



Infant and Toddler Maine Early Learning and Development Standards

(Infant Toddler MELDS)

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Welcome Letter

Dear Maine families, early educators, and all individuals invested in our youngest children;

We are pleased to join many state and local partners in presenting the *Infant and Toddler Maine Early Learning and Development Standards* (the revision of the original *Supporting Maine's Infants & Toddlers: Guidelines for Learning and Development*). The first three years are a crucial time for brain development, and it is our belief that this document will offer parents, family members, early learning providers and professionals, community members, and policy makers an understanding of infant and toddler development which will support high quality care and learning for Maine's youngest children.

First published in 2006 following two years of research, input and collaboration from many professionals, this revised version reflects the latest research and updates on development from birth to thirty-six months and has been reviewed by a wide variety of professionals. It highlights the beginning of the continuum of learning and connects to the standards developed for preschoolers and school age children. When all Maine residents become invested in the well-being of our infants and toddlers, the health of Mainers will improve and our economy will thrive. Thank you for your commitment to quality early learning and development and ensuring that all of Maine's youngest children get the start in life necessary to realize their incredible potential.

Sincerely,



Todd A. Landry, Ed.D., Director, OCFS



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Introduction

As neuroscience has clearly shown, the brain grows and develops rapidly in the first years, and young children need positive stimulation and responsive and nurturing interactions to thrive. Stress, trauma, negative interactions and harmful environments can be most damaging in the very early years as recognized by Harvard's Center for the Developing Child¹. The surge of research and knowledge, over the past few decades, has given us all a better understanding of how vital the first years are, and how to maximize a child's resilience and potential for the betterment of all society.

This document is based largely on *Supporting Maine's Infants & Toddlers: Guidelines for Learning and Development*, the original Maine guidelines for infants and toddlers. It has been updated with current evidence-based information and redesigned to align with Maine's Pre-K and K-12 standards to illustrate how the foundations of learning are established in the first three years. The definition of Early Learning and Development Standards set forth by the U.S. Department of Education states, "a set of expectations, guidelines or developmental milestones that describe what all children from birth until kindergarten entry should be able to do and their disposition toward learning." With this in mind, both the terms guidelines and standards are used interchangeably throughout this document.

Following the guiding principles of this document, it is important to recognize that learning comes from play in everyday experiences and holistic development is supported within relationships with adults. When adults realize infant and toddler learning comes from discoveries they make on their own with support from caring adults, rather than from structured lessons, it is exciting to see what happens.



A Little About...Brain Development

The key ingredients necessary for a baby's healthy brain development include: positive relationships with their family and caregivers in the community, experiences that allow exploration, and a safe (physical and emotional) environment.

To find out more go to "Appendix A.1: A Little About...Brain Development" on page 77.

¹ "Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University." *Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University*, developingchild.harvard.edu/.

As infants and toddlers develop, they first become aware of and then start to make sense of their world. These first years are crucial for building the architecture of their brain. Brain research points to the fact that interactions with caring adults who provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment allow babies to thrive. Being culturally sensitive and individually responsive to each child and their family in every setting is what will allow children to develop holistically in all domains supporting their ability to be ready for Pre-K and beyond.

The Infant and Toddler Maine Early Learning and Development Standards (Infant Toddler MELDS) are divided into three age ranges that correspond with several national documents. These age ranges are broad enough to allow for variations in a child's development, but still show evidence of the typical development at these stages:

- Younger Infants (birth to 8 months)
- Older Infants (6 to 18 months)
- Toddlers (16 to 36 months)

Within each age range, five distinct Standards/Domains, or areas of development, are covered and each is followed in parentheses by the language from the original Maine infant and toddler guidelines:

- Standard/Domain: Social and Emotional Development (Social Being)
- Standard/Domain: Approaches to Learning (New)
- Standard/Domain: Early Language and Literacy (Ability to Communicate)
- Standard/Domain: Physical Development and Health (Strong and Healthy Body)
- Standard/Domain: Cognitive Development (Curious Mind)

Standards/Domains are broken down into Goal Topics which are aspects of that area of development. These were referred to as Elements in the original Maine infant and toddler guidelines, but it seemed important to identify them for how they can be used. There is a definition of each Goal Topic which can assist in the development of individual goals for children based on the curriculum and planning being done by the teacher.

Beside each Goal Topic are Indicators, or examples of child behavior. These behaviors cover the age range indicated and just give an idea of SOME of the common behaviors observed during this stage of development. Users of these guidelines will observe and identify many more behaviors for each of these Goal Topics.

Specific ideas for supporting development for each age are on the page following the Indicators. These are under the heading: Implementing in Routines and Experiences. While these are NOT curriculum, these ideas are just meant to be an example of how

to intentionally incorporate activities that support each area of development into everyday routines common for this age. However, these activities and ideas like them can be incorporated into any time of the day.

There have intentionally been a variety of terms used throughout this document which refer to the same thing. In recognition of the many different labels people use in the early childhood field, words like: caregiver, teacher, child care provider, etc. are used interchangeably.

These guidelines are meant to give an idea of the skills infants and toddlers are working on at any given stage so that adults feel empowered to support children as they grow and to seek intervention when needed. The important part is to have fun as you use these guidelines with infants and toddlers and their families during these amazing first three years of development.

Also included in this revision are updated “A Little About...” topics. These are important areas for readers to consider, and were well utilized in the original guidelines. The second one is found below. It includes the page number in the Appendix where you can find more information on this particular subject. The first one is found on page 4 and is on Brain Development.



A Little About...Celebrating Diverse Families

Engage families with:

- Cultural sensitivity and understanding
- Trusting and open communication
- Recognizing parents as their child's most important teachers
- Honoring and celebrating diverse family structures
- Inclusive, family-centered communication approaches



To find out more go to “Appendix A.2: A Little About...Celebrating Diverse Families” on page 79.

Key Components of an Early Learning Standard

Social and Emotional Development

Standard Domain

Goal Topic: Trust and Emotional Security (Emotional Functioning)

Goal Topic

Definition: Development of the ability to express and manage a range of emotions, recognize and interpret the emotions of others, and express care and concern towards others. *Note: This is an extremely important topic to be explored and experienced with children. Labeling and accepting ALL feelings throughout the day will support children's development in many ways.*

Indicator

Indicator: Birth-8 months

Expresses feelings of comfort, discomfort, enjoyment, fear, surprise, anger or unhappiness through:

- various facial expressions
- body movements
- gestures

Quiets or stops crying when held, rocked, given a change of position or level of stimulation in the environment, or talked to by a familiar adult.

Attends with interest when others show range of emotions through facial expressions, voices, or gestures.

May cry when another child cries

Indicator: 6-18 months

Expresses a variety of emotions and modifies expression according to the reactions of familiar adults.

Looks to/ seeks comfort from familiar adults when distressed and accepts reassurance.

Responds to others' emotional expressions by:

- sharing emotional reactions – smiling when adult smiles, showing excitement when other children are excited
- looks sad or concerned when another child is crying; may offer soft toy, blanket, or food

Displays confidence that needs will be met by caregiver, evidenced by child watching and waiting a short time for caregiver to meet the recognized need.

Indicator: 16-36 months

Self-conscious emotions appear: shame, embarrassment, guilt, pride.

Shows understanding of some emotional expressions by:

- labeling them
- asking questions about them
- responding appropriately (verbally or non-verbally)

May use artistic tools for emotional expression.

Expresses empathy toward other children or adults.

Begins to express feelings of anger and frustration: tells friends "I don't like that!".

Has an expectation that the caregiver will provide what is needed in most situations.

Ideas for implementation will be found on the following page

Purpose Statement and Potential Uses

Infant and Toddler Maine Early Learning and Development Standards (Infant Toddler MELDS): A statewide resource for everyone who loves, cares for, and educates infants and toddlers.

The intent of Infant and Toddler Maine Early Learning and Development Standards is:

- To offer families and other caregivers of infants and toddlers, early childhood professionals, and policymakers a set of guidelines about development and early learning;
- To aid in the understanding that infants' and toddlers' natural learning patterns and diverse abilities are best nurtured in everyday experiences, in a playful way, at home or in a child care setting;
- To recognize that learning occurs through discoveries made through playful experiences and the everyday routines of infants and toddlers; these discoveries are made on their own and with the guidance and nurturing relationships with caring adults;
- To support the whole child with a holistic and integrated approach to each child's development;
- To provide guidance to adults engaged with infants and toddlers as they design inclusive environments and curriculum and build intentionality into their interactions;
- To be used to **INFORM** individual curriculum planning, assessment, early intervention, for the Birth-3-year-old stage, bridging to the 3-5-year-old stage of development (Preschool MELDS), and the Kindergarten-12th Grade stages of development (Maine Learning Results).

As a reminder Infant and Toddler MELDS is:

- Not an exhaustive guide to child development or a developmental checklist;
- Not an assessment tool or for use to determine children's eligibility for various programs or services;
- Not a curriculum;
- Not an instrument to collect statewide information on the overall status of children.

Potential Uses: The Infant and Toddler MELDS has been designed as a resource which can be used by those in Maine working with and advocating for the high quality, developmentally appropriate care of infants and toddlers. These people include, but are not limited to: families, caregivers, home visitors, teachers, therapists and other professionals, community members and policy makers. The intention of this document is to assist parents and those in the field and our communities in working together to support the healthy development of Maine's youngest citizens. Listed below are potential uses for this document, remembering that we all share in the collective responsibility for successful outcomes for our youngest children.

For Parents and Family Members

To build awareness of infant and toddler development

- Better understand infant and toddler development and provide some strategies to enhance their own children's optimal development
- Develop greater awareness of developmental milestones

To increase awareness of quality infant and toddler care and education

- Recognize that families are the first and most important teachers and advocates for their young children
- By raising awareness of practices associated with quality care, families may be more likely to select early care and education settings with teachers who have received training in supporting infant and toddler development

To increase communication between parents and other caregivers

- Common language for families and other caregivers
- Provide continuity and consistency in meeting the needs of very young children

For Caregivers, Teachers and other Early Learning Providers and Professionals

To guide planning for learning experiences and the role of caregivers and teachers

- Have a common framework for developmental expectations for infants and toddlers from birth to 3
- Provide guidance for supporting infants' and toddlers' developmental progress
- Have common language for use across different settings, programs, and services
- Facilitate discussions and collaboration among families, caregivers, childcare professionals, home visitors, public health nurses, school programs, higher education, medical professionals and others

- Plan learning experiences for each individual child by understanding their culture, diversity, developmental level, learning style, interests, and temperament
- Plan a responsive environment by understanding the individual child and offering developmentally appropriate equipment, materials, routines and activities

To provide content for staff training and development

- Caregiver and teacher qualifications and training directly affect the expected outcomes for infant and toddler development
- MRTQ training is available to support implementation and knowledge building, and is the foundation for establishing shared developmental goals

For Community Members

To help organize advocacy efforts within the community

- Communities are focusing on the importance of early care and education for the future economic development of the community. The U.S. Council of Economic Advisors in 2019 reported that, “creating a system that maximizes opportunity without interfering with personal family decisions is a vitally important goal for the economy and American society as a whole.”²
- Due to the emphasis on school readiness in several state and national initiatives, the importance of quality infant and toddler care and education in providing the foundation for later learning is also receiving more attention. It is nationally recognized that competent and well-trained infant and toddler ECE professionals are able to provide high-quality care to infants and toddlers, supporting rich learning experiences and building a solid foundation for school readiness (Zero to Three, 2010).

For Policymakers

To assess the impact of public policies on infants, toddlers and their families

- Policymakers can use Infant and Toddler Maine Early Learning and Development Standards as a guide to policy formation by highlighting the developmental and educational needs of infants, toddlers, families and educators
- Support prevention and early intervention efforts to ensure very young children get a strong and healthy start, reducing the likelihood that children will need more intensive and costly help at a later age

² “The Council of Economic Advisers.” The Council of Economic Advisers. “PDF.” Dec. 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/The-Role-of-Affordable-Child-Care-in-Promoting-Work-Outside-the-Home-1.pdf>. PDF download.

To improve public understanding of appropriate expectations, accountability and responsibility

- Parents, family members, other caregivers, early childhood professionals, teachers, community members and policymakers all share in the **collective responsibility** for successful outcomes for the youngest children.



Guiding Principles

The following principles guided the process of developing these guidelines:



Scientific research provides the basis for the guidelines. The guidelines were drawn from a vast and complex body of knowledge about infant and toddler development. This body of knowledge contains information based on the neurobiology of development, the theory of developmentally appropriate practice, and empirical work examining all aspects of development. The guidelines capture the mix of old and new information, but must be understood as a flexible work-in-progress that will change as our scientific understandings change. Current science indicates that young children learn best when they are emotionally and physically safe and secure, and there is support for the family's culture.



Social relationships form the foundation for early learning. Babies come into the world ready to make emotional and social connections. Within nurturing relationships that support attachment to caregivers, babies learn through their interactive emotional and social exchanges. These connections are key for learning about others and learning from others about themselves. Indeed, families and early childhood professionals' close relationships can challenge infants and toddlers interest to reach their full potential. Early childhood professionals recognize parents as children's first and most important teacher, as they work together to promote early learning by providing nurturing, good nutrition and protection. This solid foundation supports all later skills including how they approach future learning.



Infant and toddler development is a holistic process. Although researchers and practitioners often think about the infant's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development as separate processes, growth and development in each of these areas depends on the interaction between the domains with one influencing the development of another. Even though the guidelines are separated into five domain areas to bring focus to the development in each domain, parents, early childhood professionals, and policymakers must understand that development itself is not separated, but rather integrated and holistic.



Play is the most meaningful context for early learning. Learning is best when it occurs throughout a child's daily routines and experiences in a meaningful context. For infants and toddlers, play is the most meaningful context for learning where children are free to make discoveries about their world. For example, a child discovers number principles by lining up cars and toy people in one-to-one correspondence, while their caregiver offers intentional language in a playful way that extends their learning. When adults are familiar enough with the guidelines, focused and intentional teaching and guidance will build on children's interests and strengths while they are engaged in everyday play, yielding the best context for learning.



Infants and toddlers differ in their patterns of development. There are individual differences between infants and toddlers that need to be respected. Consider that children will develop at their own individual pace, and some may have developmental delays or disabilities. Also, development of skills within different domains will vary among children. Often while a child works on one domain, the growth in other domains may “pause” for a time. There are also differences based on social groupings, such as gender, socio-economics, and culture. Sensitive parenting, for example, may be defined differently in different cultural groups. In addition, children show important differences in temperament and individual interests. All of these differences underline the importance of seeing the guidelines as flexible, and not as strict timelines for development.



A Little About...Toilet Learning

The secret to toileting success is patience and timing. There is not just one “right” way or one “right” age. Think of it as just another skill you are helping the child learn. When adults don’t make a big deal about it, children are more likely to follow their own internal desire to reach this important milestone.

To find out more go to “Appendix A.10: A Little About...Toilet Learning” on page 89.

