan out, then curl inward.	8–12 months
Eye Blink	Baby immediately closes her eyelids whenever a bright light or a puff of air comes near her eyes.	Permanent

**BIRTH
TO 3
MONTHS**

Cognitive Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to see:

A baby:

- begins to coordinate eyes and follow object or faces as they move.
- responds to faces or objects he sees and gazes at faces.
- sucks and gums objects that come near her mouth.
- displays reflexes that are the beginnings of sensory skills, which in turn provide the basis for the development of intellectual skills.
- enjoys looking at black and white and high contrast colors.
- begins to bring his fist to his mouth—first sign of coordination of movements.
- begins to do more than one thing at a time (looking and hearing, seeing and sucking) by the end of this period.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A limited variety of soft, washable, colorful toys to look at or suck on (be sure there are no small parts to come off and be swallowed); these provide an interesting yet safe environment for a baby.
- Space for a baby to move freely - limit time in equipment that is restrictive to movement, i.e. swings, car seats - when he is not in the car
- Providing babies with opportunities to look at things in the world around them, including your warm smiling face, helps to create an environment that supports visual development. (Brain Wonders)
- Take a baby to different rooms—place her in different positions.
- High contrast colors and patterns like bull's eyes, stripes, and checkers
- A quilt or blanket of assorted colors and textures for a baby to lie on

Cognitive Development

BIRTH
TO 3
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Allow a baby the freedom to develop at his own rate.
- Give a baby faces to look at (especially that of the primary caregiver) and opportunities to see, touch and mouth objects.
- Provide a baby with time on her back so she can have a broader view of the world, both ears can hear, and she can use her hands.
- Pay attention to a baby's moods, and respond to his cries and sounds.
- Sharing books and stories as part of quiet cuddling time can be a great way for caregivers and babies to connect.
- Help a baby find her fist or thumb for comfort.
- Hold brightly colored objects within a baby's reach and encourage his batting, grasping and handling motions.

Did You Know:

- At birth, a baby's brain has all the cells it will ever need.
- Studies show that a nurturing touch actually helps many babies gain weight and develop healthy relationships with caregivers. (Brain Wonders)
- When you gently hold a baby in the warmth of your arms, you have the opportunity to support healthy development, not only through your touch, but also through your gazing into his eyes, talking or vocalizing. You may want to think of the actions that take place when you hold an infant as "sensory nourishment" or food for the brain. (Brain Wonders)
- Be aware that a baby's senses are the doors to her mind. Stimulation of all her senses will make a baby more aware of her surroundings and will allow her to make distinctions in her ever-expanding world. (Parents As Teachers)
- Brain development begins before birth. Amazingly it is in the process within a week of conception. While most of the newborn's brain cells are formed during the prenatal period, the brain is not completely developed at birth. Much of the connecting of neurons and strengthening of those connections takes place after birth. The way the brain cells connect and develop will be influenced by the newborn's experiences with child care providers and the environment. (Brain Wonders)

**BIRTH
TO 3
MONTHS**

Language Development and Communication

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A baby:

- listens – a baby can hear a variety of sounds and is amazingly interested in the speech sounds of language.
- will turn her head in the general direction of sounds heard.
- cries – for babies, crying is a way of communicating. It is how a baby lets you know what he needs. A baby cries to let you know he is hungry, upset, cold, bored, tired, uncomfortable, or over stimulated.
- responds to voices- newborns not only hear your voice, but show preference in listening to it by turning their heads in the direction of your voice.
- is sensitive to noise levels.
- begins cooing toward the end of this period.
- makes sounds with her saliva.

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A Supportive Environment Includes:

- You, the mother, father, or primary caregiver, are the most important aspect of the environment for infant language development.
- Fill a baby's environment with gentle conversation, soft music and other pleasant sounds.
- Also provide quiet times even during a baby's awake periods
- A variety of objects to hear, see, and feel; describe them as a baby observes or touches them.

Language Development and Communication

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Listen and respond to a baby. Enjoy the sounds she makes.
- Talk and sing to a baby. This helps him become familiar with your voice.
- Pretend a baby is telling you something when she coos and gurgles. Expand on what she “says,” and answer her “questions.” Respond by imitating her sounds. (Brain Wonders)
- Try to interpret a baby’s cries. Try to figure out what he is telling you.
- Your response tells a baby she is important and she can trust in you to meet her needs. Your repeated response and actions over time will help her learn ways to calm herself down. (Brain Wonders)
- Talk to a baby, especially during care giving times; tell him what is happening as it happens and what will happen; pause and give time for response.
- A baby may tell you that she needs to take a break from the “conversation” by looking away. Give her a break and then begin the “conversation” again.
- At this point a baby is most attracted to the sound, pitch and rhythm of your voice – the music of language. Softly sing to him.
- When you talk to a baby, get close to her and make eye contact. This helps her associate the sound of your voice with your face.

Did You Know:

- Before they are born, babies can hear the rhythms and tones of a mother’s and father’s voice.
- Studies show and caregivers report that even very young babies can recognize their caregiver’s voice. As early as the first few days of life, many newborns will turn toward the sound of a familiar caregiver’s voice.
- You CANNOT SPOIL A NEWBORN by holding touching, caressing, comforting and meeting her needs. In fact the best evidence says that babies who receive a lot of loving attention in these early months become more independent, resourceful, and less demanding toddlers. (Brain Wonders)
- **Feeding:** Newborns who are breast-fed receive antibodies from their mother’s milk. These antibodies help the newborn develop a stronger immune system, have less frequent ear infections, fewer allergies, and fewer respiratory and stomach illnesses. (Brain Wonders)
- A newborn has vision at birth, but it is the least mature of the senses. The newborn’s eyes can track or follow movement, but only within a distance from 9–12 inches from the infant’s face. The newborn’s eyes cannot focus as well as those of an adult. As a result, objects and people look a bit fuzzy during the first few months of life. (Brain Wonders)

BIRTH TO 3 MONTHS

Activities Such As This Support Healthy Growth and Development

Developing Trust

Feeling your touch, hearing your voice and enjoying the comfort of physical closeness all help a baby develop trust.

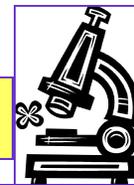
What You Need

Soft Music

What to Do

- Gently move a newborn's arm and legs. Or tickle her lightly under the chin or on the tummy. When she starts to control her head, lie on the floor with the baby on your stomach with her head on your chest. Let her reach for your nose or grab your hair. Talk to her and name each thing that she touches.
- Place a baby on your belly. Some research has shown that such contact releases chemicals called endorphins that help the baby feel comforted. In addition, such contact builds stomach and back muscle strength that is essential as he learns to crawl.
- Sing and cuddle with a baby. Hold her snuggled in your arms or lying face up on your lap with her head on your knees. Make sure the head of the newborn is well supported. Sing a favorite lullaby.
- Include happy rituals in a baby's schedule. For example, at bedtime, sing the same song every night, rock him or rub his tummy.
- Pick up a crying baby promptly. Try to figure out what is wrong. Is she hungry? Wet? Bored? Too hot? Crying is a baby's way of communicating. By comforting her, you send the message that language has a purpose and that someone wants to understand her.

Close-up



It's 10:00a.m. at Baby Loves Child Care, the older babies (crawlers) are having a snack and Jasmine is giving 8-week-old Aisha a bottle. She cuddles Aisha closely while sitting in the rocking chair. While Aisha is sucking on a bottle, Jasmine gazes at her and softly sings to her "You're such a lucky girl. Your mommy loves you so much. Jasmine loves you too. You were hungry." Jasmine pauses between sentences to let Aisha respond by gurgling. When Aisha starts getting fussy, Jasmine stops, raises Aisha to her shoulder, nestling Aisha's head against her neck, and gently burping her while continuing to talk to her.

During this feeding time with Jasmine, Aisha learns about: responding to being held and touched; comfort from another's voice as Jasmine cuddles her and speaks to her; making eye contact with Jasmine; developing trust that Jasmine will meet her needs in the future; communicating her needs to Jasmine; watching Jasmine's face for cues; and doing more than one thing at a time, but most importantly, Aisha learns that interactions with human beings are positive and pleasant and this will help her learn to approach interactions with peers and other adults in a positive way.

3 TO 6 MONTHS

DRAFT

3 TO 6 MONTHS

Personal and Social Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Social

A baby:

- begins to recognize you!!!!
- identifies and responds enthusiastically to your voice—may smile, vocalize and/or vigorously move her arms and legs.
- responds differently to different people.
- laughs and giggles.
- is becoming very interactive—may babble, then pause waiting for a response from you.
- wants to explore food and begin self feeding finger foods by six months.

Feelings and Self-Awareness

A baby:

- displays a wider variety of feelings and uses his voice to express them.
- coos and babbles in response to interaction and to express feelings.
- begins to realize hands and feet belong to her and begins to explore them, as well as her face, eyes, and mouth.
- is learning to fall asleep on his own.
- reacts when hearing her own name.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- **You** are the most important thing in a baby's environment right now.
- Make sure a baby sees your face and your expressions. He will be watching you. Make eye contact and smile a lot. This conveys to the baby your complete interest in him.
- Keep the environment natural. A baby will be interested in things we think of as ordinary. Remember a baby is new to this world and everything she is experiencing is new.
- Provide touch experiences for a baby. Place him on different surfaces such as a soft blanket, a rough blanket, or a cool mat. Watch for distress and end activity if baby expresses distress.
- Allow the baby to reach out and touch objects of different textures - sticky, smooth, bumpy, cold, etc.

Personal and Social Development

3 TO 6
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Responding quickly, warmly and attentively to a baby is of utmost importance as he is forming a critical attachment to you.
- Let the baby know she can count on you to meet her needs. Read the baby's cues and respond quickly to help comfort her when she cries.
- Hold a baby when he needs to be held. A baby may let you know he needs to be held by crying, fussing, reaching toward you or gazing toward you.
- When holding is not possible, reach out and touch the baby with your "eyes" and voice.
- Recognize, label, and respect a baby's feelings; talk about what she seems to be expressing.
- Watch for the kinds of touch the baby likes and dislikes. Does he smile and continue to touch or does he fuss and pull away? Stop experiences he seems to dislike.
- Engage in back and forth interactions frequently.
- Cooing, smiling, sticking your tongue out...this helps teach a baby about the back and forth of conversation.
- Delight in the baby's accomplishment—her actions and the sounds she makes.



Did You Know:

- A father's* presence in the life of his child is important. The **quality** of his interactions enhances the life of his child and other family members. Fathers help to shape the attitudes, values, and skills of his child and family that best support growth, development, and stability.

*or the presence of a significant male.

3 TO 6 MONTHS

Physical Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Large Muscle

A baby:

- begins to gain voluntary control of his arms and legs – is beginning to lose reflexive behaviors.
- is gaining stronger control of her head; beginning to control and lift her head when held in an upright position. A baby will gradually push up and arch her back while on her stomach by using arm muscles and moving her legs. She is strengthening the arm, leg, head, neck, and body muscles that will eventually help her roll over, sit and stand in an upright position for walking..
- reaches, grasps, and bats objects accurately.
- lifts his head and chest using forearms for support. He enjoys kicking and stretching arms and legs.
- may be able to roll over both ways and begin to sit with assistance by 4 to 6 months.
- Movement in a variety of directions provides the experience a baby needs to learn how to balance and gain control over her body. This includes moving side to side as when swaying; moving up and down as when bounced; and moving back and forth as when walking. All of these movements occur automatically when a baby is in your arms. (Brain Wonders)

Small Muscle

A baby:

- is reaching out for objects with his arms. He is more actively touching and exploring objects. Grasp reflex no longer takes over a baby's hands all the time.
- may swipe toward an object and miss.
- is getting better at scanning, following and focusing on objects in her environment. She can see in color, see more clearly and perceive depth and adjust to different distances.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A large secure/safe play area; large enough for you and the baby, free open space for him to roll, scoot, and wiggle his arms and legs.
- A variety of washable objects within reach of a baby for her to look at and reach out for. Encourage rolling or moving by placing an interesting toy close by.
- Rug, mat or soft surface (blanket) for the baby to lie on
- Only use a swing to truly help the baby calm down, and only when you are available to talk to him. Do not leave a baby unattended in a swing.
- Avoid placing the baby in restrictive equipment, car seats, swings, strap-in seats, jolly jumpers, walkers, and bouncers, etc. for too long.

