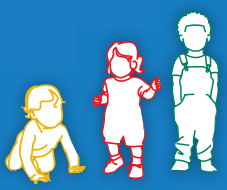
Caring for Connecticut's Children

A HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN



Promoting Healthy Child Development



2014

Volume 2 - Second Edition

Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut, Inc.

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Dear Connecticut Parents and Caregivers:

I hope you find this second edition of Caring for Connecticut's Children as wonderful and helpful as the first. Nearly ten years ago we printed and distributed 50,000 copies of both volumes of the handbooks – Volume One: Promoting Health and Safety (2004) and Volume Two: Promoting Healthy Child Development (2005) – to parents, formal and informal early care and education providers, home visitors and health care providers throughout the state. The demand was such that the supply was quickly depleted.

This second edition, updated with the most current information, was prompted by a request from the Connecticut Department of Children and Families to provide information on child development to post on their *ctparenting.com* website. Recognizing we had a treasure trove of easily communicated information within the handbooks, we offered to update the content, which was then posted on the website in short segments over the course of a month. Given the demand for the first edition and that we continued to have requests, we decided to build on the work done for the website and prepare a second edition of the handbooks.

With the assistance of a committed team at the UCONN Health Center's Nurturing Families Program, led by Karen Gallucci, Julia González Candela, and Jennifer Vendetti, both volumes have been extensively revised, while preserving the easy-to-read appearance of the original versions. Graduate student interns Allison Polesel and Lindsay Dion also contributed to the revision process. Cindy Langer at the Child Health and Development Institute contributed many hours working with the UCONN Health Center team to edit the final document and work with the design and printing contractors. All this work took over a year to complete but we are pleased to now have these beautiful editions available for your use.

These handbooks have been described as the manual for parents that should accompany every newborn in Connecticut. We hope you find the information helpful and that you will return to them as resources as the children in your care move from infancy to toddlerhood and on to being preschoolers.

Thank you for all that you do in caring for the children of Connecticut!

Warmly,



Judith Meyers, PhD.
President and CEO
Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut

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INTRODUCTION

Caring for children is among the most important of life's tasks. Children grow and develop in the context of the affectional bonds that we foster. It is through this relationship that we can provide the guidance, security, care and protection that create the necessary conditions for their experiencing trust, love, self-esteem, and curiosity in the larger world. Whether you are a parent, grandparent, foster parent, or child care provider, you have a very important job! The first few years of a child's life are times of extraordinary growth and development. All the experiences that children have, whether positive or negative, will have an influence on the kind of person they will become. Childhood is a time for exploration, experimentation, play, laughter and fun. You can help young children learn many wonderful things and take delight in the things that they are able to do!

The Caring for Connecticut's Children handbook series was developed to help caregivers (parents, grandparents, child care providers, etc.) succeed in the important job of caregiving by sharing information and best practices on early childhood topics such as health, safety and physical, intellectual and emotional development. The user-friendly format and listing of tips, activities, and resources throughout, make these handbooks great "quick reference" documents. We hope that this two-volume set will become a valuable resource for all those caring for the youngest members of our communities.

Purpose of this Handbook

This second volume in the Caring for Connecticut's Children series, *Promoting Healthy Child Development*, is designed to highlight key developmental milestones of children from birth to age five and address how parents and caregivers can facilitate children reaching these milestones successfully. Developmental milestones are major markers of accomplishments covering broad areas of human growth and development: *physical, social, emotional* and *cognitive*.

The milestones presented throughout this handbook are offered as general guidelines to help you assess whether a child is progressing at the rate expected for his age. However, it is important to remember that children develop at their own pace and therefore may reach these milestones as part of the larger pattern of their overall development. One should not become overly focused on the achievement of a specific milestone at a particular timepoint. However, if you are concerned that a child is not growing, talking, moving, listening, or responding the way he should be, discuss this with a health care provider (physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant) or developmental/ parenting expert (such as a social service provider, parent educator, or home visitor). Noticing and addressing problems as early as possible provides the best chance for improvement.

For more information on any topic in this handbook, talk with a health care provider and/or check out the Resource Section at the end of this handbook where you will find a wealth of information. The Resource Section includes local, state and national organizations that provide information, education and support for parents and child care providers on many child development topics and issues.

INTRODUCTION

A Note About Child Development

It is important to keep in mind that **development in one area affects and interacts with all other areas of development.** For example, self-confidence – which is an important piece of emotional development – affects a child's willingness to try new things, explore, find creative solutions to their problems and take on new challenges. So be sure to support all areas of development (emotional, physical, cognitive and social) – they each play an important role in shaping a child's overall growth and development!

It is also important to remember that:

- each child is unique and interacts and reacts to people and his environment in his own way
- each child develops at his own pace but shares a similar sequence of development with other children
- each child's heredity, culture, environment and experiences will influence the ways in which he grows and develops

Key Terms: (see http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/350/350-055/350-055.html)

PHYSICAL development refers to physical changes in the body, including size, weight, hearing, vision, gross motor, and fine motor skills

COGNITIVE development refers to children's ability to think, understand, develop language, gather knowledge, and process information

SOCIAL development refers to how one learns to interact with others, and to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships in various environments

EMOTIONAL development refers to how children experience, express and regulate their feelings

How to Use this Handbook

An Educational Tool
Each section begins with an introduction and explanation of the topic to be covered and includes helpful hints for promoting healthy child development, whether physical, social, emotional or cognitive. Most sections also include charts that explain what is happening at various ages and stages of development and what parents and caregivers can do in their homes and classrooms to address children's needs along the way.

Note: In this handbook, the authors alternated the use of male and female pronouns.

A Resource Manual
Contact information for local and national organizations is included for those looking for additional help or information on the topics discussed in this book. Resources are included within the appropriate section and/or are catalogued by topic at the end of the book. Where possible, we have listed toll-free phone numbers and website addresses. If you do not have Internet access at home or in the workplace, visit your local library.

Age Icons
This book focuses on child development issues for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The following icons are used in each section to indicate to the reader which age group(s) will be discussed. For this book, the age groups are defined as follows:



Infants: 0 to 12 months



Toddlers: 1 to 3 years



Preschoolers: 3 to 5 years

INTRODUCTION

Other Icons

Look for the following icons and other graphics throughout this book. They will lead you to important information and practical tips to help you create an environment that will stimulate healthy child development.



Creative tips and ideas



New research or little known facts



Important things to remember



Alerts or warnings



Sources for more information

Note: This handbook is meant to promote the health and development of young children by providing caregivers with information, recommendations, and ideas based on established best practices. This book is not intended in any way to substitute for the care or advice of a health professional.

About the Child Health and Development Institute

The Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut (CHDI), a subsidiary of the Children's Fund of Connecticut, is a not-for-profit organization established to promote and maximize the healthy physical, behavioral, emotional, cognitive and social development of children throughout Connecticut. CHDI works to ensure that children in Connecticut, particularly those who are disadvantaged, will have access to and make use of a comprehensive, effective, community-based health and mental health care system.



Section 1:
FOUNDATIONS OF HEALTHY CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Secure Caregiver-Child Attachment: *Early Relationships*

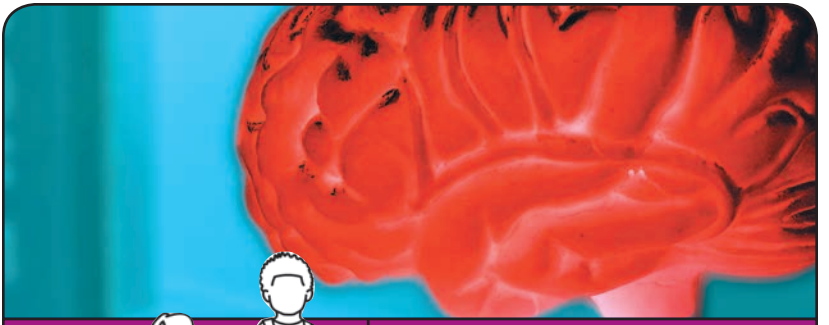
Children develop physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively within the earliest and most important relationships they have with significant caregivers. Babies come in to the world ready to "attach" and form these relational bonds with their caregivers; however, the quality of their attachment is largely influenced by how their primary caregivers read and respond to their emotional signals. Primary caregivers are those important persons in a child's life, usually parents, who provide care on a routine basis and who are emotionally invested in the child's well-being. The process of early bonding with babies is facilitated by nurturing activities such as feeding, holding, soothing, communicating (singing, motherese/parentese), and developing routines to promote a sense of safety and security. Responding quickly and with sensitivity to babies' needs is an important way toward building trust, cultivating empathy, and fostering security between caregiver and baby.

Building a secure attachment relationship with an infant during this critical window establishes a foundation for how the child views themself, understands and interacts with others, approaches new situations and learning, and copes with stress and danger.

Helpful Hint! As a caregiver, being emotionally present and available, self aware, and reflective are important skills in fostering healthy and loving parent-child relationships. Please see the Resource Section in this handbook for resources to develop these and other parental skills.

NEWS FLASH

Secure caregiver-child attachment relationships are based on a developmental process by which the infant learns to effectively use the caregiver as a secure base to explore, seek comfort, and understand relationships. Children also develop the ability to understand and regulate their emotional states through this relationship and with the caregiver's help.





The AMAZING BRAIN

infant, toddler & preschool

At birth, all of a child's major organs (the heart, lungs, kidneys) are fully developed except one – the brain! Most of a child's brain develops after he is born and in the first few years of life. **All the experiences a young child has, whether positive or negative, affect brain development and ultimately, a child's ability to understand language, solve problems and get along with others.** Feeding children nutritious foods, keeping them safe from harm, talking and reading to them often and providing love and affection are important ways that parents and caregivers can promote healthy brain development. With your help, a baby's brain will follow normal patterns of growth and development and be able to take in information and make sense of the world.

NEWS FLASH

A preschooler's brain is more than twice as active as an adult's brain. This allows them to process and retain new information quickly.

TIPS FOR PROMOTING HEALTHY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

WHAT TO DO…	WHY?
If you are pregnant, make sure you take care of yourself by eating healthy foods, avoiding smoking, drinking or other drugs, visiting your health care provider for check-ups, and getting help if you feel stressed.	Much of babies' brains develop before they are born. A mother's health has a direct impact on her baby's health and on how well her baby's brain develops before birth.
Always protect a baby's head and neck by: • Supporting it when holding, carrying or cuddling the baby • NEVER throwing the baby up in the air or shaking the baby	Babies' heads and necks are weak and fragile. Supporting the head and neck and avoiding fast or jerking movements are important for preventing serious damage to a baby's brain.
Sing, talk, and read to the baby all the time. Even before the child can speak, describe what you are doing and what you see in picture books and all around you.	Babies' brains are wired to learn speech and language from the very beginning. The number of words a child knows is strongly influenced by how much parents or caregivers talk to the child.
Gently snuggle, massage, stroke and cuddle the baby. (See page 34 for information on infant massage.)	Warm, affectionate touching helps a parent or caregiver bond with the baby. Experiencing secure, caring relationships is very important to healthy brain development. It provides "sensory nourishment" for your baby's brain. (see Zero to Three – Baby Brain Map www.zerotothree.org)
Make sure children get plenty of opportunities to practice fine and gross motor skills. Many age-specific activities can be found later in this handbook.	Activities that exercise the large and small muscles will benefit both brain and motor development. They allow your baby opportunities to learn to gain balance and control over their body (Zero to Three – Baby Brain Map)



The AMAZING BRAIN (continued)



infant, toddler & preschool

In this section, you will find specific activities that support healthy brain development as well as some other fun ways to help the children in your care grow and learn. **Remember, as the parent or caregiver, you play a very special role in creating an environment that will support the child's brain development.**

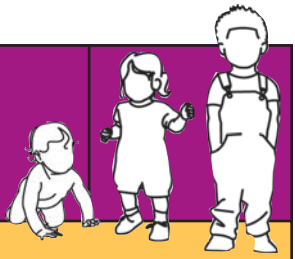
?MORE INFO

To learn more about brain development, visit the Brain Wonders website at www.zerotothree.org/brainwonders

ACTIVITIES THAT HELP THE BRAIN DEVELOP

ACTIVITY	HOW DOES THIS HELP?
Encourage children to put things in a logical order, like stacking blocks from biggest to smallest.	These activities teach children about patterns and how to put things in the right order.
Encourage children to make choices, like which color shirt they want to wear.	Letting children make choices and asking them about those choices helps children gain confidence in their own judgment and understand themselves better.
Ask children WHY and HOW questions often, like "Why do you think that bird flew away?" or "How did you find your socks?"	Asking questions helps children make connections between patterns and relationships by asking them to explain their thinking.
Create situations that show children cause and effect, like filling an ice cube tray with water and then putting it in the freezer so the water freezes.	Activities that show children cause and effect help them learn about the consequences of different actions.
Read stories aloud.	Hearing stories helps children expand their sense of the world and become familiar with language that is both written and spoken. It also gives the reader an opportunity to talk with the children about the experiences described in the story.
Sing songs, play music and play with musical instruments. 	Playing a musical instrument can help improve children's spatial reasoning activities (like putting puzzles together). Spatial reasoning is a skill that helps children later on with math and reading. Plus, playing music reduces stress.

PLAY: AN ESSENTIAL TOOL



infant, toddler & preschool

Play is a critical part of the learning process – it is the work of childhood. When children play, they explore their world, try out new ideas, and discover how to get along with others. Children learn many important skills while playing – like problem solving, cooperation, social reasoning, language and math. Through play, children develop self-esteem, self-confidence, curiosity, self-direction, values, strength and coordination.



? MORE INFO

For creative ideas on fun activities you can do with children, visit www.pbs.org/parents or check out the following books:

- ***Make Believe*: *Games and Activities for Imaginitive Play*** **(D.G. Singer and J.L. Singer)**
- ***Baby Play*** **(W. Masi and R.C. Leiderman)**
- ***Your Child at Play*** **series (M. Segal, W. Masi, & B. Bardige)**
- ***Playing Smart*** **(S.K. Perry)**

BENEFITS OF PLAY FOR CHILDREN

PHYSICAL

Children develop:

- Large motor skills through activities like throwing, swinging, skipping and climbing
- Small motor skills by playing with things like crayons, markers, paint, clay, play dough, or dolls

Play also helps children:

- Explore and discover what their bodies can do
- Gain hand-eye coordination (Zero to Three – "Power of Play")

COGNITIVE

Children learn about:

- Cause and effect
- Size and space
- Shapes, numbers, colors, and letters
- Problem solving
- Sorting things into groups

Play also helps children:

- Develop language and communication skills and creativity
- Plan and experiment with new ideas

SOCIAL

Children learn how to:

- Take turns, wait for something desired
- Negotiate
- Share
- Compromise
- Cooperate
- Join in a game
- Imitate

Play also helps children:

- Practice getting along with others

EMOTIONAL

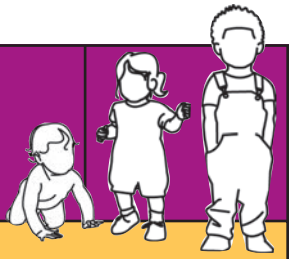
Children develop:

- A sense of pride in their accomplishments
- A desire to try new things when they are successful at learning other things
- Experience, identify, and express different feelings

Play also helps children:

- Gain independence as they learn to do things for themselves
- Master dealing with difficult experiences
- Gain self-control and an understanding of limits (Zero To Three – "Power of Play")

PLAY: AN ESSENTIAL TOOL (continued)



infant, toddler & preschool

Play gives children an opportunity to test their new skills in a safe and comfortable place. Using dolls or puppets, writing, drawing or pretend playing gives children the chance to freely express their feelings and fears. Through play, children can more easily communicate about difficult or stressful topics (like a new baby in the family, starting a new school, or divorce). So, as a parent or caregiver, it is very important to provide lots of time for children to play, and, as much as possible, to allow the child to take the lead in directing the play activities. The following page offers some great tips on creating a healthy play environment.

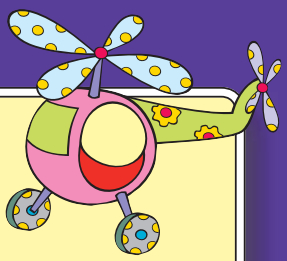


REMINDER

Have a lot of different playthings available and let children be creative in how they use the toys. General household items like plastic bowls, wooden spoons, used paper towel rolls, or old clothes that can be used for dress-up are fantastic playthings! And remember, there is no wrong way to play! Let your child direct their own play adventures. This will allow them to develop their creativity and self-confidence.