Universal Design for Learning

What are Universally Designed Settings? Supporting the needs of young children with a wide range of abilities is not new to early care settings. The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Joint Position Statement on inclusion states: “Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high-quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports.” Universal design is described as “The philosophy of developing and designing physical environments to be accessible to the greatest extent possible, to the people who use them, without the need for adaptation.”³

The concept of Universal Design in early care settings has broadened beyond the creation of physical space and materials to include curriculum, teaching strategies, play materials, activities, and experiences for successful learning. By planning for the diverse needs of infants and toddlers from the start, early care and education providers spend less time modifying or adapting the environment later. Using a Universal Design approach not only helps to ensure that all children have access to learning environments; it also encourages creativity, flexibility, and resourcefulness to meet the individual needs of all children.



³ DEC/NAEYC. (2009). Early childhood inclusion: A joint position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute

Introduction to the Stages of Development

Young Infants: Birth to 8 months

Early infancy is a time of tremendous change in a child's physical abilities, thoughts, social interactions and ability to communicate. Even though there is much development happening, infants are born prepared to learn, and equipped with remarkable capabilities. Infants are both capable and vulnerable during this time of development. The most important people to support them in reaching the up-coming significant milestones are their parents and caregivers.

We now know from scientific research that newborns are competent and are: thinking, differentiating tastes, feeling and expressing basic emotions such as interest, distress, happiness, anger, sadness, and fear, and observing and tracking people and objects in their environment. Despite their amazing abilities, newborns do sleep for a large portion of their day. Since every single thing is new to them, from the milk in their stomach to the breeze on their face, this sleep is important as it helps to consolidate all of the new information. With this in mind, it is essential that caregivers provide for individual schedules that accommodate differing sleep needs.



As infants progress beyond the newborn period, they begin to establish a routine and spend increasing amounts of time awake. The best time for them to learn is when they are quietly awake; this is the ideal time to interact with them. Infants of any age love to look at faces, particularly those of their primary caregivers. It is also a great time to have reciprocal exchanges, back and forth, just like adult conversations. Infant-focused conversations can be held using a combination of gestures, words, sounds, and facial expressions.

One of the most important understandings children gain from this early infancy period is a sense of trust. When children's needs are responded to promptly and consistently, they come to understand the world as a place that will support them and meet their needs. Their first and most important relationship is with the family. In a child care setting, young infants need one primary caregiver who will continue to provide that sense of trust. Although this attachment relationship is key, infants can develop attachments with other consistent caregivers. To maximize the infant's development, it is IMPORTANT for all caregivers involved to support the infant's primary relationship with their family.

Young infants make meaning of the world mainly through their senses. They especially rely on their mouths to experience and understand the environment. It is important to provide them with safe, washable items to mouth. Talking, singing, and holding the infant are also beneficial for sensory development. It is also a time of rapid physical growth and development. The rate of height

and weight gain is remarkable during this period. Infants learn control of their body during this time, moving from reflexive actions to more voluntary control. Development proceeds from head to toe and from the midline of the body outward. Infants gain control of their heads and torso before their arms and legs. It is important to help young infants develop physically by changing their position frequently, incorporating time on their tummies, and spending time in the outdoors.



Providing an enriched environment means stimulating infants by doing things with them, explaining what you are doing, step by step while feeding and changing diapers. There is no evidence that activities, promoted by the media (example: learning videos, on-going classical music, etc.) benefit brain development. In fact, if overused, such activities could create anxiety in the infant. It is much more productive to give them the opportunity to: hear language, reach out and grab objects, feel different textures, and look at pictures with contrasting colors. Using daily routines and activities as opportunities to experience the world with a responsive caregiver is essential for the brain to develop to its maximum potential. A few ideas of ways parents and early childhood professionals can support this brain development are to:

- Provide toys that are eye-catching, brightly colored, have varying textures, are easily cleaned, easy to grasp, but large enough so infants will not choke on them.
- Provide rings and other items for chewing, teething and exploring.
- Hang large, simple pictures on the wall with contrasting colors, as well as pictures of their family.
- Play music with purpose rather than as constant background noise.
- Provide the opportunity to view faces both real and pictured, along with unbreakable mirrors so children can see themselves.
- Provide soft, washable books that infants can explore visually and through touch and mouthing.

Children develop at different rates and in different ways. It is important to keep in mind that their development is always embedded in context: their family, both immediate and extended; their friends; their neighborhood: the values, customs, and norms of their culture. Growth and development may proceed differently – more slowly or quickly – depending on what a particular child's context is. These differences are healthy and should be nurtured and respected. For example, some cultures:

- Place less emphasis on creating a schedule for their infants. Infants are permitted to feed on demand and sleep and wake when they want to.
- Do not view independence and individuality as the primary goals for a child.
- Emphasize relationship-building over self-soothing skills.
- Do not encourage expressions of negative, individualistic emotions such as anger.

- View discipline as always coming from an outside authority. Developing an internal control is not a focus of parents from some cultures.

Experienced caregivers will trust their instincts as they use the guidelines to support the developing infant. This document offers some ideas about the amazing abilities young infants are born with and continue to develop, and it also provides ideas about what can be done to support and enjoy those developing capabilities. However, if there is a concern about an infant's development, caregivers should write down factual observations with dates noted over a period of time as documentation of those concerns.

It is important to talk with the family and encourage them to seek professional help if there are concerns. Share your notes with the family and use these resources from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

Finally, anyone who has cared for a young infant can relate to feeling frustrated and overwhelmed, particularly during the first few months as they begin to regulate their patterns for eating and sleeping. Caregivers may think the best thing to do is to keep giving of themselves, but it is actually best for both themselves and the infant if they draw on the support provided by people in their environment, childcare community, and family. It is vital to keep up with their own self-care as they get to know the infants' cues and patterns. Providers who are well-cared-for and well-rested have the potential for higher quality and more enjoyable interactions with the infants in their care.

Feel free to use this document, *Taking Care of Ourselves*, https://www.ecmhc.org/documents/TakingCare_ProviderBk_final.pdf to help in self-assessment; and contact MRTQ's TA for caregiver support. <https://mrtq.org/technical-assistance/>

Older Infants: 6 months to 18 months

This stage of development, referred to as older infants, is most notably marked by increased growth and newfound physical abilities that allow children to move around more freely. This is a period of transition between the dependency of young infancy and the growing desire for independence that is characteristic of the toddler stage. At times, older infants will bask in the delight of their newfound abilities to explore and discover everything within reach, at other times, they will depend heavily on trusted adults to ease their fears, understand their frustrations, and help them calm themselves.

Older infants' emotions are becoming more specific during this phase of development. There are:

- smiles and hugs for affection,
- anxiety at separation,



- anger at people and objects when they do not perform as expected.

There is a growing sense of self and an increased interest in peers and unfamiliar adults. Yet there are times when unfamiliar adults may cause distress or when a peer interaction is challenging. Caregivers can support emotional growth by providing a trusted presence and safe, predictable environments. It is also important for caregivers to acknowledge the child's feelings and help them understand the situation they are experiencing.

Older infants are gaining control over their large (gross motor) muscles and small (fine motor) muscles. They are using their senses to coordinate movement. They are still exploring by putting things in their mouths. With every new physical skill gained, they are able to experience and explore new objects, new textures, and new patterns of movement. They begin to learn that:

- objects have attributes (hard, soft, bumpy, slimy, etc.),
- their actions cause events to happen (pop-up toys, blocks fall down, etc.),
- adults respond to their actions (they look to adult to see reaction).

As they learn to navigate space, they learn that obstacles can be avoided. Caregivers can support physical development and the wonders of discovery by providing safe spaces both indoors and out where older infants can explore and practice their emerging skills. In addition, playing together and showing excitement in the child's accomplishments will extend their learning.

With increased physical skills comes an emergence of self-help skills. With consideration of cultural expectations, older infants may begin to attempt to dress and feed themselves. Although self-feeding can be very messy, allowing for experimentation with this process can be an important learning experience. Letting older infants do things for themselves also can help them establish a sense of self and strengthen their self-confidence.

Older infants' communication abilities are becoming increasingly more intentional. Vocal signals are being used more often to gain attention and to have needs met. They understand more words than they can say and will look toward several objects when named. Long babbled sentences mimic the conversations they hear around them.

When caregivers make eye contact and repeat early attempts at vocalizations, the older infant learns that these interactions are important and enjoyable. Caregivers also support the development of language skills by sharing interest in the objects and toys that motivate curiosity through:

- verbally labeling items,
- describing the objects' attributes,



- describing the actions of the child.

Older infants are actively learning by seeking to explore the world they inhabit and to see how their explorations and investigations impact that world. They are beginning to:

- use objects as tools,
- imitate adult actions and words,
- discover objects still exist when out of sight,
- make comparisons between 2 or more objects.

They are also beginning to understand how things fit into space and to see how they fit into the space that is around them. You will see them experiment by going under a table, getting into a box, etc. They primarily learn through this active experimentation and begin to problem-solve using trial and error.

While older infants are indeed experiencing new depths of active learning, it is important to recognize that children are unique in terms of their interests, activity levels and temperament. For example, some children might focus on communication skills for a period of time while others focus on newfound physical skills. Typically, however, there are approximate milestones for all areas of development.



Culturally consistent care provides comfort and facilitates trust and a positive sense of self. By supporting the values of the family, caregivers build children's confidence and self-esteem. It is important for the child that the parent and the caregiver discuss differences in expectations around learning and social interactions. Consistency with expectations helps older infants feel more secure. For example, some cultures approach language acquisition differently. They may not isolate an object by attributes like, size, shape or color. Metaphors may be highly valued as well as verbal play and the use of imagery in certain cultures.

Make efforts to bring the child's culture into the child care setting. Provide:

- familiar comfort items,
- foods the family eats,
- some of the native language.

This will assure older infants that there is a predictable familiarity in care settings away from their home.

Due to American culture's fast paced competitive approach to life, some people are anxious for babies to reach milestones "on time" or even "early". The notion of "in time" is a better guideline. If there is concern, anxiety can be eased by discussing concerns with a pediatrician or by a developmental screening. Early intervention services are an important resource for the child, family and caregiver. Resources from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention are a good place to start. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

Successful inclusion of infants with special needs in natural environments requires the same quality care we expect for all children. Providing an environment that is universally designed and is developmentally, as well as individually, appropriate ensures participation in all activities which is the goal. An attitude that encourages older infants with disabilities to experience and explore the world in a way appropriate for them is critical to both their learning and self-esteem, helping them feel they belong and are capable.

Young children with sensory impairments including, hearing, vision, sensory integration issues may tire more quickly than peers. Watch for stress signals and provide for frequent rest periods. When children's sensory systems do not process information accurately they may:

- be unable to attend,
- be unable to focus,
- not tolerate movement or touch,
- have affective disorders,
- lack emotional expression.

Concerns of this nature require professional assessment. Contact Maine Child Development Services (CDS) <https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/cds/contact>

While individual older infants acquire language and communication skills at varying rates, it is important to be alert to some early warning signs that warrant further attention:

- a child who stops babbling at 8 to 9 months,
- a child who does not show interest in interacting with objects and caregivers,
- a child who does not give, show or point to objects by 11 to 12 months,
- a child who does not play games such as peek-a-boo by 11 to 12 months.

Concerns of this nature, too, require professional assessment. Talking with parents and encouraging them to contact Maine Child



Development Services (CDS) is key. To explore next steps go to <https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/cds/contact>

Adults can help older infants thrive by providing a responsive, reliable presence and reassurance when thresholds of frustration and excitement are reached. Appropriate materials and safe environments that facilitate active discovery and exploration, coupled with adults' patience and understanding of individual needs, allow children to achieve their full potential.

To maintain that patience, it is important for caregivers to keep up with their own self-care. This could include ensuring adequate sleep, exercise and healthy eating, along with opportunities to enjoy favorite activities by oneself and with family or friends. Healthy and rested caregivers can maintain their sense of humor and read that book for the hundredth time knowing they are helping to successfully develop our next generation.

Feel free to use this document, *Taking Care of Ourselves*, https://www.ecmhc.org/documents/TakingCare_ProviderBk_final.pdf to help in self-assessment; and contact MRTQ's TA for caregiver support. <https://mrtq.org/technical-assistance/>

Toddlers: 16 months to 36 months

The toddler stage of development is one characterized by a tension between the desire for independence and the need for continued dependence on a trusted caregiver. Toddlers yearn to be social beings, yet they require lots of assistance in managing the complexity of relationships with peers. Problem-solving skills emerge, as does the need to be self-sufficient. Exploration changes from discovery of the attributes and function of things to the purposeful manipulation and investigation of the world around them.

As toddlers maneuver their way through the developmental milestones, they need a secure base in the form of a loving, trusted adult who respects their growing needs and big emotions. Then they can begin trying out their independence, returning frequently to the adult for guidance, affection and reassurance.



Toddlers are unique social beings, while receptive skills are increasing, they are not yet equipped with the expressive language skills necessary to navigate a variety of experiences. Forming the basis for toddlers' social interactions are:

- body language,
- gestures,
- single word utterances,

- physical overtures.

As language skills develop, toddlers have more success in communicating their needs to playmates, especially when supported by modeling from the caregiver. Young toddlers often enjoy playing next to, or nearby a friend, while older toddlers begin to enjoy more cooperative play. Learning these skills is often frustrating and may result in conflict. Caregivers need to acknowledge the child's feelings and explain the situation helping the child to feel understood.

Physically, toddlers begin to lose their side-to-side gait, and balance and coordination begin to improve. They start to have a steady gait, and practice running, galloping, two-footed hopping, and climbing. It is important to provide space for all of this physical development indoors as well as outdoors. Toddlers also love to manipulate small objects using art tools, like paintbrushes and markers, with more dexterity. Since a toddler's grip still involves the entire hand, wider implements can be used. As they develop and their experience increases, they will begin to use the forefinger and thumb to color, write, and paint.

This stage is also marked by significant effort for mastery in self-help skills. The "Me do it" attitude permeates toileting, feeding, and dressing routines even in the earliest months of the stage. Toddlers thoroughly enjoy imitating adults and helping. This growing sense of autonomy is supported differently in different cultures. Some may want to offer to let toddlers help with simple tasks:

- washing tables,
- using small brooms,
- putting napkins out.



When they are ready for the challenge of toilet learning, toddlers will let you know by remaining dry for longer periods between diaper changes, announcing when their diaper is wet, and saying when they need to go. It is important to work with families to recognize these cues. Allow the toddler some control in the toileting process as this self-guided mastery will build a toddler's sense of self-competence. Adults should be sensitive to the fact that the normal readiness range for toilet learning is very broad and may extend past toddlerhood.

Throughout the toddler stage of development, language – both expressive and receptive – takes on new importance. Whether playing with a friend, communicating a need to an adult, or listening to a story read aloud, language in all its forms opens a critical door for a developing toddler. Its use is powerful and functional, creative and fun – just the elements needed to entice a toddler. Some delightful means of exposing children to the gift of language are:

- singing songs with actions,
- interactive reading,

- using chants,
- practicing rhymes and finger plays,
- signing with speech.