Physical Development

3 TO 6
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Watch attentively – sit on floor with the baby often.
- Respond when the baby calls for you.
- Prop a baby up against pillows and let him strengthen his upper and lower body.
- Be careful not to distract her unnecessarily with noise or excessive talking.
- Allow a baby freedom to explore through looking, sucking, stretching and reaching. Allow him to move and develop his skills naturally.
- Delight in a baby's ability to move and explore her world in new ways.
- Sleep: Keep your routine as consistent as possible. Find out where the baby is most comfortable sleeping and be sure to provide it each time. Be sure the area is darkened and quiet. A baby should be put to sleep on his back, not on his stomach.
- Place a baby in different positions, back, stomach, and sitting with support. Each gives her a different view and chance to explore in different ways.

Did You Know:

- A baby's physical, cognitive, social and language development are closely intertwined (integrated). Without opportunities to use her body freely, she will not be able to learn about space, movement, and the effects her actions have on objects and people around her. (Parents As Teachers)
- If you notice any signs of stiffness or tight muscles, extreme floppiness, favoring of one arm, leg or body side, poor head control at 3 months, inability to roll over by 5 months or sit with support by six months, talk to your pediatrician or family doctor about it. (Brain Wonders)
- Holding a baby to stand will not make him walk faster or better.

3 TO 6 MONTHS

Cognitive Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A baby:

- explores everything with his mouth. Be sure toys are clean and items that a baby can choke on are out of reach. Avoid objects that are less than two inches in diameter, have small removable parts or sharp edges.
- responds to what she sees and pays attention to what she is viewing for longer periods of time. A baby is alert more of her awake time.
- looks from one object to another.
- is beginning to hold objects on his own and to manipulate them to some extent. A baby grasps items of interest and investigates them. It is through touch that he begins to be aware of the boundaries of his body.
- demonstrates signs of remembering.
- looks for the source when she hears a noise.
- looks and sucks at the same time but needs to stop sucking to listen.
- shows interest in back and forth imitation games.
- brings objects to his mouth to explore.
- anticipates comfort and stops crying when you approach.
- Babies use their whole bodies and their senses as they manipulate toys and other safe objects and engage in play alone, with a primary caregiver, and at times with or near other infants.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Objects of interest at this stage include: humans, other infants, bright toys, soft balls, rattles, squeeze toys.
- Rubber rings, soft dolls and soft books with pictures
- Inflatable toys with bells or colored balls inside for a baby to watch and kick
- A crib gym with a variety of objects attached encourages a baby to reach, bat, and kick.
- Offer a baby objects that can be grasped easily.
- Change a baby's environment by bringing her on a short shopping trip or to the park. Talk about what you both see.

Cognitive Development

3 TO 6
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Watch carefully to see what the baby is looking at. Observing what he finds interesting will help you know what you should provide for him and give you insight into his personal preferences.
- Engage in imitation games with a baby. For example, you say “baa” and wait for the baby to try to imitate the sound. She is learning to become a conversation partner through this play.
- Encourage exploration and natural curiosity by providing a variety of objects of different textures, shapes and sizes. Allow a baby opportunities to take the lead.
- Develop predictable routines, familiar songs and personal games.
- Encourage a baby to follow the slow movement of a toy with his eyes and to reach for it. Respond enthusiastically to the baby’s efforts.

Did You Know:

- When infants play, they engage in looking, listening, touching, tasting and moving with the objects and people in their environment. Play provides them with the experience of connecting what they see with what they hear, taste or touch. It helps infants develop sensory connections that provide input into the brain and influence their cognitive, physical, motor, social, and emotional development. (Brain Wonders)

3 TO 6 MONTHS

Language Development and Communication

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A baby:

- is beginning to listen attentively.
- coos, whimpers, gurgles and makes a variety of other sounds. Vowel and consonant sounds will be held longer and increase in quantity gradually transitioning to true babbling at around 5 months.
- listens intently to sounds he makes with his mouth.
- cries less often.
- “talks” to herself and others through these variety of sounds. You may begin to notice her making “raspberries” or bubbles. These are ways in which a baby experiments with new sounds and are important motor practice for later speech. Making these sounds is enjoyable for a baby. Go ahead and make them back to her.
- developing a sense of communication as you imitate the faces and sounds he/she is making.
- By 6 months of age, many babies will be repeatedly producing strings of one syllable at a time, such as “ba”, “ma”. Babies babbling will also mimic the tone of conversational speech—rising and falling in rhythm with their vocal expressions. They are becoming true conversational partners. For babbling to develop further, a baby must be able to hear the language that surrounds her. If a baby’s hearing is impaired (e.g., by ear infections) or deaf, her vocalizations will be delayed or even absent. (Brain Wonders)

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- YOU—you are still more important than any toy for language development.
- Some toys offer auditory stimulation, and allow infants to make various sounds with bells, rattles, and squeak toys.
- Play music at different times of the day and choose music carefully. Think about a variety of styles, rhythms, tempos and beats. Keep the volume low. A baby’s hearing can be damaged by loud noises and be sure not to provide music as continuous background noise.

Language Development and Communication

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Talk to a baby, especially during care giving routines, give him “warnings” of what’s to come – what going to happen next – what he is about to experience.
- Respond to cooing, babbling – encourage and support her vocalizations. Engage in back and forth vocalizations with her.
- Listen carefully and imitate the sounds he makes.
- This kind of reciprocal language play shows the baby that you hear her and allows her to experience the turn-taking that is an important part of developing language skills and communicating with others. (Brain Wonders)
- Recite nursery rhymes or sing songs to a baby while changing his diaper, rocking or feeding him. He especially enjoys the sound of your voice even if you do not consider yourself a good singer.

Did You Know:

- Even very young babies are able to focus and attend to pictures in a book, although they don’t know what the picture actually mean. This is a very first step in picture recognition, an important emergent literacy skill. (Brain Wonders)
- Why do babies chew on books? Babies learn about their world using all of their senses. Mouthing objects is a favorite way for them to explore. When a baby chews on a book, she is learning about the physical characteristics of books, an important early literacy skill.
- Research suggest a link between verbal intelligence and the number of words a baby hears in conversation with a partner in the first two years of life. While you do not want to talk constantly to your baby, you do want to be sensitive to his cues expressing desire to interact with you – gazing into your eyes, turning in the direction of your voice, or looking in your direction as you enter his view. These are all great opportunities to engage the baby in conversation.
- Talking to babies is critical for reinforcing the connection in their brains that allow them to perceive and produce the sounds of your language. (Brain Wonders)

3 TO 6 MONTHS

Activities Such As This Support Healthy Growth and Development

- To entertain a baby, sing an action song. For example:
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!
If you're happy and you know it and you really want to show it,
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!

If you don't know lullabies or rhymes, make up your own!
- Dance with a baby. To soothe the baby when he is upset, put his head on your shoulder and hum softly or listen to recorded music as you glide around the room. To amuse him when he is cheerful, try a bouncy tune.
- Talk to a baby often. Answer her coos and gurgles. Repeat the "ga-ga's" she makes and smile back. Sometimes, you can supply the language for her. For example, when the baby stretches her arm toward her bottle and says "ga-ga-ga", say, "Oh, you're ready for some more milk? Here's your milk. Is it good?"
- Lay a baby on his back and hold brightly colored toys over the baby's chest within his reach. He will love reaching up and pulling them close to him.
- Play with the baby in front of the mirror. Call the baby by her name, point to her facial features (eyes, ears, mouth, nose, hair) and name them.
- Gently tickle a baby and laugh together with him.

DRAFT

Close-up



Marsha's four-month-old son, Jared, loves his rattle. "Let's watch it fly," Marsha suggests. She moves the rattle through the air where Jared can see it. Jared's little arms and legs go like egg-beaters! When Marsha hands the toy to Jared, he grabs it and begins to mouth it. Jared then moves his hand back and forth and delights in the soft, tinkling noise. Soon Jared gets tired and turns his head away. Marsha takes the rattle and continues to shake it in front of Jared's face. Jared closes his eyes and begins to cry. "Okay, I get it. Time for a break," says Marsha. She picks up Jared and cuddles him.

During this playtime with mom, Jared learns about:

- **sounds of words** and the **rhythm of language** as his mom talks to him.
- **communication** as he and his mom engage in a back-and-forth "conversation" and as his mom reads and responds to his cues.
- **his own self-worth** as he sees how much pleasure his mom gets from playing with him.
- **imitation** and **cause and effect** when he shakes the rattle like mom and hears the noise.
- **hand-eye coordination** as he reaches and grasps the rattle
- **objects** when he hears the rattle's sounds, sees its colors, feels its texture, and even smells and tastes it.

6 TO 9 MONTHS

DRAFT

6 TO 9 MONTHS

Personal and Social Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Social

A baby:

- interacts enthusiastically with familiar people.
- may respond with fear or anxiety to strangers or unfamiliar people (even relatives that she has not spent much time with) – often called stranger anxiety.
- calls to you for help if stuck in a position he does not want to be in or if something he wants is out of reach.
- delights in imitating you and having you imitate her.
- enjoys games, like peek-a-boo, with others.
- enjoys affectionate games; he may reach out to touch your face.

Feelings and Self-Awareness

A baby:

- now displays an even wider variety of feelings.
- may seem to have quick mood changes.
- can see the difference between herself and rest of the world.
- responds to his name.
- demonstrates taste preferences.
- may show signs of wanting to feed self.
- is comforted by items such as a stuffed animal or a special blanket that help her to feel safe and secure.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

The baby's comfort toys (stuffed animal or blanket). These toys increase feelings of security during times of need. Be sure to provide them during periods of transition.

A large enough space for the baby, other children, and you. The environment should be set up in such a way to promote optimal exploration and interactions which promote the development of relationships.

- Provide a variety of surfaces—soft pillows, mats, blankets.
- Be sure area is free from safety hazards so the baby can move freely without being told “no” or “stop.”
- Toys on floor or in small buckets accessible so the baby can make choices
- A variety of toys, chewable, shakeable, soft, cause and effect to encourage development in many areas
- Stay within reach or eyesight so the baby knows you are there to help solve problems and meet needs.
- When possible, complete daily routines, such as folding laundry or preparing meals, within the baby's eyesight.

Personal and Social Development

6 TO 9
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Sensitive, responsive care giving builds feelings of trust and security in a baby.
- As you are talking to a baby during care giving routines, name her body parts.
- The baby will be giving signs that he wants to interact with you; take every opportunity you can to fully engage in interaction with him.
- Encourage and support a baby's self help skills, as she is able to take them on (feeding, pulling off socks, putting toys back in bucket, etc.)
- Provide security for a baby during periods in which he experiences stranger anxiety.
- Respond to the baby's increasing efforts to get your attention.
- Continue to frequently rock and cuddle the baby reassuring him of your love.
- Express your enthusiasm to a baby as she makes new discoveries or solves simple challenges by herself.

Did You Know:

- The most significant emotional milestone during the second 6 months of life (and perhaps in all of child development) is the onset of attachment: babies' powerful bond to the most significant person in their life. (Brain Wonders)
- Stranger anxiety is one way babies outwardly demonstrate attachment: once babies recognize and prefer their primary care giver(s), they become wary of adults who are not familiar. (Brain Wonders)

6 TO 9 MONTHS

Physical Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Large Muscle

A baby:

- has full control of her head.
- will try whatever mode of transportation he is capable of to get to where he wants to explore- rolling, scooting, dragging his body across the floor.
- rolls from back to stomach to back and stomach to back and may utilize rolling as a way to get from one place to another. A baby may almost curl her body to a sit position while rolling.
- may creep or inch forward or backward.
- appears focused on maneuvering body - exploring a great deal with body in space.
- begins to sit alone.
- begins to sleep through the night.
- may begin to pull to stand.
- delights in throwing, banging, or dropping objects over and over again.

Small Muscle

A baby:

- reaches with one arm and successfully grasps objects and anything of interest.
- holds objects and manipulates them with his/her hands.
- moves objects between hands.
- investigates objects.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- More open space and freedom to move a baby's body within the environment. Exercise helps strengthen muscles that are crucial for motor development.
- A variety of textures under the baby i.e.: hard floor, rugs, soft mats, grass, wooden deck, etc.
- A variety of safe and interesting objects to move toward and reach for.
- A sort of obstacle course with pillows or cushions that the baby can climb over, around and through
- Materials in containers that allow the baby opportunity to dump and fill over and over
- Opportunities for messy experiences. Many babies like to touch their food and explore with their fingers.
- Furniture safe for pulling to stand

Physical Development

6 TO 9
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Strategically place objects in the environment that challenge a baby to move and reach for them.
- Provide plenty of room and motivation for moving around, grasping, and manipulating objects.
- Provide for adult-supervised interaction with other infants and children.
- Avoid placing the baby in positions he cannot get into himself.
- Allow the baby to develop at her own pace.