HELPFUL HINTS

- Play with children every day.
- Let children make the rules of play and follow *their* lead.
- Create a special space in the house or classroom for children to play, but also play outdoors!
- Arrange for playtime with other children. Playgroups are a great way for children to begin developing their social skills.
- Model appropriate play behavior when necessary, but if children are playing and interacting nicely, it may be best to just observe.
- Make sure the environment and play activity is safe. Keep harmful things out of reach. If play gets out of control, stop it immediately before someone gets hurt.
- Avoid restricting children to typical "boy" or "girl" activities. For example, if a girl wants to play with a truck or a boy wants to play with the toy stove, let them have fun with the toys they have chosen.
- Play games that encourage cooperation and interaction like throwing a ball or "house." Children learn how to cooperate and take turns when given the chance to practice this skill.



BRIGHT IDEA

Label toy shelves with both pictures and words for toys. You'll be helping children learn the words for their toys and teaching them where the toys go when it is time to put them away.





FLOORTIME
Making An Emotional Connection

infant, toddler & preschool

Each step of the *Floortime* process offers an opportunity for the caregiver to show respect and acceptance of a child's emotions. The play activity or game becomes secondary to the emotional sharing and two-way communication that is developed.

NEWS FLASH

The Partners in Parenting Education (PIPE) program provides developmental guidance through an infant mental health and relational perspective. *Floortime* is a concept created by Dr. Stanley I. Greenspan. *Floortime* is a way of understanding the important and sometimes challenging way of relating to and responding to children during their developmental work-play! Partners in Parenting Education have developed this tool from the *Floortime* model. For more information on the full Partners in Parenting Education curriculum, please go to www.howtoreadyourbaby.org

FLOORTIME SUGGESTIONS

1. OBSERVE FIRST

Before you approach, assess the child's general mood and the emotional tone of the play activity. Listen. Watch. Gather cues: facial expression, gestures, posture, voice tone, words ... or even silence. Is the activity level high or quieter? What is the emotional theme of the play? Think about the child's temperamental traits. How are they affecting the play?

2. APPROACH: OPEN THE CIRCLE OF COMMUNICATION

Move close to the child and use appropriate words and gestures to match the emotional tone of the play. Establish an emotional connection by using appropriate facial expressions and body language. Show interest in what the child is doing. Begin by imitating. If the child is not already at play, introduce a toy or game. Start or model play.

3. FOLLOW THE CHILD'S LEAD

Let the child respond to the play activity in his own way. Merely be an "assistant." Let the child be empowered by being the director, creating his own play "story." Continue what the child seems to enjoy. Share interest, excitement, and joy. Take turns. The child will experience warmth and connectedness with you and feel understood. Following the child's lead enhances his self-esteem.

4. EXTEND AND EXPAND THE PLAY

Make supportive comments, but don't "take over" or intrude. Ask questions to stimulate creative thinking, but let the child problem solve. Let the child's ideas define the direction of the playtime drama. Expand on the child's ideas. Help by clarifying the emotional themes the child is pursuing. Change the play slightly or add something new. Encourage the child with each step of the task. Ignore mistakes but help when frustrated or stuck.

5. LET THE CHILD CLOSE THE CIRCLE OF COMMUNICATION

When the child "closes" the communication circle that you "opened," a two-way emotionally responsive communication has occurred. You will have built on each other's ideas and responses and shared a successful playtime interaction. When the child masters a task, wait for the child to look at you. Wait until he expresses pride, and then congratulate the child with praise and excitement. Be sure to let the child bring the activity to a close. Let the child choose a new activity or repeat this one. Show respect by allowing the activity to end when the child becomes disinterested or seems tired.



© 2002 How to Read Your Baby FloorTime 101





UNDERSTANDING YOUNG CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

infant, toddler & preschool

Before knowing how to guide young children's behavior positively, you must first understand the five basic reasons for a child's actions. Remember, children's behavior is an important way that they communicate with us. Understanding these reasons will help you be more reflective rather than reactive and will result in more positive outcomes for both you and the child. It will also help you create an atmosphere that supports and nurtures the child. In the next few sections, you will find tips on guiding children's behavior, which you can apply skillfully once you determine what may be causing the child to act in ways that seem problematic or difficult.

HELPFUL HINTS

These five questions may help you consider what may be motivating a child's behavior and how to respond most constructively (borrowed from *Understanding Behavior: A Key To Discipline* by the National Association for the Education of Young Children).

Is this a developmental stage?
Many behavior problems that occur in early childhood appear when a child is entering a new developmental stage. Feeding and sleeping problems may also arise. Be firm but supportive during these times, and be extra patient and loving.

Is this an individual or temperament difference?
Not all children of a certain age act the same way. These individual differences may be the result of a variety of causes, ranging from different temperaments (shyness or moodiness) to actual disabilities or disorders (like a speech or hearing problem).

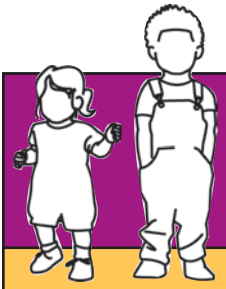
Is the environment causing the behavior?
Sometimes the environment causes a behavior that may seem inappropriate. An overcrowded child care setting or the lack of an appropriate number or types of toys can increase aggression or spark jealousy.

Is the child in a new or unfamiliar situation or facing a new task or problem?
Perhaps this is the first time a young toddler has been asked to share a toy or treasured object. Developmentally, the child does not truly understand the concept of sharing yet, so mastering this new skill will take some practice. Or, perhaps a new baby was born or a loved one, like a grandparent, died.

Does the child have unmet emotional needs?
Emotional needs that are unmet can be very difficult to discern. They can affect children's behavior in a variety of ways. Some children may be withdrawn, some may be aggressive, while others may cling to their parents or caregivers. In these situations, provide extra love and attention, such as encouraging participation in play activities and praising the child for being sensitive to others' feelings. Clues to what the child is feeling or struggling with may be found in observing their play activities.

ALERT

If a child is misbehaving or acting unusually, make sure that she is not hungry, bored, tired, feeling lonely, or getting sick. These are commons things that affect children's behavior.



UNDERSTANDING A CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT

toddler & preschool

Parenting itself is a developmental process; we are in a constant state of learning and changing along with our children. Caregivers will observe dramatic shifts in their child's behavior, interests and their emotional states. It is important to understand that these shifts are normal, predictable and patterned.

The *Gesell Institute of Child Development* in New Haven, Connecticut provides an important framework for understanding how children learn, grow and express themselves in the context of developmental changes and processes. The Gesell Institute offers parents and providers an evidence-based model for understanding child development in the context of the environment and relationships. How children act depends on their physical growth, especially brain development. As children's nervous systems grow, their minds develop and their behaviors change. Because of this natural process, children cannot be hurried or pressured to act in more grown-up ways.

Children may alternate between stages of equilibrium, where they feel comfortable and appear to be thriving, and stages of disequilibrium, when the child has trouble with many areas of living, such as eating, sleeping, responding to other people, and behaving in socially unacceptable ways. The figure below shows these alternations as they typically occur for the average child in the early years of life.

REMINDER

Children's behavior often becomes disorganized as they are experiencing intense developmental changes. Understanding the underlying causes of these behaviors will help you respond more sensitively.

THE SPIRAL OF DEVELOPMENT

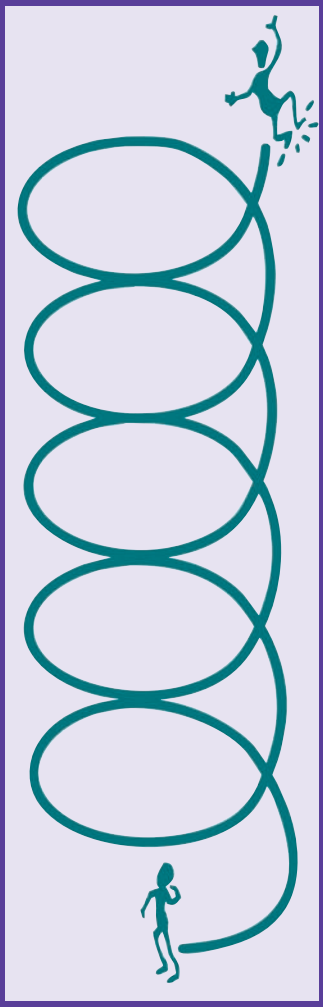
Disequilibrium

4½ Years:
- Sometimes acts like a four, sometimes like a five
- Insecure
- Emotionally changeable

3½ Years:
- Needs to succeed/have own way
- Insecure
- Disobeys
- Clumsy, stumbles often
- Objects to eating, dressing routine

2½ Years:
- Goes to extremes
- Can't make a choice
- Hates change
- Bossy, demanding, determined

18 Months:
- Difficult, impatient
- Frustrated when he can't communicate, cries or tantrums when not understood
- Can't make body do what he wants



Equilibrium

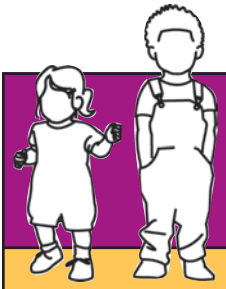
5 Years:
- Quiet and secure
- Wants to be good, usually is
- Likes the tried and true, not the new and strange

4 Years:
- Self confident, loves to be silly
- Willing to try anything, wild
- Laughs and cries loudly
- Brags, swears, and even lies

3 Years:
- Happy with the world
- Likes to obey
- Controls body well
- Proud of ability to feed and dress himself

2 Years:
- Pleasant, friendly, calm
- Talks more easily
- Controls body well
- Can cooperate

Gesell Institute programs and publications help parents, teachers, and other professionals understand the ages and stages of childhood. The illustration shown above highlights the Gesell model for communicating the challenges children experience as they move through various developmental processes. For more information about this child development framework, please visit www.gesellinstitute.org or call 1-800-369-7709 (toll-free).



POSITIVE GUIDANCE

toddler & preschool

Positive guidance focuses on guiding children toward appropriate behavior, rather than simply punishing them for misbehaving. It is an effective tool for minimizing behavior problems, as well as boosting children's self-esteem and helping them develop coping skills. Positive guidance techniques are sensitive to children's abilities at different ages and stages and can help parents and caregivers create healthy environments that provide both caring and direction.



REMINDER

As a parent or caregiver, you are a very important role model for a developing young child. Do your best to exhibit behavior that you would like to see children imitate. But remember that it takes time for children to understand and recognize their feelings, and learn how to control their emotional states and behavior. Be patient as you guide them in acting appropriately.

TIPS ON USING POSITIVE GUIDANCE

Guide children's behavior with kindness and firmness. Firmness and kindness together help children cooperate and learn acceptable behavior while feeling secure.

Give children choices. Whenever possible, give children a choice between at least 2 acceptable options. Being able to make choices helps children feel more in control of their environment and helps develop their self-esteem and self-confidence. Providing too many choices could be overwhelming to a child, so it is important to strike a balance between flexibility and structure.

Give clear, simple directions. Children are better able to follow instructions if you give them one thing to do at a time. Be sure that you have their full attention when giving directions (e.g., make eye contact) and that your expectations are realistic given the child's age.

Provide a safe and interesting play environment. Children are more likely to misbehave if they are bored. So, offer lots of developmentally appropriate toys and activities and child-proof the environment to avoid unnecessary accidents or a continual need to set limits that can be frustrating.

Set clear limits. Limits are not rules - they are flexible boundaries. Limits should be set for safety, to protect children and property (toys, furniture, etc.), and to teach responsibility and show respect for all people. Children feel secure in an environment with limits that are neither too strict nor too laidback.

Help children successfully transition to new activities. Providing both 10-minute and 5-minute warnings before changing activities can help children make the adjustment.

Be consistent. Children do best when the rules are consistent from day to day. Frequent changes to the rules can be confusing and may lead children to act out in order to find out what the limits are.

Follow through. When you say something, follow through! If you tell a child she cannot go outside without a jacket, do not let her go outside until she has put on her coat. Be firm, yet kind as you enforce your rules. This helps children learn about responsibility.

Use praise and positive statements often. Children love to be praised and it is an effective way to encourage good behavior. Be as specific as possible when praising children. For example, "I love it when you put your coat away. Thank you. It makes me very happy."

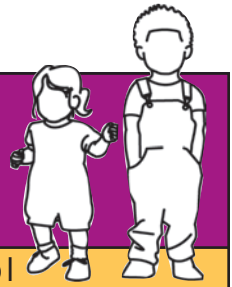
Take action before a situation gets out of control. Be aware of potential conflicts that may be arising and intervene by suggesting another activity or helping children express their feelings in words.

NOTE: Remember that no two children are alike and relationships change constantly, so pick and choose from this list as necessary to fit each child and situation.



Make a game out of good behavior. For example, encourage children to put away their toys by saying, "Let's see if you can get all the toys in the shelf by the time I count to ten."

RESPONDING to MISBEHAVIOR



toddler & preschool

Behavior problems in children surface for many reasons. A child may become frustrated by the limitations of his growing mind and body or feel threatened, scared or unsure by an unfamiliar situation. Other reasons include that the child is hungry, bored, sad, or not feeling physically well.

As a parent or caregiver, how you respond to a young child's misbehavior is very important. Your reaction can either help the child learn from his mistakes and behave better in the future or simply cause the child to feel shamed and humiliated. Ultimately, discipline should help children develop self-control and a sense of "right" and "wrong", while building their self-confidence and problem-solving skills. There are many positive discipline techniques that support these goals, several of which are described in this section. It is important to remember that no single technique will work for every child in every situation, so use your best judgment.

NEWS FLASH

The *Time-out* approach is often misunderstood and, thus, misused. *Time Out* should not be used as a punishment for children when parents are feeling frustrated with, or don't understand their children's actions. This can be damaging to the child's self-esteem and the relationship with the caregiver. Caregivers should carefully consider their child's needs and ensure that the child can understand the rationale behind this approach. Distraction, redirection and modeling appropriate behavior are very effective with toddlers. An alternative, and we believe less potentially damaging, approach called "Time-in" is for helping children regain control of their emotions and behavior without separating child from caregiver. For information about "Time In", please read "*Time-In Parenting: How to Teach Children Self-Control, Life Skills, and Problem Solving By Lending Yourself and Staying Connected*" by Otto Weininger.

TECHNIQUES FOR DIFFICULT BEHAVIORS AND EMOTIONS

Reflection. When a child misbehaves, stop and reflect on what might be causing the behavior and what the child may be trying to communicate to you through his actions. For example, the child may be hungry, or feeling frightened. Acknowledging and responding to what is underlying the child's behavior often resolves the issue.

Active Listening. This involves listening closely to what the child is really trying to tell you with his words, tone of voice, and body language. Helping the child express his true feelings and acknowledging that they are important may be enough to calm the child and stop the inappropriate behavior. By listening to children and taking them seriously, it also helps them develop self-confidence and self-esteem.

Emotional Presence. It can be difficult for parents to witness their child's distress and there is a strong temptation to distract, cheer them up, or pressure them to feel or act differently. It is important for children to learn that they are acceptable and lovable with a full array of emotional experiences. Caregivers are encouraged to remain emotionally present and available when their children are distressed to allow them to experience these emotions in a safe way, not feel alone or ashamed, and learn how to regain their sense of control through a loving, supportive relationship. This can go a long way toward helping them develop mastery in this domain.

Redirection. When a child is doing something inappropriate, you calmly stop the behavior, explain why that behavior is inappropriate, and then direct the child's attention to another, more suitable activity.

Negotiation and Problem Solving. Negotiation should be used with situations between two or more children. You are the facilitator and help children solve their problem without placing blame about "who had it first" or "who started it." When children take part in the resolution, they feel less need to misbehave, are more willing to learn from their mistakes, and develop new problem solving skills.

Natural and Logical Consequences. Consequences teach children that unpleasant things happen when they make bad choices or misbehave. A consequence that occurs naturally might be when a child refuses to eat dinner and later gets hungry. A logical consequence is one imposed by the parent or caregiver, such as telling a child who threw sand that they won't be able to play in the sandbox until tomorrow. It is important, however, for the caregiver to maintain and support the child's safety at all times and not allow the child to engage in activities that are beyond his physical or developmental level (e.g., playing on playground equipment that is too high or complicated, creating serious dangers).

Time-out. Time-out is meant to help a child (and caregiver) calm down so he can act more appropriately. This approach should never be used with infants and young toddlers as they cannot be expected to understand the rationale behind this approach and may be harmed by a forced separation from a caregiver who is critical to their ongoing emotional well-being. Time-out involves removing a misbehaving child from a tense situation to a quiet, safe place within your sight for a few minutes – just long enough for the child to regain self-control. Children in time-out should never feel shamed or isolated from their peers. It should not be seen or experienced as a punishment for the child, but as an opportunity *for the child to have a break* from an intense situation. Once a child regains control, help the child successfully rejoin the group or activity and then praise the child for his improved behavior. This approach should be used judiciously to ensure it is not damaging to the caregiver-child relationship.

ALERT

If a child continually harms himself or other children, he may have some emotional issues that need to be addressed. Assistance from a trained professional may help. In a child care situation, it is essential that the parents and caregivers communicate about the child's behavior and how to deal with it so the child's emotional needs are being met and healthy development continues. Be sure to share these behaviors with your health care provider.