Toddlers enjoy the sound of their own voice, announcing “mine”, asking “why?”, or reasoning about where something or someone has gone (i.e. “mommy work”). In addition to the pleasure of sound, a toddler’s ability to communicate with the world around them is evidence of their growing autonomy.

Intellectually, toddlers are actively constructing their own knowledge. The ability to hear, see, smell, taste or touch their immediate environment empowers toddlers to understand concepts, practice skills, and solve problems through their play. Early numeracy like sorting by color and other attributes grow in complexity to include counting and exploring the connection between objects and numbers. Toddlers play in a sensory table enables them to learn about basic math skills such as:

- comparing the size of objects,
- recognizing the volume of containers,
- considering the quantity of items,
- matching and identifying simple patterns.



Finally, toddlers begin to develop their imaginations. The magic of symbolic thought opens the door to more complex play with peers, to developing shared perspective, and to practice human interactions. Support toddlers’ exploration of non-traditional gender roles during dramatic play including family roles, occupational roles, etc. Toddlers begin to understand traditional gender roles through socialization. Boys may try on the role of mother, while girls may want to be the father; they may want to try being their teacher, too. This is an important way for children to try out a variety of social roles and develop an unbiased understanding of gender roles. This newfound symbolic thought is shown by their ability to:

- hold a picture in their mind,
- use scribbles and marks to recreate an image on paper,
- pretend in the housekeeping area,
- tell their own story based on ones they have heard.

Caregivers should be sensitive to the range of development that occurs for children 16-36 months of age. Activities and materials that are appropriate for the 36-month old may not be appropriate for the 18 month old. Learning occurs when all toddlers have ample time to fully participate in daily routines and activities. Offer a wide array of activities that allow toddlers of varying abilities to

feel successful:

- open-ended art activities that focus on the process of exploration to refine motor skills,
- produce group art as well as individual art,
- while playing in the sensory tables offer individual trays of sand or bins of water for children who may be overwhelmed by the closeness of so many peers,
- ensure that playgrounds include opportunities for a child with limited mobility to transfer to a play structure, sand box or swing,
- work toward a genuine partnership with families so care routines and family child rearing practices across home, school, and cultural environments reinforce each other.

If there is a concern about a toddler's development, caregivers and the family will want to have on-going conversations and use these resources from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html> Doing factual observations over a period of time can help document concerns and be shared with families who may want to contact Maine's Child Development Services (CDS) to have a developmental assessment done. <https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/cds/contact>

Toddlers need caregivers to be patient and understand that learning will often look messy and disorganized during this stage of development. It is important for caregivers to practice self-care in order to have the energy to keep up with this busy stage of development. Caregivers' ability to regulate their own emotions and remain calm supports the toddler's ability to gain this self-regulation skill. Know that every day, adult interactions and responsiveness to these toddlers are shaping the toddlers' brains and fostering an understanding of the world.

Feel free to use this document, *Taking Care of Ourselves*, https://www.ecmhc.org/documents/TakingCare_ProviderBk_final.pdf to help in self-assessment; and contact MRTQ's TA for caregiver support. <https://mrtq.org/technical-assistance/>

Introduction to Social and Emotional Development

Social and Emotional development of infants and toddlers refers to many things:

- their developing capacity to form close, secure and trusting relationships with adults and peers;
- their need to experience, express and regulate emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways;
- their need to explore the environment and learn in the context of family, peers, community and culture.

Infants and toddlers first rely on others to help them be calm and ready to take in information from the environment. A relaxed caregiver helps a child to feel safe and competent. This adult/child relationship is referred to as co-regulation and is an important step in the development of self-regulation skills. With adult support, infants use mechanisms (use of a soothing object, sound, action, etc.) which help them regulate their emotions and use feedback to adjust their actions. Developing an ability to regulate more complex behaviors and emotions requires adult guidance to integrate these mechanisms with the development of their cognitive, social, and language skills. The ability to self-regulate behavior and emotions is a competency that emerges from the experience of being calmed and guided in the use of self-soothing strategies. Co-regulation can be used to support learning in all domains.

Early childhood educators can promote social and emotional well-being of children by providing an environment that encourages participation, cooperation, and positive interactions with others. A cooperative learning environment encourages children to understand and celebrate their similarities and differences. Through intentional teaching strategies, children can begin to develop a positive self-image and learn self-regulation and appropriate conflict resolution skills that they will use the rest of their lives.



A Little About...Infant Massage

Infant massage is a way to connect and build a positive bond between a loving adult and an infant. Try it! You'll both like it!

To find out more go to "Appendix A.4: A Little About...Infant Massage" on page 82.

Goal Topic: Trust and Emotional Security (Emotional Functioning)

Definition: Development of the ability to express and manage a range of emotions, recognize and interpret the emotions of others, and express care and concern towards others. *Note: This is an extremely important topic to be explored and experienced with children. Labeling and accepting ALL feelings throughout the day will support children's development in many ways.*

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Expresses feelings of comfort, discomfort, enjoyment, fear, surprise, anger or unhappiness through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • various facial expressions • body movements • gestures <p>Quiets or stops crying when held, rocked, given a change of position or level of stimulation in the environment, or talked to by a familiar adult.</p> <p>Attends with interest when others show range of emotions through facial expressions, voices, or gestures.</p> <p>May cry when another child cries.</p>	<p>Expresses a variety of emotions and modifies expression according to the reactions of familiar adults.</p> <p>Looks to/seek comfort from familiar adults when distressed and accepts reassurance.</p> <p>Responds to others' emotional expressions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharing emotional reactions – smiling when adult smiles, showing excitement when other children are excited • looks sad or concerned when another child is crying; may offer soft toy, blanket, or food <p>Displays confidence that needs will be met by caregiver, evidenced by child watching and waiting a short time for caregiver to meet the recognized need.</p>	<p>Self-conscious emotions appear: shame, embarrassment, guilt, pride.</p> <p>Shows understanding of some emotional expressions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • labeling them • asking questions about them • responding appropriately (verbally or non-verbally) <p>May use artistic tools for emotional expression.</p> <p>Expresses empathy toward other children or adults.</p> <p>Begins to express feelings of anger and frustration: tells friends "I don't like that!".</p> <p>Has an expectation that the caregiver will provide what is needed in most situations.</p>

Goal Topic: Trust and Emotional Security (Emotional Functioning)

Definition: Development of the ability to express and manage a range of emotions, recognize and interpret the emotions of others, and express care and concern towards others. *Note: This is an extremely important topic to be explored and experienced with children. Labeling and accepting ALL feelings throughout the day will support children's development in many ways.*

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Respond to infants' cues and emotional expressions with warmth and understanding. Example: "It looks like you're sad to see your Dad leave for work."</p> <p>Match infants' affect during interactions (diaper changes, feeding, etc.) Acknowledge what you are doing to meet the infant's needs. "I'm getting your lunch ready!"</p> <p>Diaper Changing:</p> <p>Try to mirror the child's emotional expressions while changing diapers, and label the emotions. Example: "You're sad because your bottom is sore. It hurts and makes you sad. Your face looks sad, too!"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Use facial expressions and gestures to match children's affect. Example: When they show a concerned look, you do too.</p> <p>Include a broad range of feelings vocabulary. Example: "You look excited about the strawberries for lunch today" or "It's frustrating when you can't fit the piece in the puzzle, isn't it?"</p> <p>Be responsive to build trust. Offer comfort using the child's name often.</p> <p>Preparing for a fire drill, it is important to be calm and soothing as you evacuate the children. Example: "There's the loud fire drill; we're going to get in the evacuation crib and ride outside. Here we go."</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Ask questions like "How could we help our friend feel better?" or "What do you think she's feeling right now?" during times of conflict.</p> <p>Choose stories that include characters experiencing a range of emotions; ask children to describe what's happening.</p> <p>Whenever possible connect an emotional label to the facial expression of characters in the book. Example: "The little pig looks scared, doesn't he? Why do you think he's scared? Do you think he's afraid because he can't see his mother?"</p> <p>Build feelings vocabulary beyond just happy or sad. Example: "Are you worried you won't get to play outside?"</p> <p>Provide consistent routines which are predictable, supporting the development of trust.</p>

Goal Topic: Self-Regulation

Definition: Development of the ability to regulate emotions and mood.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Comforts self by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• clutching toy• sucking thumb• stroking blanket <p>Starts, maintains, or stops social contact through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• looks• gestures• sounds• smiles <p>Anticipates being lifted or fed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• molds body-turns towards adult• opens mouth <p>Signals (using cues) when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• full-pushes bottle away, stops nursing• wants to be put down – squirms, pushes away	<p>Comforts self by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sucking on fingers• retrieving a familiar object• engaging in a familiar routine• utilizing quiet space in classroom when needed <p>Expresses own needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• gestures when hungry• grabs blanket when tired• calls to engage caregiver <p>Anticipates and participates in routine activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• lifts arms when dressing• holds out cup <p>Can be restless and determined creating conflicted needs which can lead to power struggles emerging (Example: child is tired but doesn't want to stop playing).</p>	<p>Shows impulse control by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• beginning to understand their role in play (need to wait for a turn for a toy)• tolerating brief wait times or delays• anticipates and follows routines when prompted:• helps with clean up• gets ready to go for a walk• joins group time for dancing, stories, etc.• begins to dress themselves as part of daily routines, even though it may take longer <p>Begins to manage and adjust actions and behavior with the guidance of familiar adults:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• using words or signs such as “no” or “stop” during conflict• let's a trusted adult know when hungry, tired or needing assistance with a peer

Goal Topic: Self-Regulation

Definition: Development of the ability to regulate emotions and mood.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Naptime:</p> <p>Attend to individual cues and recognize when infant signals that they are tired (fussiness, rubbing their face, etc.), over-stimulated, in need of stimulation, etc.</p> <p>Begin to incorporate strategies the child has demonstrated as patterns of self-regulating behaviors (sucks thumb, rubs blanket on body, uses pacifier, etc.).</p> <p>Provide brief opportunities for infant to self-soothe, support their learning.</p> <p>Example: "I can see that you are tired by the way that you're rubbing your eyes, do you want to lie down or rock with me?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Snack Time and Throughout the Day:</p> <p>Acknowledge child's emotions, and offer ideas for the way the child self-soothes. Example: "You really wanted that book. I wonder if you might like your favorite book while you wait?"</p> <p>Understand that older infants may revert back to behavior more typical of early infancy when tired, hungry, frustrated, or conquering a new skill.</p> <p>Example: "Are you hungry for a snack? You found a way to feel better while you wait by holding your favorite 'lovey'. I'll go get you some snack right now."</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Choice Time:</p> <p>Provide rituals and routines which accompany important events of the day (snack, mealtime, nap, going outdoors, etc.).</p> <p>Example: "That song means we're done playing, and now what do we do? That's right ~ we wash our hands now!"</p> <p>Allow time and space for children to release their frustration in non-harmful ways.</p> <p>Example: "It looks like you are frustrated, would you like to throw beanbags into a basket, (squeeze a ball, work with clay, or sit and read a book with me)?"</p>



A Little About...Temperamental Tendencies

Each person, child and adult is unique in their own temperament. The compatibility of temperaments can affect the quality of the adult-child relationship.

To find out more go to "Appendix A.g: A Little About...Temperament Tendencies" on page 88

Goal Topic: Sense of Self, Self-Awareness, and Self-Concept

Definition: Emerging awareness of self and others; understanding that the self is a separate being with connectedness to others and a growing ability to make independent decisions and choices.

Indicators: Birth-8 months

Uses hands to explore different parts of the body.

Beginning to understand that they can make things happen; (example: pat a musical toy to make music come again, or raise arms to be picked up by parent or caregiver).

Cries when a parent or caregiver leaves the room.

Smiles at self in mirror.

Recognizes, holds, touches own feet and hands.

Shows preferences; cries when something is not liked.

Indicators: 6-18 months

Points to or indicates parts of the body when asked.

Express thoughts and feelings by saying "no!"

Begins to recognize and respond to own name (example: gestures at sound of name or vocalizes at sound of name).

Recognizes familiar people in addition to immediate family or primary caregiver.

Uses name to refer to significant people; for example, "Mama" or Papa".

Shows distress when preferred people don't interact with them.

Shows signs of mastery; for example:, laughs at own cleverness or is frustrated when unable to do something.

Indicators: 16-36 months

Recognizes own image in the mirror or photo and understands that it is self.

Says own name when asked and names others in family.

Identifies self by gender, for example:, "I boy".

Begins to make comparisons between self and others; for example:, "Tommy is boy like me."

Uses adjectives to refer to self, for example:, "Me big".

Communicates, "I do it!" or "No" when caregiver or parent tries to help.

Respect toddlers' valid opinion of saying no.

Wants to experience the world on own terms; for example, avoids messy materials.

Uses evaluative words to talk about self, "Me good girl?"