Did You Know:

- Research indicates that infant walkers do not permit the right kind of practice for promoting the development of independent walking. Infants cannot see their feet. This kind of visual feedback appears to be important when the baby begins to take those first steps on her own. Another problem is that they do not help babies develop a sense of balance, which is one of the greatest hurdles to the onset of independent walking. (Brain Wonders)
- When infants are born, the areas of the brain that will eventually control and coordinate voluntary movements are not yet well developed. These motor areas of the brain mature in a head to toe sequence, meaning that brain areas that control movement of the head and neck muscles mature before those controlling arm and trunk muscles, which in turn mature more rapidly than areas controlling the legs. (Brain Wonders)

6 TO 9 MONTHS

Cognitive Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A baby:

- is alert during waking hours.
- recognizes familiar objects.
- sees, reaches for and manipulates objects.
- looks for dropped objects – developing object permanence, the understanding that an object exists even when out of sight.
- uses several senses at once.
- anticipates the effects of her actions.
- has a strengthened memory.
- experiments with trial and error.
- Is very curious and actively explores the environment—as a baby's mobility increases, he begins to seek and explore what he can see, hear, and feel. Exploration becomes noticeably more intense.
- understands a few words that are repeated often.
- begins to be aware that certain behaviors bring the same response (cause and effect).
- uses toys in more complex ways, moves from mouthing a small container to scooping and pouring.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A variety of objects to shake, rattle, bang, and drop such as stacking blocks or objects, pop-up toys
- Objects throughout the environment at various levels so a baby has a desire to move about and reach for them
- Safety should be a primary concern as a baby is becoming more and more mobile and her curiosity is at an all-time high. Avoid objects that are less than 2 inches in diameter, have small removable parts or sharp edges.
- Safety proof rooms—cover electrical outlets and remove objects that can be pulled down. See [Caring for Connecticut's Children Volume 1](#) for additional information on safety.

6 TO 9
MONTHS

Cognitive Development

How You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Allow a baby freedom to explore. Repeated exploration of objects helps a baby learn about her environment.
- Change or rearrange objects in the environment periodically – to keep a baby’s interest and curiosity peaked.
- Read simple board books that refer to objects that might not be in a baby’s immediate environment.
- Point to and name your body parts – such as eyes, nose, chin, mouth, eyebrows, ears, as well as the baby’s hand, foot, and knee.
- Continue to provide adult-supervised opportunity for interaction with other babies and children.
- Provide bath toys, such as containers, washcloths; show and talk to the baby about pouring, squeezing and floating.
- When playing with a baby, be sure to pause and give him time to “take in” the experience to process (learn) what just happened.

Did You Know:

- Babies begin to understand how the world works when they see, touch, hold and shake things. Inspecting things also helps them to coordinate and strengthen their hand muscles.
- A baby’s brain is now 50% of its adult size.
- As a baby begins to see that she can make things happen, e.g. push a button and a toy pops up, she builds her self confidence and wants to try new things.

6 TO 9 MONTHS

Language Development and Communication

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A baby:

- responds to different voice tones and inflections.
- imitates tones and inflections.
- enjoys short songs and games with repetitive patterns such as peek a boo and pat-a-cake.
- has gained more control over sounds she produces.
- is greatly increasing his repertoire of sounds to express feelings.
- is beginning to link sounds of words with their meaning.
- continues to communicate primarily through her actions.
- begins to look for objects you name.
- listens closely to the sounds in his environment.
- understands a few words that she hears often, such as mommy, daddy, baby, bye-bye.
- can vocalize simple syllables "ba" "pa" "da" "ma".
- begins to babble "ma ma ma," "ba ba".

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Cloth or cardboard books, flap books and texture books with simple pictures.
- Plenty of toys to explore that make different sounds—musical stuffed toys, objects that rattle, squeak toys
- Be sure reading together with you is part of the baby's daily routine. Before naps and bedtimes are good times to cuddle and read a book together.
- Allow the baby to touch and even take the book from you for a few moments, gently encourage refocusing on a page you have not yet read.

6 TO 9
MONTHS

Language Development and Communication

How You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Respond to a baby's communication.
- Continue to talk often to the baby. Be sure to give him plenty of time to respond to you with his own babbling.
- During play times, comment on what the baby is doing; be careful not to interrupt her experience.
- Read - Read - Read during times when a baby is relaxed and both of you can enjoy the experience. Don't worry if he doesn't make it through the whole book. If it becomes a favorite, you will have many opportunities to read it over and over at his request.

Did You Know:

- Children communicate in many different ways. Gestures such as pointing, looking, vocalizing, and crying are all messages that a baby is sending about what she wants or needs. As a baby develops, she will begin to learn that symbols- like words and pictures - are ways to communicate too. This is an important learning leap in language and literacy development. (Brain Wonders)
- Babies begin to understand how the world works when they see, touch, hold, and shake things. Inspecting things also helps them to coordinate and strengthen their hand muscles.

6 TO 9 MONTHS

Activities Such As This Support Healthy Growth and Development

Touch and See!

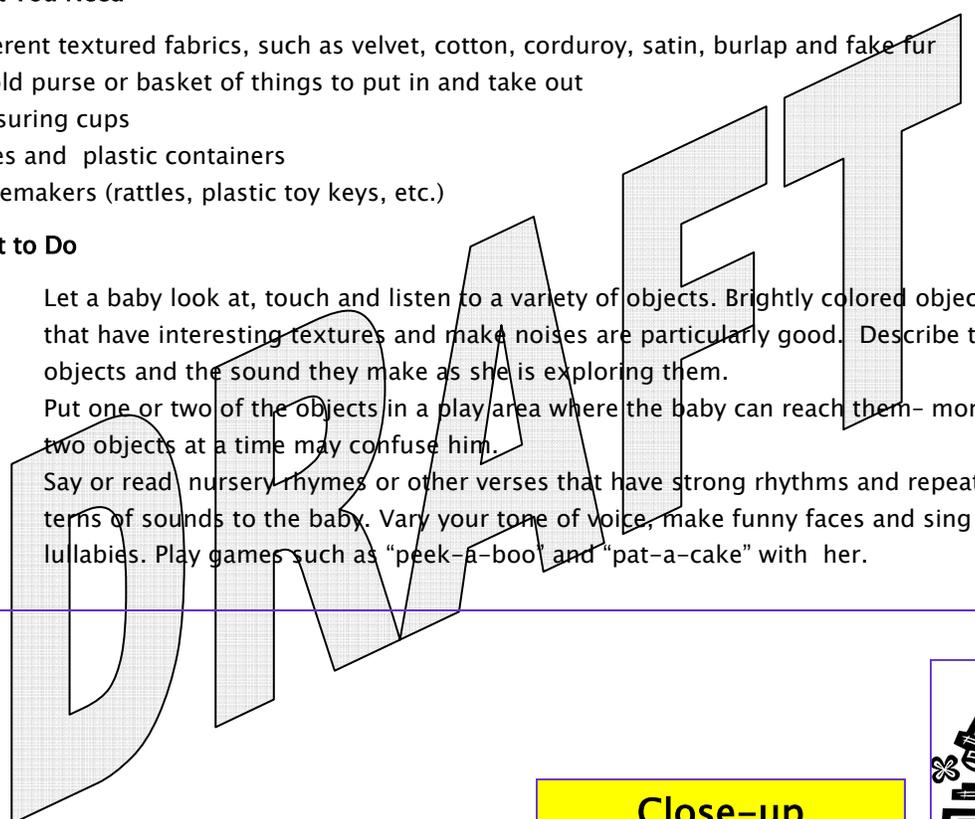
Whenever they are awake, babies are hard at work, trying to learn all about the world. To help them learn, they need many different things to play with and inspect. Objects around your home offer many possibilities.

What You Need

Different textured fabrics, such as velvet, cotton, corduroy, satin, burlap and fake fur
An old purse or basket of things to put in and take out
Measuring cups
Boxes and plastic containers
Noisemakers (rattles, plastic toy keys, etc.)

What to Do

- Let a baby look at, touch and listen to a variety of objects. Brightly colored objects that have interesting textures and make noises are particularly good. Describe the objects and the sound they make as she is exploring them.
- Put one or two of the objects in a play area where the baby can reach them—more than two objects at a time may confuse him.
- Say or read nursery rhymes or other verses that have strong rhythms and repeated patterns of sounds to the baby. Vary your tone of voice, make funny faces and sing lullabies. Play games such as “peek-a-boo” and “pat-a-cake” with her.



Close-up



Mark is playing on the floor with two 7-month-olds, Noah and Cameron, rolling a colorful, bumpy ball back and forth. Mark sits with his legs apart and the babies are sitting within 3 feet, facing him. Mark is careful to roll the ball slowly to Noah, giving him a chance to pick it up and turn it over in his hands. As Noah turns it over, it slips from his hands and rolls toward Mark. Mark smiles and says “Yah, Noah!” and claps his hands. Noah tries to clap his hands and grins. Mark rolls the ball again. During this playtime, Noah learns: imitation (when he tries to copy Mark’s clapping); dropping an object; sitting alone; manipulating and investigating objects; interacting with others and enjoying games; using several senses at once; that certain behaviors bring the same response (cause and effect); and that people respond to his communication.

9 TO 12 MONTHS

DRAFT

9 TO 12 MONTHS

Personal and Social Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Social

A baby:

- enjoys performing for you, teasing, and imitating you and doing silly things to make you laugh.
- shows interest in interactive games (peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake).
- initiates interactions with other children and adults—enjoys companionship.
- is becoming sensitive and interested in the moods and activities of others.
- plays next to other children—parallel play.
- anticipates routine events.
- closely studies the actions of adults and other children.

Feelings and Self-Awareness

A baby:

- is attached to his primary caregiver – shows signs of preference for this person over others.
- may fear separation and strongly protest your leaving.
- expresses affection and anger to you and others special in her life.
- rejects things he does not want – pushes them away, throws them, swats them out of the way.
- interacts with her mirror image.
- may become frustrated or angry with toys that are not doing what it is he wants them to do.
- is developing self-help skills. She finger feeds self and drinks from cup holding handle.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Appropriate materials to encourage a wide range of self help skills such as: dress up clothes and hats, a waste basket that the baby can reach to help clean up after meals or small messes, pretend telephone, laundry basket to put clothes in
- Opportunities to interact with other children
- Pillows and sofa cushions on the floor to climb over
- Baby doll, blanket, bottle
- Unbreakable mirrors
- Large cardboard blocks that resemble bricks
- Plastic dishes and cups

Personal and Emotional Development

9 TO 12
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Provide enough routine in the day so that the baby can anticipate the sequence of events.
- Allow a baby opportunities for uninterrupted play.
- Encourage a baby's problem solving – do not immediately rush in with assistance unless he is really stuck (**unless, of course, it is a safety issue**).
- Allow a baby to discover the consequences of her behavior whenever it is safe to do so.
- With a baby's increased memory skills, he knows that you exist when you are not with him. He may cry out for you at night or protest your leaving the room. Be positive when leaving him and be sure Baby has something that gives him comfort (blanket or toy). Remind the baby that you will return.
- Allow time and space for a baby to find her own solutions to challenges she faces, but be available when she becomes overly frustrated or angry.
- Respond with enthusiasm to feelings of pride in a baby's accomplishments and his desire to share affection with you. When he acts frustrated or annoyed, respond with patience and sensitivity.
- Help a baby handle her feelings. Comfort her when she cries, acknowledge when she is frustrated, and help her to calm down and try again. Label the baby's feelings for her, "You seem angry." Your support will help her learn to manage the strong feelings she is experiencing and develop self awareness and self control.

