

Supporting Maine's Infants & Toddlers:



Guidelines for Learning & Development





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Introduction

This document offers parents of infants and toddlers, early childhood professionals, and policy-makers a set of guidelines about development and early learning. One of our goals is to help individuals understand what to look for as a baby grows and develops. Another goal is to aid in understanding that infants' and toddlers' natural learning patterns and abilities can be nurtured in everyday activities occurring in a home or childcare setting. Young children's learning comes from discoveries they make on their own under the guidance of caring adults rather than from structured lessons. Suggestions are provided for caregivers, which includes parents and early childhood professionals, for interacting with infants and toddlers, organizing the environment so it supports their learning, and responding to their individual differences.

The guidelines are divided into three age ranges:

- younger infants (birth to 8 months)
- older infants (8 to 18 months)
- toddlers (18 to 36 months)

Within each age range, four distinct areas of development are covered:

- development into social beings
- development of strong and healthy bodies
- development of effective and creative communication
- development of curious minds

Domains are broken down into elements which are aspects of that area of development. Beside each element are indicators or examples of child behavior.

For each element there is a section marked "Caregivers support by:". These sections offer ideas for what caregivers can do to encourage development.

Ideas for organizing the environment and meeting the principles of Universal Design for Learning are found at the end of each age range in a section called Applications.

Within each age range, we present development sequentially because it best fit our guiding principle (see below) that development is a holistic process.

We cannot stress enough that these are guidelines. No single child will follow the exact pattern of development laid out here. The guidelines are meant to give an idea of the skills infants and toddlers are working on at a given stage so that caregivers feel empowered to support children as they grow and to seek intervention when needed.



Guiding Principles

The following principles guided the process of developing these guidelines:

Scientific research provides the basis for the guidelines. The guidelines were drawn from a vast and complex body of knowledge about infant and toddler development. This body of knowledge contains solid information based on both classic and recent research studies. The guidelines capture the mix of old and new information, but must be understood as flexible works-in-progress that will change as our scientific understandings change.

Infant and toddler development is a holistic process. Although researchers and practitioners often think about the infant's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development as separate processes, growth and development in each of these areas depends on growth and development in all of the other areas. The game of peek-a-boo is a good example. Newborns are not mature enough to enjoy this game, but older infants are because they have matured biologically, have developed a trusting relationship with others, and have learned to enjoy the emotional state of suspense. Even though the guidelines separate developmental areas, parents, early childhood professionals, and policymakers should understand that development is not piecemeal, but rather holistic.

Social relationships form the foundation for early learning. Babies come into the world ready to make emotional and social connections with their parents and other caregivers; from the first day of life they learn from the emotional and social exchanges they have with others. These connections are key for learning about others and learning from others. Indeed, parents and early childhood professionals use close relationships to challenge infants and toddlers to take that extra step and reach to the limits of their abilities. Parents and early childhood professionals also support early learning by providing good nutrition and protection from viruses, accidents, environmental hazards, controlled substances, and chronic and severe stress. The guidelines recognize parents and early childhood professionals as essential educators of infants and toddlers.

Play is the most meaningful context for early learning. Learning is best when it occurs in a meaningful context. For infants and toddlers, play is the most meaningful context for learning. In play, children make discoveries about their world. For example, they discover counting principles by lining up cars and toy people in one-to-one correspondence. The guidelines reflect this emphasis on everyday play as the best context for learning.

Infants and toddlers differ in their patterns of development. There are individual differences between infants and toddlers. Some may have developmental delays or disabilities. There are also differences based on social groupings, such as gender, social class, and culture. Sensitive parenting, for example, may be defined differently in different cultural groups. In addition, children show important differences in temperament. All of these differences underline the importance of seeing the guidelines as flexible, not as strict timelines for development.

What are Universally Designed Settings?

Meeting the needs of young children with differing abilities is not new to early care settings. The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) position statement on inclusion states: "Inclusion as a value, supports the right of all children, regardless of abilities to participate actively in natural settings within their communities. Natural settings are those in which the child would spend time had he or she not had a disability."

Universal design is the philosophy of designing and creating products and environments to be accessible, to the greatest extent possible, to the people who use them. The concept of Universal Design in early care settings has broadened beyond the creation of physical space and materials to include curriculum and teaching strategies for all infants and toddlers. When we plan for the diverse needs of infants and toddlers from the start, early care and education providers spend less time modifying or adapting the environment later. Using a Universal Design approach encourages creativity, flexibility and resourcefulness to meet the individual needs of all children.

Process

Jack Shonkoff (2000) argued that if we are seriously interested in enhancing the well-being of children and families in this country, science, policy, and practice must be merged. Writers of this document attempted such a blending, combining insights from childcare practitioners, academic psychologists, and policymakers.

The process began in 2004, when the Maine team of the National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative formed a subcommittee to begin the Infant and Toddler Learning Guidelines. Other stakeholders joined the workgroup to draft and edit these guidelines. Membership of the workgroup changed and paused to study work done in other states. In particular, they reviewed the early guidelines of Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Kentucky, and Maryland. Finally, in late 2004 and early 2005, a core group began drafting Maine's version of the guidelines. By spring 2005, Maine's team of the National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative and many other stakeholders provided formal written and informal verbal feedback on an initial draft of the guidelines which was reformatted and presented at a Forum where over 100 early care professionals provided input that was used to complete this document. This information was assessed and used in the next draft of the guidelines.

In addition to the guidelines or drafts of guidelines from other states, the workgroup consulted the following resources in preparing this document:

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State of Maine Early Childhood Learning Guidelines.

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Young Infants: Birth to 8 months



Introduction to the stage

Young Infants: Birth to 8 months

Developmental Guidelines

Application

Introduction to the stage

Early infancy is a time of tremendous change in a child's physical abilities, thoughts, social interactions and ability to communicate. Even though there is much development over this period, infants are born prepared to learn and equipped with remarkable abilities. During early infancy, the most important people in children's lives are their parents and caregivers.

Until about 30 years ago, it was a common misconception, even among scientists, that newborns are incapable beings who do little more than sleep, cry and digest food. We now know that newborns are competent and have some amazing abilities. For example, newborns feel pain, think, dream, differentiate tastes and track a slowly moving object with their eyes. Perhaps the most striking example of infants' complex abilities is shown by two-hour-old infants' preference for hearing something their mothers read aloud repeatedly before they were born. Clearly, many abilities are already finely tuned to allow them to demonstrate this preference.

Despite their abilities, of course newborns do sleep a large portion of the day. Every single thing around them, from the milk in their stomach, to the breeze on their face, to the light overhead, is new to them, and sleeping helps with consolidation of all of this new information. As infants progress beyond the newborn period, they begin to establish a routine and spend increasing amounts of time awake. The best time for them to learn about the environment is when they are quietly awake; this is the ideal time to interact with them. Infants of any age love to look at faces, particularly those of their primary caregiver(s). It is also a great time to start having reciprocal exchanges, just like adults have conversations. Infant-focused conversations can be held using gestures, words, sounds or expressions, or a combination of all four.

Young infants quickly show signs of their temperament, which is an early foundation of personality. For example, some infants are particularly active or social or fussy. It's important to respect these temperamental differences in the way a caregiver responds to an infant's particular way of relating to the world. The goal is to develop a fit between the

caregiver's personality and the burgeoning personality of the infant. As in any relationship, compromises need to be made as the infant and caregiver learn how best to relate to one another.

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

The early infancy period is also a time of rapid physical growth and development. The rate of height and weight gain is remarkable during this period; in the first few months, infants gain about an inch in length per month and an ounce of weight per day. Infants also learn control of their body during this time, moving from reflexive actions to more voluntary control. Development proceeds from head to toe and from the midline of the body outward, infants gain control of their heads and torso before their arms and legs. It is important to help young infants develop physically by changing their position frequently.

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

Providing an enriched environment means stimulating infants by doing things with them, explaining what you are doing, step by step while feeding and changing diapers. Lately, the media has had much to say about early enrichment for children. While a young infant's interactions with the world contribute to early brain development, an enriched environment doesn't mean playing classical music daily, using early learner videos, or exposing the infant to the alphabet. In fact, there is no evidence that those extra activities make a difference in brain development. If overdone, such activities could create anxiety in the infant. It is more productive to give them the opportunity to feel different textures, hear language, reach out and grab objects, see faces, and look at pictures that have contrasting colors. Using

daily routines and activities as opportunities to experience the world may be all that is needed for the brain to develop to its maximum potential. The guidelines below are not intended to try to produce “super-babies”; the goal instead is to support healthy, well-adjusted development. In short, appreciating young infants as human beings and interacting with them, as with any human, is what they need to develop to their potential.

A little about...brain development

As recently as twenty years ago we thought that genes alone determined an infant's brain structure. We now understand that children come into this world with certain genetic endowments, a predisposition for learning, and a temperament through which sensory information is filtered (National Research Council, 2000). In fact fully 2/3 of a child's brain continues to develop after birth (most significantly from birth to age three) and the brain continues to develop according to the environmental stimulation it receives. One of the most crucial facts emerging from the research is the importance of the parent/caregiver in providing loving, supportive, interactive relationships and environments that are developmentally appropriate. Children, who are provided responsive and stimulating care, are far more likely to experience successful outcomes than those who are not (Eliot, 1999)

A Note of Caution:

Caregivers should be aware that some marketing strategies may use the brain research to promote commercial products. Providing too much environmental stimulation (toys, books, music etc.) in an effort to create a “smarter” child may indeed result in excessive stress causing hormones to be produced that can actually impede healthy brain development.

Children develop at different rates and in different ways. Though much can be learned from studying the “norm,” the best indicator of healthy develop-

ment is the caregiver's own instincts. Caregivers know better than any chart whether the infant they are with day in and day out is developing properly. The guidelines offer some ideas about the amazing abilities young infants are born with and continue to develop, and also provide some ideas about what can be done to support and enjoy those developing capabilities. Experienced caregivers trust their instincts as they use the guidelines to support the developing infant.

Anyone who has cared for a young infant can relate to feeling frustrated and overwhelmed, particularly during the first few months of an infant's life. Caregivers may think the best thing to do is to keep giving of themselves, but it's actually best for both themselves and the child if they draw on the support provided by people in their environment, childcare community and/or family. It is vital to keep up with their own self-care. Caregivers who are well-cared-for and well-rested have the potential for higher quality interactions with infants than do exhausted, on-edge, or depressed caregivers.

A little about... maternal depression

Being a new mother can be taxing. About 60% of new mothers experience the “baby blues;” feelings of mild irritability, anxiety, moodiness, and depression that pass within days. However, there is a more serious condition, postnatal depression, which affects about 1 in 10 new mothers and requires treatment. This depression, which often, but not always, occurs in mothers who have a history of depression, is profound and lasts for months. Postnatal depression not only has consequences for the mother, but also for her infant and possibly affects children later in life. Infants of depressed mothers have been found to show more negative emotions, to have less secure attachments, and to be withdrawn and non-responsive when interacting with strangers. Work closely with new mothers and offer support and resources when necessary.