Goal Topic: Sense of Self, Self-Awareness, and Self-Concept

Definition: Emerging awareness of self and others; understanding that the self is a separate being with connectedness to others and a growing ability to make independent decisions and choices.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Diapering:</p> <p>Encourage hand and feet play, when a child's movement causes mobile to move, verbally acknowledge with excitement.</p> <p>Example: "You kicked your feet and the bird moved!"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Playtime:</p> <p>Use mirror play to show awareness of self-image by smiling, patting, vocalizing. Add game play such as peek-a-boo, chase, etc. Speak child's name and react verbally to child's response.</p> <p>Example: "You looked right at me when I said your name, Joey, and now I can see you!"</p> <p>Provide meaningful and relevant choices.</p> <p>Show affection and delight over their new accomplishments.</p> <p>Help them during frustrating situations by talking them through or suggesting a solution.</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Dressing and Throughout the Day:</p> <p>Support child to be independent with dressing and other self-help skills when appropriate. Offer choices whenever possible,</p> <p>Example: "Would you like to wear this red shirt or this blue one?"</p> <p>"Your choices are the crackers or the sandwich. Which one would you like now?"</p> <p>When possible, show the child the two options which may help them make the choice.</p> <p>Make saying "no" a fun game versus a power struggle.</p> <p>Provide photos of the children/families, talk about them.</p> <p>Play simple games like "Open, shut them".</p>



Goal Topic: Relationships with Adults

Definition: The developing ability to respond, become attached to and engage with adults.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Seeks comfort from caring adult by crying and looking for him or her.</p> <p>Is more easily soothed by sound of primary caregiver's voice than unfamiliar voice.</p> <p>Shows preference for familiar adult, lifts arms to be picked up by special adult; squealing and kicking when familiar adult appears.</p> <p>Responds to being held: Calming down, molding of the body to the caregiver.</p>	<p>Forms attachment with primary caregiver; more easily soothed, studies the face, attends longer to caregiver's facial expressions.</p> <p>Distinguishes between familiar and unfamiliar adults.</p> <p>Exhibits separation anxiety, cries briefly when separated from parent or caregiver.</p> <p>Feels secure to explore environment in presence of primary caregiving adult.</p> <p>Plays away from the primary caregiver and then moves close to him or her from time to time to check in.</p> <p>When distressed child seeks to be physically close to primary caregiver.</p> <p>Imitates sequence of events after seeing the sequence completed by a caregiving adult; for example, read a story to a doll or put a teddy to bed.</p>	<p>Seeks attention of a special caregiver and communicates "Watch me!" before proudly displaying a new skill.</p> <p>Cries and looks for special caregiver after falling.</p> <p>Tries to influence adult behavior; for example, brings favorite book and expresses "One more?" even though she has just heard "We are all done; time for a nap".</p> <p>Gesturing for one more hug as a parent is leaving for work.</p> <p>Uses adult as a resource through words or actions; for example, asks a caregiver for a cracker or for help getting jacket on.</p> <p>Begins to follow simple instructions or guidance of a caregiver.</p>

Goal Topic: Relationships with Adults

Definition: The developing ability to respond, become attached to and engage with adults.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Throughout the Day:</p> <p>Respond quickly to baby's signals and needs. Understand babies communicate through different types of cries for hunger, boredom, frustration, tiredness, discomfort/pain, overstimulation, or a wet diaper.</p> <p>Example: "It's really busy in here, isn't it? I can see that you are getting overwhelmed. Do you want to snuggle with a book?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Transition:</p> <p>Foster a sense of security by telling child ahead of time what will happen. Include child in the routine by telling her what you are doing and describing your actions. Offer learning opportunities through predictable caregiving routines.</p> <p>Example: "Are you all done eating? Let's wash our hands. What are we doing next? Let's get our coats to go outside."</p> <p>Enjoy playful moments throughout the day, exploring materials and/or books together.</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Mealtime:</p> <p>Provide a secure base from which toddlers can begin to explore the environment, socialization and imaginative play. Be close by to provide help if needed and give toddler confidence to try new skills or enter new play situations. Don't over react when mistakes occur.</p> <p>Example: "Oops, it looks like you missed your cup, let's wipe up the spill and try again".</p> <p>Participate in brief teacher-led experiences such as book reading, movement, etc.</p>

Goal Topic: Relationships with Children

Definition: Noticing, relating with and becoming attached to people around the child's own age.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Turns to the voice of an older sibling.</p> <p>Notices a crying peer with a serious expression.</p> <p>Watches other children with interest.</p> <p>Reaches out to touch eyes or hair of a peer.</p> <p>Laughs when an older sibling or peer makes a funny face.</p> <p>Tries to get the attention of another child by smiling or babbling to him/her.</p>	<p>Plays side-by-side with another child.</p> <p>Matches emotions with a peer's emotions.</p> <p>Participates in spontaneous interactions with peers and exhibits enjoyment.</p> <p>Influences and responds to a peer's behavior in a simplistic manner; for example, handing a playmate a doll.</p> <p>Begins to show preference among play partners, often hugging or touching them.</p> <p>Knows the names of peers when they are referred to.</p> <p>Knows the family members of frequent playmates.</p>	<p>Engages in social pretend play with one or two friends and take on roles; for example, pretends to be a dog while a friend pretends to be the owner.</p> <p>Expresses an interest in playing with a particular child.</p> <p>Exhibits sadness when a favorite friend is not at school; "When you miss your friend here at school, she misses you too".</p> <p>Engages in joint exploration and has begun associative play; for example, attempts to build a block tower with a friend or can wait a short time for "my turn".</p> <p>Shows concern for a peer who is in distress.</p> <p>Engages in reciprocal play such as run and chase or offer and receive.</p>

Goal Topic: Relationships with Children

Definition: Noticing, relating with and becoming attached to people around the child's own age.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Social Play:</p> <p>Children learn by watching others; provide infants with opportunities to be around other children, sometimes including those slightly older than themselves.</p> <p>Be present and provide direct support during peer interactions. Narrate children's actions and interactions and label appropriate touch.</p> <p>Example: "Look, your friend is trying to say hi to you, he's patting you on the arm. Can you gently touch him back?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Outdoor Play:</p> <p>Because sharing is not a skill that older infants have learned yet, provide more than one of their favorite toys. Provide toys that encourage interactions such as a rocking boat, balls, telephones.</p> <p>Position yourself to guide play and promote successful interactions between children.</p> <p>Example: "You are playing with the ball right now. I think your friend would like a turn. Can you roll it to him?"</p> <p>Example: "It looks like you want to hug your friend, but she doesn't want that now."</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Free Play:</p> <p>Allow toddlers to begin to problem solve, understand natural consequences of behavior, and explore interaction within the safety of a caregiver's fair and reasonable limit setting. Give them opportunities to share materials (blocks, sensory table, etc.).</p> <p>Encourage growing empathy skills by labeling feelings and talking about how our actions impact others.</p> <p>Model positive social interactions by offering positive guidance when toddlers' attempts at socialization fail.</p> <p>Example: "If you both want to throw a ball inside, let's get the balls and bucket and see if you can throw the balls into the bucket!"</p>



Introduction to Approaches to Learning

Approaches to Learning is a new domain in Infant and Toddler Maine Early Learning and Development Standards. The Goal Topics for this Standard/Domain are important dispositions which can be intentionally supported by caregivers:

- Initiative
- Curiosity
- Engagement
- Persistence
- Creativity

Babies are born to learn; their eagerness to learn, curiosity, and openness to new experiences seem to come naturally. Nurturing these characteristics in infants and toddlers is important for building foundations for their learning in the more structured environments they will experience in the future. Infants must have multiple opportunities to explore the environment and be offered a variety of materials that stimulate all their senses. Materials and equipment should capitalize on their interests and provide novelty.

At the same time, infants cannot be expected to build on these early dispositions on their own. Caregivers play an important role in stimulating and encouraging exploratory behaviors and helping babies establish connections between these behaviors and newly learned concepts and skills. The key is to engage children in learning in ways that are meaningful and enjoyable for them. Allow them to participate at their own pace, coming and going at will, and safely exploring what they show an interest in.

Dispositions and development that contribute to children's success in school and beyond—such as persistence, engagement, and initiative—may show greater variability between children; some children may need greater support than others in order to develop these characteristics. Infants' expression of their approaches to learning varies depending on their temperament and the cultural context. Caregivers' awareness of these differences and of the ways to address them is critical for supporting these competencies that honor the child's cultural identity.

A well-designed learning environment contributes to a child's feelings of safety and trust. An engaging environment supports children's play and builds upon their strengths, interests, knowledge, and ability to explore the world around them. An intentionally designed environment is one in which adults play a deliberate role in facilitating children's exploration. Such learning environments encourage infants and toddlers to explore, initiate and problem solve. Caregiver interactions play a critical role in extending each child's curiosity, experimentation, and reflection.

Goal Topic: Engagement and Persistence

Definition: Continues to work at tasks or activities even when challenged. Engages and explores thoroughly and tries to solve problems.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Makes and maintains eye contact while being held for feeding.</p> <p>Finds ways to bring hand to mouth even when hand is covered by a blanket or clothing.</p> <p>Tries to reach a toy hanging from a high chair.</p> <p>Tries to move bottle, cries, or touches adult when bottle is empty.</p> <p>Begins to look for dropped objects.</p>	<p>Looks out the window for a familiar caregiver to return.</p> <p>Uses several different ways to get a toy when it's out of reach.</p> <p>Reaches for caregiver's hands to continue game/song:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peek-A-Boo• Pat-A-Cake• Twinkle, Twinkle <p>Continues to feed self even when having difficulty.</p>	<p>Empties the entire toy box while looking for a favorite toy.</p> <p>Turns puzzle piece in a variety of directions to fit into puzzle frame.</p> <p>Climbs into a box or open cupboard to get toys or objects that are out of reach.</p> <p>Attempts to put on shoes or coat by self, tries for a while before asking for help.</p> <p>Follows after and says "Good-bye" or cries when caregiver is leaving the room or going out of the house.</p> <p>Overcomes an obstacle in the way of obtaining a desired object.</p>

Goal Topic: Engagement and Persistence

Definition: Continues to work at tasks or activities even when challenged. Engages and explores thoroughly and tries to solve problems.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Feeding:</p> <p>When the baby lets you know they are done or they want more, acknowledge their efforts. Example: "Thank you for letting me know you are all done (you want more)."</p> <p>Baby explores food on a tray. Example: "You are trying to pick that up, aren't you? I think you figured it out!"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Blocks:</p> <p>Caregivers facilitate by helping children extend time engaged in an activity through modeling, encouragement and joint attention. Example: "Look at you putting the block on top of the other one! Now what will you do?"</p> <p>Child attempts to stand on a block not meant for standing on. Example: "You would like to stand on something small. That block is not safe to stand on. Let's see if we can find something safe for you to practice standing on."</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Dressing and Throughout the Day:</p> <p>Encourage child verbally to continue efforts to put boots on to go outside. Example: "I see you working hard to get those boots on your feet."</p> <p>Facilitate the engagement in exploration of interesting materials, and extend the play by offering encouragement and modeling. Example: "That goop is very stretchy! I can pull mine. You are pounding yours and it is getting flat!"</p>



A Little About...Feeding

Feeding is embedded in our cultures. So, talk with families about how a baby is held, how the baby participates, and what foods are introduced and when. Make mealtimes relaxing and enjoyable!

To find out more go to "Appendix A.3: A Little About...Feeding" on page 81

Goal Topic: Initiative and Curiosity

Definition: Shows interest and engages in active exploration (visual, auditory, tactile) of self, objects, and surroundings. Develops ability to engage others in interaction.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Explores a variety of materials including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• their body• people• objects <p>Vocalizes or makes noise to attract caregiver's attention.</p> <p>Uses facial expressions, sounds or gestures to show likes or dislikes.</p> <p>Shows eagerness to investigate novel objects.</p>	<p>Lifts arms up in order to be picked up by caregiver.</p> <p>Gets a favorite book and brings to caregiver to read.</p> <p>Shows preference for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• certain foods• toys• activities <p>Willing to approach new people, things and experiences.</p> <p>Shows enthusiasm for exploring and learning (clap, smile).</p>	<p>Studies people and things around them seeking more information.</p> <p>Shows interest and/or approaches other children for play.</p> <p>Makes their choices known by talking about what they want and asking questions using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• gestures• facial expressions• words <p>Starts to sing a song or move to music and others join in.</p> <p>Shows interest in trying new experiences and new ways of doing things.</p>

Goal Topic: Initiative and Curiosity

Definition: Shows interest and engages in active exploration (visual, auditory, tactile) of self, objects, and surroundings. Develops ability to engage others in interaction.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Diapering and/or Feeding:</p> <p>Child reaches up and finds a foot. Example: "What did you find? Are those your feet? Are those toes?"</p> <p>Baby is reaching towards the mother when she is breastfeeding or bottle-feeding him. Example: "Are you trying to say hi to Mommy? Do you see Mommy?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Outdoor Play:</p> <p>Children are jumping in puddles with their boots on. Example: "What do you think is in those puddles? How big of a splash can you make?"</p> <p>A child is investigating a plant (which you know is not poisonous). Example: "What does that flower feel like? Is it soft?"</p> <p>Mealtime:</p> <p>Child playfully pushes spoon towards the caregiver's mouth. Caregiver: "Is this bite for me?" Pretends to eat food off from spoon and passes spoon back to the child, "Your turn."</p> <p>Child explores self-feeding, texture, color, and feel of food on plate or tray.</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Circle Time:</p> <p>Children are choosing their own songs. Explore ways to have them repeat actions or verbalizations. Encourage them to share with the group how to move to the song. Example: "Can you show your friends how we will move to this tune?"</p> <p>Sensory box is being passed around for children to explore. Example: "What do you feel in the sensory box? Is it rough? Is it smooth?"</p> <p>Outdoor Play:</p> <p>Children are introduced to a new ride-on toy. Encourage them to try the new toy and show their peers how to take turns. Example: "Look how we ride this around our track and then pass it to a friend when we're done."</p> <p>Children hear a siren and are concerned. Acknowledge their interest and help them "track down" the sound, if possible.</p>



Goal Topic: Creativity

Definition: Explores new experiences in a familiar setting. Develops ability to invent, pretend and try new things.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Finds new ways to use familiar toys/ materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • putting a block in a cup • using a spoon to bang on tray • "inviting" an adult to mouth rattle <p>Laughs and tries to imitate noises or silly sounds.</p> <p>Investigates pushing water or food around with hand on high chair tray or table.</p> <p>Begins to repeat chance sensorimotor activities to elicit a reaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bang hands on table • drop a toy <p>Anticipates being lifted and moves body accordingly.</p>	<p>Bangs on pots and pans with a spoon to make noise then tries the same action on other objects.</p> <p>Uses familiar objects in pretend play and imitates sounds the objects make: animal figures, puppets, other items (cars, trucks, etc.).</p> <p>Begins to move to the music of varying rhythms, tempos, and types.</p> <p>Uses a colorful scarf in different ways such as dancing, waving it or using it as a blanket.</p> <p>Begins to focus attention on one activity or toy for a short period of time.</p> <p>Engages in "dump and fill" with items.</p> <p>Begins to explore expression with art implements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scribbling with large crayons • creating markings in finger paint • molding playdough 	<p>Acts out dramatic play role-play themes with others; engages in make- believe play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • imitates a dog or cat by crawling and making barking or meowing noises • offers a caregiver or peer a pretend snack or drink during play <p>Uses items for other than intended purpose Carries on an imaginary conversation using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a toy telephone • baby doll • other items (stuffed animal, book, etc.) <p>Participates in music activities and dances with increased rhythm.</p> <p>Makes silly faces to see other children and adults react.</p> <p>Creatively explores and experiments with sensory mediums, combining different types of materials to make something new.</p> <p>Uses puppets in dramatic play.</p>

Goal Topic: Creativity

Definition: Explores new experiences in a familiar setting. Develops ability to invent, pretend and try new things.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Meal Time:</p> <p>Allow baby to explore food textures on their tray. Example: "Does that squash feel squishy? What are you going to do with that Cheerio?"</p> <p>Comment on the sensory experiences of smell, sight, sound, taste, temperature, etc. Example: "Does that banana smell sweet? How does it taste?"</p> <p>Music and Movement:</p> <p>Sing to the infant regularly, provide a variety of sounds and music, and move with infant to music.</p> <p>Example: "Do you like this kind of music that makes us want to bounce up and down? Do you feel your body moving?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Small Group Time:</p> <p>While playing music in small group, provide scarves, shakers, etc. Example: "How can you make your scarf move?"</p> <p>Allow children a variety of choices in materials.</p> <p>Show your creativity with materials. Example: "These bubbles float up when I blow them this way! What happens when you blow them?"</p> <p>Free Play:</p> <p>Provide variety of sensory materials. Play music together by hitting pots and pans with a wooden spoon, and by singing and moving to the music together. Example: "Should we be a band in a parade? Can you play your instrument as we march?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Dramatic Play:</p> <p>Ask children what animal they would like to be. Help them find "costumes." Example: "How long of a tail do you need? What sound does your animal make?"</p> <p>Knowing the child, consider what they might be interested in exploring or experimenting with. Example: "You spent a lot of time with the markers yesterday, would you like to make a list for the grocery store? What should we use to make a list?"</p> <p>Offering materials that allow children to engage in self-expression, make-believe play, object representation. Example: "You seem to really like that fire fighter helmet. Are you putting out fires today? What about your boots?"</p> <p>Be sure to allow non-traditional and neutral gender alternatives for dress-up options.</p>



Introduction to Early Language and Literacy

Infants and toddlers acquire language and literacy skills through meaningful interactions with people in their lives. Much of their language learning is incidental and arises naturally during play and everyday routines and experiences. They also need intentional interactions with the adults caring for them to further their development, provide motivation and strengthen important skills in the Goal Topic areas of:

- Language Comprehension
- Language Expression
- Emergent Literacy

The first pre-intentional stage when babies cry and have their needs met lays the groundwork for the next developmental stage of expressive language, the intentional stage, where infants use gestures, body movements and facial expressions to communicate. This lays the foundation for symbolic communication when children begin to use words to represent what they are interested in. For children with communication delays, gestures and pictures may be used for a more extended period of time. Dual language learning should be intentionally supported throughout these stages.