Did You Know:

- It's not too soon to help a baby develop some independence. You can encourage independence by letting a baby do things for herself. Whatever she's trying to do, if she has a reasonable chance of doing it herself, let her try. Praise her for trying. (Growing Child, Inc., p. 70)

9 TO 12
MONTHS

Physical Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Large Muscle

A baby:

- crawls on hands and knees.
- crawls carrying object in hand or mouth.
- pulls up to stand. Soon he will be able to lower himself to a sitting position .
- stands alone. She may not be able to get down from standing easily.
- can get into a sitting position on his own.
- may move along holding onto furniture – side stepping.
- moves about freely in her environment by crawling, cruising (side stepping around furniture) or walking with assistance or alone.
- continues to experiment and discover effects he can have on toys, shaking, pushing, dropping, throwing, banging.
- can throw a ball.

Small Muscle

A baby:

- can pick up small objects easily with thumb and forefinger (pincer grasp).
- explores and manipulates with forefinger.
- is strengthening eye-hand coordination.
- uses her forefinger to point.
- turns pages in a stiff cardboard book.
- can make marks with jumbo crayons.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A baby needs even **more room to explore**—safety proof the environment so that as he moves and explores, he will not get hurt.
- **An even greater variety of objects**, textures, experiences and toys: plastic or wooden cars/trucks, play/real telephones, blocks, dolls, balls, nesting toys, manipulatives, pop beads, puzzles, etc.
- Pillows to crawl over, soft mats of different thickness, rails or low furniture for standing or cruising and low steps to provide a variety of levels for exploration
- Sturdy surfaces to pull up and balance on.
- Opportunities to practice walking (with your support if needed) on safe surfaces—carpet or grass.

9 TO 12
MONTHS

Physical Development

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- If the baby can pull himself up to stand but is having difficulty getting back down, encourage him to problem solve how to get down and provide help if he indicates he is stuck and frustrated.
- Provide open spaces and safe climbing opportunities which allow a baby to explore with little adult interference.
- Encourage a baby's manipulative skills, such as pulling off socks, opening doors, taking apart nesting toys.
- Provide bite size pieces of food that a baby can easily pick up and eat. Be sure to include her with the rest of the family at mealtimes as she enjoys being with you and imitating you.

Did You Know:

- Dropping is an exciting new skill for a baby this age. At playtime, show the baby how you can drop toys one by one into a shoe box. Then take them out again. Give him a chance to fill and empty the box by dropping toys into it and then taking them out. She is very interested in toys and other objects when they are dropped or thrown! (Growing Child, Inc., p. 55)
- Baby can use both hands but may show a preference for the left or the right. However, permanent hand preference is usually not established for another year or more. (Growing Child, Inc., p. 67)

9 TO 12 MONTHS

Cognitive Development

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A baby:

- now remembers games and toys from previous experiences.
- anticipates people's return.
- can concentrate on a task for longer periods of time without interruption or distraction.
- will uncover or search for a toy she has seen hidden. She remembers the location of toys she has hidden.
- enjoys dumping and refilling containers.
- can solve simple manipulative challenges (shape sorters).
- is becoming interested in discovering the consequences of his behaviors.
- understands 10–15 frequently used words.
- practices actions over and over again. This is how she figures out how things work.
- is beginning to use objects symbolically.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- The same toys listed under physical development support intellectual development.
- Interesting and safe objects from his real world to explore i.e. pots, pans, wooden spoons, various sized boxes, shape sorters, etc.
- A cardboard box filled with materials to feel: tape, felt, sandpaper, velvet
- Safe toys with interesting details and moving parts: pull toys, jack-in-the-box, objects with dials, levers, buttons, flaps

Cognitive Development

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

Provide opportunity and experiences for a baby to become self-assertive.

Help the baby interpret and label the effect of his actions on others, i.e. "John is sad because you took his ball."

Continue to provide opportunity to strengthen self-help skills.

Help a baby express separation fears, label her feelings, and provide her comfort.

Be an active participant in helping the baby develop attachment to you.

Model the expression of feelings, desires, likes, and dislikes, neither minimized or exaggerated.

Play hide and seek games. The baby can learn that you or objects still exist even though he cannot see them.

Encourage and praise the baby when she concentrates on and persists at a challenging task.

Did You Know:

A baby now knows that objects are permanent and look different in different settings. (Growing Child, Inc., p. 68)

The baby is now developing a sense of Cause and Effect. (Growing Child, Inc., p. 68)

Small frustrations are okay and important in building problem solving skills and later in handling greater frustration.

9 TO 12 MONTHS

Language Development and Communication

As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A baby:

- shows interest in the conversations of others.
- responds to names of familiar objects.
- can carry out simple requests. Make simple requests of him... "Give me your book" or "Wave bye-bye."
- uses words such as "mama" and "dada" and engages in private conversations.
- uses intonations in her vocalizations. She jabbars expressively and enjoys "talking" to herself in the mirror.
- enjoys repeating sequences of sounds. He shouts and yells for pure delight.
- is beginning to understand your words. For example, when asked "Where's the ball?" she will respond by looking for it.
- is developing an understanding of what others are saying (receptive language) before he can actually say the words himself.
- intentionally uses gestures and/or vocalizations to communicate in order to regulate the behavior of others and to engage in social interaction.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Picture books, photographs or photo albums
- Music
- A language rich environment, including songs, finger plays, stories, flannel board activities, dancing, games, rhymes, poems.
- Mirrors—provide the opportunity for a baby to see and "talk" to herself in the mirror.

Language Development and Communication

9 TO 12
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Invite a baby to participate in conversations.
- Be careful not to discuss the baby in his presence without including him in the conversation.
- Provide opportunity and encourage interaction with other infants/siblings and older children.
- Continue to respond to a baby's vocalization and attempts at conversing with you.
- Ask questions a baby can respond to either by shaking or nodding her head or with words - "yes," "no"
- Name objects that the baby points to. Also, point to and name objects for him as he explores his environment both indoors and outdoors. Call his attention to interesting sights, sounds, tastes, odors, and textures.

Did You Know:

- From the very beginning, babies try to imitate sounds that they hear us make. They "read" the looks on our faces and our movements. Talking, singing, smiling and gesturing to a baby helps her to love—and learn to use—language.
- Fathers should make an extra effort to read to their children. Many fathers would rather play catch in the driveway with their sons than take them to the library. It is not by chance that most of the students in U.S. remedial-reading classes are boys. A father's involvement with books and reading can do much to elevate books to at least the same status as sports in a boy's estimation. (The Nurturing Father's Program)

9 TO 12 MONTHS

Activities Such As This Support Healthy Growth and Develop-

Baby Talk

Babies love hearing the voices of the people in their lives.

Materials You Need

No material required

What to Do

- Touch a baby's nose, ears, eyebrows, mouth, etc... and repeat the word for this body part several times. Do this with objects too. When a baby hears you name some thing over and over again, she begins to connect the sound with what it means.
- Point to and name familiar objects. By hearing an object over and over, a baby learns to associate the spoken word with its meaning. For example, "Here's your blanket. Your very favorite blanket. What a nice soft blanket!"
- Look at books together and name objects that he points to in the book
- Show the baby pictures of animals and make the sounds they make. Encourage the baby to imitate you: "The cow says...moo!" "Can you say...moo?"
- Cut a large opening in a large cardboard box. Let a baby crawl into it and play.
- Children enjoy quiet times and places where they can be alone. The baby may go to his special place himself when he wants to be alone.

Close-up



Brandon is reading with his one year old daughter, Keisha, before putting her to bed. The book is Ten, Nine, Eight by Molly Bang—a favorite because it is a simple story with pictures of familiar routines and objects. As she sits in his lap, Keisha helps turn the pages of the sturdy board book... Brandon reads, "10 small toes all washed and warm" and asks her, "Where are your toes?" She smiles and points to her feet. He says, "Here are Keisha's toes," and lightly squeezes each toe as he counts "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10." She squeals with delight. Keisha turns the page to "9 soft friends in a quiet room" and looks at the picture, pointing to the toys and making sounds. Brandon repeats after her, naming each stuffed animal and toy. He says, "Oh look, there's a kitty curled up in the toys—can you find the kitty?" She points to the cat and says "keel!" then claps her hands, laughing. He says, "You found the kitty. It's a black kitty with yellow eyes." They continue through the short book, with Keisha turning the page each time she is ready to move on. As Brandon speaks more and more quietly, they end with "1 big girl all ready for bed." Keisha is learning: page turning left to right, identification of body parts, one on one correspondence, counting, labeling, *great give and take of conversation/language.*

12 TO 18 MONTHS

DRAFT

12 TO 18
MONTHS

Personal and Social Development

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Social

A toddler:

- can follow one and two step directions.
- seeks your approval but is not always co-operative.
- will show you when she needs your help.
- will prefer you and rely on you to provide comfort, reassurance, assistance and affection.
- shows a sense of humor.
- labels his own emotions and the emotions of others.
- prefers to play alongside other children

Feelings and Self-awareness

A toddler:

- displays a wide variety of emotions and responds to the emotions of others (may cry when others cry).
- focuses on himself—declares objects as “mine.”
- continues to fear strangers and often new and unfamiliar places.
- shows affection to a wider circle of familiar people.
- doesn't hesitate to make clear her preferences and moods – that are going to be her own and different from yours.
- is beginning to realize the difference between his possessions and others.
- experiences increased frustration as she continues to develop language skills and often has difficulty verbally expressing her needs, desires and emotions.
- expresses or demonstrates a strong will and will test limits and strive for independence.
- shows interest in doing things for himself, including dressing and feeding.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- An environment rich with opportunity for a toddler to experiment with her self-help skills...taking off clothes, washing hands, putting her clothes in a drawer, etc.
- Opportunities for him to be around other children of similar age. A toddler will enjoy the companionship of playing alongside other children.
- Comfort, then assistance, to move on when the toddler expresses frustration
- Whenever possible, modify the environment to reduce frustration, e.g. do not leave materials that she should not have with a child's reach.

Personal and Social Development

12 TO 18
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Support a toddler's efforts to do things for herself.
- Acknowledge a toddler's possessions and help him negotiate with others.
- Set reasonable limits.
- Know that uncooperative behavior is often a sign of self assertion.
- Give choices whenever possible.... "Do you want to wear the blue shirt or the red one?"
- Recognize and acknowledge a toddler's fears, hesitations, and uncertainty in new situations. Provide assurance.
- With a new found desire to do things for herself, you may see a toddler experiencing higher levels of frustration.
- Offer tools for a toddler to use in frustrating situations – such as words to help describe his feelings, gestures, or ways to ask for help.
- State clear consequences for actions "If you swing the bat at John, I will take it away." Provide an environment rich with opportunity for a toddler to experiment with her self-help skills...taking off clothes, washing hands, putting her clothes in a drawer, etc.
- A regular, consistent schedule
- A warning when activities will change or end or something needs to be done to the toddler, such as a diaper change

Did You Know:

- Toddlers often have difficulty controlling impulses such as the desire to bite, hit or scream. Toddlers can sometimes restrain themselves when told "no" (although they will also want to test you), but it is especially difficult for them to control themselves when they are tired, hungry, or upset. By observing a toddler, it may be possible to identify the sign of a frustrating situation before it occurs or gets out of hand. When a toddler is overtired, she may need to be invited to a quiet area, or redirected with a song or movement game. (Brain Wonders)
- If a tantrum cannot be avoided, it's important for you, as a caregiver, to know how to handle the situation effectively. Negative behavior is normal and healthy in a toddler during the second year. Try to understand the reason for the behavior, i.e. the toddler is trying to establish individuality and independence. Remaining calm but firm is not only best for the toddler, but also for you. If you become increasingly angry and demand compliance, you become a role model for additional negative behavior on the toddler's part. Redirecting the toddler's attention to a pleasant activity may diffuse the situation and is far more effective than scolding. (Growing Child, p. 105)
- Experiencing frustration/tantrums is an important developmental process for toddlers in learning how to cope with and get through difficult situations. Allowing toddlers to express those strong feelings while they are learning other ways to manage those feelings is a necessary part of development.

**12 TO 18
MONTHS**

Physical Development

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Large Muscle

A toddler:

- stands without support. She may take steps by herself but still prefers to crawl as a faster mode of transportation.
- lifts his knees high and steps down with the front part of his foot hitting the ground first. His walking at first appears clumsy. As a toddler approaches his 2nd birthday, he begins to step more smoothly with a heel to toe movement.
- is now able to more easily maneuver around obstacles in her environment. Walking becomes more coordinated.
- can climb up and down stairs. This is also a time when a toddler might try climbing out of his crib.
- runs, propels herself on riding toys, throws objects, kicks, hops on two feet, expresses herself through dance.