Young Infants Birth to 8 months

DOMAIN: Development into social beings

Element:	Indicators
<p>Self Awareness: Understanding that the self is a separate being with an identity of his or her own and with connectedness to others</p>	<p>Explores what own body can do by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking • Chewing • Reaching • Grabbing <p>Has a limited understanding that he or she is responsible for some of the fascinating events in the environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kicks to move a mobile • Imitates an adult's simple facial expressions
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noting accomplishments, no matter how small. • Eating, sleeping, and wakeful play on fairly regular schedule. • Labeling their own feelings and the feelings they see the infant expressing. • Offering activities for infant to use more than one sense at a time. 	
<p>Self-Regulation: Development of the ability to regulate emotions and mood.</p>	<p>Comforts self by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clutching toy • Sucking thumb • Stroking blanket <p>Starts, maintains, or stops social contact through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks • Gestures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounds • Smiles <p>Anticipates being lifted or fed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Molds body • Opens mouth <p>Signals when full:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pushes bottle away • Stops nursing
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving infants a chance to self-soothe as they get older by allowing them to suck on their hands or to find something in the environment that interests them. • Helping infants create own patterns of self-regulation (Eating, sleeping, and wakeful play on fairly regular schedule). • Establishing and attempting to maintain an individualized daily schedule. 	
<p>Self Concept: Development in knowing and valuing self; growing ability to make independent decisions and choices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smiles at self in mirror • Recognizes holding/touching/own hands and feet
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging hand and feet play. • Providing mirror play. 	

Young Infants Birth to 8 months

DOMAIN: Development into social beings

Element:	Indicators
<p>Adult Interaction: Noticing, relating with and becoming attached to people older than themselves</p>	<p>Signals adult for attention or help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crying, gesturing, or moving <p>Establishes, maintains and discontinues eye contact with person looking at him or her</p> <p>Takes turn acting and reacting to adults</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pausing sucking when mother stops rocking • Widening eyes every time a caregiver shakes a toy • Cooing each time a caregiver stops talking to <p>Is more easily soothed by sound of primary caregivers' voices than others' voices</p> <p>Imitations of simple facial expressions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puckering the lips • Sticking out tongue <p>Responds to being held</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calming down • Molding body to fit the holder's body • Growing quiet and still and studying the adult's face <p>When being talked to, attends to the speaker</p> <p>Stays awake longer if adult interacts with him or her</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If caregiver shows facial expressions, infant attends longer <p>Shows preference for familiar adults</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaching out for primary caregiver; cooing more readily and broadly, smiling more often, and more easily soothed around a familiar adult • Squealing and kicking when familiar adult appears <p>Smiles socially</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smiling in response to social contact or to begin social contact <p>Shows expressions of surprise, sadness, disgust, anger and fear</p>

Caregivers support by:

- **Responding promptly and consistently to their needs.**
- **Understanding and responding to different types of cries for hunger, boredom, frustration, tiredness, pain/hot/cold, over stimulation, or wet diaper.**
- **Modeling appropriate behaviors in the manner of talking when interacting with others, and in the manner of reacting emotionally to situations.**
- **Appreciating and supporting infants' need for attachment to primary caregivers, yet fostering relationships between them and other adults, as well. For example, avoid rushing to comfort infants the moment they react negatively to a new person.**
- **Labeling their own feelings and the feelings they see the infant expressing.**
- **Allowing infants to socially disengage if they look away and not forcing social contact or reciprocal sound making.**

Young Infants Birth to 8 months

DOMAIN: Development into social beings

Element:	Indicators
<p>Peer Interaction: Noticing, relating with and becoming attached to people around the child's own age</p>	<p>Cries if another infant cries</p> <p>Looks intently at another infant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual gaze <p>Looking at others is often paired with excitement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arm and leg flailing <p>Reaches out to touch peer's face, hair, or other body part</p> <p>Grabs for an object a peer is holding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches for a doll or stuffed animal another infant is holding
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing infants with opportunities to be around and observe other children, particularly those slightly older than themselves. We all learn by watching others. • Naming and labeling appropriate touch. • Supervising peer interaction. 	
<p>Social intelligence: Awareness of diversity and difference</p>	<p>Responds positively to primary caregivers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eyes brighten, cuddles <p>Responds to familiar/unfamiliar environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smiles, reaches out, or frowns, stares

Young Infants Birth to 8 months

DOMAIN: Development of strong and healthy bodies

Element:	Indicators
<p>Perceptual Development:</p> <p>Ability to take in and organize sensory experience (taste, touch, smell, sight, sound, feelings, motion/action). The central nervous system processes information through the senses. Sensory, motor and cognitive skills are interconnected and influence each other.</p>	<p>Display reflexes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflexes at birth: stepping, palmer grasp, Babinski (extension of toe when foot stroked), Moro (startle) reflex, rooting and sucking, hand-to-mouth, righting head up, eyes open when held upright, tonic neck (head to side, arm extended), swimming (moves arms in swimming motion) • Reflexes that develop after birth: reciprocal kicking (bicycling), neck righting (body follows turn of head), parachute (catching self from falling), Landau (arm and leg extension while on stomach) • As new reflexes appear some of original are integrated <p>Newborns bring information in through senses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual system immature (attentive to black and white and objects of contrasting colors). Nearsighted. • Infant may become fixated visually. • Preference for slower, high pitched sounds • Can distinguish mother's or father's voice from that of a stranger • Sensitivity to touch highly variable • Shows enjoyment of motion such as rocking, jiggling, bouncing, or being carried around • Can distinguish smell of mother from others

Young Infants Birth to 8 months

DOMAIN: Development of strong and healthy bodies

Element:	Indicators
<p>Perceptual Development continued:</p> <p>Ability to take in and organize sensory experience (taste, touch, smell, sight, sound, feelings, motion/action). The central nervous system processes information through the senses. Sensory, motor and cognitive skills are interconnected and influence each other.</p>	<p>Infants show increased visual ability and perception:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased ability to detect detail • Ability to coordinate visual information from each eye <p>Infants show increased integration of sensory stimulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to what they see, for instance an infant might move toward desired person or object • Look for source of noise, such as dropped toy • Shows taste preference • Display tactile needs and response (ie. infant wants to bite something for teething and puts fingers in mouth) <p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposing infants to a variety of sensory experiences inside and outside. • Helping infants experience mobility through carrying, positioning, holding to enhance sensory opportunities. • Recognizing that infants need calm and stimulating experiences.
<p>Gross-motor skills (large muscle):</p> <p>Ability to maintain stability in various positions and to move from one position to another, dependent upon coordination of muscle strength and muscle tone.</p>	<p>Exhibits beginning stages of large muscle control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head control: • Lifts chin • Lifts head • Lifts both head and shoulders • Supports self on flexed elbows • Supports head in upright position <p>Coordination of muscle control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turns from back to stomach and stomach to back • May move from place to place by rolling • Inches forward or backward on stomach or back • Sits unsupported • Begins bouncing when held <p>May almost sit while rolling over</p> <p>Begins to use arms and legs purposefully</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claps hands • Pounds on things with hands • Kicks at objects <p>Holds arms out for jacket or lifts arms so T-shirt can be taken off</p> <p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limiting periods of time in assistive devices like walkers, exersaucers, car seats, and swings. • Giving infants frequent “tummy time” while closely supervising. • Creating floor environments that encourage movement. • Facilitating a variety of gross motor opportunities by positioning themselves at the infant’s level.

Young Infants Birth to 8 months

DOMAIN: Development of strong and healthy bodies

Element:	Indicators
<p>Fine Motor Skills: (Small Muscle) Eye-hand or skilled sensory coordination</p>	<p>Stares at objects, especially faces; begins to coordinate eyes</p> <p>Grasp reflex diminishing</p> <p>Reaches for object with both arms but with hands fisted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swipes and misses desired objects• Reaches with one arm and grasps at will• Grasps, releases, “re-grasps”, and releases object again• Can grasp thumb and forefinger but not well yet <p>Brings objects to mouth</p> <p>Beginning eye hand coordination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manipulates object in hand, transfers object from one hand to another <p>Follows a slowly moving object with eyes</p>
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playing active games such as patty cake and fingerplays.• Placing objects within and just beyond arm’s reach.• Offering a variety of objects and textures.	
<p>Self-help/Adaptive skill development: Using motor skills to show adaptation and self regulation strategies.</p>	<p>Displays signs of self comforting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sucks thumb to pacify self <p>Shows signs of self feeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Begins to hold own bottle/cup• Begins to feed self infant foods
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognizing when infant is distressed and responding appropriately.• Keeping their own and infant’s hands clean.• Providing early self feeding opportunities with a variety of textured foods.	



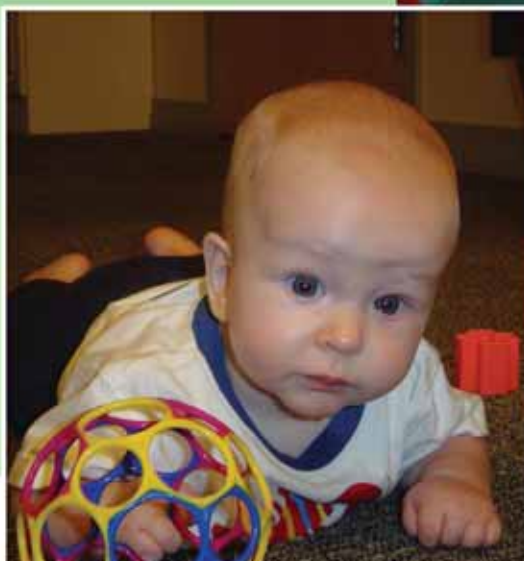
Young Infants Birth to 8 months

DOMAIN: Development of the ability to communicate

Element:	Indicators
<p>Language Comprehension (receptive language): Understanding the meaning of information, ideas and feelings expressed by others; increased understanding of language (comprehension) and vocabulary development (understanding). Initial language development occurring within the context of relationship.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Refers to mode of communication in which the child is most fluent including the child's primary language, sign language or assistive communication device.</i></p>	<p>Maintains eye contact with person looking at him or her:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mutually gazes with primary caregivers• Shows preference for voice of primary caregivers <p>Reacts to human voice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turns toward conversation• Quiets self• Appears to watch or listen <p>Reacts to new voices or sounds by becoming more quiet or active:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awakens at loud sounds• Startles or cries from loud sounds• Shows different responses to tone of voice• Looks around for source of sounds

Caregivers support by:

- **Responding to infants' gestures, sounds or facial expressions, and attempting to interpret aloud, what the infant is saying.**
- **Engaging in reciprocal interactions with infants, such as taking turns at making sounds or smiling.**
- **Putting words to caregiving actions; explaining what caregiver is doing and why.**
- **Talking to them right from birth. Infants especially respond when high-pitched, intonation-varying speech and a lot of facial expressions are used.**
- **Using given names when speaking to them.**



Young Infants Birth to 8 months

DOMAIN: Development of the ability to communicate

Element:	Indicators
<p>Language Comprehension (receptive language) continued:</p> <p>Understanding the meaning of information, ideas and feelings expressed by others; increased understanding of language (comprehension) and vocabulary development (understanding). Initial language development occurring within the context of relationship.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Refers to mode of communication in which the child is most fluent including the child's primary language, sign language or assistive communication device.</i></p>	<p>Enjoys inflection and modulation of voices, especially that of the primary caregiver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially more responsive to motherese • Enjoys sound of singing • Enjoys sound of words from books being read <p>Distinguishes familiar voices from other sounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turns toward familiar sounds • Reaches for caregivers face or voice <p>Exhibits participation when books are read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fingers or looks at books when read
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singing and reading to infants. • Pointing out and explaining pictures. • Allowing infants to mouth books, it's their way of learning. 	