MORE INFO

A popular program called "1-2-3 Magic" may have some important new information to help you with positive guidance approaches to helping children manage difficult behavior. The approach helps parents to avoid a negative pattern of responding to young children typically caused by feeling stressed or upset by your child's behavior. Parent education programs such as Nurturing Families Network and Family Resource Centers may provide guidance on how to use this approach in their group programs. Most libraries will have these materials for you to check out and review at home. If you find that it is very difficult to refrain from responding negatively to your child's behavior, please seek counseling or professional support! For more information about the 1-2-3 Magic program, visit: www.parentmagic.com. Connecticut caregivers will find www.kidsmentalhealthinfo.com an important resource to get information and help.

2

INFANT DEVELOPMENT



INFANT DEVELOPMENT: OVERVIEW

infant

Babies experience an extraordinary amount of growth and development during their first year. A newborn grows from a helpless infant to a little person who is gradually able to manipulate things around her all by herself. Seeing an infant's abilities emerge is an amazing process, so enjoy watching the stages of development build upon each other. As the caregiver, you play an important role in making sure that the baby's cognitive, physical, social and emotional well-being are developing in the best possible way. **Babies depend on you for everything!** What the baby learns through her interactions with you will make a big difference in how she views and relates to the world around her.



BRIGHT IDEA

Infant massage is physical and emotional communication that reinforces bonding and attachment between caregiver and baby, helps to build daily routines which develop an infant's trust and security around a "typical" day, promotes the infant's ability to manage state changes, is a tool for parents to help baby through fussy periods and offers a number of health benefits for baby including digestion, sleep, and emotional connection to caregiver. Family Wellness Centers of Community Health Centers (New Britain, Middletown and Meriden) often provide free monthly infant massage workshops for parents. Find "Family Wellness Centers" on Facebook. Hartford Hospital Integrative Medicine Department offers new parent infant massage training – find out more at www.harthosp.org/NewsEventsClasses/Programs. For a general overview of the purpose and benefits of baby massage and to find local massage therapists, go to www.infantmassageusa.org.

DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS: BIRTH TO AGE ONE

Bonding /Attachment
It is of utmost importance for infants to develop a strong, secure attachment to their primary caregivers (usually Mom and Dad, but could also be grandparents, childcare provider, or someone else). This attachment begins to form at birth and develops over the first 12-18 months of life. Babies take part in what is called the "social dance," where the baby responds to the caregiver by moving her lips, crying, cooing or turning her head toward the caregiver, and in response, the caregiver kisses, holds or talks softly to the baby. The baby's signals indicate her need for close, physical contact and/or emotional connection with her parent. When this cycle of caring interaction repeats again and again, it helps the infant to form the secure attachment that will support her growth and development throughout childhood and adolescence. Caregivers can facilitate the development of secure attachment by being attuned to their baby's signals for closeness, comfort, and also exploration, and then responding in emotionally sensitive ways.

Trust
Trust is another important experience babies learn from their caregivers. A baby learns to trust when you provide her with all the basic needs (nutritious food, clean diapers, clothing, loving interactions, etc.) *predictably, quickly and lovingly*. Responding this way will not spoil the baby! Rather, this lets the baby know that she can depend on you to take care of all her needs and that she is an important person to you. Trust enables the baby to feel good about herself, know that she deserves care and protection, and teaches her to appreciate and respect others.

Exploring the World
It is healthy for children to be curious and interested in the world around them. One of the early ways that babies learn about the world is by putting items in their mouths. This is a normal way for babies to explore their world and learn about the many new and interesting objects in their environment. Your job is to make sure all dangerous items are out of babies' reach.



REMINDER

Each child is unique and develops at her own rate. Still, if you think your child is not growing, talking, moving, listening or responding the way she should be, bring your concerns to the child's health care provider. Noticing and addressing problems as early as possible provides the best chance for improvement. You can also call the Child Development Infoline toll-free at 1-800-505-7000 to discuss concerns about a child's behavior, learning or development and the need for a free developmental evaluation or to obtain a developmental questionnaire called "Ages and Stages" that will help you monitor how the child's development is progressing.





SOCIAL and EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

infant

Babies begin to develop socially and emotionally as soon as they are born through their interactions with parents and other caregivers. **For infants to be socially and emotionally healthy, they need to develop a strong, secure attachment to their primary caregivers (Mom, Dad, child care provider) and learn how to trust.** When parents and caregivers provide nurturing and responsive care to their babies' needs (like food or a clean diaper), they not only create a sense of security but also help to make the children feel good about themselves.

ALERT

Maternal mental health terms a group of conditions including depression and anxiety that impacts many mothers before and after childbirth. When a mother experiences depression or anxiety, it can have a negative impact on her baby's development and also on her developing relationship with baby. Depression affects a mother's physical and mental health, and her ability to be responsive and sensitive to her baby. Common signs and symptoms include feeling sad, overwhelmed, irritable, having lower energy or interest in activities, crying for no reason, having difficulty getting enough restful sleep, poor appetite, difficulty concentrating or remembering, or maintaining attention and interference with other areas of functioning such as relationships, work, and self-care. Maternal depression is treatable! It is critical that mothers suffering from depression seek professional help. For resources, call 2-1-1 (toll-free). Postpartum Support International provides information on treatments, support groups, and resources throughout the United States (www.postpartum.net). For those with insurance, contact your insurance carrier to identify a counselor in your area.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WHAT IS HAPPENING?

Birth to 3 months

- The baby is learning to trust based on how well her basic needs are being met.
- The baby starts forming an attachment with her primary caregiver.
- The baby begins to develop a social smile.
- The baby is more communicative.
- The baby is more expressive with face and body.
- The baby imitates some movements and expressions.
- The baby enjoys playing with people.

4 to 7 months

- The baby responds with baby sounds when caregivers talk and smile.
- The baby smiles directly at her primary caregivers and begins to laugh.
- The baby enjoys social play.
- The baby is interested in mirror images.
- The baby responds to expressions and emotion.
- The baby appears joyful often.

8 to 12 months

- The baby becomes strongly attached to the primary caregiver and only wants that person for most things.
- The baby is shy or anxious with strangers.
- The baby gets very upset if the primary caregiver leaves or if a stranger is near.
- The baby enjoys imitating people in play.
- The baby shows preference for specific people and toys.
- The baby tests parental response.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO?

Respond consistently, quickly and lovingly to her needs so she will learn to trust you and the world around her.

Smile, laugh, snuggle and talk with her to let her know she is important to you and to help her form a secure attachment with you.

Reflect back the faces and expressions you see in your baby, like a mirror to show you are trying to understand her.

Talk, sing or read stories often.

Use animated facial expressions and voice tones when talking to encourage more interactions and to model varied emotional expression.

When strangers are near, reassure babies that everything is okay by using gentle, encouraging words and gestures. (For more tips, see section on Stranger Anxiety).



If a parent has to leave a baby with another caregiver to go to work or run errands, the baby may get upset. When this happens, try soothing the baby by giving her a comfort object to hold, like a favorite blanket or toy. Also, try to establish a "leaving routine" so that your child knows what to expect when you are leaving. Do not try to slip away when your child is not watching! Your child needs to feel confident that you will come back. Although it may be tempting to disappear, disappearing when they are distracted or engaged in an activity may damage their sense of security in not being able to predict important events in their life.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT:
Thinking and Problem Solving



infant



In the first year of life, babies make huge steps in their ability to think, solve problems and communicate. This is called *cognitive development.* As babies' five senses (taste, touch, smell, sight, hearing) and muscles develop, they grow from totally helpless infants into little explorers who can open up cabinets, stack large blocks on top of each other, begin to say a few words and even throw food from the high chair! Although you may find some of these activities frustrating, they are proof that the baby has made leaps and bounds in cognitive development. These are all signs that a baby's brain is developing and giving her the power to think and constantly learn more about the world around her.

THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

At the same time that babies are learning how to communicate and develop their language skills, they are also learning how to "get what they want, when they want it." This is called thinking and problem solving. Below are some examples that illustrate an infant's problem solving process.

The baby thinks to herself...	The baby solves this problem by...
"I want that rattle!" 	**Deciding to roll over, reach for and/or crawl to the rattle.**
"I am hungry!"	**Communicating through cries, grunts or pointing until someone feeds her or pointing to the food or drink that she wants.**

ADDITIONAL INFANT COGNITIVE ABILITIES

Newborn to 3 months:

- Begins exploratory play by touching objects and putting them in the mouth

4-7months:

- Follows a disappearing object with the eyes
- Reaches to grab a dropped toy
- Finds a partially hidden object
- Explores with hands and mouth

8-12 months:

- Recognizes family members
- Uses "trial and error" approach to reach a goal
- Explores objects in different ways
- Finds hidden objects easily
- Looks at correct picture when the image is named
- Imitates gestures
- Begins to use objects correctly



COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: Language and Communication

infant

Language development follows a predictable pattern. **You'll find that a baby's language develops from coos and grunts in the first 12 months, to first words around 10 – 12 months, to two word sentences around 18 – 24 months and, finally, to whole sentences around age 3.** In the first 12 months, babies also communicate with you by crying, smiling or using body gestures (like pointing to something).



How Does Your Child Hear and Talk: Birth to One Year

HEARING AND UNDERSTANDING	TALKING
Birth to 3 months • Startles to loud sounds • Quiets or smiles when spoken to • Seems to recognize your voice and quiets if crying • Increases or decreases sucking behavior in response to sound	**Birth to 3 months** • Makes pleasure sounds (cooing, gooing) • Cries differently for different needs • Smiles when sees you
4 to 6 Months • Moves eyes in direction of sounds • Responds to changes in tone of your voice • Notices toys that make sounds • Pays attention to music	**4 to 6 Months** • Babbling sounds more speech-like with many different sounds, including p, b and m • Chuckles and laughs • Vocalizes excitement and displeasure • Makes gurgling sounds when left alone and when playing with you
7 Months to 1 Year • Enjoys games like peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake • Turns and looks in direction of sounds • Listens when spoken to • Recognizes words for common items like "cup", "shoe", "book", or "juice" • Begins to respond to requests (e.g., "Come here" or "Want more?")	**7 Months to 1 Year** • Babbling has both long and short groups of sounds such as "tata upup bibibibi" • Uses speech or noncrying sounds to get and keep attention • Uses gestures to communication (waving, holding arms to be picked up) • Imitates different speech sounds • Has one or two words (hi, dog, dada, mama) around first birthday, although sounds may not be clear

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BRIGHT IDEA

Learning how to communicate and express their needs can be a frustrating experience for young children who have not yet learned how to talk. Teaching children sign language can help to supplement their developing communication skills. Infant sign language is the ability of infants to use their facial expressions, hands and body to communicate their needs. Check out the following websites for more information: www.littlesigners.com. The American School for the Deaf offers baby sign language classes for the community! www.asd-1817.org/page.cfm?p=664



COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: Language and Communication (continued)



infant

Communication and language development means learning how to use nonverbal as well as verbal (spoken) actions to express wants, needs or ideas. Developing language and communication skills is an important part of an infant's cognitive development. **How well these skills develop depends upon having an observing, sensitive adult who reads the child's cues and responds accordingly.** The following pages provide numerous activities that you can do with babies to help strengthen their language and communication skills.

BRIGHT IDEA

- Babies love that sing-songy rhythm of talking called "motherese" or "parentese." Talk often to babies about what you are doing, what is around them, or pretty much anything! The more you talk to your infant the greater their vocabulary and comprehension will be as they grow.

TIPS FOR PROMOTING LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

- **Delight in babies' ability to communicate with you. When a baby coos, babbles or gurgles to you, respond back with the same sounds.**
- **Talk to babies during daily routines such as diapering, feeding, playing, bathing or dressing. Describe what you are doing and why. This is a great way to help them learn language and see how activities are connected!**
- **Babies need LIVE people to talk with in order for them to learn language and communication skills, not just voices heard over the television. Avoid using the TV as a substitute for talking with the baby.**
- **Look into the baby's eyes when talking to her. Ask the baby questions and give her the answers. For example, "What time is it? It's time for your nap."**
- **Tell babies what an object is or what a phrase means. This is called labeling. For example, tell the baby that this is a red, round ball or that we say "bye-bye" when we leave.**
- **Sing and hum to babies. The songs you sing can be silly ones that you make up on your own or traditional songs and nursery rhymes.**



- **Play music for babies. This helps them begin to hear the rhythm of words as they link together and experience the beat of different sounds.**

NEWS FLASH

When children learn two languages from birth, they are benefiting from the opportunity to take advantage of their innate abilities, as language capacity is greatest during very early childhood.



COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: Reading to Infants

infant

Reading is an extremely important way to help babies learn to speak and understand language. It also helps to cultivate attachment as it is an activity that is shared with positive emotion. It is not as important what you read to babies, just that you read something to them! Luckily, babies are very interested in books. They may try putting books in their mouths or simply carry books around with them. In this section, you will find several good tips for reading to little ones.



HELPFUL HINTS ON READING TO INFANTS



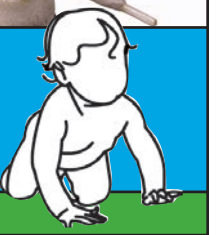
- Keep several sturdy, board books or plastic books on hand for infants to explore.
- When a baby urges you to sit and read to her – take advantage of the opportunity!
- Hold the baby comfortably while reading to her.
- Let the baby show you what pages she wants you to read.
- Make the reading experience interesting, fun and pleasurable. Use different voices and make different faces while reading to the baby.
- Point to and name pictures or scenes in the story.
- Ask the baby questions about the story, like "Can you show me where the bunny rabbit is?" and let the baby point the object out to you.
- Allow baby to look at pictures on pages as long as he seems interested. Don't rush to turn pages.
- Follow the baby's cues for "read more" or "stop reading."
- Be patient if the baby loses interest in the story. Babies have a short attention span!
- Let your baby see you reading so that they know that it is important for everyone to read!
- Read the baby's favorite books again and again.
- Expose your child to a variety of different books, including fairy tales, poems, non-fiction, etc.
- Create a quiet, special place where you and your child can read.

? MORE INFO

For ideas on books that are especially helpful for infants, toddlers or preschoolers, talk to your local librarian or visit the following websites: www.reachoutandread.org and www.scholastic.com



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: Growth Update



infant

Over the first five to six months of life, infants grow very rapidly. After this, babies continue to grow, but at a slower pace. Overall, most babies triple their birth weight and double their birth length by age one. **To ensure healthy development, it is very important to take babies to a health care provider for regularly scheduled check-ups and immunizations.** These visits provide an opportunity to discuss the child's development and address any concerns.

NEWS FLASH

(see http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/senses/sense newborn.html)

(see www.pbs.org/wnet/brain/episode1/infant vision/flash.html) This is a link to a fascinating computer simulation of visual development from newborn to adulthood from The Secret Life of the Brain by PBS.)

At birth, infants can

- See things that are 8 to 12 inches away.
- Feel things. The sense of touch is actually present in the first 8 weeks of pregnancy!
- Smell things. A 3-day old baby can even identify the unique smell of his mother's breast milk.
- Hear things. Newborns recognize familiar sounds they heard before birth, like Mom or Dad's voice.
- Taste things. Sweet and sour, and discriminate between the two.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

WHAT IS HAPPENING?	WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?
In the first few weeks of life, babies will spend most of their time eating, sleeping, pooping and needing to be held, cuddled and comforted.	Be patient and remember that babies need you for everything! Ask for help from family, friends or early childhood professionals if you feel stressed and overwhelmed by the baby's needs. It is fine to take breaks!
Babies are gradually learning to master control of their bodies.	Provide babies with safe, interesting activities that help them develop motor skills. For example, play gentle exercise games like moving the baby's legs in a bicycle motion.
Teeth begin to grow and cut through the gums around 6 months of age. This is called teething.	Help keep the baby's teeth and mouth healthy. Good dental care is important for overall health and speech development (see Volume 1). Give your child something firm and/or cold to chew on; such as a teething ring or washcloth. If your child is eating solid foods, hard and cold foods, such as teething crackers and applesauce or yogurt can also help ease gum pain and soreness temporarily. (see www.babycenter.com)
Infants are continuously building upon the five senses that are present at birth – sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste.	Allow your child opportunities to practice using their senses. Provide new, interesting and safe toys that stimulate several of their different senses at once, like a rattle that is colorful to look at and also makes noise.

ALERT

Proper nutrition is critical to a child's healthy development. Breast milk provides the best nutrition for babies in their first year. When breast feeding is not possible, iron-enriched formula can help ensure that babies get the proper nutrients. For more information, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics www.healthychildren.org, Breastfeeding USA www.breastfeedingusa.org and Connecticut La Leche League www.lllct.org



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: Motor Skills

infant

Motor skill development means gaining the ability to control the various parts of your body. This part of physical development is divided into two categories: gross or large motor development (head, legs, arms) and fine or small motor development (fingers, toes). Motor development becomes more complex as a baby's brain develops. Young children must first learn to do simple things with their bodies before tackling more challenging physical activities. **For infants, much of their gross motor development prepares them for walking, whereas the major fine motor achievement in the first year is controlled use of their hands.**



BRIGHT IDEA

Lay the baby on her stomach to play each day so she can exercise her chest and arm muscles and develop head and neck control. This is called "tummy time."