Small Muscle

A toddler:

- may use both hands at the same time for two different purposes and shows preference for one hand over the other.
- may undress himself or untie shoes - this is a good time to encourage self help skills.
- shows interest in exploring sensory materials and uses art materials.
- feeds herself finger foods, drinks from covered then uncovered cup, and washes her own hands.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Continued need for large open spaces to explore both indoors and outdoors free of objects with sharp edges for him to crawl and to practice walking
- Provide many opportunities to practice walking and maneuvering around obstacles, such as large pieces of furniture, in the environment.
- The environment should provide objects that can be manipulated in various ways, explored safely with a young toddler's whole body and carried around while walking.
- Provide opportunity to carry, dump, climb and push- pull objects such as toy shopping carts, doll strollers, or small wagons, and riding toys.
- Provide plenty of safe low places for climbing under, over, inside of, on top of, and around.

Physical Development

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Provide an environment that is safe to maneuver around in.
- Support a toddler in her efforts to walk, but be careful not to push her to walk, allowing her to develop at her own pace and in her own time. Fluctuating between walking and crawling is normal.
- Place favorite toys in different areas of the room and ask a young toddler to bring them back to you.

Did You Know:

- Toilet training is a learning process which includes three basic skills necessary for success. First is **muscle control**. A toddler must be able to control his sphincter muscles to hold and let go of bowel and bladder contents. Second is **communication**. A toddler must be able to understand what it is you want him to do and to communicate with you—by word or action—when he wants to use the toilet. Third is **desire**. A toddler must want to be trained. He may want to please you, to be like his friends, or he may simply prefer to be clean. Bladder and bowel control are developmental behaviors. There are wide variations in the age at which a toddler reaches the appropriate stage of development. Generally, the later training begins, the less time it takes. However, the concept of “readiness” is central. How will you know he is ready? He may indicate readiness by: being regular in bowel movements, staying dry for an hour or two in the daytime and waking up dry from naps, complaining when wet or soiled and generally liking to be clean and tidy, being aware the urine and feces come from his body, wanting to imitate adults and be grown up, telling you when he has had or is having a bowel movement, and pausing and making sounds or grimaces when having a bowel movement. You can respond and promote successful toilet training by being calm and patient, having a matter-of-fact attitude, by clearly telling the toddler what is expected of him, by accepting **gradual** successes, by praising and encouraging his successes, and by understanding his failures. Casual responses to failures indicate that you have confidence in him to do better next time. Note that the age at which a toddler starts toilet training and the progress he makes is not an indication of the toddler’s other developmental achievements. (Growing Child, p. 107)

12 TO 18 MONTHS

Cognitive Development

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A toddler:

- finds hidden objects – will go on a search if you ask him to.
- has increased memory.
- can solve a problem–explores new approaches to problems.
- often (not always) thinks about actions before acting.
- imitates others who are not present. By 12 months the brain has matured enough that it is possible for toddlers to recall actions and events that occurred a few hours or even a day earlier. Within the 12–18 month range, this ability to recall another person's earlier action and repeat it some time later becomes well established.
- has the potential to learn from what she has seen others do. You may demonstrate the use of a particular toy such as banging on a musical instrument or placing a peg in a hole. While the toddler may not repeat the action immediately, she may display it in some form at a later time in the day or week. **(Brain Wonders)**
- As toddlers become more and more familiar with stories, they remember sequence and details. Delight in their excitement over being able to predict what comes next. Do not be surprised if a toddler becomes upset when you try to skip pages in his favorite book.
- She is beginning to explore role playing and props in pretend play.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Toddlers enjoy the toys and household objects listed in sections pertaining to babies, but can use them in much more sophisticated ways.
- Large beads to string, large Lego blocks, small building blocks, stacking cones, wooden blocks, nesting toys, puzzles, dolls, dress up cloths (hats, pocketbook), cooking utensils, pots and pans
- Push–pull toys
- Provide opportunities to engage in play with interesting and challenging materials – objects that encourage manipulation, interaction and the need to figure something out – such as blocks, puzzles, water and sand play and plenty of props for pretend play.
- Rotate toys periodically. A toy he hasn't seen in a while cannot only spark new interest, but also exploration in new and complex ways.

Cognitive Development

12 TO 18
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Promote active problem solving by expressing an interest and following a toddler's lead in play and activities.
- Allow yourself to be a safe or secure base from which a toddler can explore. You are there to encourage her independent exploration, as well as to provide comfort and emotional refueling when needed. She has come to count on your trusting relationship for emotional support.
- Continue to provide for interaction with other toddlers.
- Set up his environment so that he can see new and more complex ways to use toys and equipment.
- Be open to her new ways of exploring her world, i.e. stacking pillows, using puzzle pieces as cars, etc.
- Allow a toddler to make limited choices — an apple or banana for snack, crayons or markers to color with, etc.
- Allow a toddler to make mistakes as he is exploring and manipulating objects. These are learning experiences too!
- Continue talking with a toddler. This not only supports her developing communication and thinking skills, but also her sense of self. Through practice she becomes aware of the power of language to both gather information and communicate her needs. (Brain Wonders)

Did You Know:

- Around 12 months of age toddlers begin to think in more complex ways. They will spend time using objects as tools. For example, if you give them a stick, they will use it to try to get an out-of-reach toy. Toddlers are aware that if they pull on a string the attached toy will come along which makes pull toys very popular at this age. Toddlers will also begin to experiment with objects to see what they can do. For example they will throw a ball to the ground and see that it bounces then throw a doll to see what it will do. (Brain Wonders)

12 TO 18 MONTHS

Language Development and Communication

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A toddler:

- has made the connection that words stand for objects.
- makes sounds very similar to those he has the most experience with (sound and intonation) even though you might not understand the words.
- may say her first words which usually involve the name of a person, object or action. They may include “hi” “bye” or “no.”
- may say two to eight words. Remember receptive language (the ability to understand what others are saying) develops before expressive language (the toddler’s ability to speak words).
- uses non-verbal signs that he understands what you are saying, such as pointing or moving toward an object you have labeled.
- begins to increase her vocabulary toward the end of this period. It usually does not exceed 10–20 single words.
- uses gestures and sounds increasingly in coordination to communicate intent
- will repeat or try another mode of communicating desire if his attempts at communicating are unsuccessful.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Toy telephones and dolls to promote language development
- Interactive books, magazines, newspaper pictures
- Talking to a toddler about her play
- Music
- Language partners—adults and other children

Language Development and Communication

12 TO 18
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Get down on a toddler's eye level and make eye contact when speaking with him.
- Continue to talk about what she is doing as she is doing it.
- Show excitement in his efforts to communicate with you.
- Encourage conversation with other adults and children.
- Give simple instructions to follow.
- Play games with her.
- Singing songs and repeating finger plays over and over again support a toddler's desire and need for repetition.
- Encourage expression of feelings through words.
- Encourage expansion of language experience.
- A toddler communicates in many ways. In order to understand what he is saying, listen to the tone of his voice. Is he asking a question, stating a command, or voicing a protest? Watch him as he tries to speak: Is he pointing to something? What is he looking at? These are clues to the meaning of his expressive language.

Did You Know:

- Research suggests that talking with toddlers influences the growth of vocabulary. The more words a toddler hears while engaged in "conversations" with her care providers, the larger her vocabulary will be and the faster it will continue to grow. It is important to understand that listening to the T.V., or to your conversations with other adults in your care setting will not do the job. The best support for this kind of language growth is talking directly to your toddlers about things that are meaningful to them, especially their own actions, feelings and attempts to speak. (Brain Wonders)
- Children need to hear a lot of words in order to learn how to communicate themselves. It's particularly helpful when you talk about the "here and now" – things that are going on in front of the child.

12 TO 18 MONTHS

Activities Such As These Support Healthy Growth and Development

Shop Till You Drop

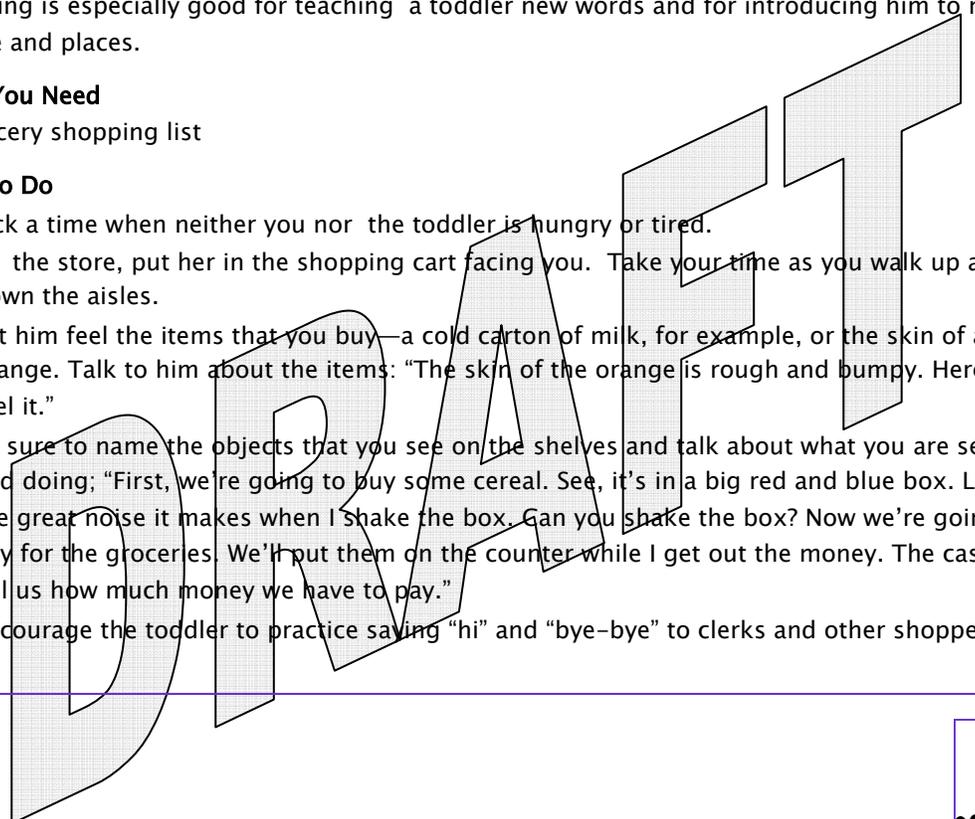
Shopping for groceries is just one of many daily routines that you can use to help a toddler learn. Shopping is especially good for teaching a toddler new words and for introducing him to new people and places.

What You Need

A grocery shopping list

What to Do

- Pick a time when neither you nor the toddler is hungry or tired.
- At the store, put her in the shopping cart facing you. Take your time as you walk up and down the aisles.
- Let him feel the items that you buy—a cold carton of milk, for example, or the skin of an orange. Talk to him about the items: “The skin of the orange is rough and bumpy. Here, you feel it.”
- Be sure to name the objects that you see on the shelves and talk about what you are seeing and doing; “First, we’re going to buy some cereal. See, it’s in a big red and blue box. Listen to the great noise it makes when I shake the box. Can you shake the box? Now we’re going to pay for the groceries. We’ll put them on the counter while I get out the money. The cashier will tell us how much money we have to pay.”
- Encourage the toddler to practice saying “hi” and “bye-bye” to clerks and other shoppers.



Close-up



It is 10am and 14-month-old Jordan is fussy and crying. Sandra, Jordan’s caregiver, moves toward him with one of his favorite toys. When she reaches him, Jordan bats the toy, turns away and whimpers. Sandra tries again to comfort Jordan by inviting him to come and sit on her lap and look at a book. Jordan falls to the floor and cries. After a moment, Sandra looks at the clock and then at Jordan and says gently, “Jordan, are you hungry?” She continues with, “Jordan, if you are hungry, go sit in your little chair.” Jordan walks over to his little chair. Sandra asks warmly, “Jordan, do you want milk or juice?” Jordan replies, “Ju-Ju.” Jordan is learning: to communicate what he needs and what he is feeling; to make choices; to follow simple directions; to use words to get what he needs; and about cause and effect.

18 TO 24 MONTHS

DRAFT

18-24
MONTHS

Personal and Social Development

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Social

A toddler:

- is becoming aware of other people's points of view. He begins to understand that others have feelings and becomes very interested in them.
- plays make believe (dramatic play) and pretends to be a character in a book or movie with you or others.
- uses words or pictures to tell you what she is interested in..."Look, airplane!"
- continues to enjoy imitating adult behaviors and activities.
- is interested in helping with day to day activities around the house.