Supportive language and literacy learning environments include three important elements: responsive conversations that use rich vocabulary; daily interactions with books; and engaging interactions with sounds, songs, finger plays, print, etc. The curriculum for infants and toddlers should integrate language and emerging literacy in all areas of development. Guided encouragement from adults in the use of books and creative expression through play provides children with the tools for lifelong learning and the ability to become critical thinkers and effective communicators. The foundation built during these years is essential to the child's later learning.



A Little About... Multilingual Learners and Their Families

Dual Language Learners (DLL) are defined as children who are learning two (or more) languages at the same time while developing their first (or home/heritage) language. Caregivers and teachers should create welcoming environments that respect and promote both second language acquisition and preservation of children's home languages and cultural identities.

To find out more go to "Appendix A.7: A Little About...Multilingual Learners and Their Families" on page 85.

Goal Topic: Language Comprehension (Receptive Language)

Definition: Understanding the meaning of information, ideas and feelings expressed by others; increased understanding of language (comprehension) and vocabulary development (understanding). Initial language development occurring within the context of relationship. *Note: Refers to mode of communication in which the child is most fluent including the child's primary language, sign language or assistive communication devices.*

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Maintains eye contact with person looking at him or her:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mutually gazes with primary caregivers, shows preference for voice of primary caregivers <p>Reacts to human voice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> appears to watch or listen, quiets self, turns toward conversation <p>Reacts to new voices or sounds by becoming more quiet or active:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> startles or cries at loud sounds, shows different responses to tones of voice, looks for source of sounds 	<p>Responds with gestures or vocal signals to familiar words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responds to own name turns to look at familiar person/object/pet when named understands simple phrases as “bye-bye”, “hot”, etc. points or reaches to familiar objects when named as in body parts, favorite toys, family pictures <p>Understands simple one step requests such as “Get your blanket”, “Give me your cup”.</p> <p>Looks to adult for messages about appropriate or inappropriate behavior.</p> <p>Attends to and enjoys listening to adult voices: rhymes, songs, short stories, imitation games such as pat-a-cake.</p>	<p>Understands a variety of simple two-step requests and follows multi-step daily routines like handwashing.</p> <p>Understands names for common objects, familiar people, familiar actions.</p> <p>Understands contrasts such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> yes/no, come/go, run/stop, up/down, fast/slow <p>Understands prepositions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on, in, under, over <p>With adult direction, finds items needed for an activity.</p> <p>Shows increased attention span when being read to, listening to rhymes, finger plays, songs of increased complexity.</p>

Goal Topic: Language Comprehension (Receptive Language)

Definition: Understanding the meaning of information, ideas and feelings expressed by others; increased understanding of language (comprehension) and vocabulary development (understanding). Initial language development occurring within the context of relationship. *Note: Refers to mode of communication in which the child is most fluent including the child's primary language, sign language or assistive communication devices.*

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Lap Time:</p> <p>Use child's name and engage in reciprocal interactions with sounds and facial expressions. Example: "Joe, you crinkled your nose like this!"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Snack Time:</p> <p>Cleaning up from snack time, use child's name and short direction. Example: "Kate, please throw your napkin in the trash."</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Music Time:</p> <p>Introduce a new song by modeling the movements, linking words to action. Example: "I'm a little teapot short and stout; here is my handle, here is my spout."</p>



Goal Topic: Language Expression (Expressive/Productive Communication)

Definition: The use of sounds, gestures, words, phrases or sentences to express self. Initial language development occurring within the context of relationship. Note: *Refers to mode of communication in which the child is most fluent including the child's primary language, sign language or assistive communication devices.*

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Initiates communication with caregiver: maintains eye contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> looks intently at caregiver cries, grunts or makes loud sounds to seek caregiver assistance smiles or gestures to initiate social contact moves body in anticipation of being picked up <p>Makes a variety of repetitive sounds or gestures: babbles and coos; pairs consonants and vowels with repetition such as "ma" or "da"; uses hands to express self.</p>	<p>Uses physical gestures or sounds to get help from adult:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gazes between adult and desired item, tugs or pulls on caregiver moves, points or motions to object out of reach expresses own needs such as hunger or wanting comfort item <p>Expresses self with movement or facial expressions: shakes head "no"; nods "yes"; smiles; frowns.</p> <p>Takes turns in back-and-forth verbal play with caregiver that mimics a conversation. Responds to caregiver's speech by babbling/uttering in reply.</p> <p>Moves toward expression of identifiable words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> jargon has melody and inflection imitates familiar words/sounds begins expressing clearly words like "mama", "dada", "bye-bye", "no", "ba-ba"(bottle) 	<p>Uses words or actions to request assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> asks for food when hungry asks for help may use words to solve conflicts with peers/siblings <p>Combines words into simple sentences: "Mommy bye-bye", "Milk all gone".</p> <p>Asks and answers simple questions: lots of what, why and where questions.</p> <p>Uses everyday experiences to build on vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> talks about what they are doing uses language to convey simple ideas <p>Refers to self by name; uses personal pronouns (I, me, you) with increased proficiency.</p> <p>Vocabulary increases with age; articulation becomes increasingly clearer; may express feelings both physical and emotional.</p> <p>Carries on sustained interactions with caregivers.</p>

Goal Topic: Language Expression (Expressive/Productive Communication)

Definition: The use of sounds, gestures, words, phrases or sentences to express self. Initial language development occurring within the context of relationship. Note: *Refers to mode of communication in which the child is most fluent including the child's primary language, sign language or assistive communication devices.*

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Naptime:</p> <p>Noticing child is tired when they begin to fuss and rub eyes and reach out. Example: "Betsy, are you telling me you're tired? Do you want me to pick you up?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Free Play:</p> <p>Describe attributes of what toy the child is interested in and acknowledge child's attempts to respond. Example: "You are figuring out how to put that round block in the round hole!" Child responds, "Da?" "That's right, there! There."</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Transition:</p> <p>When Dad is dropping child off, encourage child to say good-bye and support emotions. Example: "Bye-bye, Daddy. We'll miss you. (Allow time for child to verbalize.) We'll see you after we play here today."</p>



Goal Topic: Emergent Literacy

Definition: The acquisition of skills such as looking, gesturing, recognizing and understanding pictures and symbols, handling books, and scribbling-laying the groundwork for conventional reading and writing.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>With a responsive adult, looks at and attends to pictures of other babies or faces.</p> <p>Looks at books, pats the pictures, brings book to mouth.</p> <p>Kicks feet or moves arms in response to music.</p> <p>Listens and attends to repetitions of culturally and linguistically familiar words, songs or rhymes.</p> <p>Uses signs or gestures in response to adult's conversation with them about photos of familiar people.</p>	<p>Exhibits increased participation when books are read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • points • makes sounds • vocalizes • smiles • turns page <p>Makes motions for familiar games, rhymes, songs or finger plays.</p> <p>Begins to "use" communication tools during imitative play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses phone or book • grasps marker or crayon <p>makes marks on paper</p>	<p>Exhibits increased participation with written forms of communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • looks at books, magazines as if reading • makes sounds that relate to pictures • turns pages at the right time <p>Recognizes signs and symbols in the environment: identifies stop sign, labels or logos of familiar places/items; memorizes and repeats phrases of songs, books, rhymes.</p> <p>Increased understanding of communication tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • converses with others using play phone • tells others what own scribbles mean <p>Shows increased attention when being read to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to make observations about the use of words and pictures • enjoys stories of increasing complexity

Goal Topic: Emergent Literacy

Definition: The acquisition of skills such as looking, gesturing, recognizing and understanding pictures and symbols, handling books, and scribbling-laying the groundwork for conventional reading and writing.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Lap Time:</p> <p>Show pictures of family or friends to infant, and describe. Example: "Do you see your dog, Fido, right here? What does Fido say?"</p> <p>You might have a special book for each child.</p> <p>Spend time singing familiar tunes while moving to the rhythm of the song with the baby in your arms or on your lap.</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Music:</p> <p>Have a time of day where children can choose favorite songs or rhymes to do either individually or as a group. Example: "Who's ready to sing some of our favorite songs?"</p> <p>Repeat as often as requested. Songs with actions are powerful.</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Art:</p> <p>Have a variety of writing tools, paper, sand trays, shaving cream, etc. for children to access. Example: "You made a big blue mark. Tell me about your story?"</p> <p>Encourage expansion by showing excitement to their response.</p>



Introduction to Physical Development and Health

Young children love active play. Children age birth to three are developing their physical abilities at an extremely rapid rate in the Goal Topic areas of:

- Perceptual Development
- Gross Motor Development
- Fine Motor Development
- Self-help/Adaptive Skills/Well-being

Early childhood educators encourage and promote physical development by providing safe and appropriate physical activities. These experiences need to be adapted to the child's abilities, special needs or health concerns, and individual patterns of growth. At this age, an awareness of materials that could be hazardous to their safety needs to be a priority (example: small objects, strings and cords, etc.).

For infants and toddlers, it is necessary for physical activities to be supported and planned intentionally by caregivers, including daily outdoor play and exploration, floor time, tummy time, and the freedom to investigate and move safely within their environment. Children who participate in regular physical activity will have overall better health and confidence in their bodies and what their bodies can do.

Promoting healthy eating and food choices will support life-long habits that contribute to overall physical health, well-being, and self-care. Early childhood educators play an integral role in engaging families in the process of their child's physical development and well-being (example: nutrition, trying new foods, toilet learning, oral hygiene, etc.). When early childhood educators successfully model and support the benefits of both regular exercise and proper nutrition, they can significantly impact a young child's life-long habits of maintaining good physical health.



A Little About...Sleep and Brain Development

Did you know that most of a baby's brain development occurs while sleeping? Brain synapses are formed during sleep and memories are formed and stored.

To find out more go to "Appendix A.8: A Little About...Sleep and Brain Development" on page 87.

Goal Topic: Perceptual Development

Definition: Ability to take in and organize sensory experience (taste, touch, smell, sight, sound, feelings, motion/action). The central nervous system processes information through the senses. Sensory, motor and cognitive skills are interconnected and influence each other.

Indicators: Birth-8 months

Reflexes at birth: stepping, palmar grasp, startle reflex, rooting and sucking, hand-to-mouth, and moves arms in swimming motion.

Reflexes that develop after birth: bicycle kicking, body follows turn of head, and protects self when falling.

Initially visual system immature (attentive to objects of contrasting colors).

Increased ability to detect detail and coordinate visual information from each eye.

Infant may become fixated visually.

Preference for slower, high pitched sounds.

Can distinguish parents' voice from that of a stranger.

Shows enjoyment of motion such as rocking, jiggling, bouncing, or being carried around.

Indicators: 6-18 months

Continue to integrate information gathered from the senses:

- shows increased ability to concentrate and begin to show sustained interest in people, objects and activities
- shows increased desire to explore sensory information
- oral exploration of objects decreases with age
- shows increased enjoyment of varieties of sensory information

Visual information more refined:

- depth perception established; seeks and responds to increased visual stimulation

Hearing information more refined: ability to discriminate sounds in a noisy setting.

Indicators: 16-36 months

Sensory thresholds do not interfere with desire to explore surroundings:

- continues to show increased ability to concentrate with multiple sensory stimulation present
- increased cognitive and motor skills allows increased ability to explore and form meaning from sensory information

Visual discrimination more refined:

- ability to discriminate finer detail in tandem with cognitive development (i.e. may notice caregiver's earring)

Hearing discrimination more refined:

- ability to isolate familiar sounds in tandem with cognitive development (i.e. hears siren outside, points and says, "Fire truck!")

Goal Topic: Perceptual Development

Definition: Ability to take in and organize sensory experience (taste, touch, smell, sight, sound, feelings, motion/action). The central nervous system processes information through the senses. Sensory, motor and cognitive skills are interconnected and influence each other.

Indicators: Birth-8 months

Can distinguish smell of mother from others.

Respond to what they see (i.e. move toward desired person or object, look for source of noise).

Begins to show taste preference.

Birth-8 months

Implementing in Routines and Experiences:

Outdoor Time:

Allow the child to reach for a leaf and touch it, commenting on its properties. Example: "The leaf is smooth and soft."

Point out the breeze on the child's face, the sounds and smells that are in the environment, and the movement of things in nature.

6-18 months

Implementing in Routines and Experiences:

Sensory Table:

When child mouths an object, comment on its properties and encourage child to look at it. Example: "It feels round in your mouth, look and see – it's round (smooth, big, etc.)."

Outdoors:

Ensure children have a variety of movement opportunities to support their vestibular (balance) and proprioceptive (body position) development. Example: "You are working hard to walk on that board!" and "Look how your body fits into that little space under the climber!"

16-36 months

Implementing in Routines and Experiences:

Quiet Area:

After lots of stimulation, offer child an opportunity to take a toy to a quiet area. Example: "You've been very busy; would you like to take the little truck to the quiet area and play by yourself for a little while?"



Goal Topic: Gross Motor (Large Muscle)

Definition: Ability to maintain stability in various positions and to move from one position to another, dependent upon coordination of muscle strength and muscle tone.