<p>Language Expression (expressive/productive language):</p> <p>The use of sounds, gestures, words, phrases, or sentences to express self. Initial language development occurring within the context of relationship.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Refers to mode of communication in which the child is most fluent including, the child's primary language, sign language or assistive communication devices.</i></p>	<p>Initiates communication with caregiver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains eye contact with mutual gazing • Looks intently at caregiver • Cries, grunts or makes loud sounds to seek caregiver assistance • Smiles or gestures to initiate social contact • Moves body in anticipation of being lifted or picked up <p>Makes a variety of repetitive sounds or gestures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babbles and coos to self as well as to others • Pairs consonants and vowels such as “ma” or “da” with repetition • Uses hands to express self <p>Imitates tones or inflections and actions made by caregiver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smiles in response to caregiver smile • Responds “ba” to caregiver saying “ba” <p>Uses a variety of means to express feelings or needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiated cries to signal hunger or anger • Kicks feet/waves arms • Smiles/laughs to express pleasure
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being aware of and responding to a child's body language. • Describing infant communication to others (i.e. “You are smiling at your friend, Betsy!”). • Imitating sounds and gestures made by infant. • Responding to infants' sounds using turn taking. 	

Young Infants Birth to 8 months

DOMAIN: Development of the ability to communicate

Element:	Indicators
<p>Emotional Understanding: Understanding of the emotional expressions of self and others.</p>	<p>Can distinguish facial expressions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happiness • Anger • Sadness
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing and supporting infants' anxiety about unfamiliar adults/situations. • Mirroring infants' expression and labeling associated feelings. • Exploring books with emotional themes and pictures. 	
<p>Emotional Expression: Ability to communicate feelings.</p>	<p>Displays a wide range of emotions, both positive and negative, as well as interest and curiosity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social smile occurs • Laughter is apparent • Shows surprise, sadness, disgust, anger and fear
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing hiding/memory games such as peek-a-boo. • Recognizing and labeling infant's emotions. • Smiling and laughing with infants. 	

Young Infants Birth to 8 months

DOMAIN: Development of curious minds

Element:	Indicators
<p>Exploration and Discovery: Experiencing the properties of things, developing curiosity and inquiring about the world.</p>	<p>Displays reflexes that set the stage for sensory exploration toward intellectual development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turns head toward nipple • Grasps finger of caregiver when placed in palm <p>Directs attention toward caregiver's face or voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gazes at caregiver's face during feeding <p>Directs attention toward objects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches and grasps for objects or stares at them • Reacts to new objects, voices, sounds and touch by becoming more active or quiet
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering new and familiar objects to explore. • Allowing infants to explore their toys; accepting that they understand the world primarily through their mouth. 	

Young Infants Birth to 8 months

DOMAIN: Development of curious minds

Element:	Indicators
<p>Concept Development and Memory: Understanding cause and effect, and the permanence of things. Developing memory skills and the beginnings of representational thought</p>	<p>Engages in immediate and deferred imitation of facial expressions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smiles back at caregiver • Smiles when familiar adult re-enters room • Responds by patting mirror when sees own image reflected <p>Uses more than one sense at a time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses sight, hearing and touch to examine and shake a toy to elicit a sound • Mouthing and banging a toy <p>Looks for or orients toward dropped object</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks down when drops a toy from table <p>Repeats making a pleasing sight, sound, or motion to continue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kicks or swats mobile, and repeats over days and weeks • Continues to bang an object to repeat a sound
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing infants to explore their toys with their mouths, knowing this is how they learn. • Providing objects for the infant to create and repeat sounds. • Offering both familiar and unfamiliar objects. 	
<p>Problem Solving, Symbolic Thought, and Creative Expression: Developing the ability to find a solution to a dilemma; using mental representation and learning to be imaginative in self-expression</p>	<p>Imitates sounds and gestures</p> <p>Observes and feels the rhythm of simple daily routines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rocking to sleep • Riding in a stroller • Listening to an adult voice reading or singing <p>Uses sensorimotor exploration to experience various textures, patterns, sounds, and smells</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakes rattle • Mouths a toy • Runs hand over face of caregiver <p>Begins to repeat chance sensorimotor activities to elicit a reaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bang hands on table • Drop a toy <p>Anticipates being lifted and moves body accordingly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stiffens body in preparation for being lifted • Stretches arms up toward caregiver • Tries to lift head toward caregiver <p>Experiments with self soothing activities</p> <p>Finds hidden objects</p>
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing how the child is figuring something out. • Providing opportunities for problem-solving, such as find the toy under the blanket. 	

A little about...infant massage

Wanting to be touched is a natural human desire. Being touched and massaged regularly is particularly important for infants. Touch is one of the first senses to develop in utero and newborns can feel the difference between hot and cold, comfort and pain. Although all infants benefit from touch, the most striking effects show up in studies of preterm infants. When preterm infants received 15-minute sessions of having their limbs flexed and their bodies massaged three times a day, they gained between 31% and 47% more weight than infants who did not receive the touch stimulation, even when they took in the same amount of formula as the non-touched infants. In addition, the infants who received touch left the hospital 5 days earlier. It seems that touch aids in absorption of nutrition, has cognitive benefits, and helps the caregiver-infant attachment bond, at the very least. Bottom Line: A little massage can go a long way!

- Provide small mirrors so children can see themselves.
- Provide soft, washable books that infants can explore visually and through touch.

Responding to individual difference

Jot down observations, with dates noted, if you see infants:

- Being socially unresponsive. Examples of this include, holding body stiffly when held, not engaging in reciprocal sound-making, avoiding eye contact, or showing limited emotional expression.
- Showing perceptual difficulties including, not watching an object pass slowly in front of their face, not orienting toward sounds, not engaging in reciprocal sound-making, and/or never imitating facial expressions.

Talk with the family and encourage them to seek professional help if you find the child showing any of these signs consistently. Share your notes with the family.

Infants vary greatly in their temperament, so the individual child is always the best indicator of how a caregiver should proceed. For example, some infants...

Organizing the environment

Parents and Early Childhood Professionals can...

- Provide toys that:
 - Are brightly colored, attractive and eye-catching.
 - Are of varying textures.
 - Produce an immediate outcome by making a sound or moving.
 - Are washable.
 - Are easily graspable, but large enough so that infants could not choke on them.
- Provide rings and other items for chewing, teething, exploring.
- Hang large, simple pictures on the wall that are made up of contrasting colors.
- Play music softly and purposefully rather than as a constant background.
- Provide the child with the opportunity to view faces both real and pictured.

...will need and want more alone time. Allow them this. Encourage them to have social interactions with peers and adults, but also respect their need to take time away from others.

...will bore of "conversations," books or objects quickly. Encourage the completion of the task at hand, finishing the page you're reading for example, while respecting the need to move on.

...will not enjoy being held as much as other infants do. As long as a child is not being stiff and unresponsive when held, respect the infant's desire to have space.

...are easier to get onto a set schedule than others. Attempt to create a routine since having one will probably be comforting to the infant, but try to accept that a particular infant may have a spontaneous, slightly unpredictable personality that might be beneficial later in life. If you are follow-

ing the cues infants provide in the form of gestures, sounds and facial expressions, then they are most likely getting what they need.

- ...smile more than others, some cry more than others. There is no “right” mood for an infant to be in. Try not to see crying or anger as “bad” emotions but rather as just as another means of expression.
- ...get over-stimulated quickly and easily. While it is important that they experience novel events, people and objects, some infants need it provided in small doses.
- ...can sit quietly for large blocks of time while others are always moving. These differences in activity level are even noticeable in the womb! Allow infants to guide how much physical activity they need and want.
- ...adapt to new situations and people easier than others do. Just because an infant is slow to warm up doesn't mean that this child cannot handle the new situation. Avoid rushing to prematurely comfort or extract infants from new situations, but let them know you are there to support them. Let them explore with their eyes, body position, etc., and adjust on their own timetable.

Although the guidelines and much about infants are written without explicit reference to the outside world, it is important to keep in mind that children's development is always embedded in context: their family, both immediate and extended; their friends; their neighborhood; the values, customs, and norms of their culture. Growth and development may proceed differently – more quickly or slowly, or in a completely different direction – depending on what a particular child's context is. These differences are healthy and should be nurtured and respected. For example, some cultures...

- ...place less emphasis on creating a schedule for their infants. Infants are permitted to feed on demand and sleep and wake when they want to. This is particularly seen in African cultures.

...do not view independence and individuality as the primary goals for a child. People from these cultures may:

- Emphasize relationship-building over self-soothing skills.
- Not encourage expressions of negative, individualistic emotions such as anger.
- Not agree with the use of time out. It is viewed as too extreme since it is a form of being shunned from the group.

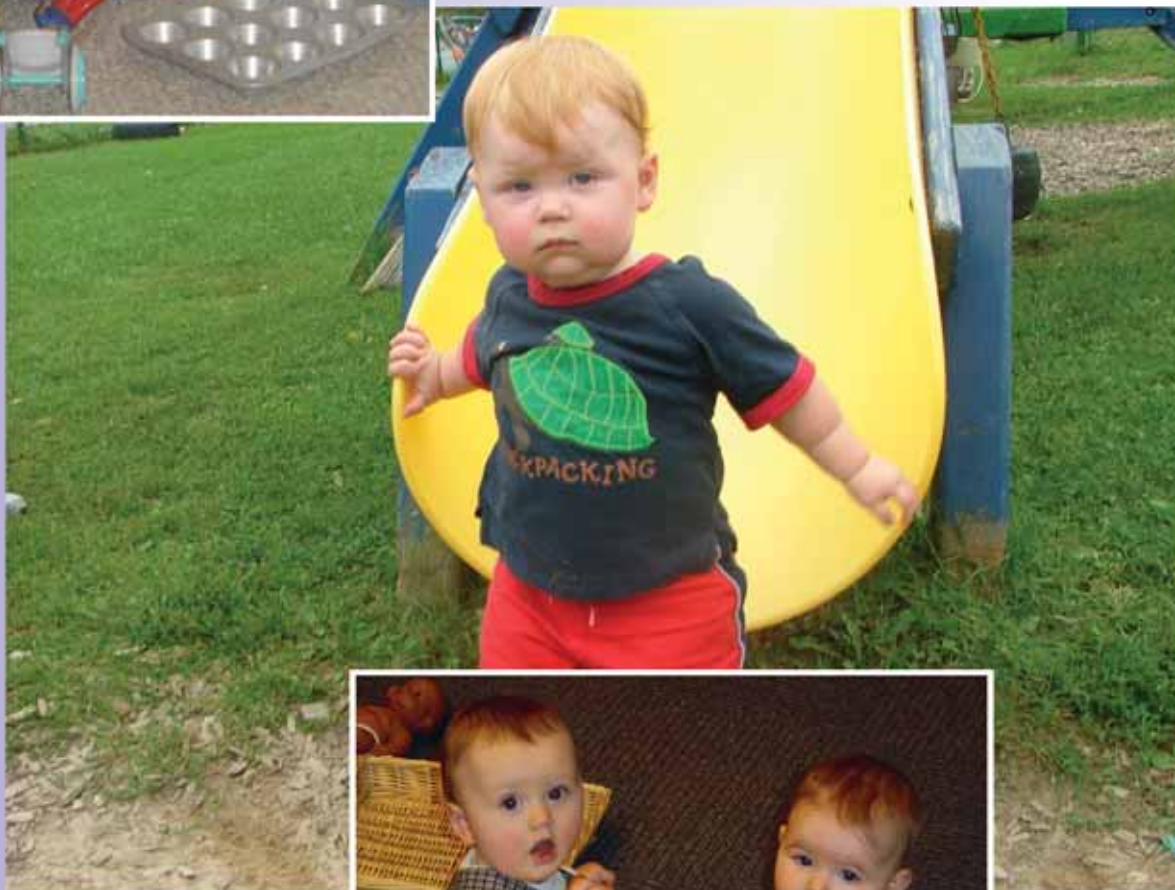
- ...encourage carrying of the child more than Western cultures do. This is particularly seen in African cultures. The extra carrying may make the child sleep more during the day, and therefore begin to sleep through the night later than a child who is carried less. In addition, being carried more frequently may slow physical development, particularly related to walking. Neither outcome is detrimental; children will develop on their own schedule.
- ...view discipline as always coming from an outside authority. Developing an internal control is not a focus of parents from these cultures.