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES

(see www.americanpregnancy.org/firstyearoflife/firstyeardevelopment.html)

AGE	MILESTONE	
GROSS MOTOR DEVELOPMENT **Birth - 3 months**	• Lifts head momentarily • Turns head from side to side when lying on back	• Moves head from side to side while lying on stomach • Lifts head to 45 degrees while lying on stomach
3 months	• Stretches legs out and kicks when lying on stomach • Learns to hold up head when sitting but bobbles forward	• Begins to bear some weight on both legs while standing • When lying on stomach, can lift head and shoulders 45 to 90 degrees off of ground
4 months	• Rolls from side to back or back to side • Pushes up using the arms when placed on stomach	• Sits with support
5 months	• Rolls from stomach to back	• Holds head up while sitting
6 months	• Turns over completely when laid on back or stomach • Can lift chest and some of stomach off of floor and bear weight on hands when placed on stomach	• Bears most of own weight when in a standing position
7 months	• Uses arms to drag the body along the floor • Sits without support	• Bears full weight on legs and feet
8 months	• Gets to sitting position without assistance • Crawls forward on belly by pulling with arms and pushing with legs • Assumes hands-and-knees position	• Gets from sitting to crawling or prone (lying on stomach) position • Pulls up to stand
8-10 months	• Begins crawling on hands and knees	• Moves feet to take steps while standing
11-12 months	• Walks while holding onto someone else's fingers or furniture	
12-15 months	• Stands momentarily without support • Walks while holding one hand of another • Attempts first steps independently	• Walks independently • Sits down from standing position independently
FINE MOTOR DEVELOPMENT **Birth – 3 months**	• Swats at and then holds onto things (isn't able to let go) • Hands stay clenched • Brings hands within range of eyes and mouth	• Strong grasp reflex present • Holds and shakes objects but does not reach for them
4 months	• Tries to reach towards objects but misses; overshoots • Eye-hand coordination begins	• Grasps objects with both hands
6 months	• Grasps and then lets go of things that are no longer wanted	• Uses the pincer grasp. This is when the thumb and forefinger are used to pick things up (like a Cheerio™).
7 months	• Transfers objects from hand to hand	
8 months	• Picks up objects using thumb and index, fourth, and/or fifth finger (raking grasp)	
9 – 12 months	• Uses forefinger to poke, probe and hook things • Picks up object using thumb and index finger (pincer grasp) • Places objects, one after another, into a container • Takes objects out of container	• Lets object go voluntarily • Bangs two cubes together, claps • Tries to imitate scribbling • Can manipulate objects out of tight fitting spaces





SUPPORTING INFANTS' DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PLAY

infant

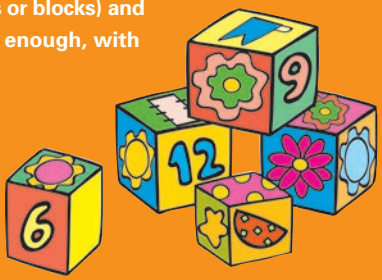
There are lots of ways that parents and caregivers can play with children to help develop their physical, emotional, social and cognitive skills. To give you a sense of the many possibilities, the following page provides a number of suggested activities to do with infants. This list is just a beginning. Be creative and do your best to make play activities fun and interesting!

REMINDER

Watch for signals that babies need to rest. Newborns can get over stimulated easily. If you are playing with the baby and you notice the baby becomes unhappy, turns away, or starts to cry, the baby may be signaling that it's time for her to sleep or enjoy some quiet time. Do not push her to continue but let her rest. Ending the play on a good note will help ensure that your child will want to engage in the activity later!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN BIRTH TO AGE ONE

- With a newborn, move a brightly colored toy back and forth slowly. Let the baby follow it with her eyes.
- Play peek-a-boo by hiding your face or a toy behind a blanket. Watch how the baby grows to understand that even though she can't see an object, it's still there.
- When the baby is able to lift her head while lying on her stomach, put a mirror safely in front of her face. Babies love looking at faces!
- Let the baby stretch to reach a toy or other safe, interesting object by placing it almost out of reach.
- Develop the baby's interest in music by helping her clap in rhythm with songs you sing or shake a rattle or bang on some pots and pans with a wooden spoon.
- Give an older infant stacking toys (like rings or blocks) and let her stack the objects in any order. Soon enough, with your help, she'll learn the right order.



ALERT

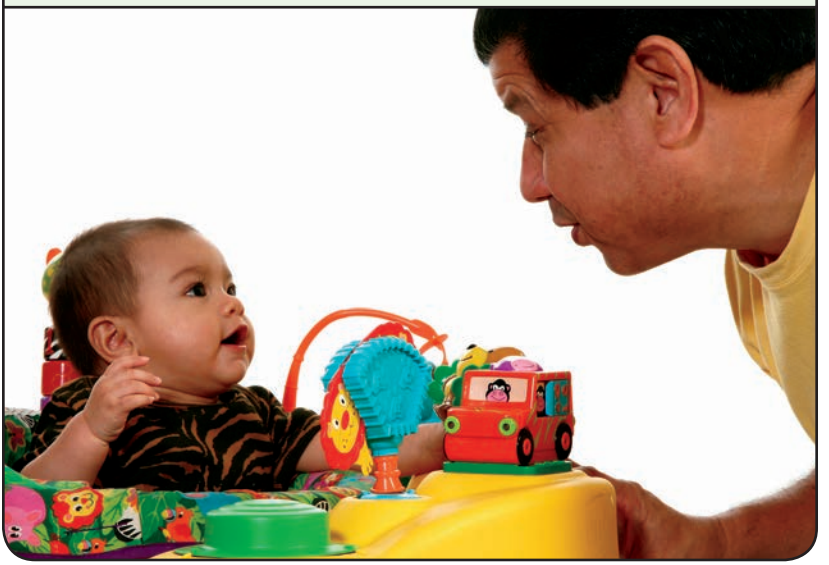
Make sure toys given to infants are 1 3/4 inches in size or greater. If you can fit a toy inside a roll of toilet paper, it's too small and could cause choking.



LEARN THE SIGNS AND ACT EARLY

infant

There are lots of ways that parents and caregivers can play with children to help develop their physical, emotional, social and cognitive skills. To give you a sense of the many possibilities, the following page provides a number of suggested activities to do with infants. This list is just a beginning. Be creative and do your best to make play activities fun and interesting!



NEWS FLASH

The Centers for Disease Control, Connecticut Department of Public Health and the UConn Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities are providing caregivers with guidance on how to LEARN THE SIGNS and ACT EARLY to support early childhood development. To receive additional materials on LEARN THE SIGNS/ACT EARLY, please call the Child Development Infoline at 1-800-505-7000 or go to www.cdc.gov/milestones.

LEARN THE SIGNS AND ACT EARLY

ACTION	SIGNS
Act early by talking to your health care provider if your 2-month old infant:	• Doesn't respond to loud sounds • Doesn't watch things as they move • Doesn't smile at people • Doesn't bring hands to mouth • Can't hold head up when pushing up on tummy
Act early by talking to your health care provider if your 4-month old infant:	• Doesn't watch things as they move • Doesn't smile at people • Can't hold head steady • Doesn't coo or make sounds • Doesn't bring things to mouth • Doesn't push down with legs when feet are placed on a hard surface • Has trouble moving one or both eyes in all directions
Act early by talking to your health care provider if your 6-month old infant:	• Doesn't try to get things that are in reach • Shows no affection for caregivers • Doesn't respond to sounds around him • Has difficulty getting things to mouth • Seems very floppy, like a rag doll • Doesn't make vowel sounds ("ah", "eh", "oh") • Doesn't roll over in either direction • Doesn't laugh or make squealing sounds • Seems very stiff, with tight muscles
Act early by talking to your health care provider if your 9-month old infant:	• Doesn't bear weight on legs with support • Doesn't sit with help • Doesn't babble ("mama", "baba", "dada") • Doesn't play any games involving back-and-forth play • Doesn't respond to own name • Doesn't seem to recognize familiar people • Doesn't look where you point • Doesn't transfer toys from one hand to other






3
TODDLER
DEVELOPMENT

TODDLER DEVELOPMENT: OVERVIEW



toddler

The strong, secure and trusting attachments that you help children develop in the first year of life set the stage for healthy toddler development. **During toddlerhood, a child begins the process of separating from you and understanding that he is a unique person – different from you and all others.** His first steps progress to walking and running, enabling him to physically move about the world in new and exciting ways. He discovers things he has never seen before and wants to find out about them by touching, banging, opening, chewing, holding, throwing and looking at them. He is beginning to talk and express his feelings. His language development explodes during the toddler years, although he often gets frustrated because he does not yet have the right words to tell you or ask you something. He also may become distressed because he cannot yet do all of the things he wants to do, either because he doesn't have the physical skill or he cannot recognize when activities are dangerous to him. Although he is starting to recognize his separateness, his attachment needs remain very strong, and he continues to require close, nurturing involvement from important caregivers.



Autonomy/Independence

As toddlers explore their newly found independence and express their desires, you will likely see the following behaviors surface:

- **Self-help frustration:** Toddlers have a strong desire to do things on their own like dressing themselves, putting on their coats and shoes, or brushing their hair. However, toddlers are often unable to "successfully" accomplish tasks because their bodies, muscles and brains are still growing. This creates high levels of frustration, worry and shame for these young children. Toddlers will frequently cry and/or scream "I do!" or "I want!" When these situations arise, remember that this is normal behavior for toddlers. Just relax, be patient and offer gentle guiding help.

- **Testing limits:** Toddlers' emerging sense of autonomy leads them to test limits with just about everything. You'll typically find toddlers wanting to control what they eat, when they go to bed, or which clothes they wear (or not wanting to wear clothes, coats), and refusing to comply or saying "no". When toddlers test limits, they are learning about who they are and how they should behave. As a caregiver, your job is to remain calm and set clear and consistent limits that keep toddlers safe while at the same time letting them discover more about their likes and dislikes. For example, "Grace, it's too cold outside to wear shorts. Here are some other clothes for you to choose from."

Attachment and Exploration Needs

Toddlers are exploring their rapidly developing abilities. It is important for the caregiver to foster these developments in the context of their relationships. The toddler will need to relate to the caregiver both as a "secure base" from which she can embark on new adventures, while also being a "safe haven" to return to for comfort and safety as needed. Attachment needs continue; however, the child's emotional signals will shift in flavor and tone along with their changing minds and bodies.

REMINDER

Each child is unique and develops at her own rate. Still, if you think a child is not growing, talking, moving, listening or responding the way she should be, bring your concerns to the child's health care provider. Noticing and addressing problems as early as possible provides the best chance for improvement. You can also call the Child Development Infoline toll-free at 1-800-505-7000 to discuss concerns about a child's behavior, learning or development and the need for a free developmental evaluation or to obtain a developmental questionnaire called "Ages and Stages" that will help you monitor how the child's development is progressing.





SOCIAL and EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

toddler

Learning how to get along with others is an important skill that begins to develop during the toddler years. Caregivers can help toddlers work on this skill by providing many opportunities for them to play with siblings, friends and others. It is also critical that toddlers develop confidence in their growing abilities. **Letting children try new things and offering support regardless of whether the child's attempts are successful or not is an effective way to help toddlers gain self-confidence.**

ALERT

When a child behaves inappropriately, try to control your anger rather than hitting or yelling. Remember that you are a toddler's role model and he looks to you to teach him right from wrong, and how to handle frustration and other difficult emotions. For an excellent description about this developmental period, and the challenges for both child and caregivers, see Alicia Lieberman's "The Emotional Life of the Toddler" (1993).

WHAT IS HAPPENING?	WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?
The toddler is struggling with sometimes competing needs for separateness/ independence on one hand, and continued connection on the other.	Learn to recognize the toddler's need for you as both: 1) A "secure base" in which you can support their exploration and separateness. 2) A "safe haven" who offers comfort, support, safety. Figuring out which need is being expressed at a given time can be challenging!
The toddler is becoming an independent person who wants to do everything by himself. However, he is still very dependent on the adults who care for him.	Allow toddlers to try to do things on their own first, then offer help if needed. Be especially supportive when toddlers are not able to do something, as this is very upsetting to them. When possible, try to structure the environment and create opportunities for your child to have success in handling new, but manageable challenges.
The toddler is developing self-esteem and self-confidence. Depending on how the toddler is treated, he either feels good about himself and the things he can do, or begins to feel badly about himself and his abilities.	Praise toddlers' efforts, whether or not they are successful. Respect toddlers so that they learn to respect themselves. Encourage them to try things more than once and not give up when something doesn't come easily. However, don't force him to do something if he has become exasperated.
The toddler is learning how to control his behavior (self-regulation) and beginning to understand how he should behave.	Set clear and consistent rules that keep toddlers safe and help them learn how they should behave. If a child forgets the rules, gently and calmly remind them and, if necessary, redirect their attention to something else. Be patient, as learning self-regulation is a slow and gradual process. Express empathy (an understanding of the child's emotional experience) when he becomes very upset or frustrated rather than expressing disapproval of his expressions of anger.
At around 15 months old, toddlers begin to understand that their actions affect others and that other people have feelings. However, their ability to understand that others truly have a different perspective remains limited.	Talk to toddlers about how their actions make others feel. For example, "I know you were angry that you couldn't have the toy, but when you took it away from Johnny, it made him feel sad." This will help toddlers expand their vocabulary and learn the words for feelings.





COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: Thinking and Problem Solving

toddler

With each step of toddlers' physical and social/emotional growth and development, they also make huge steps in their ability to think, solve problems and communicate. This is called *cognitive development*. **Toddlers' bodies, muscles and brains are growing more and more each day, helping them explore and test things in their environment and learn more about the world around them.**

BRIGHT IDEA

Try singing songs that are accompanied by finger, hand or other body movements, or the use of puppets and characters. Singing is a great way to promote cognitive development through coordinated actions, and musical verses help children learn how to control their body movements. For a wonderful list of action verses for children, visit: www.creativityinstitute.com/finger-plays-and-action-verses-for-children.aspx

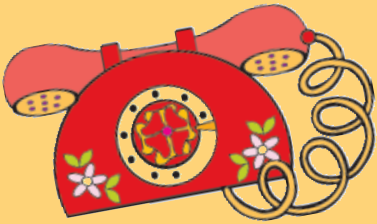
THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

WHAT IS HAPPENING?

The toddler acts like a little scientist. He loves to do "experiments" with cause and effect. He'll experiment with his food, mashing and squishing it with his fingers, throwing it from his highchair, and putting it in his hair. Toddlers like to watch and see "what will happen."

Toddlers begin to:

- Imitate something they saw a few days earlier.
- Use a block, for example, as a telephone. This is called symbolic play and it's a very important step in toddlers' cognitive development.



- Sort objects according to color, size or function.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Although you may find the things toddlers like to do frustrating and messy, remember that this behavior is an important part of their growing and learning. Do your best to keep toddlers safe, then try and relax and find enjoyment in the silly things that toddlers like to do!

- Encourage toddlers to play. This is the way children find out about and explore their world.
- Join toddlers for some playtime. Let them show or tell you what they want to play with and how they want to play. Follow their lead and enjoy!

(See the PLAY section on page 73 for fun activities to do with toddlers to develop their thinking and problem solving skills.)



COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: Language and Communication

toddler

Language development means learning how to use words and sentences to express wants, needs or ideas. Children make a lot of progress in language development between the ages of 1 and 3. Toddlers begin to say two word sentences around 18 – 24 months, like "Me up!" (meaning "Please pick me up.") **By the time they reach age 3, toddlers are most likely speaking in short, whole sentences, like "Pick me up, Daddy."** They may also be using qualifiers and adjectives, and adding emotion and tone to their expressions. All of these developments should be encouraged through many opportunities for conversation and interaction.



How Does Your Child Hear and Talk: One to Two Years

HEARING & UNDERSTANDING

- Points to a few body parts when asked.
- Follows simple commands and understands simple questions ("Roll the ball," "Kiss the baby," "Where's your shoe?").
- Listens to simple stories, songs, and rhymes.
- Points to pictures in a book when named.

TALKING

- Says more words every month.
- Uses some one- or two-word questions ("Where kitty?" "Go bye-bye?" "What's that?").
- Puts two words together ("more cookie," "no juice," "mommy book").
- Uses many different consonant sounds at the beginning of words.

How Does Your Child Hear and Talk: Two to Three Years

HEARING & UNDERSTANDING

- Understands differences in meaning ("go-stop," "in-on," "big-little," "up-down").
- Follows two requests ("Get the book and put it on the table").
- Listens to and enjoys hearing stories for longer periods of time.