Indicators: Birth-8 months

Exhibits beginning stages of large muscle control:

- head control, lifts chin, lifts head, lifts both head and shoulders, supports self on flexed elbows

Coordination of muscle control:

- turns from back to stomach and stomach to back, moves by rolling, inches forward on stomach or back, sits unsupported, begins bouncing when held

Begins to use arms and legs purposefully:

- claps hands, pounds on things, kicks at objects, holds arms out for jacket or so shirt can be taken off

Indicators: 6-18 months

Exhibits increasing control of large muscles and body movement:

- sits up, crawls or creeps, pulls to stand, cruises while holding on to furniture, stands alone, climbs out of crib, walks alone, runs with a wide stance, walks upstairs holding a hand, stops and walks backwards a few steps, climbs simple structures

Uses arms and legs with increasing purposefulness:

throws, carries, pushes, pulls, dumps objects, scoots on or rides wheel toys without pedals

Indicators: 16-36 months

Exhibits more control and coordination of large muscle and body movement:

- walks fast, walks on tiptoes, walks backwards, walks upstairs holding a railing (or hand), runs with control, climbs well, throws a ball with aim, may jump in place, may balance briefly on 1 foot, rides tricycle

Uses arms and legs with more purposefulness:

- catches a ball by trapping it with arms and hands, pounds object with intention and precision, creates simple block structures, pushes foot into shoe, takes off shoes

Engages in creative movement spontaneously and when prompted by music or adult.

Goal Topic: Gross Motor (Large Muscle)

Definition: Ability to maintain stability in various positions and to move from one position to another, dependent upon coordination of muscle strength and muscle tone.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Changing:</p> <p>Notice if when given a visual and verbal prompt, the infant lifts arms. Example: "Would you like me to pick you up? I see you reaching up for me."</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Soft Climbing Blocks:</p> <p>Encourage a new crawler to attempt to move on to/over soft blocks. Example: "Can you climb up on this block? Can you hold on and push with your feet?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Music:</p> <p>Offer a wide variety of music and ask children how they would like to move. Example: "How does this music make you feel like moving?"</p>



Goal Topic: Fine Motor (Small Muscle)

Definition: Eye-hand or skilled sensory coordination of small muscles.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Stares at objects, especially faces; begins to coordinate eyes.</p> <p>Grasp reflex diminishing.</p> <p>Reaches for objects with both arms, but hands are fisted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">reaches with one arm and grasps at will, grasps – releases – “re-grasps” and releases again, begins to grasp with thumb and forefinger <p>Brings objects to mouth.</p> <p>Beginning eye hand coordination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Transfers object from one hand to another <p>Follows slow moving object with eyes.</p>	<p>Scoops up and takes with hand to manipulate or pick up objects, sand, food, etc.</p> <p>Brings two blocks together to make noise.</p> <p>Uses thumb and forefinger to pick up small items.</p> <p>Handles a cup or spoon for self-feeding.</p> <p>Begins to show preference for one hand.</p> <p>Undresses self and unties shoes.</p> <p>Can turn pages of a board book</p>	<p>Uses a crayon to imitate marks/scribble.</p> <p>Holds object with one hand and manipulates it with the other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">brushes dolls hair, holds and winds a music box <p>Folds blanket, cloth, paper, etc.</p> <p>Pours liquid from small pitcher.</p> <p>Shows preference for one hand.</p> <p>Puts on easy clothing.</p> <p>Holds spoon, fork, cup, but may still spill.</p> <p>Can use paintbrush, but doesn't control drips.</p> <p>Can turn pages of a book.</p>

Goal Topic: Fine Motor (Small Muscle)

Definition: Eye-hand or skilled sensory coordination of small muscles.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Lap Time:</p> <p>Offer items for infant to explore and reach for while on your lap. Example: "You are holding that rattle (blanket) tightly! You're strong!"</p> <p>Be sure to have a "mouthed toy" basket or sink to collect toys after babies are done mouthing them so they can be washed and sanitized.</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Sensory Table:</p> <p>Provide a variety of materials with different textures in the sensory table for children to explore. Example: "Which paper can you tear? Can you crumble it into a ball?"</p> <p>Be creative with the materials you put into your sensory table, include things from nature when possible.</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Dramatic Play:</p> <p>Offer several items for baby dolls in dramatic play: blankets, Velcro bibs, bottles, etc. Example: "Can you feed the baby the bottle? Does the baby need a bib on?" "Do you want to cover the baby with the blanket?"</p> <p>Ask questions that connect the toddler with his own experiences, too. Example: "Did you have a bottle when you were a baby?" "Do you like wearing a bib?"</p>



Goal Topic: Self-Help and Adaptive Skills

Definition: Uses motor skills to show adaptation and self-regulation strategies. Expresses physical needs verbally or non-verbally. Begins to participate in physical care routines.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Displays signs of self-comforting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sucks thumb to pacify self <p>Shows signs of self-feeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begins to hold own bottle/cup, begins to feed self with fingers <p>Alerts caregiver in own way when physically uncomfortable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hungry, tired, wet pants, etc. 	<p>Making progress with self-feeding.</p> <p>Shows interest in dressing self:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pushes arm through sleeve, takes clothes off, unties shoes <p>Shows interest in toileting at end of this stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • watches others engaged in toileting, • explores sitting on potty chair <p>Shows interest in helping with chores, mimics adult behavior.</p> <p>Makes attempts at self-help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • takes off socks • pulls on bib 	<p>Progressing well with self-feeding and self-serving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • holds spoon, fork, cup • feeds self • pours own water from small container • sets items on table and removes after eating <p>Continues to show interest in dressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undresses self, puts on clothes (no buttoning), shoes, jacket, hat <p>Shows increased interest and proficiency with toileting skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • willing to use toilet • washes hands after toileting <p>Increased interest in helping with chores and physical care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attends to blowing nose • cleans tables • picks up toys

Goal Topic: Self-help/Adaptive Skills/Well-being

Definition: Uses motor skills to show adaptation and self-regulation strategies. Expresses physical needs verbally or non-verbally. Begins to participate in physical care routines.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Napping:</p> <p>Acknowledge when infant shows signs of being tired. Example: "You look tired. Shall we change your pants and get ready to lay down and nap?"</p> <p>Have a consistent napping routine and personal space in the environment where babies feel comfortable lying down.</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Transition Indoors:</p> <p>Allow child time to remove articles of clothing. "Can you take off your hat? Can you unzip your coat?"</p> <p>Provide a visual support of the sequence for undressing to support their understanding of the process.</p> <p>Simplify hard tasks, allowing child to complete art of the process. Example: "There – the zipper is connected at the bottom, can you pull the zipper all the way up?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Family Style Meal:</p> <p>Provide small pitchers and opportunity to pour own milk. Example: "Let me see you pour just a little water into your cup."</p> <p>Create a visual placemat that has guidance for expectations during the meal, and next steps for routine after the meal.</p> <p>Have containers within easy reach of toddlers so they may clear their dishes off the table themselves.</p>





Introduction to Cognitive Development

The Cognitive Development domain refers to:

- thinking and problem solving,
- knowledge about particular objects and the way the world works,
- mathematical knowledge,
- abstract thought and imagination.

Infants enter the world ready to learn and begin immediately to acquire and process new information. As they develop, they draw on social-emotional, language, motor, and perceptual experiences and abilities for cognitive development. Children first solve problems by chance and with their bodies. Then they gradually come to understand the connection between what they do and the outcome. They begin to see patterns and possibilities and begin to learn words to use to help them (i.e. grabbing a toy before asking, pushing before asking someone to move, etc.). They learn to discriminate between objects based on their different attributes (size, shape, etc.). This is important for developing math skills, logic and reasoning. They are attuned to relationships between features of objects, actions, and the physical environment (pushing buttons, stacking and knocking down blocks, etc.). They are learning how the world “works”.

Parents, family members, friends, teachers, and caregivers play a vital role in supporting the cognitive development of infants and toddlers. Providing the healthy interpersonal or positive social and emotional context in which cognitive development unfolds is important. These interactions form the basis of trust, allowing the child to feel free to explore. This confident exploration helps infants and toddlers make connections when learning new concepts such as the ones in science, social studies, and their early ideas about mathematical concepts.



A Little About...Media Influence

As tempting as it may be to distract or entertain babies with media, it's important to remember that healthy brain growth requires direct interactions with caregivers. The AAP advises: Avoid digital media for toddlers younger than 18 to 24 months other than video chatting.

To find out more go to “Appendix A.6: A Little About...Media Influence” on page 84.

Goal Topic: Exploration and Inquiry

Definition: Experiencing the properties of things, developing curiosity, and inquiring about the world around them.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Displays reflexes that set the stage for sensory exploration toward intellectual development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • turns head toward nipple • grasps finger of caregiver when placed in palm <p>Directs attention towards caregiver's face or voice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gazes at caregiver's face during feeding <p>Directs attention toward objects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reaches and grasps for objects or stares at them • reacts to new objects, voices, sounds and touch by becoming more active or quiet 	<p>Manipulates, visually inspects, feels and mouths things in the environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moves toward toy • bangs on table with toy • fingers and inspects object <p>Takes time to investigate and may protest when play is interrupted.</p> <p>Can use several senses at once to explore the environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mouths, then holds toy at a distance • shakes and then throws ball <p>Looks at and explores how a material reacts when acted upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water added to the sand table • popping bubbles with hands and feet 	<p>Independently explores the immediate environment to investigate what is there:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asks about a new toy or explores different textures in the natural environment • searches for a specific toy <p>Tries new activities, materials and equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unfamiliar art materials • different musical instrument • joins in new song or finger play <p>Uses multiple senses to determine properties of things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lifts, shakes and listens • smells, tastes and inquires of caregiver about the item

Goal Topic: Exploration and Inquiry

Definition: Experiencing the properties of things, developing curiosity, and inquiring about the world around them.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Free Play:</p> <p>Offer new and familiar objects to explore. Example: Allow infants to explore their toys; accepting that they understand the world primarily through oral explorations. "Would you like to see this bunny? You put it in your mouth, does it taste good?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Science or Book Area:</p> <p>Recognize when older infants require new challenges and provide them with new toys, books and experiences as they grow, change and develop new interests. Example: "You have been interested in turning the pages of the book, let's try this one."</p> <p>Allow the children to collect pine cones to bring into the classroom. Ask questions about them and do a variety of activities with them. Example: "Are some of the pine cones sticky? Which one do you want to use to paint with? What will happen if we put them in the water table?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Environment:</p> <p>Rotate materials to maintain toddlers' interest. Provide varied environments i.e. bringing in natural materials, outdoor exploration, etc. Example: "Do you see the new materials in the sensory table today? Where do you think they came from?"</p> <p>Offer a "Surprise Box" that allows children a chance to use their senses in predicting what is in it. Example: "What do you think is in the box? Is it big or small? Is it heavy or light? Can you smell it? What does it sound like when you shake it?"</p>

Goal Topic: Concept Development and Working Memory

Definition: Understanding cause and effect, object permanence, developing memory skills, imitation, use of tools and the beginnings of representational thought.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Uses sight, hearing and touch to examine an item to learn about it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mouths, bangs, grasps, releases and re-grasps <p>Looks for or orients toward dropped object:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • looks down when drops toy from a table <p>Repeats a pleasing sight, sound, or motion to show enjoyment and a desire to continue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • looks towards a musical toy to continue interaction <p>Repeats a previously successful sound or motion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kicks or swats mobile and repeats over days and week • continues to bang an object to repeat a sounds 	<p>Remembers location of favorite object:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asks for objects out of sight • persists in search for a desired object when it is hidden <p>Remembers games and toys from the previous day.</p> <p>Anticipates people's return, time for nap, etc. within context of daily routine.</p> <p>Imitates actions across a change in context; beginning of ability to fantasize and role-play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • imitates mom on the phone when at child care setting • uses another object or person as a tool: • asks to be picked up to reach something • rolls toward a toy to reach it <p>Understands "more" in reference to food or simple play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responds appropriately when asked if child wants more crackers 	<p>Uses familiar objects in combination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses spoon in bowl, doll in bed, and person in car <p>Engages in make believe play acting out simple dramatic play themes with others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You baby, me momma" • pretends to be an animal <p>Recognizes that the words "two, three, four, etc." are numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recites numbers with prompting or adult cues • uses some number words during play or activity: "I want two" <p>Imitates counting rhymes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One, Two Buckle My Shoe, Three Little Monkeys <p>Shows some understanding of daily time sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time for nap, lunch, outdoor play <p>Begins to solve simple problems in his or her head:</p>

Goal Topic: Concept Development and Working Memory

Definition: Understanding cause and effect, object permanence, developing memory skills, imitation, use of tools and the beginnings of representational thought.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Imitates sounds and gestures.</p> <p>Finds hidden objects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uncovers a partially hidden toy under a blanket or cloth 	<p>Begins to think about actions before doing them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> chooses a toy, book, or doll from a group enjoys taking things out of a container and putting them back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> moves a toy to get to another object stands on block or another object to reach an item
Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Free Play:</p> <p>Provide objects for the infant to create and repeat sounds and actions. Example: "Here's your rattle. Can you shake it to make noise?"</p> <p>"You like being able to make that mobile move when you kick your feet, don't you?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Dramatic Play:</p> <p>Understand that older infants use objects to represent other things. They may hold a cardboard block up to their ear as if it is a phone receiver. Example: "Who are you talking to? Is it your friend?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Music and Movement:</p> <p>Understand the importance of repetition to support toddlers' development of skills. Example: "Do you want to march around the room again?"</p>

Goal Topic: Reflection and Problem-Solving

Definition: Begins to use reasoning and planning ahead to solve problems using a variety of strategies.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Engages in simple repeated actions to reach a goal, such as trying to get whole hand and then fingers or thumb in mouth.</p> <p>Anticipates being lifted and moves body accordingly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• stiffens body in preparation for being lifted• stretches arms up toward caregiver• tries to lift head toward caregiver <p>Uses own actions or movements to solve simple problems, such as rolling to the side to reach an object or kicking to make something move.</p>	<p>Begins to focus attention on one activity or toy for a short period of time.</p> <p>Explores how to make something happen again or how something works by doing actions over and over again:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• repeatedly filling a container and emptying it out <p>Tries different solutions to everyday problems until discovering one that works.</p> <p>May try the same strategy multiple times even if it is not working.</p>	<p>Engages in activities for longer periods of time, including make believe play.</p> <p>Tries several times to solve more challenging problems, often using a combination of actions or behaviors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• determined to reach the sink and pulls over a block to stand on, then adds a book to make it higher <p>Uses experimenting to figure out solutions to everyday problems, including in social situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• two children both want to fit into a small car and agree to take turns <p>Begins to develop ability to find a solution using mental representation.</p>

Goal Topic: Reflection and Problem-Solving

Definition: Begins to use reasoning and planning ahead to solve problems using a variety of strategies.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Throughout the Day:</p> <p>Point out to infant ways problems are being solved. Example: "You wanted that rattle and you rolled right over there and got it!"</p> <p>Use self-talk as you solve problems to meet the infant's needs. Example: "We ran out of wipes! We'll need to go to the cubby to find some. Here they are!"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Free Play:</p> <p>Child continually goes to the book shelf and puts all the books on the floor. Ask questions to help child consider other possibilities. Example: "You like to see all the books on the floor. Should we lay them out so you can see the covers? Where else could we put them?"</p> <p>Several times child covers doll with blanket which falls off each time doll is picked up. Example: "It looks like that blanket won't stay over the baby when you pick her up. I wonder what else you could do to make it stay?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Throughout the Day:</p> <p>Acknowledge child's attempt at solving a problem, commenting specifically on the steps they have taken. Example: "You have been thinking hard about how to get that wheel to spin. You turned the car over and twisted it. What will you try next?"</p> <p>Encourage experimentation as a child struggles with something. Example: "It seems like you are having a hard time with that puzzle. What else could you do with those puzzle pieces?"</p>



A Little About...Maternal Depression

It is not uncommon for mothers, and occasionally fathers, to experience "baby blues" during pregnancy and for a short time after birth. Feelings of anxiety, mild irritability and depression may occur as parents' hormones readjust themselves after a baby is born. Offer support and understanding.