A little about...sleeping

Families all over the world participate in a variety of sleeping arrangements. While many American institutions including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommend against it, co-sleeping, or sleeping with the infant in the bed with the parents is supported widely in non-Western cultures and is practiced by many families in the United States as well. It is the responsibility of the family to make safe and informed decisions that benefit their family.

<http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/cosleeping.html>

Older Infants: 8-18 months



Introduction to the stage

Developmental Guidelines

Older Infants: 8 to 18 months

Application

Introduction to the stage

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

Older infants' emotions are becoming more specific during this phase of development. There are smiles and hugs for affection, anxiety at separation, and anger at both people and objects when they do not perform how the older infant expects or wants. There is a growing sense of self and an increased interest in peers and unfamiliar adults. Yet there are times when unfamiliar adults may cause distress or concern and when peer interactions may show a lack of consideration for others' feelings. There exists a tension between older infants' curiosity and desire to explore, and their deeper dependency needs of attachment and security. Caregivers can support emotional growth by providing a trusted presence and safe, predictable environments.

Older infants are gaining control over their large (gross motor) and small (fine motor) muscles. They are using their senses to coordinate movement. They are still exploring by putting things in their mouths. With every new physical skill gained, they are able to experience and explore new objects, new textures, and new patterns of movement. They begin to learn that objects have attributes, that their own actions cause events to happen, and that adults respond to their actions. As they learn to navigate space, they learn that obstacles can be avoided. Caregivers can support physical development and the wonders of discovery that accompany this phase by providing safe spaces both indoor and out in which older infants can explore and practice their emerging skills. Caregivers can also reinforce fine and gross motor skill development by playing and by showing excitement and pleasure in the child's accomplishments.

With increased physical skills comes an emergence of self-help skills. Older infants begin to attempt to dress and feed themselves. Although self-feeding

can be very messy, it is important to allow for experimentation with this process. Letting older infants do things for themselves also helps them establish a sense of self and strengthens their sense of self-confidence.

Older infants' communication abilities are becoming increasingly more intentional. Rather than crying, vocal signals are now being used more often to gain attention and to have needs met. They understand more words than they can say and will look toward several objects when named. Long babbled sentences mimic the sounds and conversations they hear around them. They begin to use the words "me," "I," and "you." As they mature, they may put two or three words together.

A little about ...multilingual and multicultural families

Infants and toddlers whose home language is not English must transition from their home culture and language to English in the early learning setting. Learning language skills, becoming literate, and learning how people communicate in more than one language requires a lot of adult support.

The National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC) suggests that caregivers support children whose home language is not English by "preserving and respecting the diversity of the home language and culture that each child brings to the early learning setting" (NAEYC, 1995, p.7) They can do this by 1) encouraging the family to continue the home language and 2) integrating cultural and language experiences of the home into the early childhood setting. A recent report on learning two languages by a Head Start and Early Head Start focus group suggested that toddlers can benefit from being exposed to two languages and that speaking both languages outside the home is considered an "asset" for development.

Identifying strategies to support English language learners in Head Start and Early Head Start Programs: English language learners focus group report. (April 2002), Available at: www.headstartinfo.org/publications/english_learners

When caregivers make eye contact and repeat early attempts at vocalizations, the older infant learns that these interactions are important and enjoyable aspects of communication. Caregivers can also support the development of language skills by sharing interest in the objects and toys that motivate curiosity through verbally labeling, describing the object's attributes, and describing the actions of the child. Reading simple books can be an enjoyable way for older infants to associate language and literacy with comfort and relaxation. As hearing is a critical component to speech replication, immediate and prompt attention should be given to any concerns about hearing ability.

Older infants are actively learning by seeking to explore the world they inhabit and to see how their explorations and investigations impact that world. They are beginning to use objects as tools, to imitate adult actions and words, to discover that objects still exist when out of sight, and to make comparisons between two or more objects. Older infants are also beginning to understand how things fit into space and to see how they fit into the space that is around them. They primarily learn through active experimentation and through problem solving trial and error. It is important to remember that cognitive, social, and emotional development are all deeply entwined during this phase of development.



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

ment. Should there be concerns about one area of development lagging behind another, it may be necessary to address these concerns through appropriate medical or developmental intervention.

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

A little about ... male involvement

Male involvement in children's lives has a profound impact. When a male caregiver's nurturing instinct is supported and encouraged, the result is a unique, bonding relationship that results in a child's strong sense of self-esteem and confidence. Research shows that children who have had positive male involvement on a consistent basis throughout their lives stay in school longer and achieve higher verbal scores. It has also shown that girls with involved dads have higher math scores and are less likely to become pregnant in their teen years.



Older Infants 8 to 18 months

DOMAIN: Development into social beings

Element:	Indicators	
<p>Self Awareness: Understanding that the self is a separate being with an identity of his or her own and with connectedness to others.</p>	<p>Begins to recognize and respond to name being spoken</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gestures at sound of name • Vocalizes at sound of name <p>Shows awareness of mirror image by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smiling • Patting • Vocalizing <p>Starts to develop toy preferences</p>	
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the child's name that the family uses. • Displaying family photos. • Offering non-stereotypical toys. 		
<p>Self Concept Development in knowing and valuing self; growing ability to make independent decisions</p>	<p>Shows preferences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cries when something is not liked <p>Shows distress when preferred people don't engage with them</p> <p>Shows signs of mastery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laughs at own cleverness • Frustrated when unable do something 	
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing meaningful and relevant choices. • Showing affection and delight over their new accomplishments. • Helping them during frustrating situations by talking them through or showing a solution. 		
<p>Self-Regulation: Development of the ability to regulate emotions and mood.</p>	<p>Comforts self by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrieving a familiar object • Engaging in a familiar routine <p>Expresses own needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gestures when hungry • Grabs blanket when tired 	<p>Anticipates and participates in routine activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifts arms when dressing • Holds out glass <p>Can be restless and determined</p> <p>Power struggles emerge</p>
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding that when tired, frustrated, or hungry, older infants may revert back to behavior more typical of early infancy. Remember that at these times it is important to meet their needs by providing food, rest, and comfort. • Helping infants learn to self-regulate as well as deepening their sense of trust and security by coming to understand that their needs will be met. • Recognizing that older infants may become over-stimulated by the amount of noise and activity in large groups or in large group settings. Provide space and time that is quieter and less stimulating if needed. • Patience, understanding and loving support from a trusted adult will ease these frustrations. Verbal affirmation of the infant's feelings and establishing clear expectations for safety for oneself and others is helpful. 		

Older Infants 8 to 18 months

DOMAIN: Development into social beings

Element:	Indicators
<p>Peer Interaction: Noticing, relating with and becoming attached to people around the child's own age.</p>	<p>Plays side-by-side with another child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sitting next to one another and pushing toy cars around <p>Matches emotions with a peer's emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frowning when a playmate is upset <p>Participates in spontaneous interactions with peers and exhibits enjoyment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing another infant a block and smiling <p>Influences and responds to another child's behavior in a simplistic manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handing a playmate a doll • Frowning when tapped on the arm by a playmate <p>Shows preference among play partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chooses to be near a particular peer, often hugging or touching him or her <p>Knows the names of children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will go over to Tom when requested <p>Knows the family members of frequent playmates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can approach Katie's mother if requested to do so
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing opportunities to play with peers as well as provide toys such as balls and telephones. • Knowing that sharing is not a skill that has been learned so it is necessary to have more than one of a favorite toy. • Providing toys such as balls and telephones. • Positioning self to guide play to promote successful interactions between children. 	
<p>Adult Interaction: Noticing, relating with and becoming attached to people.</p>	<p>Uses sounds or gestures to get help from familiar adults:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tugging on an adult's pant leg <p>Initiates contact with regular caregivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grabs onto caregiver's hand or leg when a dog approaches • Initiates hugging with a caregiver <p>Looks to adult for messages about the environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a familiar adult for a base of exploration • Checking facial expressions of a familiar adult when in an unfamiliar situation <p>Forms attachment to primary caregivers and distinguishes between familiar and unfamiliar adults:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows wariness, mixed with interest, when someone new appears <p>Exhibits separation anxiety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cries for a few minutes after separation from primary caregiver <p>Gains joint attention on objects</p> <p>Responds to praise or rewards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeats a small dance when caregiver claps <p>Enjoys helping with chores</p> <p>Points to indicate interest in something as well as responds to pointing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Points to a carton of juice in the refrigerator

Older Infants 8 to 18 months

DOMAIN: Development into social beings

Element:	Indicators
<p>Adult Interaction continued: Noticing, relating with and becoming attached to people.</p>	<p>Continues to show and make further progress with control of emotional expressions that have already been established.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waits for a short period of time as food is prepared <p>Imitates a sequence of events, even months after seeing the sequence completed by someone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting a teddy bear to bed • Reading a story to a doll
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciating that stranger anxiety is very common among older infants as they seek to explore yet feel the need to be in contact with trusted adults. Modeling acceptance of other trusted adults, by making introductions and allowing time for the child to become receptive to others. 	
<p>Social Intelligence: Awareness of diversity and difference</p>	<p>Emerges toward later end of this stage</p>
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing opportunities for appreciation of diversity, by exposure through books, pictures, etc. that depict the diversity in society. 	

Older Infants 8 to 18 months

DOMAIN: Development of strong and healthy bodies

Element:	Indicators
<p>Gross motor skills (large muscle): Ability to maintain stability in various positions and to move from one position to another, dependent upon coordination of muscle strength and muscle tone.</p>	<p>Exhibits increasing control of large muscles and body movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sits up • Crawls or creeps on hands and knees (may crawl stiff legged) • Pulls to stand (may not be able to get back down from standing at first) • Stands and cruises while holding onto furniture • Stands alone • Climbs out of crib • Walks alone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walks fast • Runs with a wide stance • Walks up stairs holding a hand • Stops and walks backwards a few steps • Climbs simple structures <p>Uses arms and legs with increasing purposefulness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throws objects • Carries objects • Pushes objects • Pulls objects • Scoots on or rides wheel toys without pedals
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing lots of safe space and material both indoors and out to support older infants' developing physical skills. • Providing fun ways to encourage movement, rolling a ball or placing a toy just out of reach for example, while ensuring that the child doesn't become overly frustrated. 	

Older Infants 8 to 18 months

DOMAIN: Development of strong and healthy bodies

Element:	Indicators
<p>Fine motor skills: (small muscle): Eye-hand or skilled sensory coordination</p>	<p>Scoops and takes with hand to manipulate or pick up objects, sand, food etc.</p> <p>Uses thumb and forefinger to pick up small items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeds self by handling a cup with minimal spilling or a spoon for self-feeding <p>Begins to show preference for one hand</p> <p>Undresses self and untie shoes</p>
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remembering that frustration may be a part of gaining new skills. • Providing a variety of texturally interesting materials to explore. 	