TALKING

- Has a word for almost everything.
- Uses two- or three-words to talk about and ask for things.
- Uses *k, g, f, t, d,* and *n* sounds.
- Speech is understood by familiar listeners most of the time.
- Often asks for or directs attention to objects by naming them.

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NEWS FLASH

When a toddler cries, hits, yells or bites, it may be a sign of frustration given his limited vocabulary and ability to express his feelings. You can help by trying to describe the toddler's feelings for him. For example "I see you're sad that it is time for your nap. I know it is hard to stop playing this fun game. You'll feel better after you sleep." As a caregiver, recognize your own reactions to the toddler's emotional upsets. It may be helpful to talk with someone, or obtain professional support and guidance to learn about situations that are especially challenging or tax your ability to remain supportive, loving, and emotionally present with your child's struggles.



COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: Language and Communication (continued)

toddler

As a parent or caregiver, there is a lot you can do to help toddlers expand their language and communication skills. This section offers several tips to give you some ideas. **A good starting point is simply to talk with toddlers often and praise their attempts at communicating with you.**



TIPS FOR PROMOTING LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

- **Provide a stimulating, nurturing and caring environment to encourage language and speech development.**

- **Talk, read and sing with toddlers all the time during the day. All these things help toddlers learn about words and language and why they are important.**

- **Use playtime as an opportunity to develop toddlers' language skills. As you play along and follow the child's lead, introduce new words that are related to the activity.**

- **Ask questions to encourage expression of ideas and interests, promote reflection, and demonstrate interest in the child's inner life.**



- **If a toddler says a sentence incorrectly, say the sentence correctly. Also, use more descriptive words in your sentence so it helps the toddler expand his vocabulary. For example, if the toddler says "Me want ball!" you can say back to him "I see that you want to play ball. Come on, let's go play with the bright blue soccer ball together!"**

BRIGHT IDEA

As a caregiver, support a bilingual child's language development by creating an environment that shows an appreciation for his background. For example, learn a few key words or phrases in the child's native language, post multi-ethnic pictures around the classroom, and play tapes/CDs of ethnic songs.





COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: Reading to Toddlers

toddler

Toddlers love to have adults read to them or tell them stories. It is an enjoyable way for them to spend time and bond with family, friends and loved ones. Plus, it strengthens toddlers' language and communication skills and helps them develop an interest in reading at an early age. **Reading out loud to children also helps them to follow a story from beginning to end, to learn new words, and to connect words with pictures.**

BRIGHT IDEA

Below are some popular books that are great for reading with toddlers.

- Are You My Mother? (P.D. Eastman)
- Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? (B. Martin)
- Llama Llama Red Pajama (A. Dewdney)
- Bear Snores On (K. Wilson & J. Chapman)
- The Good Knight (S. Woodbury)
- The Very Busy Spider (E. Carle)

HELPFUL HINTS ON READING TO TODDLERS

Choose books that:

- **Are predictable. Stories that repeat phrases and have rhyming words are appealing to toddlers.**
- **Describe daily events. Toddlers enjoy hearing stories about things that happen to them every day, like eating lunch or going to bed.**
- **Have a lot of pictures and not too many words. This can help toddlers connect the words on the page to the picture.**
- **Involve themes that children may be experiencing or struggling with (e.g., separations from caregivers for various reasons; learning to share; potty training).**

Read to them often! Reading should be part of daily routines, like bedtime and nap time. In addition, squeeze in time for a story or a song whenever you can. For example:

- **During breakfast, lunch or dinner**
- **While waiting in the doctor's office for a check-up**
- **While on a long car trip (assuming you are not also driving!)**
- **As a way to shift attention when the child is feeling emotionally overwhelmed**
- **While giving the child a bath**



REMINDER

Don't worry if your reading skills are not very strong. Just take your time and read slowly or, simply describe the pictures in the book, or make up your own story involving themes or characters your child can relate to. If you want help with your reading, contact Literacy Volunteers of America. To locate the chapter closest to you, call 2-1-1 (toll-free).





PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: Growth Update

toddler

As toddlers grow, they begin to look less and less like babies. **The average two year old weighs 25-30 pounds and has reached about half of her adult height.** They are learning to walk, run and climb on many things, like chairs and boxes. Toddlers can even turn door handles and unscrew jar tops. Keeping toddlers from harm is a big job. For healthy growth, toddlers need to use their small and large muscles a lot through safe, challenging activities.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

WHAT IS HAPPENING?	WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?
Children gain about 10 pounds and grow about 8 inches between ages 1 and 3.	**As always, provide nutritious foods and snacks, as well as plenty of play and exercise.**
By age 2, a toddler's brain reaches about 80% of its adult weight! This growth in brain capacity helps the toddler think and move her body better.	**• Provide plenty of "thinking" activities. For example, ask simple open-ended questions like "Where is that bird flying to?"** **• Give older toddlers simple instructions that have 2 or 3 steps to them. For example, "Go upstairs to your bedroom, get your sneakers and bring them downstairs." The toddler should be able to remember all those steps. If not, a gentle reminder from you will help.**
TOOTH DEVELOPMENT **12 – 15 months: First molars begin to grow** **20 – 24 months: Second molars begin to grow** **2 1/2 years old: Complete set of 20 teeth is in place**	**• Teething is often painful for children. You can help ease the pain by giving toddlers cold things to chew or suck on.** **• Help toddlers practice good dental care by teaching them how to brush their own teeth.**

BRIGHT IDEA



Use the recipe below to make your own crayons and encourage toddlers to practice drawing.

CUBE CRAYONS

Ingredients:

- 2 cups powdered laundry detergent (like Ivory Snow™)
- 1 cup water
- Food coloring
- Non–stick cooking spray

Directions:

Mix detergent and water in a bowl until creamy. Add food coloring. Spray an ice cube tray with cooking spray. Pour mixture into tray and set overnight or until hard. Remove crayons.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: Motor Skills

toddler

During the toddler years, the gross (large muscle) and fine (small muscle) motor skills become better developed as the child's brain develops. It seems as if toddlers learn something new every day! **Toddlers need a lot of time to play and practice their newly developing physical skills.** Just make sure the environment and toys are safe.



BRIGHT IDEA

To give toddlers a chance to practice their gross motor skills, let them share in simple everyday tasks. For example, let them help you put the clothes in the dryer or set out napkins on the table for dinner. Toddlers can sharpen their fine motor skills through activities like threading large beads (at least 1 3/4 inches wide) on a string or drawing a circle on a piece of paper.

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES

AGE	MILESTONE
GROSS MOTOR DEVELOPMENT **12 – 18 months**	• Walks independently and, eventually, walks backwards • Pulls toys behind her while walking • Carries large toy or several toys while walking • Kicks a ball • Climbs onto and down from furniture unassisted • Walks up and down stairs holding on to support
18 – 24 months	• Walking skills improve, begins to run, climbs stairs • Can bend over to pick things up without falling
2 – 3 years	• Runs • Jumps with both feet together • Walks down the stairs without help • Rides a tricycle
FINE MOTOR DEVELOPMENT **12 – 24 months**	• Uses pincer grasp better, holds a marker in his fist and scribbles • Builds a tower of four blocks or more • Turns pages in a book • Feeds himself using his hands • Drinks from a cup • Begins to show hand preference (right or left)
2 – 3 years	• Picks up tiny objects • Holds a marker or crayon with an adult grasp • Tries to dress and undress himself • Drawings begin to look like something recognizable





SUPPORTING TODDLERS' DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PLAY

toddler

There are lots of ways that parents and caregivers can play with children to help develop their physical, emotional, social and cognitive skills. **To give you a sense of the many play possibilities, the opposite page provides a number of suggested activities to do with toddlers.** This list is just a beginning. Be creative and do your best to make play activities fun and interesting!



SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AGES 1 TO 3

- Provide pull toys that help toddlers practice their new walking skills. Make a simple one by stringing empty cereal boxes or shoeboxes together with a handle for pulling. Make sure the strings between the boxes are a safe length.
- Invite the child's friend over to play. Offer the children a few toys or let them figure out for themselves what games they want to play.
- Play with a ball. It can be made of foam, plastic, rubber, yarn or even rolled up socks! Start with rolling the ball across the floor and then try throwing and catching.
- Help toddlers learn new words by naming everyday things you see around you, like a tree, spoon, bird, etc.
- Experiment with making sounds. Toddlers can have fun whispering, shouting or making animal noises. Give the children a toilet paper, paper towel, or wrapping paper roll to use as a megaphone and let them hear how different their voices sound through the various tube sizes.
- Give toddlers blocks or other items that they can build with, like empty cardboard boxes or clean margarine tubs. Watch as toddlers create tall towers and then happily knock them down!
- Let toddlers use their imagination. Encourage pretend play by having tea parties for dolls or stuffed animals or letting children pretend to cook, clean or repair things around the house or classroom, or enact dramas or stories that they read about or saw in a movie.
- Read and explore books with your toddler daily. This promotes positive parent-child interaction and language development.





LEARN THE SIGNS AND ACT EARLY

toddler

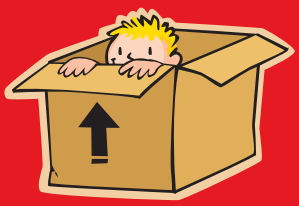
The Centers for Disease Control urges caregivers to *Learn the Signs, Act Early* www.cdc.gov/milestones. You can also access information about Learn the Signs, Act Early from Child Development Infoline. www.ctunitedway.org/cdi.html or call 1-800-505-7000 (toll-free).

NEWS FLASH

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children be screened for general development and autism at the 24-month visit. Ask your child's health care provider about your child's developmental screening.

LEARN THE SIGNS AND ACT EARLY

ACTION	SIGNS
Act early by talking to your child's health care provider if your 1 year old toddler:	• Doesn't crawl • Can't stand when supported • Doesn't search for things that she sees you hide • Doesn't point to things • Doesn't learn gestures like waving or shaking head • Doesn't say single words like "mama" or "dada" • Loses skills she once had
Act early by talking to your child's health care provider if your 18 month old toddler:	• Doesn't point to show things to others • Can't walk • Doesn't know what familiar things are for • Doesn't copy others • Doesn't gain new words • Doesn't have at least 6 words • Doesn't notice or mind when a caregiver leaves or returns • Loses skills she once had
Act early by talking to your child's health care provider if your 2 year old toddler:	• Doesn't know what to do with common things like a brush, phone, fork, spoon • Doesn't copy actions or words • Doesn't follow simple instructions • Doesn't use 2-word phrases (for example, "drink milk") • Doesn't walk steadily • Loses skills she once had






PRESCHOOLER
DEVELOPMENT



PRESCHOOLER DEVELOPMENT: OVERVIEW

preschool

With the help of loving parents and caregivers, most children reach age 3 having developed strong, secure, trusting attachments during infancy and a sense of independence during the toddler years. Over the next few years, preschoolers will continue to rely on their parents and caregivers to help them build upon this foundation. With love, support and guidance, preschoolers will become more confident in their growing abilities and thus take more initiative in their activities. **Compared to younger children, preschoolers are more imaginative, play more complex games, use sentences with more descriptive words and better grammar, and complete more difficult gross and fine motor tasks.**



REMINDER

Each child is unique and develops at his own rate. Still, if you think your child is not growing, talking, moving, listening or responding the way he should be, bring your concerns to the child's health care provider. Noticing and addressing problems as early as possible provides the best chance for improvement. You can also call the Child Development Infoline toll-free at 1-800-505-7000 to discuss concerns about a child's behavior, learning or development and the need for a free developmental evaluation or to obtain a developmental questionnaire called "Ages and Stages" that will help you monitor how the child's development is progressing.

DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS: AGES 3 TO 5

Initiative

Because preschoolers are more confident in their growing abilities, they are more likely to try new activities and test new skills. (This is also known as taking initiative.) However, they are not always very good at the activities and skills they try. When this happens, they may end up feeling less capable than others, especially if they are criticized for their failed efforts. Preschoolers need your constant guidance, support, encouragement and faith in them in order to feel good about themselves and to continue trying new things.

Self-Regulation

Self-regulation (or, self-control) is an extremely important milestone for preschoolers to achieve. Although preschoolers are better able to control their behavior than toddlers, it's still hard for them sometimes – especially when they are hungry, tired or frustrated, or when they have to wait for something they want badly. Being a role model and showing preschoolers how to handle frustrating or disappointing situations appropriately helps children improve their self-regulation skills.

Learning to Get Along with Others

During the preschool years, children learn how to control their behavior and to accept that they may have to wait for things they want (like a toy or a cookie). This is very hard work and requires a lot of guidance, support, love and role modeling of appropriate behavior from adults. To help preschoolers improve their social skills and ability to get along with others, they need lots of supervised opportunities to play with friends. This gives them many chances to practice working together to accomplish goals and resolve conflicts peacefully.

Theory of Mind

During this time, an important capacity is developing which involves a child's ability to recognize and appreciate that other people are not only physically separate and distinct from oneself, but that they may have a different perspective on the world. For example, it is during this period that a child can begin to understand that someone else may think differently, have different information, and draw different conclusions based on their own experiences. Moving from "egocentrism" (e.g., my view of the world is all that exists) to having a "theory of mind" is a significant achievement and forecasts many other important abilities such as empathy, perspective-taking, collaboration, social consciousness.

Development of Imagination

You'll find that preschoolers love acting out different roles that they have seen people in their world perform. For example, a child may pretend she is a Mommy with a baby or a postal worker delivering the mail. They may also act out stories they have heard or created on their own. Development of imagination and creativity is an important milestone for preschool children because it allows them to separate themselves from the "real world." Preschoolers develop their imagination by copying adults, role-playing, participating in pretend play scenarios and acting out wishes and fantasies.



SOCIAL and EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



preschool

Preschoolers are very social. They may have many friends – perhaps even a few that are imaginary! Preschool children love to talk and tell you what they think about everything. They are very proud of the things they can do and look to you for praise and acknowledgement of their developing skills. They also look to you for guidance. **As a caregiver, it is very important for you to be a good role model and show preschoolers how to behave by your example.** In addition, it is important to let the children know that they are loved, important and special. One good way to do this is to let preschoolers help you with a fun and easy task, like preparing a simple meal.

BRIGHT IDEA

When praising a preschool child, be descriptive about what it is that she did well. For example, instead of (or, in addition to) simply saying "Good job!" try saying, "I can see you really worked hard on this picture. I love the colors and lines you drew! Tell me about what you created."

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WHAT IS HAPPENING?	WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?
The preschooler develops a very active imagination and enjoys engaging in dramatic play alone or with other children. 	• Allow plenty of time for dramatic play. It gives preschoolers a safe environment to test their new skills. • Encourage dramatic play by supplying props like dress-up clothes. • Play along with the preschooler's imaginative games. For example, if the child is pretending to be a mail person, ask "May I have today's mail, please?" • Make play dates with her friends so she has opportunities to test her developing social skills. • Remind the preschooler gently how to share and take turns if trouble starts while playing with other children.
The preschooler likes to play with other children more than she did when she was a toddler, but still needs time every day to play alone and to play with you, too!	• Respond with interest and enthusiasm at your child's bids to engage in play and help her create interesting scenarios to enact with you. • Use play and symbolic expressions (e.g., use of dolls, puppets, figures) as opportunities to explore relevant themes. • Recognize her continued need to regard you as both *secure base* and *safe haven* at varying times, and support her wherever she is.
The preschooler begins to make up "rules" for her games.	Follow the preschooler's lead. Remember that she is still too young to follow the "right rules" for many games.
Like toddlers, preschoolers may sometimes express their feelings by crying or hitting rather than using words.	• Encourage preschoolers to use words to describe their feelings. Help them when they have trouble finding the right words. • Play games that help children identify different feelings, like asking the children to show you a sad, happy, excited or scared face. Then you can ask them what might cause someone to feel happy, sad, etc., and what can be done for someone who is feeling mad, scared. This can encourage them to develop theories about emotions, emotional reasoning, and problem-solving.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT:
Thinking and Problem Solving



preschool

From ages 3 to 5, preschoolers grow so much in their ability to think through problems and create interesting solutions to help solve them. During the preschool years, children's memories improve, so they are able to remember things that happened days or weeks ago. Play becomes much more interesting, complex and creative. Preschoolers thoroughly enjoy pretend and make-believe play, which helps them develop reasoning, imagination, creativity, memory and language skills.



THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

WHAT IS HAPPENING?

Preschoolers' thinking has developed so much that they now know:

- How to place objects in order from largest to smallest
- What the words tallest, smallest, biggest, same, more, in, out and under mean
- How to match things and group common things
- What can make something else happen (cause and effect)

Preschoolers can also count objects in the correct order. First they may count out loud, pointing to each object, but eventually they will be able to count to themselves. By age 5, many preschoolers can count up to 13.

Preschoolers have wild imaginations and sometimes have trouble telling the difference between what is fantasy and what is real. They may even feel the need to look for monsters under the bed before going to sleep!