To find out more go to "Appendix A.5: A Little About...Maternal Depression" on page 83.

Goal Topic: Mathematical Thinking

Definition: Discovering mathematical concepts such as: sequencing, size, shape, numbers, amounts of items, spatial relations, patterns.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Observes and feels the sequence of simple daily routines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> rocking to sleep riding in a stroller listening to an adult voice reading or singing <p>Explores special relationships with objects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> picks up different sized balls <p>Places shapes into shape sorter (not always in the correct space)</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding of simple number concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses sign language to ask for "More" of something takes two crackers when prompted, "Take two crackers" <p>Uses sensorimotor exploration to experience various textures, patterns, sounds, and smells.</p>	<p>Follows simple directions related to position:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> puts toys "in" basket after prompted <p>Uses simple nesting or stacking toys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> nests three or four cups stacks three or four cups or foam blocks <p>Groups a few objects by shape, color or size:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> finds two or three toys that have the same simple shape, color <p>Understands time words such as "after," "before":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Before we go outside, we have to put on your coat." explores spatial relationships: Attempts to fit own body in boxes, tunnels <p>Solves simple manipulative problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> crawls or walks around a toy 	<p>Verbally Counts (not always in the correct order):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> says "one, two, six" <p>Recognizes and names a few numerals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> notices numbers within the environment and identifies a few by name <p>Follows simple directions related to proximity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> set your shoes "beside" your cot for naptime <p>Makes comparisons between two objects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies the larger object when shown <p>Shows interest in simple patterns in the environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> points to pedestrian crosswalk and says "white, black, white, black" <p>Shows interest in patterns and sequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempts to follow a pattern with large beads and string or on a peg board plays matching games

Goal Topic: Mathematical Thinking

Definition: Discovering mathematical concepts such as: sequencing, size, shape, numbers, amounts of items, spatial relations, patterns.



Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Classifies, labels, and sorts objects by characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • heavy vs. light • color • hard vs. soft • large vs. small <p>Arranges objects in lines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes a row of blocks <p>Matches simple shapes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using form boards or puzzles -circle, square, triangle
6-18 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Use mathematical language when describing actions and materials: continue to use positional language at a more advanced level. Encourage counting, extend learning of sequence of numbers.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for sequencing, sorting, grouping by 2 or more attributes.</p> <p>Example: "I see you put all the big blocks in the basket. What will we do with the little blocks?"</p>

Birth-8 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Throughout the Day:</p> <p>Use mathematical language when describing actions and materials.</p> <p>Example: "I see you have two yellow leaves. One is bumpy, one is smooth".</p> <p>Use words like more, next, big, small...</p>

6-18 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Clean Up Routine:</p> <p>Use mathematical language when describing actions and materials: use positional terminology. Continue to use number words, describe shapes, sizes, etc. Offer opportunities for sorting, sequencing and grouping.</p> <p>Example: "Please put the ball into (behind, next to, on top of, etc.) the basket".</p>

Goal Topic: Scientific Reasoning

Definition: To observe, explore, discover, and engage in natural experiences to build the foundation for science learning.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Explores properties of items by mouthing them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explores large pop beads by putting them in their mouth <p>Uses senses to investigate the natural environment around them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> looks outward and watches leaves blowing in the wind <p>Begins to look for objects that are "hidden" or become "out of sight".</p>	<p>Investigates new phenomena:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reaches out to touch rain stops play to watch a novel element in the environment <p>Shows basic awareness of cause and immediate effect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> opens and closes, presses button to make sounds <p>Uses trial and error method effectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> successfully pushes buttons on a pop-up toy uses shape sorter with some success 	<p>Fills and empties containers with sand, water, or small toys.</p> <p>Begins to ask "Why" questions to understand specific concepts.</p> <p>Begins to notice differences and similarities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> kiwi is sweet and a lemon is sour cows and dogs both have four legs <p>Uses simple tools in exploration and inquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> magnifying glasses hammers tweezers <p>Explores different mediums and their properties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mixing sand and water cornstarch and water

Goal Topic: Scientific Reasoning

Definition: To observe, explore, discover, and engage in natural experiences to build the foundation for science learning.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Outside Play:</p> <p>Provide pop beads, teething rings, or other objects to explore. Provide outdoor opportunities daily.</p> <p>Example: "Do you hear that bird? Listen, it is singing to us."</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Free Play:</p> <p>Promote critical thinking during exploration.</p> <p>Example: "What happens when you push the button? Does it make music?"</p> <p>Provide a variety of tools to use with playdough. Encourage using the tools to make different things happen. Example: "Look what happened when you used the roller on the playdough. Will the hammer do the same thing?"</p> <p>Point out the body parts of different animals. Example: "Do you see the eyes on our turtle?" He has a tail, do you?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Science Area:</p> <p>Ask open ended questions.</p> <p>Example: "What do you see if you look at your leaf a little closer? You can use this magnifying glass."</p> <p>Example: "The blue car seems to roll faster than the green car. I wonder why? Should we try rolling them down a ramp?"</p> <p>Ask questions about sounds and physical properties. Example: "Why does that big plane in the sky make such a little sound?"</p> <p>Match baby animals with the adult animal.</p>
		

Goal Topic: Social Studies Learning

Definition: Attention to and exploration of the world around them as it authentically affects them. Learning about their family culture and cultures of others in the classroom or community.

Indicators: Birth-8 months	Indicators: 6-18 months	Indicators: 16-36 months
<p>Engages in immediate and deferred imitation of facial expressions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> smiles back at caregiver smiles when familiar adult re-enters room responds by patting mirror when sees own image reflected <p>Begins to notice differences in faces or adults.</p> <p>Begins to notice new items in the environment.</p>	<p>Demonstrates knowledge about self:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> begins to show preference towards adults recognizes items that belong to them (bottle, blanket, etc.) <p>Reacts and responds to new environments (i.e. falls asleep in car and wakes up in a shopping mall).</p> <p>Shows curiosity and points to new items in the environment.</p> <p>Reacts and responds to changes in familiar adults (i.e. mom cuts hair, dad shaves beard, etc.).</p>	<p>Shows basic understanding of people and how they live:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> imitates example of mother nursing younger sibling <p>Notices differences between people – gender, skin color, etc.</p> <p>Seeks opportunities to label new items in the environment.</p> <p>Asks questions about new people, materials and places in the environment.</p> <p>Recognizes and seeks familiar places (i.e. stores, doctor's office etc.).</p> <p>Shows interest in "helpers" in the community (fire, police, mail carriers, etc.).</p>

Goal Topic: Social Studies Learning

Definition: Attention to and exploration of the world around them as it authentically affects them. Learning about their family culture and cultures of others in the classroom or community.

Birth-8 months	6-18 months	16-36 months
<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Throughout the Day:</p> <p>Use language to acknowledge new people and items as child moves gaze toward them.</p> <p>Example: "Is that your friend Lyla? She's crawling over to see you."</p> <p>Explore similarities and differences in people. Example: "Your feet are little. My feet are big!"</p> <p>Acknowledge parents in a positive way that includes the child. "Is that your Dad coming. You love having your Dad pick you up, don't you?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Environment:</p> <p>Respond to child's interest in adding new items to the environment. Provide opportunities for novel experiences.</p> <p>Example: "What do you see new in our dramatic play? The new baby dolls look different from each other."</p> <p>Create a Families' Tree with photos of the children and their family. Talk about who is in the pictures. Example: "Where is your friend, Tyra? Is that Tyra's mother?"</p>	<p>Implementing in Routines and Experiences:</p> <p>Environment:</p> <p>Provide dolls, books, etc. that represent people in their world; including community helpers, books about family structure, and local products (i.e. blueberries, fishing, etc.). Use language to scaffold children's interest in new people and items.</p> <p>Example: "Do you like our new logging truck? What can you use for logs on it?"</p> <p>Identify usual locations for familiar objects and people. Example: "Where is your cubby? Can you find a place for your boots and your blanket?"</p>



Appendices

Appendix A.1: A Little About...Brain Development

Science has taught us much about brain development in the first 3 years of life. We have learned that babies are born both vulnerable and competent and the relationships and experiences babies have during this time have impacts that last a lifetime. Early experiences affect the brain architecture which provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior and health. During this period of development, children's learning is impacted by the social and emotional experiences they have; these early experiences affect their ability to self-regulate, to develop a healthy sense of themselves and to engage in positive relationships with others.

The key ingredients that are necessary for healthy brain development include:

- positive relationships with their family and caregivers in the community,
- experiences that allow exploration, and a safe (physical and emotional) environment.

Ultimately, it is a combination of genes and experiences working together to construct the brain architecture for each individual child.

We have also learned a lot about the impacts of toxic stress, which has resulted in an emphasis on trauma informed caregiving practices. Infants and toddlers are significantly impacted by exposure to ongoing, repeated stress. These experiences affect each child differently, however, all children need positive relationships with key adults to help develop resilience to toxic experiences. Babies born exposed to opioids and other substances are especially vulnerable due to the impacts prenatally of these substances on brain development and may need targeted strategies to mediate these affects.

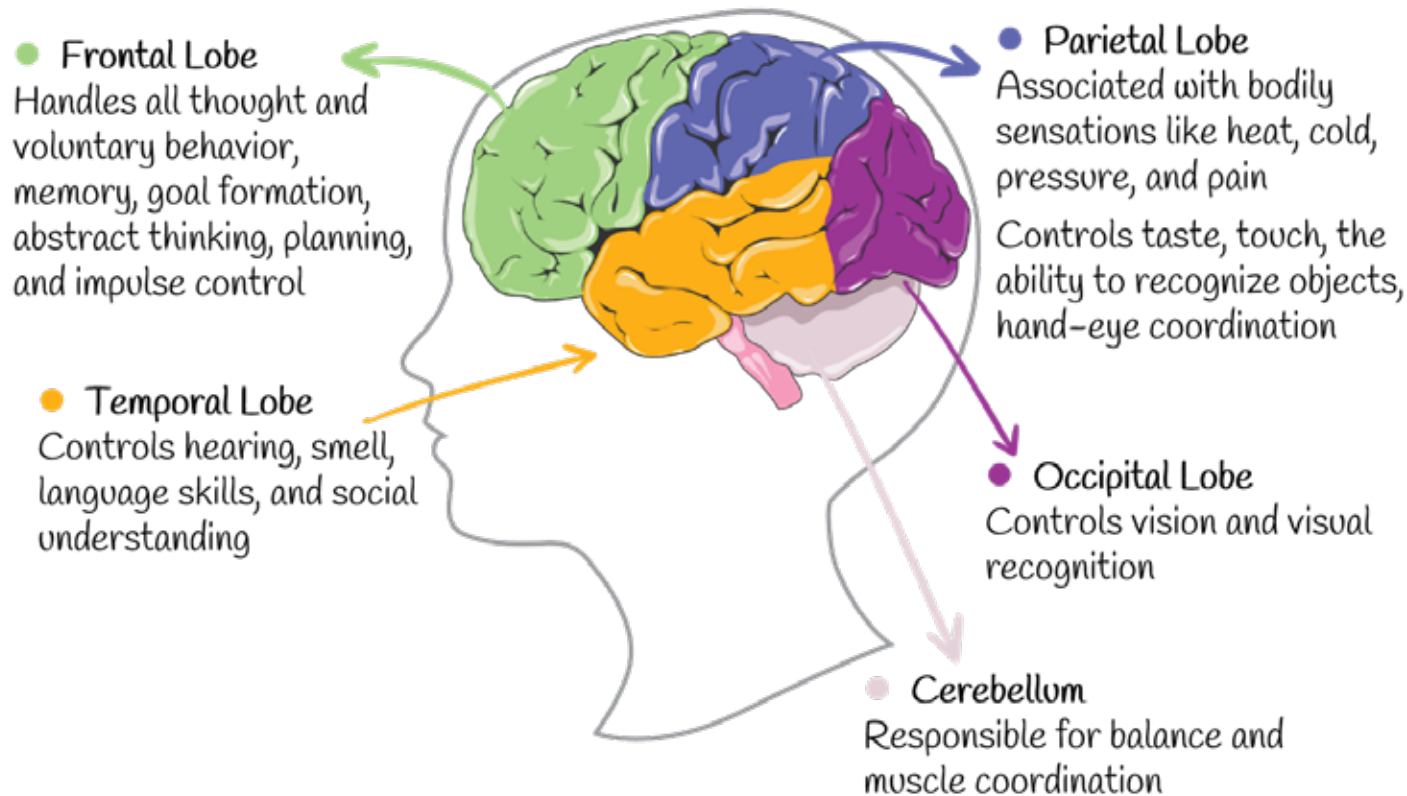
Therefore, it is imperative that caregivers work to understand the impact of positive relationships and developmentally appropriate experiences on brain development and all future learning. The National Academies of Science publication *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation* addresses the need for competencies for the early childhood workforce to focus on this information. There are many resources available for additional information on this topic.

Center on the Developing Child at Harvard: Key Concepts <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/>

Zero to Three: Brain Development <https://www.zerotothree.org/espanol/brain-development>

Head Start | ECLKC: News You Can Use: Early Experiences Build the Brain <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/article/news-you-can-use-early-experiences-build-brain>

90% of a child's brain development happens before **age 5**



Sources:

<http://www.urbanchildinstitute.org/why-0-3/baby-and-brain>

<https://www.babycenter.com/inside-a-childs-mind-a-visual-guide>

<https://www.braininsightsonline.com/blogs/news/5291502-it-happens-in-the-brain-and-it-begins-early>

<http://brainmind.com/BrainLecture7.html>

Appendix A.2: A Little About...Celebrating Diverse Families

Infants and toddlers are rooted in the framework of their families, cultures, languages, and communities. Cultural sensitivity and understanding is a cornerstone when building open and trusting relationships with parents; preserving and respecting the cultures of all families served is vital to a successful learning experience for infants and toddlers. To support optimal learning and development for infants and toddlers, caregivers and teachers should strive to establish relationships with families based on mutual trust and respect, recognizing that parents are the primary teachers of their young children. Promoting full participation builds trusting and respectful partnerships with families through interactions that are sensitive and responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity. Families may be invited to share insights about their children's temperaments, learning styles, and preferences, to join in a range of activities, to share ideas for policy development, and to be active partners in every way. This type of engagement benefits everyone: children, families, and program staff.