Feelings and Self-Awareness

A toddler:

- shows increased interest in the dressing process. Taking off his clothes is becoming a big hit!
- is becoming an independent person who wants to do things by herself. "NO" becomes one of a toddler's most powerful words; she enjoys saying it and trying it out in many contexts.
- Temper tantrums may be on the increase as he realizes he cannot do everything he wants when he wants or tell you in words exactly what he is feeling.
- may be refusing to eat. This is often a sign of both her growing independence and a decrease in appetite.
- is drinking from a cup without a lid, using a spoon to feed himself and many other simple tasks independently.
- is beginning to gain some bladder and bowel control.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Provide a cup without a lid at mealtimes along with a spoon so that she can feed herself.
- Provide materials for dramatic play such as dress up clothes, dolls, plastic dishes.
- Provide many opportunities to take off socks, hats, and shoes.
- Provide opportunities for a toddler to help sort, fold, store and choose clothes to wear.
- Provide many opportunities for a toddler to try things on his own. Delight with him in his accomplishments and be there to help when he needs it.
- Make sure she has some things of her own and places to put them without fear of others taking

Personal and Social Development

18-24
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Encourage a toddler to help with day-to-day tasks as she is able. Encourage her to try doing new things for herself.
- Set clear simple rules (limits) and gently but firmly reinforce them, particularly when it comes to safety issues i.e.: sitting in a car seat while riding in the car.
- His emerging independence and expression of his desires may be frustrating for you at times. Think about some of the behaviors that are frustrating for you and try to anticipate them. During these times you may want to try to redirect his attention to something that you see as a more positive option, such as asking him about an upcoming fun activity.
- These times can also be very frustrating for a toddler. Encourage her to seek out her comfort toys or to help calm herself by sucking her thumb (if this is a comfort for her).
- Be patient! Although a toddler wants to do everything he sets out to do himself, he still needs you close by to help.
- Respect her. When you respect a toddler, she learns to respect herself and others.
- Model pro-social, sharing behavior in your everyday interactions with children and other adults. Initiate games of sharing and turn taking. While this will promote his use and practice of these behaviors, do not expect him to share with his peers all the time. Toddlers need time to mature and have plenty of practice to demonstrate these skills consistently.
- Maintain consistent daily routines around eating, sleeping, bathing and toileting. These help toddlers predict what comes next and master daily experiences which promote self-confidence. Help her prepare for transitions by telling her what will happen next and allowing her some time to move from one thing to another.
- Be there as an attentive listener.
- Name feelings—your own and the child’s—“I feel sad.” “Putting on your shirt is frustrating.”

Did You Know:

- With his increasing awareness of self come issues of ownership and sharing, or not sharing as is usually the case. Toddlers often claim objects as “mine” and are very possessive. However, know that there is hope. As he becomes more comfortable in knowing what is his and what is not, he will begin to consider sharing with others.
- A toddler is also learning how to control her behavior (self-control) and act appropriately in situations and is beginning to understand what she should and should not do. However, she is not good at this yet. She may hit, cry, yell, bite and may not be able to stop herself from doing these things. This self control comes with time and brain maturation. (Brain Wonders)

18-24
MONTHS

Physical Development

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Large Muscle

A toddler:

- is beginning to walk faster and in a more coordinated manner.
- runs, but awkwardly.
- will walk up stairs holding a hand.
- is learning to master body movements by stooping, walking, kicking, throwing, climbing and running.
- can bend over to pick things up without falling.

Small Muscle

A toddler:

- can use a crayon to scribble as well as imitate marks.
- is gaining better control when feeding herself.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Room to walk and run and opportunities to take walks to new and different places such as a community park
- Sensory experiences (experiences where he can see, touch, taste, hear and smell) such as water and sand play
- Materials such as: crayons, pencils, dolls and doll clothes, nesting toys, paper, puzzles, play dough, snap together blocks, small blocks, small toy figures and cars
- Riding toys, wiffle ball and bat, bean bag toss into a cardboard box or laundry basket, climbing toys/jungle gyms, puzzles, stringing beads, shape sorters
- Large pieces of paper taped to the table or floor with washable crayons or markers. Always stay close by to supervise a toddler who is just learning to experiment and explore with art materials. Keep in mind that crayons do break and creative play can be messy.
- Offer an assortment of blocks of different size, shape and color to practice stacking building and balancing. Join in her play and allow her to be the leader.

Physical Development

18-24
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Keep the area that a toddler plays in interesting for him. You may want to periodically change his toys by rotating them or adding new ones. For example, when his interest lowers for a particular toy, put it away for 2 weeks or so and then bring it back out again. He may have a renewed interest in it. A few toys will catch his attention; with too many choices he may move quickly from one to another.
- Encourage her to play with other children. Rolling balls back and forth and running together can be lots of fun. Always supervise a toddler's play with peers.
- Provide ample opportunity for physical exercise. He may enjoy dancing to music, hopping, pretending to exercise with you—touching his toes, reaching high above his head, etc.
- Help the toddler get on and off a 4-wheeled riding toy until she can do it by herself.
- Provide opportunities to grasp, hold, pour, scoop, squeeze, and otherwise manipulate a variety of materials that can be safely handled and put in the mouth.
- Let him see you reading, writing or drawing; observation is a powerful learning tool both for you and him.

Did You Know:

- As she is practicing the many ways to use her body (running, hopping, kicking, pushing, pulling), a toddler may become less interested in other areas of development. For example, you may notice that her acquisition of new words slows down a little. This is normal. Continue to provide her with opportunities to practice all of her emerging skills.
- In just a few months, toddlers go from crawling to walking to practically running. Practicing their new moves strengthens connections in their brain that help with coordination. Each new motor skill contributes to a toddler's sense of mastery and feelings of competence.
- Your local library has many activities, as well as books, for a toddler to engage in..... You can also sign out various activities.

18-24
MONTHS

Cognitive Development

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A toddler:

- is beginning to solve problems in her head.
- language development is increasing rapidly.
- is beginning to enjoy imaginative play and role playing, such as being a “dog”–walking on 4 legs and barking, also called symbolic play.
- knows some sounds that animals make and enjoys imitating them.
- takes things apart and tries to put them back together again.
- will actively be figuring out how to move beyond obstacles, such as climbing on a chair to reach something he wants that’s too high for him to reach from the ground.
- is calling on past experiences to figure out new challenges.
- continues to be very curious about her surroundings and new environments.
- begins to notice tiny details in objects
- is experimenting with cause and effect. He is a little scientist, causing things to happen and then watching to see what happens next. For example, he may roll a ball into blocks and watch them fall. Then he may roll a ball into a chair and see that it doesn’t move.
- is using one object to represent another (using a block as a phone).
- recognizes herself in the mirror.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A variety of toys available on a toddler’s level to choose from; small people, animals, doll houses, nesting bowls, pots and pans, and large mixing spoons.
- Blocks and other stacking materials (empty boxes) to build up, knock down and build up again. He will learn there are many ways to accomplish the same goal.
- Be sure sturdy books are available and accessible.
- Outdoor play. Investigate the outdoors with a toddler. Talk about the colors, shapes, patterns, and textures that you both see and feel. Watch closely as she still may want to put her mouth on objects to explore them.

18-24
MONTHS

Cognitive Development

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Continue to offer a toddler choices, but only two or three at a time. Allow him to make decisions throughout the day. Be sure that the options you offer him are ones you can live with.
- Allow her to work out a challenge or problem she is facing without your intervention. Anticipate the ways in which she might solve a problem she is faced with. Be close by and always ensure her safety. Applaud her accomplishments.
- Continue to encourage a toddler's use of language by giving him words to express his feelings and desires. Continue to talk about what you both see and do.
- Encourage her exploration of toys. Be sure to let her pace herself. She will determine her rate of learning.
- If you haven't already done so, be sure to safety proof the environment. Get down on a toddler's level and look around and try to figure out the things that might catch his interest.
- Call her attention to small objects in books, magazines or on other everyday items like cereal boxes. Ask her to point to some of the details.
- While a toddler's experimentations may cause you frustration and irritation, knowing that these are the ways in which he has to learn about his world and what his body can do, it is important to be patient, provide guidance and ensure his safety.
- Engage in imaginative play with her. You will learn a great deal about her thoughts, feelings and will have many opportunities to expand on her thinking. This can help develop her creativity.
- Resist pressures from others to "teach" a toddler specific academic skills, such as colors and shapes. He will learn these readily if you refer to them in the course of your natural daily conversations. ("Do you prefer a red apple or green apple?" or "Can you hand me the blue ball?") (Brain Wonders)

Did You Know:

- While a toddler is beginning to think symbolically and use objects to represent something real in her life (pretending to eat a plastic apple), she still learns best when she sees, hears, and touches real objects (a real apple) at the same time.
- An activity that serves as a memory booster is music. For reasons we do not yet understand, songs, rhythms, and chants seem to linger in young children's minds especially well. Somehow the association of melody and lyrics encourages young brains to take hold and store the words of songs better than those of regular conversation. (Brain Wonders)

18-24
MONTHS

Language Development and Communication

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A toddler:

- is using her words to gain attention and indicate her wants, sometimes very forcefully.
- uses words to tell you about specific objects, people, or actions.
- uses words such as "I" "Me" and "Your."
- understands simple questions, can speak about 50 words and understands about 300 words by age 2.
- vocabulary is growing by leaps and bounds.
- speaks in short 2 word phrases like "Me up!" meaning "please pick me up!"
- is learning on the order of 9 new words a day.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Books, books and more books. See **Books to Grow On** pp 86-88
- Trips to the local library.
- Story-telling. Toddlers love to hear stories whether they are read or told to them. Tell stories about things of interest to them.
- Rhymes, finger plays, poems and songs. Yes, even ones you make up!

Language Development and Communication

18-24
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Continue to talk about activities that she is involved in. Name objects for her and ask her to name various objects she is encountering during her play. If a toddler says a word or phrase incorrectly, simply repeat it correctly for her.
- A toddler's speech may be hard to understand and often slow to come out of his mouth. Be patient, give him time to complete his thought.
- Praise toddlers for their attempts at communicating with you and encourage their continued expression of language. Remember that speaking "correctly" comes with time and maturity.
- Read aloud and often with a toddler. Create a quiet space or reading area where you can snuggle together while reading a book.
- Ask her questions and encourage her to ask you questions. Be an active language partner with her.
- Continue to listen with interest to what he is saying and expand on his message. For example, "That doggie." "Yes, that is a doggie and he is playing with a red ball."
- Provide real pictures of animals, people and familiar objects to draw her attention and encourage her conversation.

Did You Know:

- It is important to be aware of a child's (infancy through toddlerhood) hearing. Frequent ear infections and even mild hearing loss can lead to language delays. If you, his parent, think that he might be experiencing a hearing problem, share your concerns with your family doctor. Or, if you, his childcare provider, think that he might be experiencing a hearing problem, share your concerns with his family and urge them to talk to the family doctor.
- Shortly after a toddler begins using 50 words, a vocabulary explosion occurs. She begins adding several new words to her spoken vocabulary every day. Interestingly, researchers have noticed that this vocabulary explosion occurs at about the same time as an increase in the number of synapse (connections between brain cells) in an important language center of the brain known as Wernicke's area. (Brain Wonders)

18-24
MONTHS

Activities

Activities Such As This Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- **Make your own play dough:** 2 cups flour
1 cup salt
2 tablespoons cream of tarter
2 cups water
1 tablespoon mineral oil
Food coloring

Mix all ingredients in a saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring until stiff. Allow to cool, then knead. Store in a zip lock baggie. It will last a long time. Use cookie cutters to make different shapes. Poke a hole near the top of each shape. Let air dry. Put string through the holes and hang from a hanger to make a mobile.

- **Make your own finger paint:** 1/4 cup cornstarch
2 cups water
Food coloring

Mix ingredients in a saucepan. Boil until mixture thickens. Allow to cool, then pour into jars or other storage containers and color with food coloring. Best used on a glossy paper (butcher or shelf paper) that's taped to a surface like the floor of a low table.