<p>Perceptual Development: Ability to take in and organize sensory experience (taste, touch, smell, sight, sound, feelings, motion/action). Senses provide the means by which information from the environment is processed by the central nervous system. Sensory, motor and cognitive skills are interconnected and always influencing each other.</p>	<p>Continue to integrate information gathered from the senses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows increased ability to concentrate and begin to show sustained interest in people, objects and activities • Shows increased desire to explore sensory information • Oral exploration of objects decreases with age • Shows increased enjoyment of varieties of sensory information <p>Visual information more refined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth perception established • Seeks and responds to increased visual stimulation <p>Hearing information more refined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to discriminate sounds • Ability to discriminate sounds in a noisy setting
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing that older infants may become over-stimulated by the amount of noise and activity in large groups or in large group settings. Provide for space and time that is quieter and less stimulating if needed. • Providing a rich environment that supports sensory experiences and opportunities. 	



Older Infants 8 to 18 months

DOMAIN: Development of strong and healthy bodies

Element:	Indicators
<p>Self Help/Adaptive Skill Development: Using motor skills to show increased independence and ability to take care of own</p>	<p>Continues to make progress with feeding self:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feeds self biscuit• Drinks from cup holding handle (may spill) <p>Shows interest in dressing self:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pushes arm through jacket sleeve• Undresses self• Unties shoes <p>Shows initial curiosity/interest in toileting toward the end of stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explores sitting on potty chair• Watches others engaged in toileting <p>Shows interest in helping with chores:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mimicks adult behavior

Caregivers support by:

- **Allowing older infants to feed themselves. It will undoubtedly be a messy experience but lots of great self-help skills are being learned as well as fine motor skills and information about taste and texture. Sit down and eat with them and talk with them about their explorations with food. Make mealtime a relaxed and pleasant experience.**
- **Allowing older infants the opportunity to dress themselves to the best of their abilities. Encourage their attempts and praise their accomplishments.**
- **Offering real life opportunities such as folding laundry, dusting etc.**



Older Infants 8 to 18 months

DOMAIN: Development of the ability to communicate

Element:	Indicators
<p>Language Comprehension (receptive language): Understanding the meaning of information, ideas and feelings expressed by others; increased understanding of language (comprehension) and vocabulary development (understanding). Initial language development occurring within the context of relationship.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Refers to mode of communication which the child is most fluent including the child's primary language, sign language or assistive communication device.</i></p>	<p>Responds with gestures or vocal signals to familiar words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes and responds to mention of own name • Turns to look at familiar person/object/pet when named • Understands simple phrases such as "bye-bye," "hot" • Points or reaches to familiar objects when named: such as body parts, favorite blanket or toy, familiar pictures in books or magazines <p>Understands simple one step requests such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Pick up your blanket" • "Give me your cup" <p>Looks to adult for messages about appropriate and inappropriate behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibits behavior or action to discern adult response <p>Attends to and enjoys listening to adult voices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys listening to short stories • Enjoys listening to rhymes, finger plays and songs • Enjoys imitation games such as "peek-a-boo" and "pat-a-cake"
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing lots of language interaction. Make eye contact and repeat babbling as if conversing. Tell infants what is happening for them. • Understanding that along with conversation, older infants will continue to enjoy familiar word games like peek-a-boo, simple songs, and the comfort and enjoyment of being held while having a book read to them. • Using different language modalities including signs and gestures. 	
<p>Language Expression (expressive/productive language): The use of sounds, gestures, words, phrases, or sentences to express self. Initial language development occurs within the context of relationship.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Mode of communication in which the child is most fluent including child's primary language, sign language, or assistive communication device.</i></p>	<p>Uses physical gestures or sounds to get help from familiar adults:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gazes alternately between a desired item and an adult • Tugs or pulls on caregiver to seek attention • Moves, points or motions to objects out of reach • Expresses own needs such as being hungry or wanting comfort item <p>Expresses self using gestures, movement, intonation or facial expressions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakes head "no" • Nods "yes" • Smiles, frowns, points • Directs vocalizations and gestures toward people and objects <p>Takes turns in back-and-forth verbal play with caregiver that mimics a conversation. Responding to caregiver's speech by producing words or by babbling sounds in reply for example</p> <p>Moves toward expression of identifiable words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jargon or jabbering has melody and inflection • Imitates familiar words and sounds • Begins to express clearly identifiable words like "mama," "dada," "bye-bye," "no," "baba" for bottle • Begins to use clearly identifiable words with meaning, signaling the beginnings of symbolic representation

Older Infants 8 to 18 months

DOMAIN: Development of the ability to communicate

Element:	Indicators
<p>Language Expression (expressive/productive language continued): The use of sounds, gestures, words, phrases, or sentences to express self. Initial language development occurs within the context of relationship.</p>	<p>Exhibits increased participation when books are read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Points or makes sounds when looking at a picture book • Vocalizes, smiles when read to <p>Begins to “use” communication tools during imitative play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use phone or book • Grasp marker or crayon and make marks on paper
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the development of language skills by showing interest in the toys and objects the older infant is interested in. Describe attributes such as size, shape and function. 	
<p>Emotional Expression: Ability to communicate feeling</p>	<p>Primary emotions become more apparent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger • Fear • Sadness • Frustration
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping children label their own and others’ emotions. • Allowing/validating all emotions (e.g. it is OK to feel sad); the feeling does not need to be “fixed” using food for comfort, etc. • Modeling appropriate emotional reactions (e.g. empathy); the caregiver should express all emotions - everything is not always “happy”. 	
<p>Emotional Understanding: Understanding of the emotional expressions of self and others.</p>	<p>Uses other’s expressions to decide how to react to new situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks at caregiver’s face when stranger enters <p>Can distinguish more primary emotions, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest • Disgust
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading books that have simple, repetitive language: asking the child to label items in the book. • Expanding the child’s language (filling in the blanks). • Providing images of expressions and asking children to label the feelings. • Discussing caregiver’s own emotions – how the caregiver is feeling. • Providing books that have feeling states in them. 	

Older Infants 8 to 18 months

DOMAIN: Development of curious minds

Element:	Indicators
<p>Exploration and Discovery: Experiencing the properties of things, developing curiosity and inquiring about the world.</p>	<p>Manipulates things in the environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moves toward toy • Bangs on table with toy • Fingers, touches, and mouths objects <p>Investigates new phenomena:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches out to touch rain • Stops play to watch a novel element in the environment <p>Takes time to investigate and protests if interrupted</p> <p>Can use several senses at once to explore the environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mouths and holds toy • Shakes and mouths rattle

Caregivers support by:

- **Recognizing when older infants require new challenges and providing them with new toys, books and experiences as they grow, change and develop new interests. However, repetition of skills forms the foundation of learning at this age and interacting with familiar objects and beloved, predictable, books are very important. Resist the temptation to provide too many toys or too many activities at one time.**

<p>Concept Development and Memory: Understanding cause and effect, and the permanence of things. Developing memory skills and the beginnings of representational thought.</p>	<p>Remembers location of favorite object:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks for objects out of sight • Persists in search for a desired object when it is hidden <p>Remembers games and toys from the previous day</p> <p>Anticipates people's return within context of daily routine</p> <p>Imitates actions across a change in context; beginning of ability to fantasize and role-play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imitates mom on the phone when at child care setting <p>Shows basic awareness of cause and immediate effect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opens and closes, presses button to make sounds <p>Uses another object or person as a tool:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks to be picked up to reach something • Rolls toward a toy to reach it <p>Understands "more" in reference to food or simple play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds appropriately when asked if s/he wants more crackers <p>Uses simple nesting or stacking toys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nests three or four cups • Stacks three or four cups or foam blocks <p>Understands time words such as "after," "before":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Before we go outside, we have to put on your coat." <p>Explores spatial relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to fit own body in boxes, tunnels <p>Groups a few objects by shape, color or size</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finds two or three toys that have the same simple shape, color
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Caregivers support by:

- **Understanding that older infants also use objects to represent other things. For example, they may hold a cardboard block up to their ear as if it is a phone receiver. Playing along with this sort of activity can be great fun for the child and for the adult.**

Older Infants 8 to 18 months

DOMAIN: Development of curious minds

Element:	Indicators
<p>Problem Solving, Symbolic Thought, and Creative Expression: Developing the ability to find a solution to a dilemma; using mental representation and learning to be imaginative in self-expression.</p>	<p>Solves simple manipulative problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crawls or walks around a toy <p>Uses trial and error method effectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successfully pushes buttons on a pop-up toy• Uses shape sorter with some success <p>Begins to think about actions before doing them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chooses a toy, book, or doll from a group• Enjoys taking things out of a container and putting them back <p>Is able to concentrate and not get distracted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plays parallel to others without interaction <p>Engages in imitative play; begins to fantasize and do simple role play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pretending to call parents on phone <p>Begins to explore expression with art implements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scribbling with large crayons• Creating markings in finger paint• Molding playdough <p>Begins to move to music of varying rhythms, tempos, and types</p>

Caregivers support by:

- **Playing music together by hitting pots and pans with a wooden spoon, by providing music and song, and by moving to the music together. Soothing music at rest time can be very comforting. Sing to the infant regularly.**



A little about... media influence

Although parents and caregivers might be tempted to use television or electronic media to distract or entertain their infants and toddlers, this may not be such a good idea. Little is known about the effects of television and electronic media on infants and toddlers. The American Academy of Pediatrics urges parents to avoid television viewing for children under the age of 2 years and to create "electronic media-free" environments in children's rooms. As the Academy put it, "babies and toddlers have a critical need for direct interactions with parents and other significant caregivers for healthy brain growth and the development of appropriate social, emotional, and cognitive skills" (Pediatrics, 1999, Vol. 104, p. 342).

Organizing the environment

These suggestions are intended to reach all audiences. Some suggestions may appear to be more applicable to either home or child care settings.

Parents and Early Childhood Professionals can...

- Encourage independence by placing toys on low shelves within easy reach.
- Create space both indoor and out that supports older infants as they begin to crawl, stand, cruise, walk and even run. Mats, pillows, mattresses, bolsters, cruising rails, and low safe furniture support newfound mobility. For exploration, provide one cabinet that opens to safe items.
- Provide older infants with props and toys that support active play. These include: balls of all sizes and textures, push and pull toys, vehicles that can be pushed across the floor and crawling tunnels.
- Make sure that cabinets, drawers and any spaces that could be potentially dangerous are made child proof. Receptacle outlets should be covered, dangerous or breakable items stored out of reach and sharp edges on furniture softened. Take the time to really think about what the older infant is now able to get into or have access to. For older infants lamp cords may look appealing as do floor plants; make safety decisions accordingly.
- Older infants delight in imitating what they see occurring in their everyday life. Provide pretend play items such as: cloth dolls, doll beds and blankets, safe cooking utensils, play telephones. Older infants also enjoy stuffed animals and plastic animals, props, playhouses and small plastic people.
- Older infants are fascinated with their image and enjoy their reflection in the mirror. Provide them with unbreakable hand mirrors, wall mounted unbreakable mirrors.
- Older infants are learning about how objects fit into space and how one thing fits into another. Provide them with: stacking rings (3 to 5 pieces), nesting cups (3 to 5 pieces), pop-up boxes, simple puzzles (2 to 4 pieces), pop-up toys, teethingers and squeeze/squeak toys, boxes of varying sizes with lids, plastic buckets for dump and fill activities and floating objects for supervised bath or water play. Older infants can enjoy sensory experiences such as regular sand and water play.
- Older infants enjoy stacking and knocking down simple block structures. Provide them with: lightweight cloth, plastic or cardboard blocks. Older infants enjoy larger interlocking style blocks as well.
- Books that can be held and carried and have easy pages to turn are the best choices for older infants. Sharing book experiences now becomes more interactive and books that have simple language and contain pictures of topics and familiar objects suit this purpose. Word play is of interest too so include books with rhymes and repetition.
- As older infants become more capable, support fine motor development by providing opportunities for use of large crayons for scribbling and making marks
- Pots and pans make marvelous musical instruments but adding some more realistic, age-appropriate instruments is appealing to older infants.