Understanding and celebrating diverse family structures is essential to successful partnerships between staff and families. Family structures are more diverse than ever: single mothers/fathers, grandparents parenting grandchildren, same sex parents, parents learning English as a second language, families of children with disabilities, LGBTQ-headed families - and we have much to learn from families with a structure different than our own. To best serve young children in any setting, all families are welcome and encouraged to be involved in all aspects of the program. Caregivers and teachers talk with families about their family structure and their views on childrearing and use that information to adapt the curriculum, teaching, and caregiving methods to all families served. It's important to utilize a variety of strategies to communicate with families, and all information should be shared in a language and style that families can understand.

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Parent Engagement and Family Involvement for Early Childhood Professionals <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/parent-involvement-family-engagement-early-childhood-professionals>

Creating a Welcoming Early Childhood Program for LGBT-headed Families <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-engagement/article/creating-welcoming-early-childhood-program-lgbt-headed-families>

Making it Work: Implementing Cultural Learning Experiences in American Indian and Alaska Native Early Learning Settings for Children Ages Birth to 5 <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/making-it-work-implementing-cultural-learning-experiences-american-indian-alaska-native-early>

Raising Young Children in a New Country: Early Learning and Healthy Development Handbook <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/raising-young-children-new-country-early-learning-healthy-development-handbook>

Cultural Perspectives in Caregiving: Applying Relationship-Based Practices <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/cultural-perspectives-caregiving-applying-relationship-based-practices>

Home Visitors, Parent Educators, and Family Service Professionals: Critical Resources for Parents and Families <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2517-home-visitors-parent-educators-and-family-services-professionals-critical-resources-for-parents-and-families>

Division for Early Childhood–Recommended Practices <https://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices>

Family Engagement, Diverse Families, and Literature Review <https://www.buildinitiative.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Family%20Engagement%20Halgunseth.pdf>

Appendix A.3: A Little About...Feeding

Feeding is more than an experience in nutrition; feeding is embedded in culture. So, it is important for caregivers to understand each family. How a baby is held while being fed, how the baby participates in feeding, how often feeding occurs, and what foods are introduced and when: varies tremendously from family to family. For example, some experts suggest caregivers encourage babies to self-feed: messy, but a way to become independent. Alternatively, some cultures value dependence in children, expecting adults to feed children and discourage self-feeding.



Parents and caregivers can use feedings with a new baby as an opportunity to bond and learn about communication. When a parent finds a quiet place or corner to nurse, looks into their baby's eyes and talk to her, it may seem too early, but she is already building language skills by listening and interacting.

Professionals who care for children have an important and powerful role in early feeding relationships. Caregivers have the opportunity to support breastfeeding and a variety of family choices for feeding their child.

For additional information:

Head Start | ECLKC: Nutrition <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/nutrition>

Zero to Three: Cultural Dimensions of Feeding Relationships

Appendix A.4: A Little About...Infant Massage



Mothers, fathers, grandparents, providers, etc., can learn massage techniques. There are multiple benefits of infant massage which include encouraging positive interaction between adult and the infant, helping the infant relax and sleep, positively affect infant hormones that control stress, and reduce crying. Research shows that infants born exposed/affected by opioids, premature births, and born with special needs, can benefit from close skin-to-skin contact with his or her parents. Infant massage promotes close, skin-to-skin contact promoting positive interactions and can reduce stress and other symptoms. Throughout the country, many health care providers and hospitals are adopting programs that include infant massage, and caregivers can learn how to do it, too.

For additional information:

CradleME: <http://cradleme.org/>

Maine Department of Health and Human Services, SnuggleME: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/SnuggleME/>

Infant Massage Information: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/infant-and-toddler-health/in-depth/infant-massage/art-20047151>

Appendix A.5: A Little About...Maternal Depression

It is not uncommon for mothers, and occasionally fathers, to experience “baby blues” during pregnancy and for a short time after birth. Feelings of anxiety, moodiness, mild irritability and depression may occur as parents’ hormones readjust themselves after a baby is born.

About 1 in 10 new mothers experience a more serious condition, postnatal depression, which requires treatment. It is important to support these parents in making a postpartum care plan with their obstetrician. Untreated depression has been shown to inhibit secure attachments and generate stress in babies that can have negative short and long term effects. Helping parents know this is common and there is no shame in depression is important. Treatment can be simple and make a world of difference.

For additional information:

ACOG | Clinical: Optimizing Postpartum Care <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2018/05/optimizing-postpartum-care>

NCBI | PubMed: Depression in women: windows of vulnerability and new insights into the link between estrogen and serotonin <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22127200>



Appendix A.6: A Little About...Media Influence

In 2019, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) revised their recommendations for the use of media for children under two. As tempting as it may be to distract or entertain babies with media, it is important to remember that healthy brain growth requires direct interactions with caregivers. The AAP advises:

“Limit digital media for your youngest family members. Avoid digital media for toddlers younger than 18 to 24 months other than video chatting. For children 18 to 24 months, watch digital media with them because they learn from watching and talking with you. Limit screen use for children, ages 2 to 5, to just 1 hour a day of high-quality programming. Co-viewing is best when possible as young children learn best when they are re-taught in the real world what they just learned through a screen.”



For additional information:

American Academy of Pediatrics: Children and Media Tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/news-features-and-safety-tips/Pages/Children-and-Media-Tips.aspx>

Appendix A.7: A Little About...Multilingual Learners and Their Families

According to U.S. Census data, our children are becoming increasingly multilingual with 21.9% of children speaking a language other than English as their language of heritage. As our families continue to be increasingly diverse we recognize that home language is an essential component of each family's identity. Dual Language Learners (DLL) are defined as children who are learning two (or more) languages at the same time simultaneously developing their first (or home/ heritage) language. Exposure to more than one language does NOT cause confusion. In fact, the benefits of multilingualism are clear, "improved executive functioning skills, better working memory, and improved ability to see other people's perspectives"⁴. Additionally, multilingualism creates more cognitive flexibility, better abstract thinking, and better problem-solving skills.



Infants and toddlers also cultivate strong bonds with their community and culture, which creates a foundation for identity and character development. To support this development caregivers and teachers should be in harmony, helping infants and toddlers make personal connections by following what is familiar to the child in their home practices. Caregivers and teachers should create welcoming environments that respect and promote both the development of a second language and the preservation of children's home languages and cultural identities. Caregivers can show support of home language in their classrooms/programs by encouraging families to talk about their traditions, cultures, and languages. They can show respect for the family by not only encouraging the family to continue using their home language but to communicate with the family in their home language as much as possible.

For additional information:

Dual Language Development and Disorders: A Handbook on Bilingualism and Second Language Learning by Johanne Paradis, Fred Genesee, and Martha B. Crago

Center for Early Care and Education Research: Working Paper #2 Development of Infants and Toddlers who are Dual Language Learners https://cecerdll.fpg.unc.edu/sites/cecerdll.fpg.unc.edu/files/imce/documents/%233016_Working-Paper%232.pdf

Dual Language Learners Toolkit <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/showcase/dll>

Child Care Exchange | Exchange: Dual Language Learners: An Emerging Topic of Research that All Educators Should Watch <https://www.childcareexchange.com/article/dual-language-learners-an-emerging-topic-of-research-that-all-educators-should->

⁴ "Multilingualism." *ZERO TO THREE*, www.zerotothree.org/resources/2095-multilingualism.

watch/5024355/

Head Start | ECLKC: Creating Environments That Include Children's Home Languages and Cultures <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/dll-creating-environments.pdf>

Appendix A.8: A Little About...Sleep and Brain Development

We all know that infants and toddlers need a great deal of sleep and the amount of sleep required reduces as children grow. But did you know that most of a baby's brain development occurs while sleeping? Brain synapses are formed during sleep and memories are formed and stored. Experts agree that three main ingredients that are needed for healthy growth and development are: strong relationships with primary caregivers (both at home and in child care), good nutrition, and ample sleep. So, what does that mean for infants and toddlers in care? It means we need to ensure young children are given the opportunity to get the amount of sleep that is needed for each individual. We need to ensure we are adhering to safe sleep guidelines established by the American Academy of Pediatrics while also ensuring continuity in home and child care sleep opportunities. This balance requires regular two-way communication with each child's family to learn about changing needs and routines for sleep. The need for individualized sleep opportunities continues into the toddler years. We need to ensure our environments and schedules are flexible enough to meet the individual needs of each child regarding sleep.



Recommended Amount of Sleep for Pediatric Populations⁵

Age	Recommended Sleep Hours per 24 Hour Period
Infants: 4 to 12 months	12 to 16 hours (including naps)
Toddlers: 1 to 2 years	11 to 14 hours (including naps)
Preschoolers: 3 to 5 years	10 to 13 hours (including naps)
Grade-Schoolers: 6 to 12 years	9 to 12 hours
Teens: 13 to 18 years	8 to 10 hours

For additional information:

Head Start | ECLKC: What's Sleep Got to Do with It? Exploring Sleep and Wellness for Infants and Toddlers <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/whats-sleep-got-do-it-exploring-sleep-wellness-infants-toddlers>

⁵ "American Academy of Pediatrics Supports Childhood Sleep Guidelines." *AAP.org*, American Academy of Pediatrics, 13 June 2016, www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/American-Academy-of-Pediatrics-Supports-Childhood-Sleep-Guidelines.aspx

Appendix A.9: A Little About...Temperament Tendencies

A child's temperament describes the way in which they approach and react to the world. It is a person's basic nature or natural way of being. Temperament influences a child's behavior and the way they interact with others and their environment. While temperament does not clearly define or predict behavior, understanding a child's temperament can help providers and families better understand how young children react and relate to the world around them. Information about temperament can also guide parents and caregivers to identify children's strengths and the supports they need to succeed in their relationships and environments. Since each person, child and adult is unique in their own temperament, the compatibility of temperaments can affect the quality of the adult-child relationship. This compatibility is often referred to as "goodness of fit". Goodness of fit does not require a match between the adult and child's temperament, but an understanding and willingness to adjust caregiving style to each individual child and support their unique temperament tendencies.



The Five Temperament tendencies are:

- Activity Level
- Reaction to the Unexpected
- Attention and Regulation
- Anger, Irritability, and Frustration
- Exuberance, Enthusiasm, and Cheerfulness

For additional information:

PITC: Temperament Tendencies:

<https://wested.ent.box.com/s/wy2imm5j97p8o96a6fqsdw44xeqt81mm>

<https://www.pitc.org/resources/topic-overview-temperament>

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning: Understanding Temperament in Infants and Toddlers: https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/whatworks/WhatWorksBrief_23.pdf

Head Start | ECLKC: Introduction to Temperament: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/mental-health/article/introduction-temperament>

Appendix A.10: A Little About...Toilet Learning

The secret to toileting success is patience and timing. There is not just one "right" way or one "right" age. Children show readiness when they:

- are dry 2 hours at a time, or after naps;
- can tell you when they are urinating or having a bowel movement;
- develop essential skills: ability to walk, pull pants up and down, get on/off the potty (with some help), etc.;
- copy a parent's toileting behavior;
- follow simple directions;
- want to use the potty!



Adult caregivers should work together with a consistent plan for individual toilet learning. Be encouraging and handle accidents casually, without scolding. If a child is going through a significant change, it's a good idea to hold off on toilet learning as the child may feel overwhelmed and lose skills they have already learned.

Developmentally, toddlers are trying to gain some control over their world. Toilet learning can lead to power struggles because toddlers want to have control over their own bodies. It's important to approach toilet learning matter-of-factly. Think of it as just another skill you are helping the child learn. When adults don't make a big deal about it, children are more likely to follow their own internal desire to reach this important milestone.

For additional information:

Zero to Three: Potty Training: Learning to Use the Toilet <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/266-potty-training-learning-to-the-use-the-toilet>

Healthy Children: Toilet Training www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/toddler/toilet-training/Pages/default.aspx

Toilet Training Children with Developmental Delays <https://vkc.vumc.org/assets/files/resources/toilettraindd.pdf>

Glossary

Acquisition

something acquired or gained, like knowledge

Attachment

relationship with a young child that is characterized by highly responsive care and frequent close contact to aid in creating a bond between the child and caregiver

Attributes

a quality or characteristic ascribed to something or someone

Co-regulation

supportive process between caring adults and children that fosters self-regulation development

Competent

having adequate abilities or qualities

Context

the interrelated conditions in which something occurs

Culture

shared beliefs, attitudes, and practices shared by families, communities, or groups of people

Dependency

relying on another for support

Disposition

the tendency of someone to act in a certain manner under given circumstances

Diversity

each individual is unique and has individual characteristics

Embedded

to make something an integral part of

Emergence

newly forming

Goodness of fit

the match between temperaments of the child and caregiver and how that affects their relationship

Guidelines

information intended to advise people on how something should be done or what something should be

Holistic

relating to a complete system

Integrated

formed, coordinated or blended into a unified whole

Intentional

attention to planning, to bring about

LGBTQ

acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning or Queer

Learning environment

anywhere a child is which includes: furniture, materials, smells, noise, lighting, atmosphere, etc.

MRTQ PDN

Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network

Manipulation

to treat or operate with the hands

Mastery

a highly developed skill in or knowledge of something

Matching affect

when an adult observes a child's expression of an experienced emotion and imitates the same expression of emotion

Metaphor

a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness

Milestone

a significant point in development

Norm

a set standard of achievement derived from the average achievement of a large group

Numeracy

the ability to understand and work with numbers

Pre-intention

prior to being able to plan for a result

Reciprocal

shared, felt or shown from both sides

Resilience

the ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change

Self-regulation

the ability to manage powerful emotions, bodily functions, focus and attention

Sensory

relating to the physical senses of touch, taste, smell, sight and sound

Stages of Play

ages and types of play, typically identified in birth to three years as: solitary and parallel play, moving into associative and then cooperative play by age three to six years

Standards

an idea or thing used as a measure, norm, or model in comparative evaluation

Temperament

style of interaction in which a child understands and experiences the world and the people in it; 9 recognized characteristics: emotional intensity, sensory reactivity, activity level, adaptability, persistence, distractibility, regularity, approach/withdrawal, and mood.

Transition

a movement or passage from one state, subject or place to another

Vulnerable

capable of being physically or emotionally wounded

Resources

Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University <https://developingchild.harvard.edu>

Center for Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>

DEC/NAEYC Joint Position Statement on Inclusion https://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/sites/npdci.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/EarlyChildhoodInclusion_o.pdf

Early Intervention Every Day! Embedding Activities in Daily routines for Young Children and Their Families, Merle J. Crawford and Barbara Weber, Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2014

FCC Accreditation Standards

NAEYC Accreditation Standards

States Guidelines used:

- Arizona's Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines
- California Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations
- Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines
- Florida Early Learning and Development Standards
- Maine's Early Learning and Development Standards
- NH Early Learning Standards Birth through Five
- New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards
- Vermont Early Learning Standards
- Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines

UD and UDL Definitions in HHS/DOE Joint Policy Statement-September 2015 <https://www.fyf.org/doe-and-hhs-release-joint-early-childhood-inclusion-policy-statement/>

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