Close Up:



2-year-old Sophie is in the kitchen while her mother, Janice, is making cookies. Sophie pushes a chair near the sink where Janice is working and says, "me up." She climbs onto the chair to wash her hands. Janice pours the liquid soap in Sophie's hand. After Sophie rubs her hands together she reaches toward the faucet. Janice turns the water on and off for Sophie and offers her a paper towel. After she dries her hands, Sophie climbs down and throws the paper away. Janice takes a small plastic cup, dips it into the bowl of measured flour and says, "Sophie, would you like to help me pour the flour?" Sophie smiles broadly. She pushes the chair closer to Janice and climbs. After Sophie empties the cup of flour into the batter, Janice looks at Sophie while pointing to a bag of nuts and a bag of M&Ms and says, "Hmm...what else do we need for our cookies?" Sophie says, "Candy." As Sophie dumps the candy into the batter, she takes one for herself. As she reaches for another, she checks her mother's face. Janice laughs. Sophie takes another piece of candy. Janice hands Sophie the spoon and asks, "Sophie, do you want to help stir the batter?" Sophie takes the spoon with glee. While Sophie is stirring, Janice asks, "What do we do next?" Sophie points to the oven. Janice replies, "That's right. After we put the cookies on the pan, we'll put them in the oven." Sophie is learning: to predict what comes next; sequencing; to communicate what she wants; self-help skills; to develop her fine motor skills; social skills.

24 TO 36 MONTHS

DRAFT

**24-36
MONTHS**

Personal and Social Development

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Social

A toddler:

- may want to keep possessions close to him and will often resist sharing.
- will play for longer and longer periods of time.
- includes more involvement and interaction in play with other children.
- independently begins to seek out play with other children.
- plays make believe with one or more peers.

Feelings and Self-Awareness

A toddler:

- begins to understand personal property concepts and may say "That's mine."
- begins to assert independence and continues to show pride in accomplishments.
- may say "no" at first even to something she wants.
- still has difficulty describing his emotions even though his vocabulary is increasing and he is able to put more words together. This can be frustrating for him.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Space for a toddler's personal possessions
- When multiple children are playing in the same space, provide similar toys to limit challenges around sharing.
- Art, music, and movement provide opportunities for a toddler to express her feelings.
- Continue to provide for pretend play: dress-up clothes, puppets, dolls, small animal figures, etc., to allow opportunity for role-playing.

Personal and Social Development

24–36
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Respect a toddler's desire to hold onto and take her possessions with her.
- Model sharing and turn taking. Encourage cooperative play with others but do not expect a toddler to be able to demonstrate these behaviors all the time.
- Allow a toddler the opportunity to try things himself even if you know it will take a little longer to get done.
- Plan for situations/experiences where a toddler can be successful and experience a sense of accomplishment and pride.
- Read books that explore emotions and discuss feelings. For example, consider "When Sophie Gets Angry —Really, Really Angry..." by Molly Bang and "The Way I Feel" series by Cornelia Spelman.
- Help toddlers stay involved in play by extending on their play experience and preventing interruptions of their play.
- Provide time to participate in group or circle times when a toddler interacts with other children and shares in stories and song.
- Help a toddler identify and label her feelings: anger, frustration, happiness, sadness.
- Anticipate situations in which a he may have difficulty and intervene before an aggressive action takes place, such as hitting or biting.
- Help a toddler connect her feelings with actions by using words: "I know that you are angry, but you may not hit Claire. Say, I'm angry."
- Offer strategies that a toddler can use in frustrating situations, such as using his words to solve the problem or asking for help.
- Continue to provide consistent daily routines around eating, sleeping, bathing and toileting so that she can predict what comes next and master daily experiences which promotes self-confidence.

Did You Know:

While older toddlers have more interest in their peers than they did at 18 months, they are still most interested in pleasing themselves and cannot yet understand another child's perspective. It is not unusual for toddlers of this age to be verbally and physically aggressive in their play with objects and peers. (Brain Wonders) Be sure to stay close by and prevent when possible or intervene if necessary.

**24–36
MONTHS**

Physical Development

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

Large Muscle

A toddler:

- enjoys running (but may have difficulty stopping and turning) hopping, skipping, jumping and climbing.
- walks up and down stairs alternating feet.
- throws a ball and kicks it with one foot.
- begins to balance on one foot.
- pedals a tricycle.

Small Muscle

A toddler:

- helps to dress herself with clothing that's easy to put on, may still need your help with snaps, buttons and zippers.
- begins to brush his own teeth with help.
- can use a spoon, fork and cup—may still spill.
- can turn pages of a book one by one.
- enjoys messy, creative play such as painting with a paint brush, finger painting, scribbling, gluing and taping under your careful supervision.
- begins to favor one hand over the other.
- begins to cut with safety scissors, draws straight lines, and can copy a circle.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Space to run, hills, ramps, low stairs
- Riding toys, rocking toys, balls—small and large.
- Trips to a playground with swings, climbers, sand and water play.
- Books, 2–4 piece large puzzles, pegboards, stacking toys, objects to string (large beads)
- Play dough (see recipe p. 70), washable crayons, markers, paints (see recipe p. 70), and chalk and taping and gluing activities
- Clothing to play dress-up, dolls to dress and undress, household items to encourage pretend play (pretend cooking)

Physical Development

24-36
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Encourage free movement (within safe limits) and self-expression through movement—running, spinning, dancing.
- Provide for and become involved in sensory experiences with a toddler. Talk about what you are feeling, smelling, tasting, hearing.
- Offer a toddler simple choices whenever possible.
- Offer a variety of toys that encourage a toddler's hand and finger use. Rotate toys available within the environment and encourage new ways to use familiar toys.
- Be a toddler's "coach" by supporting her through situations where she gets stuck in trying new things.
- Include a toddler in making meals (pouring ingredients, stirring) setting up and cleaning the table together with you.
- Go for walks exploring the outdoors together—use this opportunity to teach about concepts such as big and small.

Did You Know:

- Play is essential to a toddler's healthy development. Through play he interacts with other children, has the opportunity to explore what he can do with his body, pretends and tries out various roles, explores the properties of objects, practices language and new vocabulary, tries out different emotions.
- It is through all of these experiences that a toddler's development is supported in the following areas: personal and social, physical, cognitive (thinking abilities), and Language development and communication.

**24-36
MONTHS**

Cognitive Development

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A toddler:

is beginning to solve many problems on his/her own and will try various strategies to solve a problem that he/she is facing.

will stay focused on a task for longer periods of time.

enjoys simple puzzles (4-5 pieces), simple jokes

knows most of his/her body parts and can label them on dolls and people.

may count two or three objects.

enjoys comparing sizes—"big" and "small."

notices differences in size, shape and color, and enjoys matching and grouping objects that are alike.

remembers events and places he/she has been. He/she enjoys telling others of his/her experiences.

begins to explain WHY he/she wants to do something. For example, "Why do you want the apple?" "Because I'm hungry."

A Supportive Environment Includes:

A variety of construction materials: cardboard, glue, construction paper, clay, crayons.

Simple hands-on science activities and small experiments such as using food coloring to change the color of water.

Objects to sort and classify by color, size, shape and weight.

Continued availability of art materials for messy, creative play as well as other objects he/she can play with using his/her hands and fingers.

Books

Cognitive Development

24-36
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Develop a sense of timing, knowing when to step in and knowing when to hold back and allow a toddler to work out his differences.
- It is important that you are aware of the strength of emotions, the development of thinking and problem solving skills, and the difficulty toddlers may have in controlling their impulsive behaviors. You can help them learn how to control aggressive behaviors by being attentive to their play and interactions, by helping them identify, label, and connect their emotions with actions, and by helping them find more appropriate solutions when conflicts arise. (Brain Wonders)
- Be sure to provide both girls and boys with equal opportunities to explore a variety of activities including large and small muscle play, conversation, dress up and dramatic play, art, music, science, and outdoor play.
- Recount events you have experienced together with a toddler, such as a walk to the park. Ask her to recall things she saw and did.
- Play a game having toddlers touch body parts, head, nose, ears, eyes, as you name them.

Did You Know:

- Toddlers love to ask why. They are naturally curious and this is an important way for them to learn. Why questions also lead to further investigation. Asking toddlers why questions is an excellent way to encourage expression of their thoughts and feelings.
- Being able to control impulses requires maturation of thinking skills. In fact, this involves several steps. In order to control impulses children need to first know the rule involved (e.g., No grabbing an object from another child.) and then understand that the rule applies to a particular situation (No taking the toy from Jimmy.). They need to be able to shift and control their attention from what they want to the expected behavior (Susie wants the truck, but she shouldn't take it from Jimmy.). Finally, children need to be able to think of the alternatives to their behavior (Instead of taking the truck from Jimmy, Susie can see if there are more on the shelf or wait until Jimmy is done playing with it and have a turn, etc.) (Brain Wonders)

**24–36
MONTHS**

Language Development and Communication

As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

A toddler:

- enjoys expressing himself through language. He talks about what he is doing while doing it, trying out what he has learned about communicating with others in new contexts. He expects even strangers to be language partners with him.
- will use personal pronouns such as I, me you.
- enjoys telling and retelling stories, short jokes (sometimes forgetting the punch line).
- takes cues from others, laughing out loud when others are laughing.
- enjoys talking on the phone and pretending to talk on the phone.
- enjoys “reading” familiar books to you and other playmates.
- uses phrases or sentences to ask a question about something she wants to do (example, “Go to playground?”) with inflection.
- has conversations with adults and peers that make sense, often with four or more back and forth comments on a variety of topics.

A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A variety of children’s books.
- Pictures at a toddler’s eye level—samples of her art work
- Songs and language games (rhyming words, etc.)
- Plenty of opportunity to talk with other children and adults
- Music and musical instruments, including home-made drums, shakers, etc.
- Puppets, small people, animals, dollhouses, barns, baby dolls

Language Development and Communication

24-36
MONTHS

Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Continue to encourage a toddler to talk with you. Ask questions such as “What do you think would happen if....”
- Ask a toddler what she is feeling in different situations “Are you happy to see Beth?” “Did it make you feel angry when Josh took your toy?”
- Ask a toddler to tell others what he wants. Provide him with examples “I want the truck.” “I was using that ball”
- A toddler will need reminders from you to solve challenges with others using her words as opposed to physical means (hitting, grabbing, kicking)
- If a toddler is approaching a “break down” point—ready to break into uncontrolled crying, let him know that you understand what he is feeling and provide support to get through his difficult time. i.e.: “I know you are tired and feel frustrated because you cannot find Elmo. Let’s look together.”

Did You Know:

- By engaging in conversations with a toddler and really listening to her responses, she feels important.
- In today’s world bilingualism is a skill to be valued and supported when it is the goal of the toddler’s family. Infants are quite capable of learning two languages from birth. They begin life with the ability to hear the differences among the sounds of many languages. Any sounds a child continues to hear reinforce the brain connections used to process them, so she will retain the ability to perceive and produce them. By 2-3 years, toddlers are very capable of using each language with different people in different contexts—for example, speaking Spanish with the care provider and English with Mom and Dad, or speaking English with Mom and Spanish with Grandma. (Brain Wonders)
- Remember: a toddler exposed to two languages is dealing with two very different systems of communication. While she is capable of doing this, her progress in each may appear a bit slower than if she were communicating in only one language. (Brain Wonders)

24-36 MONTHS

Activities Such As This Support Healthy Growth and Development:

Puppets (home-made will do just fine) provide an opportunity for children to safely express their feelings through pretend play. For directions on making puppets, check the internet, sewing patterns at fabric stores, and your own imagination! Puppets can be made from all kinds of materials—socks, fabric scraps, felt, paper mache, poster board, paper bags, paper plates and cups, and even vegetables!

Mirrors and dolls also inspire toddlers to engage in pretend play. Mirrors enable him to see himself during dress-up play as he explores different roles using related props...Dolls that are about 12-15 inches long and can be carried in one hand are preferred. Dolls should reflect different ethnic backgrounds (The Creative Curriculum for Infants & Toddlers) to promote his understanding and acceptance of diversity in the larger world.

Using a paper bag or a shoe box, design a “mystery” box or bag for her to explore. Toddlers enjoy the surprise of reaching into a mystery box to discover hidden objects that must be identified by their shape, texture, or smell. (The Creative Curriculum for Infants & Toddlers)

Toddlers naturally gravitate to toys that promote their independence. Self-help boards, cards, or frames for practicing fastening and unfastening Velcro strips, snaps, buckles, hooks, and zippers are always favorites. (The Creative Curriculum for Infants & Toddlers)

Push and pull toys, blocks, riding toys, climbers, and even large cardboard boxes continue to be popular with this age group.