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Encourage continued development of these skills by providing games and activities like:



- Cooking
- Helping match socks and sort laundry
- Playing with puzzles and memory games
- Sorting different shapes, colors or categories (like animals, food, etc.)
- Planting seeds
- Waterplay

Provide activities that let children practice counting. It's great for their cognitive development and it lets them gain better control of their fingers while counting.

Be careful of what preschoolers watch on television. Violent television shows or movies will scare preschoolers and make them think the things they see on the screen are real. Similarly, programs that depict sad events (e.g., losing a friend, parent) may trigger painful feelings and it is important to be available to talk with and support your child if this happens.

NEWS FLASH

By age 4 or 5, preschoolers are able to remember their addresses and phone numbers. Be sure to quiz them on this information so they have it memorized in case they get lost.





COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: Language and Communication

preschool

By age 5, children's language has become much more advanced. **Preschoolers are able to talk to you in complete sentences, answer your questions with interesting responses and tell you jokes** (although they may not make any sense to you!) Preschoolers may still stumble over words occasionally and although their attention span is better than when they were younger, don't be surprised if a preschool child loses interest while you're reading a book or singing songs.

How Does Your Child Hear and Talk: Three to Four Years

HEARING & UNDERSTANDING

- Points to a few body parts when asked.
- Follows simple commands and understands simple questions ("Roll the ball," "Kiss the baby," "Where's your shoe?").
- Listens to simple stories, songs, and rhymes.
- Points to pictures in a book when named.

TALKING

- Says more words every month.
- Uses some one- or two-word questions ("Where kitty?" "Go bye-bye?" "What's that?").
- Puts two words together ("more cookie," "no juice," "mommy book").
- Uses many different consonant sounds at the beginning of words.

How Does Your Child Hear and Talk: Four to Five Years

HEARING & UNDERSTANDING

- Hears you when you call from another room.
- Hears television or radio at the same loudness level as other family members.
- Answers simple "who?", "what?", "where?", and "why?" questions.

TALKING

- Talks about activities at school or at friends' homes.
- People outside of the family usually understand child's speech.
- Uses a lot of sentences that have 4 or more words.
- Usually talks easily without repeating syllables or words.

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COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: Language and Communication (continued)

preschool

The following pages provide numerous activities that you can do with preschoolers to help strengthen their language and communication skills. **One important thing for parents and caregivers to do is to support preschoolers' early attempts at communicating and expressing themselves through writing.** To do this, ask children to read their own writing to you and gently lead them toward correct spelling, pronunciation and word usage. Also, encourage preschoolers to write their names or a letter in the alphabet. But realize that preschoolers may not be able to do this all the time and expect that some letters may be printed backwards sometimes. Try your best to make learning letters fun, not stressful!



TIPS FOR PROMOTING LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

- **Talk with preschoolers often, using very descriptive words to help them expand their vocabulary.**
- **Ask children questions like "Why do you think so?" or "Can you tell me the end of the story in your own words?"**
- **Give preschoolers opportunities to tell you what they think about things.**
- **Define words that a preschooler does not understand.**
- **Read to preschoolers as much as you can. Preschoolers like books that are imaginative, suspenseful and exciting (see the next page for more on reading to preschoolers).**
- **Ask preschoolers to tell you their own story or joke. You'll have fun realizing how creative, imaginative and funny they are!**

BRIGHT IDEA

Use playtime as an opportunity to help preschoolers learn new words. For example, if the child is building with blocks, you might help him learn words such as "under", "over", "bigger" and "smaller" by using these words as appropriate to describe what the child is doing.







COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT: Reading to Preschoolers

preschool

Helping children learn how to connect the words they hear with the words they see is a big step toward getting them ready to read. This is why singing, talking and reading aloud to children at all ages is so important. Reading to children at an early age and making it fun also helps them to develop a love of reading that will likely stay with them into adulthood.



BRIGHT IDEA

Below are some popular books that are great for preschoolers.

- Madeline (L. Bemelmans)
- A Pocket for Corduroy (D. Freeman)
- Curious George (H.A. Rey)

For additional ideas, talk to your local librarian or visit http://www.reachoutandread.org/parent-resources/ and www.scholastic.com/parents

HELPFUL HINTS ON READING TO PRESCHOOLERS

- **Choose books that have:**
  - **Main characters about the same age or a little older than the preschooler**
  - **Colorful illustrations**
  - **Animals or imaginative creatures**
  - **Simple plots that progress quickly**
  - **Repetitive words or phrases that are easy for children to remember**

- **Keep a collection of developmentally appropriate books on hand at home or in the classroom. Let the preschooler select the book you will read together.**

- **Try using props while reading aloud to preschoolers. For example, if you are reading a book about a magician, wear a magician's cape or hat.**

- **Get the children involved in the story by asking them to act out certain parts of the book or dress up like their favorite storybook characters.**

- **Take preschoolers to your local library or other community places that offer story hours for young children.**

- **Take preschoolers on trips to visit the places that you read about, such as the post office or the zoo. It helps make the stories come to life and is great for getting the children involved in conversation!**



REMINDER

Don't limit reading to books! Catalogues, menus and children's magazines are also great reading material. HIGHLIGHTS is a popular children's magazine that preschoolers love. For more information on this publication, visit www.highlights.com.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: Growth Update



preschool



Children grow so quickly! **By age 4, the average preschooler weighs 37 pounds and is over 40 inches tall.** Furthermore, a preschooler's brain is already 90% of its adult size, allowing for more advanced thinking, problem solving, motor and social skills. Although preschoolers start to look a lot more grown up, they are still very young and have a lot of growing left to do. Preschoolers need at least an hour and a half each day to nap or rest with quiet activities, as well as 10 to 12 hours of sleep each night.

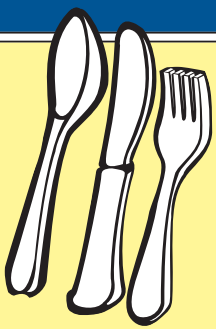
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

WHAT IS HAPPENING?	WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?
Growth and development is slower than it was in the infant or toddler years. A child between ages 3 and 5: • Weighs 30-50 pounds and gains about 3-5 pounds per year. • Measures 40 inches, on average, and grows 2-3 inches per year. • Looks a lot leaner because the stomach flattens and the legs now take up 1/3 of their total body length.	• Continue to provide preschoolers with nutritious foods and drinks as well as lots of exercise (see Volume 1). • Don't worry if a preschooler's appetite decreases. This is normal because their physical growth is slowing down. Most preschoolers need to have about 1,500 calories a day.
Baby teeth fully grow into place so the preschooler has a full set in her mouth.	• Continue to brush teeth with preschoolers daily. Give preschoolers the opportunity to brush their teeth by themselves. • Teach preschoolers about healthy food choices and how too much sugar can harm teeth (see Volume 1).
Many preschoolers become "picky eaters" because they have more taste buds on their cheeks, tongue and throat making them more sensitive to different tastes.	Help children establish healthy eating habits by offering a variety of nutritious foods from which they can choose.

BRIGHT IDEA

Here are a few suggestions for making mealtime with preschoolers (even picky ones) less stressful:

- Try serving meals on plates with dividers or keep foods separated on the child's plate.
- Serve food warm but not hot.
- Eat meals together as a family as much as possible and talk to preschoolers about your day and theirs.





PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: Motor Skills

preschool

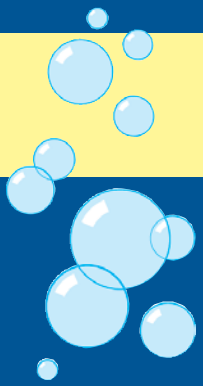
Gross and fine motor activities become better developed as preschoolers' brains continue to grow. As a parent or caregiver, be patient with preschoolers as they test out their new skills. **Remember, preschool children are learning something new every day and it is a very exciting time for them!** Give them lots of opportunities to play and practice their new abilities. And don't forget to make sure that the environment and toys are safe.



MOTOR DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES

AGE	MILESTONE
GROSS MOTOR DEVELOPMENT **3 – 5 years**	• Throws a ball overhead • Kicks a ball forwards • Hops and stands on one foot for a few seconds • Pedals a tricycle • Walks up and down the stairs by herself using alternating feet and without support • Jumps up and down in place • Throws ball overhand • Catches bounced ball most of the time • Moves forward and backward with agility • Swings, climbs • May be able to skip
FINE MOTOR DEVELOPMENT **3 – 5 years**	• Dresses herself, although snapping, zippering and buttoning may be difficult for younger preschoolers • Uses fork, spoon, and (sometimes) a table knife • Builds a tower with 8 or more blocks • Holds a crayon, marker or pencil the correct way • Pours liquids without much spilling • Forms shapes and objects out of play dough or clay • Uses child-size scissors • Copies geometric patterns • Draws a person with two to four body parts • Prints some letters

BRIGHT IDEA



Preschoolers love to blow bubbles and it is a great way for them to practice their motor skills. You can use many things to blow bubbles, like plastic cookie cutters, plastic lids with holes cut in the center, or even fly swatters! Below is a simple recipe for a bubble solution. It's best to blow bubbles outside and to supervise children because bubbles can make the ground slippery.

BUBBLES

Ingredients:

4 1/2 cups water

1/2 cup hand dishwashing detergent (like Dawn™ or Palmolive™)

Optional, for stronger bubbles: add 1/2 cup corn syrup or glycerin (found in most drug stores)

Directions:

Combine water and detergent. Stir well, but do not shake. Add corn syrup or glycerin if desired.





SUPPORTING PRESCHOOLERS' DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PLAY

preschool

There are lots of ways that parents and caregivers can play with children to help develop their physical, emotional, social and cognitive skills. To give you a sense of the many possibilities, the opposite page provides a number of suggested activities to do with preschoolers. This list is just a beginning. **Be creative and do your best to make play activities fun and interesting!**

BRIGHT IDEA

Sharing isn't easy and preschool children are still working on mastering this skill. To reduce conflict when other children are coming over to play, have the child put away his "special toys" and provide activities that encourage the children to play in groups, such as building with blocks.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 5

- Go on a "twin hunt"! Gather a few items like leaves, twigs, rocks, and feathers and put them in a box. Take a walk with preschoolers and find a "twin" for each item.

- Use a puppet or make one out of a paper bag or sock to encourage preschoolers to act out familiar stories or ones that they make up. It also gives them a chance to act out problems or something that is upsetting them.

- Get a big box from an appliance store or supermarket and use it to create a house. An adult can cut out holes for windows and then have fun with preschoolers painting or drawing artwork on the walls and hanging curtains made from old clothes or towels.

- Connect a few open cardboard boxes together and make a tunnel for preschoolers to crawl through.



- Set up bowling games using smaller toys as bowling pins to knock down.

- Use old clothes and costumes to dress-up and act out fairytales you read together.

- Help preschoolers make a secret hideout by putting a blanket or sheet over a table or chair.

- Use dolls or stuffed animals to act out different scenarios, like a trip to the zoo or a tea party.



LEARN THE SIGNS AND ACT EARLY

preschool

The Centers for Disease Control urges caregivers to *Learn the Signs, Act Early* www.cdc.gov/milestones. You can also access information about Learn the Signs, Act Early from Child Development Infoline. www.ctunitedway.org/cdi.html or call 1-800-505-7000 (toll-free).



MOTOR DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES

ACTION	SIGNS
Act early by talking to your child's health care provider if your 3 year old child:	• Falls down a lot or has trouble with stairs • Drools or has very unclear speech • Can't work simple toys (such as peg boards, simple puzzles, turning a handle) • Doesn't understand simple instructions • Doesn't speak in sentences • Doesn't make eye contact • Doesn't play pretend or make-believe • Doesn't want to play with other children or with toys • Loses skills he once had
Act early by talking to your child's health care provider if your 4 year old child:	• Can't jump in place • Has trouble scribbling • Shows no interest in interactive games or make-believe • Ignores other children or doesn't respond to people outside the family • Resists dressing, sleeping and using the toilet • Doesn't understand "same" and "different" • Doesn't use "me" and "you" correctly • Doesn't follow 3-part commands • Doesn't retell a favorite story • Speaks unclearly • Loses skills he once had
Act early by talking to your child's health care provider if your 5 year old child:	• Doesn't show a wide range of emotions • Shows extreme behavior (unusually fearful, aggressive, shy or sad) • Unusually withdrawn and not active • Is easily distracted, has trouble focusing on one activity for more than five minutes • Doesn't respond to people, or responds only superficially • Can't tell what's real and what's make-believe • Doesn't play a variety of games and activities • Can't give first and last name • Doesn't draw pictures • Doesn't talk about daily activities or experiences • Doesn't use plural or past tense properly • Can't brush teeth, wash and dry hands, or get undressed without help • Loses skills he once had



5

SPECIAL TOPICS



SPECIAL TOPIC:
Stranger and Separation Anxiety

infant

Up until about six months of age, babies are pretty good about letting new people help care for them. This changes some time between 6 and 12 months, usually around 9 months, when babies start to realize that some people are strangers, different from Mom and Dad or their usual caretakers. It is normal for them to get upset when they see strangers near them. This is called *stranger anxiety*. Some babies are more vocal about this than others.

Around the same time, babies begin to develop *separation anxiety*. *Separation anxiety* is when a baby starts to worry that when you walk out of sight, you might not come back. **Both stranger anxiety and separation anxiety are signs that the baby is developing normally.** In fact, the presence of stranger anxiety forecasts the child's strengthening sense of attachment to her primary caregivers. However, it can be a painful time for the parent or caregiver to go through. Babies outgrow this stage in a few months as they learn that new faces are often around and that the familiar faces will return.



TIPS FOR HANDLING STRANGER AND SEPARATION ANXIETY

- Introduce new people slowly, especially if you will be leaving the baby with them. Spend time together with the baby while she is meeting new people. Let the baby see you acting friendly towards them so they can feel this is a safe person for everyone to be around. Screen carefully anyone you will have taking care of your child. Observe them interacting with your child and make certain they share your values regarding the most critical aspects of child care.
- When leaving the baby with a new caregiver, show the baby that you love her and that you are okay with what is going on. Reassure her that you will be coming back.
- Expect the baby to cry for a few minutes when you leave. But, always say goodbye to the child before leaving – never sneak out.
- Keep a consistent, brief routine for saying good-bye. After some time together with the baby and making sure the new caregiver has everything needed, reassure the child, say good-bye, and go.
- Leave the baby's blanket or favorite toy with her whenever you are not there. Consider leaving an item that will remind her of your presence and love for her when you are not there such as a picture, scarf with your scent or perfume, recording of your voice.
- Be sure caregivers know how to reach you at all times.
- Don't be surprised if the baby cries again even though she has been left with the same "stranger" before.



Babies are sensitive to new caregiving interactions. Let new caregivers know of any special routines that may help the child feel more secure in the new environment. For example, if you usually sing a lullaby to help the baby fall asleep, make sure the caregiver is familiar with that tune.

DIFFERENCES IN DEVELOPMENT

- **Developmental disabilities are a group of conditions due to an impairment in physical, learning, language, or behavior areas. About one in six children in the U.S. have one or more developmental disabilities or other developmental delays. www.cdc.gov.**

- **The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.**

- **Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth-2) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (ages 3-21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B. For more information, please go to http://idea.ed.gov**

- **Categories of Developmental Disabilities under IDEA:**
  - **Autism**
  - **Deaf-blindness**
  - **Deafness**
  - **Developmental delay**
  - **Emotional disturbance**
  - **Hearing impairment**
  - **Intellectual disability**
  - **Multiple disabilities**
  - **Orthopedic impairment**
  - **Other health impairment**
  - **Specific learning disability**
  - **Speech or language impairment**
  - **Traumatic brain injury**
  - **Visual impairment, including blindness**



- **For a complete list of resources for families affected by developmental disabilities in Connecticut, go to the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities www.nichcy.org, click on "State Organizations", then click "Connecticut".**



SPECIAL TOPIC: Toilet Training



toddler

Toilet training is a big event for toddlers. It is a huge step toward becoming an independent person. **In order to start toilet training, the child's body and brain must be ready.** This means that certain muscles in the body must be able to control the urges to go to the bathroom, and the child must be able to understand, remember and follow instructions. Typically, toddlers are ready to begin toilet training between their 2nd and 3rd birthdays, but each child is different.

BRIGHT IDEA

To increase the chances for success, try not to start toilet training when the child is experiencing major changes in his life, such as the birth of a new sibling or starting a new child care situation.

SIGNS A CHILD IS READY TO BEGIN TOILET TRAINING

- Asks to use the potty.
- Knows when they have "gone" in their diapers and can use words like "going potty" to tell you. (This is the first step in knowing when they have to go to the bathroom. Praise this!)
- Can stay dry for at least 2 hours at a time.
- Wants to wear underpants instead of diapers.
- Wants wet or soiled diapers changed right away.
- Can help pull underpants up and down.
- Demonstrates a desire for independence.
- Can and will follow simple directions.