Close Up:



Dan, a teacher, takes a group of children to the playground. 35-month-old Jin and 30-month-old Trae race toward the slide. When they reach the stairs, they attempt to climb the stairs simultaneously, each declaring, “Me first!” Dan walks over to the children and says calmly, “I see both of you want the slide. It’s not safe for both of you to go up the stairs at the same time. How can we solve this problem?” Jin says, “Me first!” Trae hits Jin and declares, “No, me first!” Dan takes Trae’s hand and says, “I cannot let you hit Jin. You need to tell Jin that you want to be first.” Dan goes on to say, “What if we take turns? I’m going to let Jin go up the stairs and count how long it takes for her to slide down. Then it will be your turn, Trae, and I will count for you.” Jin climbs the stairs and slides down. She races back to Trae and Dan and declares, “Trae, now it’s your turn!” The children continue to take turns climbing and sliding during their morning play. Trae and Jin are learning: to delay gratification; to cope with frustration; to use words to solve problems; to share and take turns; adults can be helpful; and number and time concepts.

RESOURCES

DRAFT

RESOURCES

Web Sites of Interest

BETTER BABY CARE CAMPAIGN

<http://www.betterbabycare.org>

The Better Baby Care Campaign is a nationwide effort to improve the quality of infant and toddler child care. It provides up-to-date information on research and resources regarding infant and toddler care. The website provides information on federal, state, and local policy initiatives.

BRAZELTON TOUCHPOINTS CENTER

<http://www.touchpoints.org>

The Touchpoints Model is a training program that provides skills and strategies for professionals to build alliances with parents of children from birth to three. It combines relationship-building and child development and promotes building and maintaining relationships with parents as the basis of preventive care. It focuses on key points in the development of infants, toddlers, and their families.

CHILD CARE AWARE

<http://childcareaware.org/>

Child Care Aware helps parents find the best information on locating quality child care and child care resources in their local communities. It is funded through a cooperative agreement with the Child Bureau, Administration of Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

CHILD CARE BUREAU, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, U.S. DEPARTMENT HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/>

The Child Care Bureau is dedicated to improving the quality, affordability, and availability of child care for families. The Bureau administers federal funds to states, territories, and tribes to assist low-income families in accessing quality child care when parents work or participate in education or training programs.

EARLY HEAD START NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER AT ZERO TO THREE

<http://www.ehsnrc.org>

The Early Head Start National Resource Center is operated by ZERO TO THREE, Washington, DC, in collaboration with WESTED of Sausalito, CA. The EHSNRC works at the national level to provide information and training to Early Head Start on a range of topics including: developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive services for infants/toddlers and families, building effective relationships with families, creating developmentally appropriate environments, effective networking, collaboration, and community-building skills, inclusive services for children with special needs, and other topics.

RESOURCES

Web Sites of Interest

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER–CLEARING HOUSE ON ELEMENTARY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ERIC/EECE)

<http://www.eric.ed.gov>

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system designed to provide users with resources and information on education. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (ERIC/EECE) provides information for educators, parents, families, and individuals interested in the development, education, and care of children from birth through early adolescence.

HEALTHY CHILD CARE AMERICA (HCCA)

<http://www.healthychildcare.org>

The HCCA program is a collaborative effort of health professionals, child care providers, and families working to improve the health and safety of children in child care. HCCA seeks to maximize the health, safety, well-being, and developmental potential so each child experiences quality child care within a nurturing environment and has a medical home.

I AM YOUR CHILD (IAYC)

<http://www.iamyourchild.org>

The IAYC Foundation is a national, non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of early childhood development and school readiness. It develops a wide variety of resources for parents, early childhood professionals, child advocates, health care providers, policy makers, and the media.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH BUREAU, DEPARTMENT OF US HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (MCHB)

<http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov>

MCHB provides links to resources, publications, websites, and federal and state programs relating to the health and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, pregnant women and their families. MCHB also provides a list of child health links including children with special needs.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN (NAEYC)

<http://www.naeyc.org>

NAEYC is a nation wide membership organization of early childhood educators and others dedicated to improving the quality of programs for children from birth through third grade. The website provides information on accreditation, early learning, resources for both parents and childhood providers, and early childhood education policy.

RESOURCES

Web Sites of Interest

NATIONAL BLACK CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE (NBCDI)

<http://www.nbcdi.org>

The National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) is a nonprofit organization that provides support through programs, workshops, and resources for African American children, their parents and _____areas of early health and education, health, elementary and secondary education, child welfare, and parenting. The website provides links to information about their local affiliates, conferences, and programs.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHILDREN IN PROVERTY (NCCP)

http://www.nccp.org/it_index.html

The National Center for Children in Poverty is a non-profit, non-partisan research and policy organization. It strives to identify and promote strategies that prevent child poverty and improve the lives of low-income children and families.

NATIONAL CHILDCARE INFORMATION CENTER (NCCIC)

<http://nccic.org/cctopics/infants.html>

The National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC), a project of the Child Care Bureau, is a national organization that links information and people to complement, enhance, and promote the child care delivery system, ensuring that all children and families have access to high quality comprehensive services. This link _____ is publication and organizational resource that pertain to infants and toddlers.

NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER (NECTAC)

<http://nectac.org>

The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center supports the implementation of the early _____provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Its mission is to strengthen service systems to ensure that children with disabilities (birth through five) and their families receive and benefit from high quality, culturally appropriate, and family-centered supports and services.

NATIONAL INFANT & TODDLER CHILD CARE INITIATIVE

<Http://nccic.org/itcc>

The National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative is designed to support Child Care Development (CCDF) State and territory administrators in their efforts to effect system-wide improvements in infant toddler care. The Initiative is funded by the Child Care Bureau, Administration for children and Families, Department of Health and Human services and is located at ZERO TO THREE.

RESOURCES

Websites of Interest

THE PROGRAM FOR INFANT TODDLER CAREGIVERS (PITC)

<http://www.pitc.org/>

The goal of PITC is to help caregivers recognize the crucial importance of giving tender, loving care _____assisting in the infants' intellectual development through an attentive reading of each child's cues. The videos, guides, and manuals are designed to help child care managers and caregivers become sensitive to infants' cues, connect with their family and culture, and develop responsive, relationship-based care.

ZERO TO THREE

<http://www.zerotothree.org>

The ZERO TO THREE web site offers information for those interested in the healthy development of young children, birth to three. The site includes information on brain development, learning during every day _____the developmental assessment process, parenting tips, professional journal articles, policy briefs, as well as easy-to-use A-Z topic listings, a search engine, and a growing list of Spanish materials.

CONNECTICUT BIRTH TO THREE SYSTEM

<http://www.birth23.org/>

The mission of the CONNECTICUT BIRTH TO THREE system is to strengthen the capacity of families to meet the developmental and health-related needs of their infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities. It provides resources, publications, programs and referrals, as well as a Child Development Infoline to talk personally with someone about your concerns. The phone number to call is 1-800-505-7000.

HELP ME GROW

No website available

A program for children at-risk, ages birth to five, funded by the Children's Trust Fund, to help families connect to existing resources in their community. They can also help families monitor their children's development through the Ages and Stages Questionnaire process. They can be reached through the Child Development Infoline at 1-800-505-7000.

KEYS TO GREAT PARENTING—Fun and Learning with Your Baby or Toddler

A series of seven pamphlets based on seven keys to unlocking your child's wonderful abilities. Titles include: Care for Yourself, Cuddle, Talk and Read with Your Child, Know How Your Child Develops, Be Playful with Your Child, Show Your Child the World, Teach Self Control, Practice Nutrition, Health and

Books to Grow On

Compiled by the librarian members of the
American Library Association–Children’s Book Council Joint Committee
April 2003

0–6 Months

Explores the world through the senses–sight, sound, touch

All Fall Down, Helen Oxbury
Animal Crackers: Bedtime, Jane Dyer
Baby Animals: Black and White, Phyllis Tildes
Baby Rock, Baby Roll, Stella Blackstone
Big Fat Hen, Keith Baker
Black on White, Tana Hoban
Blue Hat, Green Hat, Sandra Boynton
How a Baby Grows, Nola Buck
I Love Colors, Margaret Miller
Max, Ken Wilson–Max
My First Baby Games, Jane Manning
My Very First Mother Goose, Iona Opie
Peek–A–Boo! Janet and Allan Ahlberg

6–12 Months

Increasing exploration with hands–able to reach for books, touch and feel pictures; prefers pictures of faces, begins to vocalize.

Animal Kisses, Barney Saltzberg
Baby’s Lap Book, Kay Choraó
Brown Sugar Babies, Charles Smith
Goodnight Moon, Margaret Wise Brown
I Can, Helen Oxenbury
I Smell Honey, Andrea Pinkney
Maybe, My Baby, Irene O’Book
My Colors (Mis Colores), Rebecca Emberly
Red, Blue, Yellow Shoe, Tana Hoban
Time for Bed, Mem Fox
Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star, Jeanette Winter
Welcome, Baby! Baby Rhymes for Baby Times, Stephanie Calmenson
Where’s the Baby? Tom Paxton

Books to Grow On

Compiled by the librarian members of the
American Library Association–Children’s Book Council Joint Committee
April 2003

12–18 Months

Able to hold a book with help, turn pages, point at pictures, and make sounds for a particular picture



The Bear Went Over the Mountain, Rosemary Wells
Big Dog, Little Dog, Dav. Pilkey
Count with Maisy, Lucy Cousins
Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z, Lois Ehlert
The Everything Book, Denise Fleming
Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed, Eileen Christelow
Freight Train, Donald Crews
Itsy Bitsy Spider, Rosemary Wells
Jamberry, Bruce Degen
My First Action Rhymes, pictures by Lynne Cravath
Pat the Bunny, Dorothy Kunhardt
Rabbit’s Bedtime, Nancy Elizabeth Wallace
Read to Your Bunny, Rosemary Wells
Sheep in a Jeep, Nancy Shaw
Ten, Nine, Eight, Molly Garrett Bang
Tom and Pippo Read a Story, Helen Oxenbury
Where Is My Baby? Harriet Ziefert and Taback Simms
Where’s Spot, Eric Hill
You Are My Perfect Baby, Joyce Carol Thomas
Zoom City, Thatcher Hurd

18–36 Months

Able to name familiar pictures, turn one page at a time, and carry a book around the house. Able to concentrate on simple stories, but still needs a great deal of one-on-one interaction and physical activity.

Be Gentle! Virginia Miller
Book! Kristine O’Connell George
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle
Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault
Color Zoo, Lois Ehlert
Come Along, Daisy Jane Simmons
Construction Zone, Tana Hoban
Dinosaur Roar! Paul Stickland and Henrietta Stickland
Dinosaurs, Dinosaurs, Byron Barton
Hello, LuLu, Caroline Uff
Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear? Nancy White Carlstrom

Books to Grow On

Compiled by the librarian members of the
American Library Association–Children’s Book Council Joint Committee
April 2003

18–36 Months, cont.

Able to name familiar pictures, turn one page at a time, and carry a book around the house. Able to concentrate on simple stories, but still needs a great deal of one-on-one interaction and physical activity

Little White Duck, Bernard and Walt Whippo

Maisy’s ABC, Lucy Cousins

Max’s First Word, Rosemary Wells

“More More More,” Said the Baby, Vera Williams

Mouse Mess, Linnea Riley

On Mother’s Lap, Ann Herbert Scott

Silly Little Goose!, Nancy Tafuri

The Tale of Peter Rabbit, Beatrix Potter

The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Eric Carle

The Wheels on the Bus, Raffi

You’re Just What I Need, Ruth Krauss

DRAFT

CITATIONS

Healthy Minds

<http://www.zerotothree.org/healthyminds/9-12months.pdf>

Brain Wonders

<http://zerotothree.org/brainwonders/index.html>

Rethinking the Brain, Rima Shore, 1997, Families and Work Institute, NY, NY

www.familiesandwork.org

A Nurturing Father's Journal, Mark Perlman

The Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers, Candy Jones and Diane Trister Dodge, Ed., Teaching

Strategies, Inc., Washington, DC

www.TeachingStrategies.com

Parents as Teachers

DEC. (2005). Division for Early Childhood Companion to the NAEYC and NAECS/SDE Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program

Evaluation: Building an Effective, Accountable System in Programs for Children Birth through Age 8.

Manuscript in preparation.

Growing Child 0-24 Months, Nancy Kleckner, Ed., 2003, Lafayette, IN,

www.growingchild.com