NEWS FLASH

Do not expect children to stay dry through the night until they have been able to stay dry during the day for at least one month. Some children are not able to stay dry at night until 3 or 4 years of age.





SPECIAL TOPIC: Toilet Training (continued)

toddler

To help toddlers succeed in developing this new skill, it is important to be aware of the child's natural "body rhythms." This will help parents and caregivers know when during the day to encourage the child to try going to the bathroom. The opposite page provides several other useful tips that can help lead to toilet training success.

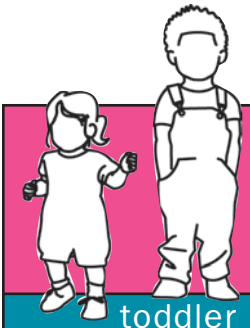


TIPS FOR TOILET TRAINING

WHAT TO DO...	WHY
Show the child how to use the toilet and make sure the child understands that older children and adults use the toilet too.	Children like to imitate adults and other role models.
Be sure clothing worn during toilet training is easy to remove. Pants without buttons or snaps are good choices.	This will reduce frustration for both the toddler and the caregiver and help the child feel successful when he is able to pull down his pants and go to the bathroom by himself.
Make sure the child can easily get to the toilet. Put a potty seat on the floor or place a child seat on the regular toilet with a step stool in front of the toilet.	It is important that the child's feet are firmly on a solid surface (like the floor or a stool) because it will help him feel secure and will make it easier to have a bowel movement.
Keep the child on the potty for no more than 10 minutes at a time.	It can frustrate a child if he has to sit there for more than 10 minutes and still cannot go to the bathroom.
Let the child get off the toilet before flushing it.	Flushing the toilet while the child is on it can be a frightening experience for a toddler.
Be sure to provide children with gentle reminders to use the toilet and look for signs that the child may need to go to the bathroom.	Lots of times, children don't like to stop playing to use the toilet. It's up to you to make sure they have lots of chances to go to the bathroom before accidents happen.
Expect some accidents, but never punish a child for these setbacks. When an accident happens, just clean the child up calmly and pleasantly.	Accidents are a normal part of learning. All children will have them. Punishing a child for an accident can damage his self-esteem.



Reward successes and praise the child's efforts frequently! It will help the child progress in his toilet training and will boost his self-esteem. Refrain from making this a tense or pressure-filled endeavor or pushing the child too far beyond his comfort zone. As much as possible, create a fun, interesting experience that supports the child's wanting to grow and demonstrate new skills.



SPECIAL TOPIC: Temper Tantrums

toddler & preschool

Temper tantrums are one way that young children express their emotions. They are a normal part of child development and usually begin when a child is around 2 years of age and lessen during the preschool years. It can be very frustrating for parents and caregivers when a child throws a tantrum and begins kicking and screaming. Although there is no way to completely eliminate this behavior, there are some ways to prevent escalation at times.



ALERT

Although children may form a habit of throwing temper tantrums if this behavior helps them get what they want, like a toy or piece of candy, it is important to not label a child's distress expressions as "manipulation." Children often have much less control over their emotions than one might imagine, and using labels like "manipulation," "spoiled," "acting like a baby" can produce shame and not really help them with the ultimate goals of emotional awareness and regulation.

TIPS FOR MINIMIZING TEMPER TANTRUMS

- Make sure a child's physical and emotional needs are being met. These needs include getting enough sleep, being well fed and receiving plenty of love and affection.
- Help children succeed in doing tasks that may cause frustration because of their developmental limitations.
- Give children a few minutes of advance warning before asking them to change activities.
- Be aware of when a child is most likely to throw a tantrum and then, if possible, work to change those conditions or situations. For example, if a child often becomes upset before dinner, this may signal intense hunger. Try eating at an earlier time or offering the child a snack. Similarly, fatigue can be a trigger for emotional displays, and encouraging sleep may be very helpful.

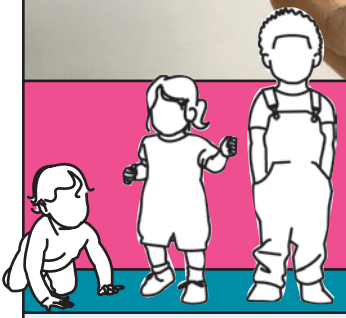
IF A CHILD THROWS A TANTRUM...

- Remain calm. (Taking a deep breath and counting to ten may help.)
- Try one of these techniques:
  - Distract the child by involving her in a new activity.
  - Remove the child from the situation until she is able to calm down, but never leave the child unattended.
  - Remain emotionally and physically present to the degree that the child allows, and is needed, to maintain her safety and reestablish a sense of security and comfort.
- After the child calms down, talk to the child about her behavior, what might have caused it or has been bothering her, and explore other ways of expressing strong emotions. Reinforce the limits as they pertain to physical and emotional safety (e.g., "it is not okay to hurt me, yourself, your friend, or call names.")
- Provide support. Children need to understand that even though you don't like their behavior, you still care about them.



If you know that a certain activity, like grocery shopping, tends to lead to temper tantrums, bring along toys or books to keep the child occupied and do your best to shop when the child is not hungry or tired.





SPECIAL TOPIC:
Helping Children Cope with Emotional Trauma

infant, toddler & preschool

Despite parents' and caregivers' efforts to protect children from harm, young children may experience some type of trauma or loss. Some examples of emotionally traumatic experiences are: parents divorcing, a loved one dying, witnessing or being exposed to violence, experiencing abuse or neglect, experiencing a fire or natural disaster, or having a parent in jail. **Parents and caregivers play a very important role in helping children recover from these emotionally painful, disturbing or shocking experiences.** One of the most important things to do is to be aware of what is going on in the child's life. This is why it is so critical that there is good communication between the parent, child and any other caregivers that interact with the child on a regular basis.

? MORE INFO

To learn more about child trauma and what you can do to help children experiencing trauma, check out the following resources:

- **National Child Traumatic Stress Network www.nctsnet.org**
- **National Center for Children Exposed to Violence**
  1-877-496-2238 (toll free)
  http://info.med.yale.edu/chldstdy/CDCP/
- **Kids Mental Health Info**
  www.kidsmentalhealthinfo.com

TIPS FOR HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH EMOTIONAL TRAUMA



- When a child seems upset, provide opportunities for him to tell or show you what he is feeling upset about. Since younger children may not be able to put their feelings or thoughts into words, give them opportunities to express themselves through dramatic play or by drawing or painting.
- Answer children's questions honestly using language that the child can understand and try to address the real (often unspoken) concerns that the child is trying to communicate.
- Help clarify information or look for signs that the child may be feeling guilty or responsible for what occurred, as this is a natural response. It is important to reassure children that they did not cause what happened and to help them process the feelings they may express directly or indirectly.
- Be aware that young children are strongly affected by how their parents react to the traumatic event. Adults provide reassurance and comfort when they remain in control and respond appropriately to children's questions and concerns. They also show children how it is possible to feel upset or sad, while still making the best of the situation.
- Learn what triggers a child's memory of a traumatic experience. Often, triggers are small things like hearing somebody speak in an angry tone or experiencing change, like going to a new place. Recognizing triggers can help you understand changes in behavior that signal the child's need for additional support.
- Help children feel secure by providing a consistent, predictable pattern for the day. Young children often feel helpless and vulnerable after a traumatic experience and this structure provides a sense of control.
- When a loved one dies or exits a child's life, try to help the child remember the good times he had with that person.
- Be patient and supportive. Children are affected by traumatic experiences in various ways and for varying lengths of time.
- Seek professional help if the child exhibits a significant change in behavior, such as sleeplessness, increased anxiety, excessive clinginess, lack of appetite or "loss" of previously mastered developmental skills (like toilet training). For information on local mental health providers, go to www.kidsmentalhealthinfo.com or dial 2-1-1 (toll-free).



6

RESOURCES / REFERENCES

RESOURCES

Following are key resources for parents and caregivers of young children.

Child Development INFOLINE

A single source of entry for preschool Special Education services, Birth to Three, Children with Special Health Care Needs Medical Home Initiative, Home visiting services for families with infants and young children, Help Me Grow services and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire.
Call 1-800-505-7000* www.ctunitedway.org/cdi.html

Connecticut United Way 2-1-1

2-1-1 is a single source for statewide information about community services, referrals to human services, Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services, and crisis intervention. It operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Multilingual caseworkers and TDD access is available. You can access 2-1-1 toll-free from anywhere in Connecticut. Dial 2-1-1*. www.211ct.org

Connecticut Libraries

Your local library is also an excellent source for information. In addition to books and other materials, most public libraries also offer children's programming including play groups, storytime and other activities. Libraries also provide free computer use with internet access. To find a local public library, visit: http://www.publiclibraries.com/connecticut.htm

Emergency

For an emergency, call 9-1-1

State Agencies Serving Families and Children

Children's Trust Fund
The Children's Trust Fund's mission is to promote parent-child relationships and reduce child maltreatment in Connecticut. CTF provides funding for hospital and community-based services to support new parents and is part of the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood.
860-424-5212 www.ct.gov/ctf or www.take5parenting.com

Connecticut Commission on Children
Brings together the various levels of government, the private sector, non-profit agencies, and philanthropy to promote public policies in the best interest of children.
860-240-0290 www.cga.ct.gov/coc

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
Establishes a comprehensive system to develop, administer, and support programs and services for children prenatally to age 5 in the areas of child development and early intervention, health and nutrition, early learning, early childhood mental health and family support. This includes: school readiness programs, child care programs, and the Children's Trust Fund programs.
860-713-6410 www.ct.gov/oec

** toll-free phone number*

Department of Children and Families
Protection from and prevention of abuse, neglect, abandonment and exploitation; foster care and adoption services; programs addressing mental health, substance abuse, and juvenile justice.
Central Office 860-550-6300 Careline: 1-800-842-2288* www.ct.gov/dcf

Department of Developmental Services
Provides supports and services to those with developmental disabilities and special health care needs, including special education, day programs and clinical services. 860-418-6000 www.ct.gov/dds

Department of Education
Child nutrition programs; professional development; family resource centers, call 860-807-2050. For teacher certification, call 860-713-6969 or visit www.sde.ct.gov

Department of Public Health
Programs to prevent diseases and promote wellness; immunization services; nutrition programs; prenatal care services; child care licensing.
860-509-8000 www.ct.gov/dph

Department of Social Services
Food assistance; parent support centers; child support enforcement; child care services; health insurance; family services; services to persons with disabilities.
1-800-842-1508* www.ct.gov/dss

Fatherhood Initiative of Connecticut
A broad-based, multi-agency, statewide program led by the Department of Social Services that is focused on changing the systems that can improve fathers' ability to be fully and positively involved in the lives of their children.
1-866-6-CTDADS* www.ct.gov/fatherhood

UConn Cooperative Extension System
Offers a variety of programs for children, youth and family. For instance, nutrition programs and environment programs. www.extension.uconn.edu

Early Childhood Development

Brazelton Touchpoints Center
An evidence-based framework of child development that strives to ensure the health and well-being of future generations by promoting healthy outcomes for infants and young children, regardless of their life circumstances. The Center is dedicated to optimizing family and community resources to build strong foundations for learning and development in the earliest years.
www.brazeltontouchpoints.org

Centers for Disease Control Developmental Monitoring and Screening
Provides parents an overview of the purpose of developmental monitoring and screening. www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/screening.html

** toll-free phone number*

RESOURCES

Gesell Institute of Child Development
Programs, publications, and research efforts help parents, educators, psychologists, social workers, and medical professionals worldwide in understanding the ages and stages of childhood. www.gesellinstitute.org/

Help Me Grow
Help Me Grow is a program of The Children's Trust Fund. Accessed through Child Development Infoline, children and families can be linked to a variety of community-based services. Unlike Birth to Three and other early intervention services for young children, Help Me Grow is available to all children and families in Connecticut. For more information, call 1-800-505-7000*.
www.ctunitedway.org/CDI/HelpMeGrow.html

Kids Health
Visit the special "Parents" section for doctor-approved information about a broad array of child health and development issues. http://kidshealth.org

National Association for Child Development
Provides information about neurodevelopmental evaluations and individualized programs for children and adults. 801-621-8606 www.nacd.org

National Center in Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities
Promotes child development, prevents birth defects and developmental disabilities, and enhances the quality of life for persons who have disabilities.
www.cdc.gov/ncbddd

National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome
Shaken baby syndrome (SBS) is the leading cause of death in abusive head trauma (AHT) cases. Educates and trains parents and professionals to prevent the shaking and abuse of infants. Includes facts about SBS/AHT and a program to help caregivers understand crying behavior (PURPLE Program).
www.dontshake.org

Reach Out and Read National Center
The "Resources" section of this website offers guidance on choosing books for young children and posts a listing of favorite books for children by age.
617-455-0600 www.reachoutandread.org

Read to Grow
Statewide organization that helps parents take an active role in their child's literacy development beginning at birth and provides free children's books for children of all ages. 203-488-6800 www.readtogrow.org

Zero to Three
A national, nonprofit organization that informs, trains, and supports professionals, policymakers, and parents in their efforts to improve the lives of infants and toddlers. Site includes sections on public policy, behavior and development and care and education. 202-638-1144 www.zerotothree.org

** toll-free phone number*

Children with Special Needs

AFCAMP (African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities)
A parent-run organization that serves parents and caregivers statewide. They seek to educate, inform and support parents of children with disabilities for the purpose of improving their children's quality of life. 860-297-4358

Child Development INFOLINE
A single source of entry for preschool Special Education services, Birth to Three, Children with Special Health Care Needs Medical Home Initiative, Home visiting services for families with infants and young children, Help Me Grow services and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire.
Call 1-800-505-7000* www.ctunitedway.org/cdi.html

Children with Special Health Care Needs Medical Home Initiative
Provides care coordination and resource guidance for families with children with special health care needs. 1-800-505-7000* www.ctunitedway.org/cdi.html

Connecticut Autism Spectrum Resource Center
The ASRC is a non-profit organization in Connecticut that serves individuals with autism spectrum disorders, their family members, and the professionals who work with them. 203-265-7717 www.ct-asrc.org

Connecticut Birth to Three System
Provides supports and services to strengthen families' ability to meet the developmental and health-related needs of their infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities. 1-800-505-7000* www.birth23.org

Connecticut Family Support Network
Information, support and family networks for parents of children with developmental disabilities and special health care needs. 1-877-FSN-2DAY* www.ctfsn.org

PATH ~ Parent to Parent and Family Voices of Connecticut
A statewide family support and resource network for families of children with special health care needs and/or disabilities. 1-800-399-PATH* www.pathct.org

Southfield Center for Development
Home of the Superkids CT social skills program. Offers parent lecture series and a wide range of assessment and clinical services.
203-202-7654 www.southfieldcenter.com

State Education Resource Center (SERC)
Resource for professionals, families, and community members regarding education and early intervention/prevention for children, youth and their families, particularly children with special needs, at-risk learners, and diverse learners. 860-632-1485 www.ctserc.org

** toll-free phone number*

RESOURCES

Early Childhood Professional Resources

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
Focused on promoting the social emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age 5. Funded by the Office of Head Start and Child Care Bureau. http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/family.html

Child Care Assistance Program
Provides financial assistance for child care to eligible low-income working families and Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) recipients.
1-888-214-5437* www.ctcare4kids.com

Connecticut Alliance of Regional Education Service Centers (RESC)
Each Service Center provides a variety of special programs and services that address the educational needs of their cooperating towns.
www.rescalliance.org (see website for local RESC District contacts)

Connecticut Association for Human Services - Early Care and Education
Works to increase families' access to quality early care and education in Connecticut. www.cahs.org

Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet
Their purpose is to develop a high-quality, comprehensive system of early childhood education among the wide array of early childhood programs in the state. www.ctearlychildhood.com

The Discovery Initiative
Funded through the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, many communities across the state have formed collaboratives to develop and implement comprehensive early childhood plans to improve the early school success of young children. http://discovery.wcgmf.org

Early Childhood Consultation Partnership
Assists early childhood educators in identifying young children's social emotional needs and creating classroom and program-wide environments that promote socio-emotional development.
Call Child Development Infoline 1-800-505-7000*

Early Childhood Personnel Center
UConn A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities is one of four regional sites nationally providing professional development to personnel providing early childhood intervention. www.ecpcta.org

State Education Resource Center (SERC)
Resource for professionals, families, and community members regarding education and early intervention/prevention for children, youth and their families, particularly children with special needs, at-risk learners, and diverse learners. 860-632-1485 www.ctserc.org

** toll-free phone number*

Family Health and Well-Being

American Academy of Pediatrics for Parents
A health and development online resource for caregivers operated by the American Academy of Pediatrics with information about the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults.
www.healthychildren.org

Child First
A model early childhood system of care that works to decrease the incidence of serious emotional disturbance, developmental and learning problems, and abuse and neglect of young children and families in Connecticut. Child First services include weekly home visitation. To find a Child First program in your community, call 203-538-5222 or visit www.childfirst.com

Child Guidance Clinics
Provide outpatient services to children and their families, regardless of ability to pay; offers evaluation; individual, family and group counseling; psychiatric services; parent guidance, education, and support services.
Dial 2-1-1* www.211ct.org

Community Health Center Association of Connecticut
Community Health Centers provide high quality health care to underserved and uninsured children and families. www.chcact.org

Connecticut Association for Infant Mental Health
CT-AIMH offers professional development opportunities to those working with infants and young children and their families assisting them to support and enhance responsive relationships, to promote culturally sensitive practices, and to reflect on their work with families and their young children.
203-737-6422 www.ct-aimh.org

Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies
Network of non-profit agencies focused on family life. www.ctfsa.org

Connecticut Immunization Program
The mission of the Immunization Program is to prevent disease, disability and death from vaccine-preventable diseases in infants, children, adolescents and adults through surveillance, case investigation and control, monitoring of immunization levels, provision of vaccine, and professional and public education. 860-509-7929 www.ct.gov/dph/immunizations

ConneCT Kids
State of Connecticut Official Website for Children featuring child friendly information on state history, culture, people and government. www.kids.ct.gov

Consultation Center
Prevention and health promotion services for children and families; mental health consultation to child care centers; training for early childhood, social service and mental health providers. 203-789-7645
www.theconsultationcenter.org

** toll-free phone number*

RESOURCES

Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services
A mobile intervention service for children and adolescents experiencing a behavioral or mental health crisis. Accessed by calling 2-1-1, and funded by the Connecticut Department of Children and Families, mental health professionals across the state that can respond immediately by phone or face to face within 45 minutes when a child is experiencing an emotional or behavioral crisis.
Dial 2-1-1* www.empsct.org

Emergency Preparedness
Both this website, and the downloadable "Guide To Emergency Preparedness" will teach you "what" and "what not" to do to keep you and your family safe in an emergency situation. www.ct.gov/dph/prepare

Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
Provides information on a broad range of topics, as well as public health education campaigns and programs and related publications and materials.
www.nichd.nih.gov

Even Start
Provides families access to training and support for creating a home environment that fosters reading and education for infants and young children.
860-713-6783 www.ct.gov/oec

Family Service Agencies
Provide crisis and mental health counseling for troubled parents, youth and others; help people locate child care, health care or other needed services near them.
Dial 2-1-1* www.211ct.org

Fit Source
Find links to activities, lesson plans, healthy recipes, information for parents, and many other downloadable tools that can be used to incorporate physical activity and nutrition into child care and afterschool programs.
http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/fitsource

Healthy Start
A health insurance program for low income pregnant women administered by the Connecticut Department of Social Services.
1-877-CT-HUSKY* www.211ct.org/informationlibrary/Documents/HEALTHYSTART.asp

HUSKY INFOLINE
Information on and enrollment assistance for HUSKY, the state's free or low-cost health insurance program for children and youth up to age 19; helps enrolled families access services.
1-877-CT-HUSKY* www.huskyhealth.com

Institute of Living
Offers a variety of mental health services for children and adolescents, including educational programs, day treatment, outpatient, and inpatient services.
1-800-673-2411* www.harthosp.org/InstituteOfLiving

** toll-free phone number*

Kids Health
Visit the special "Parents" section for doctor-approved information about a broad array of child health and development issues. www.kidshealth.org

Kids Mental Health Info
The Child Health and Development Institute is committed to the mental health and well-being of children in Connecticut. A website from the Center for Effective Practice to improve mental health care for children.
www.kidsmentalhealthinfo.com

Let's Move!
An initiative launched by the First Lady, Michelle Obama, dedicated to addressing the problem of obesity so that children will grow up healthy and able to pursue their dreams. www.letsmove.gov

Mental Health Association of Connecticut
Advocacy, education and services dedicated to supporting the mental health needs in Connecticut. Online directory of support groups and other programs and services. 1-800-842-1501* www.mhact.org

Mental Health Centers
Provide diagnostic and crisis counseling services and other mental health treatment services to children and parents. Dial 2-1-1*

NAMI-CT
National Alliance on Mental Illness, Connecticut chapter. NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI advocates for access to services, treatment, supports and research and is steadfast in its commitment to raising awareness and building a community of hope for all of those touched by mental illness. www.namict.org

Postpartum Support International
Provides support, resources, education and advocacy for perinatal mental health. www.postpartum.net. Check local chapters for activities and groups.

US Consumer Product Safety Commission – Child Safety Publications
Site for protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death from thousands of types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. The CPSC is committed to protecting consumers and families from products that pose a fire, electrical, chemical, or mechanical hazard or can injure children.
www.cpsc.gov

Wheeler Clinic HelpLine
Referral to and information about mental health or addiction treatment services; crisis intervention; supportive listening. 860-747-3434 or 860-524-1182
www.wheelerclinic.org/crisis-services

** toll-free phone number*

RESOURCES

WrapCT: Connecticut's Learning Collaborative
Provides a forum for twenty five communities in Connecticut to collaborate, develop new and existing resources, advocate, and educate for a children's mental and behavioral health care system that builds on the strengths of families and the community. Ensures that services are community-based, family-focused, and culturally competent. http://wrapct.org/

Yale Child Study Center
The mission of the Center is to understand child development, social, behavioral, and emotional adjustment, and psychiatric disorders and to help children and families in need of care. 203-785-2540 http://childstudycenter.yale.edu

Parenting Education and Support

Adoption Assistance Program at UCONN Health Center
A confidential assessment, brief counseling and referral services available for all adoptive families in Connecticut. 1-877-679-1961* http://aap.uchc.edu

Adoptive Parents Resources
Information and education for adoptive parents meeting everyday and unusual challenges. www.adopting.org/adoptions/adoptive-parents-resources.html

Attachment Parenting International
A non-profit organization dedicated to educating and supporting parents based on eight "Attachment Parenting" principles. www.attachmentparenting.org

Born Learning
Born Learning, sponsored by the United Way is an innovative public engagement campaign that helps parents, caregivers and communities create quality early learning opportunities for young children. Provides awareness, education and action for both parents and providers. Find your Born Learning community at www.bornlearning.org

Breastfeeding USA
Provides evidence-based information and support, and promotes breastfeeding as the biological and cultural norm. Provides a network of accredited breastfeeding counselors and comprehensive resources for the benefit of mothers and babies, families, and communities.
www.breastfeedingusa.org

Child Welfare Information Gateway
Promotes the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families by connecting child welfare, adoption, and related professionals as well as the general public to information, resources, and tools covering topics on child welfare, child abuse and neglect, out-of-home care, and adoption.
www.childwelfare.gov

** toll-free phone number*

Connecticut Association of Foster and Adoptive Parents, Inc.
Nonprofit organization committed to strengthening foster and adoptive families through support, training and advocacy programs. 1-800-861-8838* http://cafap.com

Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies
A statewide network of family services agencies that work to strengthen Connecticut families through advocacy, education and programming. 860-571-0093 www.ctfsa.org

Connecticut Family Support Network
Information, support and family networks of parents of children with special needs. 1-877-FSN-2DAY* www.ctfsn.org

Connecticut Parents As Teachers (ConnPAT)
Family development programs statewide such as Family Resource Centers, Nurturing Families home visiting programs, and Early Head Start and Healthy Start programs use the PAT model to provide families with developmental and relational guidance. PAT is a nationally recognized, evidence-based parent learning and child development program. Visit www.connpat.org

Connecticut Parent Online
The online home of Connecticut Parent magazine. www.ctparent.com

Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center (CTPIRC)
A resource for Connecticut families funded by a grant to the State Department of Education to aid parents in making decisions about their children's education. 1-800-842-8678* www.ctpirc.org

CT Parenting
A central hub of useful parenting information adminsistered by the Connecticut Department of Children and Families. 860-550-6300 www.ctparenting.com

Even Start
Provides families access to training and support for creating a home environment that fosters reading and education for infants and young children. 860-713-6783

Family Resource Centers
Offers parent education and training; family support; preschool and school-age child care; teen pregnancy prevention (positive youth development services); and family day-care provider training. www.sde.ct.gov

Fussy Baby Network – Erikson Institute
Information and support for parents with fussy, crying infants. Warmline answers questions, provides support and guidance. The Fussy Baby Warmline number is 1-888-431-BABY* or go to www.fussybabynetwork.org.

** toll-free phone number*

RESOURCES

Head Start and Early Head Start
Head Start and Early Head Start services are available to pregnant women and children ages birth to five and their families through federal funding. Comprehensive services include health, nutrition, social, and educational programs and are offered through centers and in families' homes. 1-866-763-6481* to find a program or visit www.ct.gov/oec for a link to the program locator website.

La Leche League of Connecticut
An international, nonprofit, nonsectarian organization dedicated to providing support, encouragement, information, and education to women who want to breastfeed. All women interested in breastfeeding are encouraged to attend group meetings or to call a Leader for breastfeeding help.
860-563-6624 www.lllct.org

Nurturing Families Network
Helps first time parents learn how to care for their babies and adjust to the demands of becoming a parent; offers nurturing parenting groups, intensive home visiting services, and parent support.
1-800-505-7000* www.take5parenting.com

Office of Foster and Adoption Services
Services for foster and adoptive parents. Department of Children and Families
1-888-KID-HERO* www.ctfosteradopt.com

Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)
A 20-week course funded by the Commission on Children that empowers parents to participate in advocacy and civic affairs in communities throughout Connecticut. www.cga.ct.gov/coc/plti.htm

PBS Parenting
A trusted resource for information on child development and early learning. It also serves as a parent's window to the world of PBS KIDS, offering access to educational games and activities inspired by PBS KIDS programs.
www.pbs.org/parents

People Empowering People (PEP) – UConn Cooperative Extension
The People Empowering People (PEP) Program is an innovative life skills, parent leadership program designed to build on the unique strengths and life experiences of participants and emphasizes the connection between individual and community action. www.pep.uconn.edu

Real Dads Forever
A multi-faceted fatherhood development program designed to energize, prepare and strengthen men to fulfill their responsibilities as parents.
www.childplan.org/programs/parent-programs/real-dads-forever

** toll-free phone number*

Children's Advocacy and Legal Services

Center for Children's Advocacy
Built on the belief that every child, no matter the circumstances, deserves justice, equity and access, the Center promotes and protects the legal rights of Connecticut's poorest and most vulnerable children.
860-570-5327 www.kidscounsel.org

Children's Law Center of Connecticut
Provides legal support and representation for children in family court. Attorneys work with parents and families to create stable, safe, and beneficial arrangements for children in custody disputes. 1-888-LAW-DOOR* www.clcct.org

Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center, Inc. (CPAC)
Provides information and support to parents or other caregivers of children with disabilities or chronic illness; offers telephone consultations and workshops.
1-800-445-2722* www.cpacinc.org

Office of the Child Advocate
Oversees the protection and care of Connecticut's most vulnerable and youngest citizens and advocates for their well-being. 860-566-2106 www.ct.gov/oca

Training and Professional Development

Center on Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
The Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation was created through a grant from the Office of Head Start to translate research on healthy mental development into materials tailored to the needs of target audiences including mental health consultants, Head Start administrators and staff, and families.
www.ecmhc.org/index.html

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning at Vanderbilt University
Promotes the socioemotional development and school readiness of children birth to five. Provides online tutorials for early childhood professionals to increase knowledge base on attachment building, regulation, temperament, and brain development. Also has handouts in English and Spanish for parents.
http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/training_infant.html

Circle of Security®, Early Intervention for Parents and Children
This is a parenting program which is based on attachment concepts and principles and aims to facilitate secure attachment and positive connections among parents and their children. www.circleofsecurity.net

Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC)
The state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (see below). Works to enhance the care, education and development of Connecticut's young children; supports early care and education professionals through training and advocacy. 203-821-7216 www.ctaeyc.org

** toll-free phone number*

RESOURCES

Connecticut Charts-A-Course (CCAC)
A statewide professional development system for early care and education providers; supports career development and program improvement through trainings and assistance for centers and homes seeking accreditation.
1-800-832-7784* www.ct.gov/oec

Connecticut Community Colleges
Offer courses in a variety of fields including human services, early childhood and child development. www.ct.edu

Connecticut Parents As Teachers (ConnPAT)
ConnPAT provides training and technical assistance to organizations, family development programs and parent educators statewide on the PAT model/ curriculum. Parents as Teachers is the nation's lead resource for parent education. Visit www.connpat.org

Council for Professional Recognition
Issues the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.
1-800-424-4310* www.cdacouncil.org

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
An organization of early childhood educators and others dedicated to improving the quality of programs for young children; offers professional development opportunities/resources; develops and promotes professional standards; advocates for support and funding of high quality programs.
1-800-424-2460* www.naeyc.org

SEEDS Network of Connecticut
Supporting Early Educators with Dynamic Solutions (SEEDS) provides early childhood professional and resources and services to help them provide quality care and education to children ages six weeks through 5 years.
www.theseedsnetwork.com

** toll-free phone number*

GLOSSARY

ACTION VERSES - Songs accompanied by finger, hand or body movements.

ATTACHMENT - The process of developing a parent-child relationship that can be measured by the infant's use of the caregiver as a "secure base".

AUTONOMY - Being able to exist and function independently, rather than being dependent upon others.

BONDING - Early emotional and physical ties formed by instinctual drives for closeness or proximity.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT - Processes performed by the brain like thinking, learning, remembering, communicating, perceiving and solving problems.

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES - Major markers or points of accomplishments in physical, social, emotional, cognitive and language development. These milestones emerge in all children in somewhat orderly steps and within predictable age ranges.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE - Learning experiences that are suitable for a child based on her level of skills, abilities and interests.

DRAMATIC PLAY - Also known as imaginative play. This is a common form of spontaneous play in which children use their imagination and fantasy as part of the activity.

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT - Refers to learning about and understanding one's own feelings and the feelings of others, and developing one's own personality and identity.

EMOTIONAL TRAUMA - An experience that is emotionally painful, disturbing or shocking.

FINE MOTOR SKILLS - Abilities that involve the use of the small muscles of the body such as the fingers, toes and face.

GOODNESS OF FIT - A term that describes the temperament match between caregiver and child. Adjustments to the "fit" often need to be made by the caregiver.

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS - Abilities that involve the use of the large muscles of the body such as legs and arms.

INFANT MENTAL HEALTH - Refers to early childhood social, emotional, behavioral develpment on an individual continuum unfolding within relationships and the environment.

INITIATIVE - Taking action on one's own without being asked or forced to do so.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT - Learning how to use words and sentences to express wants, needs or ideas.

MODELING - Behaviors that result from one person observing, learning from and copying the behavior of another person.

MOTHERESE - A slow, high-pitched repetitive form of speech that adults often use when speaking to infants. See also, PARENTESE.

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT - Refers to developing control of the various parts of the body. Motor development is divided into two categories: gross or large motor development and fine or small motor development.

PARENTAL REFLECTIVE FUNCTION - The caregiver's ability to think about and make meaning of (reflect) the mental experience of the self and the child.

GLOSSARY

PARENTESE - A slow, high-pitched repetitive form of speech that adults often use when speaking to infants. See also, MOTHERESE.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT - The changes that take place in the body, including growth and development of the senses, muscles and motor skills.

PINCER GRASP - A fine motor skill that infants often use which involves picking up small object using the thumb and forefinger.

POSITIVE GUIDANCE - A behavior management technique that helps children develop self-regulation, problem solving skills and self-confidence/self-esteem.

PRIMARY CAREGIVER - The person(s) who has the deepest, strongest and most influential impact on the child. The primary caregiver is usually the mother.

REFLEXIVE MOVEMENT - Automatic, involuntary responses to external forces such as a touch or a noise.

SAFE HAVEN - The caregiver is regarded as a source of love, comfort, safety, and security during times when the child experiences distress, threat or danger.

SECURE BASE - The caregiver is experienced as a reliable and safe harbor from which the child can freely explore and pursue her developing interests in the world around her.

SELF-REGULATION - The ability to control one's thoughts, feelings and behaviors on his own.

SENSORY EXPERIENCES - Experiences/activities that involve use of the senses like sight, touch, smell, sound or taste.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT - Learning how to get along with others and make friends.

SYMBOLIC PLAY - Play that involves pretending that an object or person is something or someone else.

TEMPERAMENT - The part of a person's character or personality that affects his moods and the way he behaves and interacts with people, situations and events.

TIME IN - A parent tool used to help children ages three and under to calm down, regain self-control, and improve their behavior that relies on the use of the caregiver rather than separating the child from the caregiver.

TIME OUT - A behavior management/discipline technique used to help children calm down, regain self-control, and improve their behavior.

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Child Health and
Development Institute
of Connecticut, Inc.

270 Farmington Avenue
Suite 367
Farmington, CT 06032

860.679.1519
CHDI@adp.uchc.edu
www.chdi.org