Responding to individual difference

Culturally consistent care provides comfort and facilitates trust and a positive sense of self. By supporting the values of the family, caregivers build children's confidence and self-esteem.

It is important for the child, the parent and the caregiver to discuss differences in expectations around learning and social interactions. Consistency with expectations helps older infants feel more secure. For example, some cultures approach language acquisition differently. They may not isolate an object by attributes like size, shape or color. Metaphors may be more highly valued as well as verbal play and use of imagery in certain cultures.

Make efforts to bring the child's culture into the child care setting. Familiar comfort items, foods, and language will assure older infants that there is a predictable familiarity in care settings away from their home.

A little about... feeding

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

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

Phillips ,C.B. & Cooper,R. M.(1995). Cultural dimensions of feeding relationships. Washington, D.C.: Zero to Three

Due to the American culture's fast paced competitive approach to life, some people are more anxious for babies to reach milestones "on time" or even "early." The notion of "in time" is a better guideline for a milestone. Anxiety about an older infant's rate of development can be eased by discussing concerns with a pediatrician or by requesting a free developmental screening at local early intervention sites.

Successful inclusion of older infants with special needs in natural environments requires the same quality care we expect for all children. Providing an environment that is universally designed and is developmentally as well as individually appropriate ensures all children's needs are/will be met with the supports necessary to meet any special needs. Participation in all activities and routines in an environment where older infants can explore tells them they are capable and that they belong.

Participation in all activities should be the goal. Early intervention services are an important resource for the child, family and caregiver.

An attitude that encourages older infants with disabilities to experience and explore the world in a way appropriate for them is critical to both their learning and self esteem.

When children's sensory systems do not process information accurately they may be unable to attend, focus, may not tolerate movement or touch, or may have affective disorders or a lack of emotional expression. Concerns of this nature require professional assessment.

Young children with sensory impairments including hearing, vision, sensory integration issues may tire more quickly than peers. Watch for stress signals and provide for frequent rest periods.

While individual older infants acquire language and communication skills at varying rates, it is important to be alert to some early warning signs that warrant further attention: a child who stops babbling at 8 to 9 months; a child who does not show interest in interacting with objects and caregivers in familiar locations; a child who does not give, show or point to objects by 11-12 months; and a child who does not play games such a pat-a-cake or peek-a-boo by 11-12 months.



Toddlers: 18 to 36 months



Introduction to the stage

Developmental Guidelines

Application

Toddlers: 18 to 36 months

Introduction to the stage

The toddler stage of development is one characterized by a tension between the desire for independence and the need for continued dependence on a trusted caregiver. Toddlers yearn to be social beings, yet they require lots of assistance in managing the complexity of relationships with peers. Problem-solving skills emerge, as does the need to be self-sufficient and competent. Exploration changes from discovery of the characteristics and function of things to the purposeful manipulation and investigation of the world around them. As toddlers maneuver their way through the developmental milestones associated with this age, they need a secure base in the form of a loving, affectionate, trusted adult. Then they can begin trying out their independence, returning frequently to the adult for guidance, affection, and reassurance.

Toddlers are unique social beings. They are not yet equipped with the complex expressive language skills necessary to navigate a variety of experiences. Body language, gestures, single word phrases, and physical overtures form the basis for toddlers' social interactions. As language skills develop, toddlers have more success in communicating their needs to playmates. Young toddlers often enjoy playing next to or nearby a friend, while older toddlers begin to enjoy more cooperative aspects of play. As young toddlers learn the skills necessary to participate cooperatively in groups, they may experience frustration that results in conflict.

Physically, toddlers begin to lose the side-to-side gait that characterizes the early months of the stage. As balance and coordination improve, they begin to have a steady gait and start practicing running, galloping, and two-footed hopping. Additionally, there is a change in the toddler's body over time; by the end of this stage, limbs and torso are longer and leaner. Toddlers love to manipulate small objects, and even begin using art tools and materials like paintbrushes or markers. At first, the wider the implement, the better since a toddler's grip still involves the entire hand. As they grow and their experience increases, toddlers begin to use the forefinger and thumb to write, color, and paint simple creative representations.

The toddler stage of development is also marked

by significant effort for mastery in self-help skills. The "I can do it myself" attitude permeates toileting, feeding, and dressing routines even in the earliest months of this stage. When they are ready for the challenge of toilet learning, toddlers will let you know by remaining dry for longer periods between diaper changes, announcing when their diaper is wet, and saying when they need to go. It is important to wait for these cues, allowing the toddler some control in the process. This self-guided mastery will build a toddler's sense of self-competence, and, ultimately, self-esteem. Caregivers should be sensitive to the fact that the normal readiness range for toilet learning is very broad and may extend past toddlerhood.

A little about...toilet readiness

Toilet Training or learning starts in infancy when babies are considered partners in diapering. As infants become toddlers, they become more and more aware of their bodily functions and eventually begin to learn to control them. Toilet training, a natural outgrowth of this long, slow process, occurs when the child achieves readiness in three developmental areas: physical, cognitive and emotional. The child must understand, be capable, and be willing to participate in the process (Gonzalez-Mena, 1990).

A Note of Caution:

Parents and caregivers may have different philosophies, ideas, perceptions, and goals for their child in this developmental area. When opinions differ, caregivers should respect the parents' point of view and be mindful of cultural and family values.

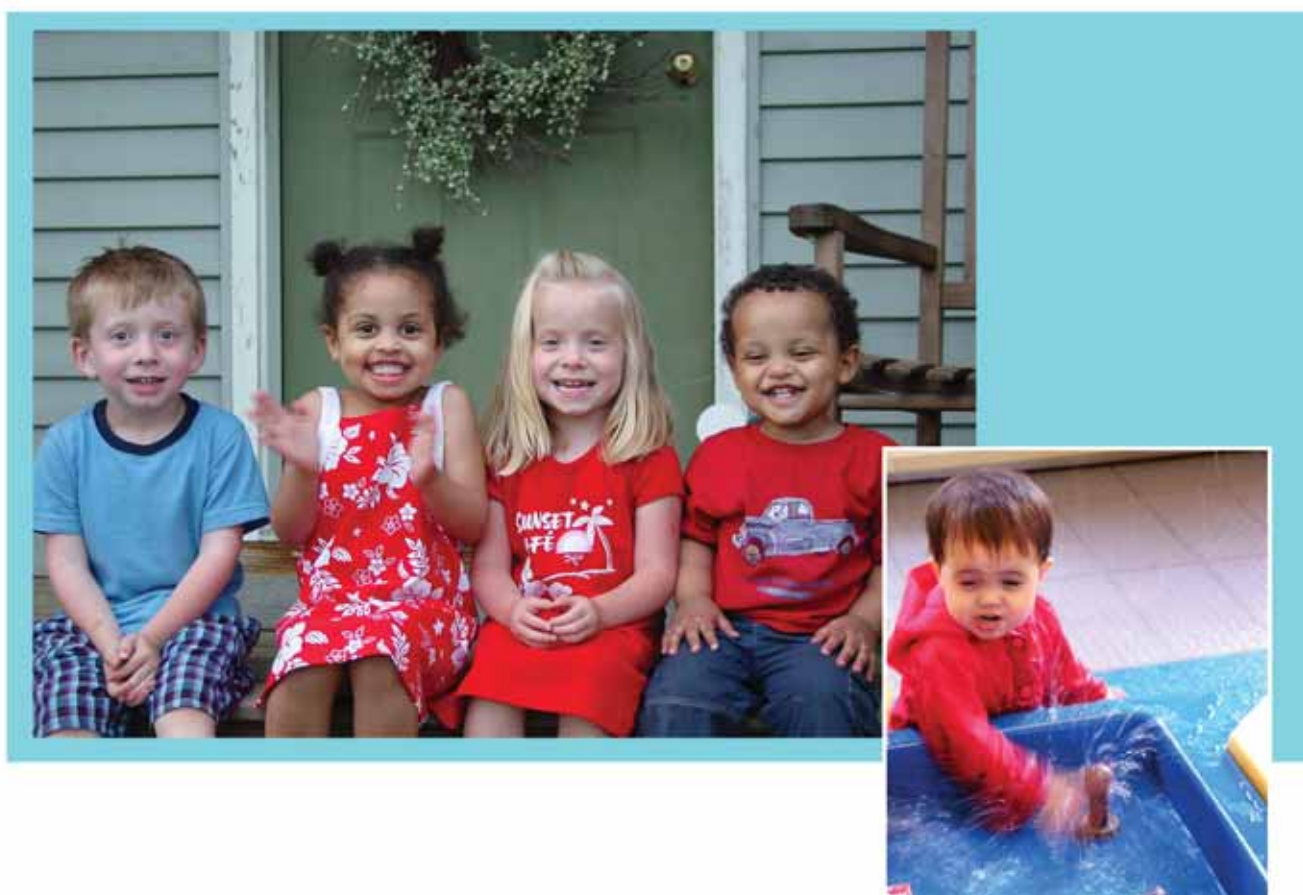
Throughout the toddler stage of development, language – both expressive and receptive – takes on new importance. Mastery of language is another step on the road to independence for a toddler. Whether playing with a friend, communicating a

need to an adult, or listening to a story read aloud, language in all of its forms and complexity opens a critical door for a developing toddler. Its use is powerful and functional, creative and fun - just the elements needed to entice a toddler. Singing, reading, chanting, rhyming, and signing with speech are all delightful means of exposing children to the gift of language. Toddlers enjoy the sound of their own voice, announcing "mine," asking "why?" or reasoning "mommy work." In addition to the pleasure of sound, toddlers' ability to communicate with the world around them is evidence of their autonomy.

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

tion. Finally, toddlers begin to develop their imaginations. This is shown by their ability to hold a picture in their minds, to use scribbles and marks to recreate an image on paper, to pretend in the housekeeping area, and to tell a story. The magic of symbolic thought opens the door to more complex play with peers, to developing shared perspective, and to practicing human interactions. Allowing toddlers adequate time and space to play, whether they are simply imitating a trip to the grocery store or creating a new version of a favorite story, is important for healthy growth and intellectual development.

Caregivers should be sensitive to the range of development that occurs for children 18 to 36 months of age. Activities and materials that are appropriate for 36 month old children may not be appropriate for the 18 month olds. Learning occurs when all toddlers have ample time to fully participate in daily routines and activities. Toddlers need caregivers to be patient and understand that learning will often look messy and disorganized during this stage of development.



Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development into social beings

Element:	Indicators
<p>Self Awareness: Understanding that the self is a separate being with an identity of his or her own and with connectedness to others</p>	<p>Recognizes self in mirror or photographs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Points to his or her own photo in a selection <p>Says own name in response to photo</p> <p>Uses “me” or name:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Me Sophie” <p>Identifies self by gender:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I boy” • Uses adjectives to refer to self: • “I big.”
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering toddlers the opportunity to look in a variety of mirrors while talking about what they see. • Making photos available for toddlers to look at and manipulate, including photos of themselves, their families and peers. 	
<p>Self Concept: Development in knowing and valuing self; growing ability to make independent decisions and choices</p>	<p>Wants to experience world on own terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I do it” <p>Uses evaluative words to talk about self:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I good girl.”
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering choices whenever possible, e.g., “Would you like to wear this red shirt or this blue one?” Make saying “no” a fun game versus a power struggle. Toddlers love the word “no,” so give them lots of appropriate ways to express it. • Respect that toddlers may have a valid opinion that is expressed by saying no. 	
<p>Self Regulation: Development of the ability to regulate emotions and mood</p>	<p>Shows impulse control by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking around spilled items <p>Anticipates and follows routines when prompted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps with clean up • Gets ready to go for a walk
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being in tune to toddlers’ need for independence and control, while also understanding that they will still need your support and guidance even as they work hard at maintaining autonomy. • Remaining patient when this balance seems impossible to manage. Know that tantrums, biting and pushing are a toddler’s way of letting go of frustration and communicating a need. Make sure toddlers are safe from harm while they are tantruming, let them know that you are nearby to help when they are ready, but give them plenty of space and time in which to release frustration. 	

Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development into social beings

Element:	Indicators
<p>Peer Interaction: Noticing, relating with and becoming attached to people around the child's own age</p>	<p>Engages in some joint exploration and associative play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to build a block tower with a peer • Takes part in an activity involving 2 or 3 peers • Can wait a short time for "my turn"
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding that evolution into a social being inevitably involves conflict. Allow toddlers to begin to problem solve, understand the natural consequences of behavior, and explore interaction within the safety of a caregiver's fair and reasonable limit setting, as well as supportive modeling of appropriate interaction. "If you want to throw, let's get out the balls and bucket and see if you can toss a ball in." 	
<p>Peer Interaction continued: Noticing, relating with and becoming attached to people around the child's own age</p>	<p>Shows concern for a peer who is in distress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hugging a crying playmate or stopping play when a peer falls down <p>Includes other children in pretend play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing house or grocery store <p>Shows reciprocal exchanges with peers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imitating a peer who is piling sand and looking for the playmate to imitate • Chasing a peer and then becoming the one who is chased <p>Seeks out a particular peer to be around</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers to other children by name • Calling a peer over by name • Greeting a playmate by name
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging growing empathy skills by labeling feelings, introducing a classroom pet to care for, and talking about how our actions impact others. "When you hit Emily, it hurts her body." "When you are missing your mom here at school, she is also missing you at her work." • Modeling positive social interactions, and offering positive guidance when toddlers initial attempts at socialization fail. "It looks like you wanted to hug your friend but she doesn't want that right now." "It looks like you want to play with the ball too." "Let's see if your friend wants to roll it back and forth, or we can get you another ball to use." "When your friend is finished with the toy, it will be your turn." 	
<p>Adult Interaction: Noticing, relating with and becoming attached to people older than themselves</p>	<p>Through words or actions, uses adults as a resource</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks a caregiver for a cracker • Asks for help getting jacket on
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a secure base from which toddlers can begin to explore the environment, socialization, and imaginative play. Knowing caregivers are nearby to help if they need it gives toddlers the confidence they need to try new skills, and enter new play situations. Be careful to nurture this growing sense of autonomy by encouraging new skills and not overreacting when mistakes occur. "Oops, it looks like you missed your cup, let's try again." Or, "Let's clean it up together and you can try again." 	

Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development into social beings

Element:	Indicators
<p>Adult Interaction continued: Noticing, relating with and becoming attached to people older than themselves</p>	<p>Shares accomplishments with adults</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls caregiver over to show a sandcastle he/she built <p>Periodically checks back with caregiver when playing or exploring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes physical contact when in need of reassurance • Calls caregiver over during play <p>Anxious reaction to unfamiliar adults decreases in intensity</p> <p>Begins to appreciate the caregiver has needs and other priorities</p> <p>Because of this new understanding, begins to soothe self when separated from primary caregiver</p> <p>Seeks to repeat behaviors that are rewarded</p> <p>Carries on sustained interactions with caregivers</p> <p>Begins to show self-conscious emotions like shame, pride, or embarrassment in addition to already established emotional expressions</p> <p>Is eager to help with chores</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to put out the napkins for dinner • Enjoys feeding the dog <p>Imitates adult activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pushes a miniature vacuum around • Pretends to saw wood <p>Identifies and imitates other people's roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calls attention to a policeman on the street • Puts on a white shirt and pretends to be a doctor
	<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping the number of caregivers involved in a child's care to a minimum. Attachment to a primary caregiver is ideal in establishing a secure base for growing autonomy. • Ensuring that toddlers know that even when things go wrong, it is their behavior that is unacceptable. Toddlers need to know that you always love them, even when their behavior is challenging and frustrating. • Allowing toddlers to help with meal preparation, setting the table, feeding the pet, or watering plants. Toddlers enjoy the sense of competence they feel when helping a trusted caregiver.

Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development into social beings

Element:	Indicators
<p>Social Intelligence: Awareness of diversity and difference</p>	<p>Notices likenesses and differences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stares at someone who is of a different ethnicity • Asks about a person who is in a wheelchair • Comments on a person who wears unfamiliar apparel <p>Comments on gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Says playmate Bill is a boy or Mom is a girl <p>Preference for same-sex companions over opposite-sex companions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is more sociable and interactive with same-sex friends • May sit on the sidelines and observe play when with opposite sex playmates
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging toddlers’ growing gender identity by allowing them to take on a variety of roles during imaginative play. • Modeling an interest in understanding and celebrating the diversity amongst people while validating children’s observations of differences and similarities. 	

Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development of strong and healthy bodies

<p>Gross Motor Skills (large muscle): Ability to maintain stability in various positions and to move from one position to another, dependent upon coordination of muscle strength and muscle tone.</p>	<p>Exhibits more control and coordination of large muscle and body movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walks fast and well • Seldom falls • Stands and walks on tip toes • Walks backwards • Walks up stairs holding a hand or railing • Walks, runs with control, climbs well, throws a ball with aim • May jump in place • May balance on one foot for a second or two • Rides tricycle <p>Uses arms and legs with more purposefulness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catches a ball by trapping it with arms and hands • Pounds object with intention and precision, hammers a peg accurately for example • Creates simple block structures • Pushes foot into shoe • Takes off shoes <p>Rides tricycle using pedals most of the time</p> <p>Engages in creative movement and dance spontaneously, and when prompted by music or adult cues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Let’s march to this music,” • “Can you dance to this music?”
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing large motor space indoors and outdoors and equipment including ramps, climbers, stairs, slides, balls, riding and pushing toys, music and props. • Modeling and participating in the use of space, body movement, and equipment. 	

Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development of strong and healthy bodies

Element:	Indicators
<p>Fine Motor Skills: (small muscle) Eye-hand or skilled sensory coordination</p>	<p>Uses a crayon to imitate marks/scribble</p> <p>Holds object with one hand and manipulates it with the other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winds music box while holding it • Brushes doll's hair <p>Folds blanket, cloth, diaper, or paper</p> <p>Pours liquid from small pitcher or cup</p> <p>Shows preference for one hand</p> <p>Puts on some easy clothing</p> <p>Holds spoon, fork, cup, but may still spill</p> <p>Can use a paintbrush but doesn't control drips</p> <p>Can turn the pages of a book</p>
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering a frequently changing choice of manipulatives, utensils, art implements, and toys for toddlers to explore. • Scheduling meals with adequate time to practice use of utensils, cups, and pitchers with support through caregiver modeling. Using hand washing routines as an opportunity to give gentle assistance to demonstrate the use of faucets, soap pumps, and wiping hands with a towel. 	
<p>Perceptual Development: Ability to take in and organize sensory experience (taste, touch, smell, sight, sound, feelings, motion/action). Senses provide the means by which information from the environment is processed by the central nervous system. Sensory, motor and cognitive skills are interconnected and always influencing each other.</p>	<p>Sensory thresholds do not interfere with desire to explore surroundings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continues to show increased ability to concentrate with multiple sensory information present • Increased development in cognitive and motor skills allows for increased ability to explore and form meaning from sensory information • Shows enjoyment and discrimination of increasingly complex sensory information <p>Visual discrimination more refined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to discriminate finer detail in tandem with cognitive development; may notice caregiver's earring <p>Hearing discrimination more refined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to isolate familiar sounds in tandem with cognitive development
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being aware that toddlers can become overstimulated and benefit from an environment that offers a balance of sensory experiences. • Using the natural outdoor environment to offer a broad variety of hands-on sensory experiences. 	

Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development of strong and healthy bodies

Element:	Indicators
<p>Self Help/Adaptive Skill Development: Using motor skills to show increased independence and ability to take care of own needs</p>	<p>Continues to progress with self feeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds spoon, fork, cup but may spill • Feeds self alone and well • Pours own milk and juice from small plastic pitcher <p>Continues to show interest in dressing self:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undresses self • Puts on clothing except for buttoning • Puts on shoes (does not lace, but can manage velcro fastenings) • Puts on own jacket and hat <p>Shows increased interest and proficiency with toileting skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise bowel and bladder control • Willing to use toilet • Will wash hands after toileting <p>May show increased interest in helping with chores</p>
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having realistic expectations of the time and effort it takes toddlers to truly participate in daily routines including cleanup, dressing, toileting, and hygiene. 	

Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development of ability to communicate

Element:	Indicators
<p>Language Comprehension (receptive language): Understanding the meaning of information, ideas, and feelings expressed by others; increased understanding of language (comprehension) and vocabulary development (understanding). Initial language development occurs within the context of relationship.</p> <p><i>Note: Mode of communication in which the child is most fluent including the child's primary language, sign language, or assistive communication device.</i></p>	<p>Understands a variety of simple two-step requests such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “pick up the ball and bring it to me” • Follows multi-step daily routines like washing hands and helping to set the table when prompted <p>Understands name for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common objects • Familiar people • Familiar actions <p>Understands contrasts such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes/no • Run/stop • Come/go • Up/down <p>Understands prepositions such as on, in, or under</p> <p>With adult direction, finds items needed for an activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult suggestion of finding missing pieces of a toy • Adult suggestion of finding items needed for an art activity <p>Shows increased attention span when being read to, and continues to enjoy listening to rhymes, finger plays, and songs of increased complexity</p>
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using language to narrate the natural routines that occur during the day, i.e. “We’ll change your diaper and put on the red pants.” • Guiding activities where children must follow a two-step direction, “We’re going outside, let’s get your coat.” • Supporting vocabulary with movement, i.e. signs, gestures, to provide additional context. 	

Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development of ability to communicate

Element:	Indicators
<p>Language Expression (expressive/productive language) continued: The use of sounds, gestures, words, phrases, or sentences to express self. Initial language development occurs within the context of relationship.</p> <p><i>Note: Mode of communication in which the child is most fluent language including child's primary language, sign language, or assistive communication device.</i></p>	<p>Uses words or actions to request assistance from familiar adults:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks for food/drink when hungry • Asks caregiver to get toys • Asks for help when needed • May attempt to use words to solve conflicts with peers/siblings or to request help from adult <p>Combines words into simple sentences such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Mommy bye-bye" • "Milk all gone" <p>Asks and answers simple questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of "what?", "why?" and "where?" questions such as: "Where is daddy?" "Go to park now?" <p>Uses everyday experiences to build on vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks about what they are doing • Uses language to convey simple ideas • Refers to self by name • Uses personal pronouns like I, me, and you with increased proficiency • Vocabulary increases with age • Articulation becomes increasingly clearer • May express feelings both physical and emotional <p>Exhibits increased participation with written forms of communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks at books and magazines as if he/she is reading • Makes sounds that relate to pictures in books • Turns pages at the right time <p>Recognizes signs and symbols in the environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies stop sign • Identifies label or logo from favorite cereal box • Memorizes and repeats phrases of songs, books, and rhymes <p>Increases understanding of use of communication tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Converses with other child or adult using play phone • Names scribbles made with marker or crayon by telling others what scribbles mean

Caregivers support by:

- **Maintaining close proximity and communicating with toddlers at their eye level.**
- **Partnering with families to support home language in addition to English.**
- **Using self talk and integrating descriptive vocabulary into everyday activities to support expressive language. "The wind feels cold on my skin."**
- **Labeling toy shelves with both the picture and the written word.**

Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development of ability to communicate

Element:	Indicators
<p>Emotional Expression: Ability to communicate feelings</p>	<p>Self conscious emotions appear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shame • Embarrassment <p>Uses artistic tools for creative expression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paints picture using large brush • Uses crayons or markers to draw, e.g., “This is my mom” • Molds clay to create, e.g., “This is my dog”
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validating children’s feelings. i.e. : “I see that you are really frustrated by that puzzle.” 	
<p>Emotional Understanding: Ability to understand the emotional expressions of self and others</p>	<p>Begins to talk about and play-act emotions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I sad” <p>Begins to show sympathetic responding to others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks if mom is okay when she coughs
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting language with facial expressions. i.e. “She looks scared...frustrated...excited.” 	

Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development of curious minds

Element:	Indicators
<p>Exploration and Discovery: Experiencing the properties of things, developing curiosity and inquiring about the world</p>	<p>Independently explores the immediate environment to investigate what is there</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks about a new toy or explores different textures in the natural environment • Searches for a particular toy <p>Tries new activities, materials and equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tries unfamiliar art materials, • Tries a different musical instrument • Joins in a new song or finger play
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotating materials to maintain toddlers interest. • Providing varied environments i.e. bringing in natural materials, outdoor exploration. 	

Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development of curious minds

Element:	Indicators
<p>Concept Development and Memory: Understanding cause and effect, and the permanence of things. Developing memory skills and the beginnings of representational thought</p>	<p>Uses familiar objects in combination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uses spoon in bowl, doll in bed, and person in car <p>Engages in make believe play acting out simple dramatic play themes with others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “You baby, me momma”• Pretends to an animal <p>Counts to two or three</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recites numbers with prompting or adult cues <p>Uses some number words during play or activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I want two” <p>Imitates counting rhymes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>One, Two Buckle My Shoe, Three Little Monkeys</i> <p>Fills and empties containers with sand, water, or small toys</p> <p>Shows interest in patterns and sequences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attempts to follow a pattern with large beads and string or on a peg board• Plays matching games <p>Shows some understanding of daily time sequence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time for nap, lunch, outdoor play <p>Matches simple shapes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using form boards or puzzles -circle, square, triangle <p>Classifies, labels, and sorts objects by characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hard vs. soft• Large vs. small• Heavy vs. light• By color <p>Arranges objects in lines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Makes a row of blocks

Caregivers support by:

- **Providing consistency, i.e. establishing and maintaining a daily schedule.**
- **Understanding the importance of repetition to support toddlers development of skills.**



Toddlers 18 to 36 months

DOMAIN: Development of curious minds

Element:	Indicators
<p>Problem Solving, Symbolic Thought, and Creative Expression: Developing the ability to find a solution to a dilemma; using mental representation and learning to be imaginative in self-expression</p>	<p>Begins to solve simple problems in his or her head</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moves a toy to get to another object• Stands on block or other object to reach an item <p>Acts out dramatic play role-play themes with others; engages in make-believe play</p> <p>Uses objects for other than their intended purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using a small block as a phone
<p>Caregivers support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offering art materials that allow children to engage in self expression, make-believe play, object representation.• Understanding that some amount of frustration is needed in order for children to become better problem solvers.• Asking open ended questions, i.e. “ What if...?”	



A little about...children moving toward independence

Can caregivers display too much warmth and caring toward the infants and toddlers in their care? Experts answer this question with a resounding “No.” Infants and toddlers thrive when caregivers support them in their endeavors. However, caregivers can sometimes fall into the trap of becoming so involved in children’s tasks that they weaken or stifle children’s growing independence. In interactions with children, give them the chance to be “in control.” For example, this may mean letting a toddler decide between two pieces of clothing. Be aware that different cultural groups approach independence and autonomy in a variety of ways. The balance between involvement and independence may look different across families and cultures.

Organizing the environment

Parents and Early Childhood Professionals can:

- Minimize the amount of times an adult says no to a toddler by creating a safe space for play and discovery including providing enough developmentally appropriate toys and materials for the number and ages of children in the group.
- Eliminate or minimize the amount of time a toddler watches television, or other passive media.
- Expand upon a home environment with trips around the local community by visiting parks, grocery stores, post offices or libraries.
- Include the following in an early childhood setting:
 - Simple dramatic play props including real items such as phone, dolls, hats, bag, utensils, keyboards, shoes, and clothing (that are easy for children to take off and put on) to expand play themes for toddlers
 - Daily reading experiences
 - Blocks of various sizes, as well as small manipulatives like Duplos, pop-beads, and simple puzzles
 - Books and music with simple, repetitive and predictable language
 - Simple art materials – crayons, markers, playdough and washable paint
 - Regular indoor and outdoor play opportunities with sand and water exploration
 - Sensory-rich environment, water, sensory table, playdough, cooking
- Create a “toddler-proof” environment, a key ingredient toward enhancing learning, minimizing inappropriate behavior, and reinforcing a toddler’s need for self-competence:
 - Because toddlers are still learning to coordinate their bodies, provide enough open and usable space for toddlers to move freely about during play
 - Create an environment that reflects the needs and interests of the specific group – i.e. an active group needs indoor climbing opportunities
- Ensure that the environment reflects pictures and items from the child’s home/family. This maintains a connection to family and reinforces a sense of belonging.
- Make sure that toddler spaces include both group play areas, as well as semi-private spaces where toddlers can safely play away from the large group.
- Allow plenty of time and space for large motor play – an indoor climbing structure, obstacle course, and/or a riding path (hallway) are ideal for toddlers on the move.
- Allow toddlers to access their own materials for art and creative play by organizing recyclables, paper, and toddler-safe art media (waterproof, non-toxic tempera, washable markers, chunky crayons, playdough) that children can safely take out, use, and put back.
- Allow appropriate spaces for specific activities. For example: an area that allows for easy cleanup for art, sand or water play, a quiet area for manipulative play, reading and literacy experiences. Active play such as gross motor should not be near the quiet area.

- Develop policies and practices that encourage small group sizes, low teacher to child ratios and long-term (across classrooms) primary caregiver assignments.

Responding to individual differences Parents and Early Childhood Professionals can...

Remember that each child's temperament affects everything from sleeping and eating habits, to approaches to play and activity. Understanding a particular child's temperament, and adjusting the style of interaction, the daily schedule, and the environment will aid development and help the toddler establish a healthy sense of self. For toddlers who are slow to warm up in new situations, plan on staying with them at the beginning of a play date or play group, and schedule some short visits with a new caregiver before leaving them with this individual. Honor differences in temperament and value the things caregivers can do with babies of different temperaments, such as taking swimming lessons together, gentle rough and tumble play, or dancing to music.

Watch for signs that the child's development is progressing appropriately. Though development is influenced by a variety of factors, including environment, experience, interaction, and individual temperament, toddlers should progress through a predictable series of developmental milestones. Talk with a health care provider early on if there are concerns about any aspect of a child's development. Early intervention is critical to giving toddlers extra support toward developing the skills they need to continue learning and growing successfully.

Encourage toddlers' growing gender identity by allowing them to take on a variety of roles during imaginative play. Avoid gender-specific toys such as baby dolls only for girls/ trucks only for boys, or primary colored toys for boys, pastels for girls, etc. Though subtle, these differences begin to socialize children into stereotypical gender roles and preferences which could limit their understanding of social diversity. It is important for parents and providers to encourage all children to play with blocks and trucks and to be physically active, and encourage all children to nurture and care for living things such as babies, pets and gardens.

A little about ... temperament

Each infant and toddler has a different behavioral style and a way of expressing emotions. Pioneering work of Thomas and Chess (1977) defined these differences as temperament and they identified temperament types. Often, these types are referred to as: flexible, feisty and fearful. The flexible child tends to have regular biological rhythms (eating, sleeping, and eliminating on a predictable schedule), a positive mood, easy adaptation to new experiences, moderate emotional reactions, and can tolerate most sensory stimulation. The feisty child is very active, shows more intense emotional reactions, and is easily distracted. These children tend to be very sensitive to sound and light and they sleep and eat in a less predictable way. The fearful child or shy child tends to withdraw from new situations and adapts to them more slowly than the others. Children can be a combination of more than one type.

Thomas and Chess also proposed the idea of "goodness of fit" between child and caregiver. No one temperament of the child or caregiver is necessarily easier or better, but being of the same temperamental style affects the relationship between adult and child. For example, a quiet, subdued child might need extra understanding from a highly expressive and energetic parent or caregiver. More recent study on goodness of fit has revealed that a parent and caregiver may view a baby differently. "Do you know what your temperament style is?"

*Thomas, A., & Chess, S. (1977). *Temperament and Development*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.*

Toddlers 18-36 months

APPLICATION

Support toddlers' exploration of non-traditional gender roles during dramatic play including family roles, occupational roles, etc. Toddlers begin to understand traditional gender roles through socialization. Encouraging children to explore nontraditional roles like a female firefighter, a male nurse or a male caregiver, is an important way to offer children chances to try out a variety of social roles and to develop an unbiased understanding of gender roles.

In an early childhood environment:

- Ensure that language activity is individualized around the language in which the toddler is most fluent:
 - If possible make sure that books are written in the toddler's native language
 - If a toddler is hard of hearing or deaf make sure that caregivers are proficient in sign language
 - Use sign with spoken language as an alternate means of communication for all children in the environment
 - Teach simple foreign language words
- Offer a wide array of activities that allow toddlers of varying abilities to feel successful:
 - Open-ended art activities that focus on the process of exploration for toddlers just beginning to refine motor skills. This will also give more experienced "artists" a chance to express themselves with the same materials. Produce group art as well as individual art.
 - While offering play in the sand and water tables, make sure to offer individual trays of sand, or bins of water, for children who may be overwhelmed by the closeness of so many children.
 - Ensure that playgrounds include opportunities for a child with limited mobility to transfer to a play structure, sand box, or swing.
 - Work toward a genuine partnership with families so that care routines and family child rearing practices across home, school, and cultural environments reinforce each other.



Additional Resources

Links to informative websites and helpful bibliographies.

The Center for Early Education and Development

The mission of the Center for Early Education and Development (CEED) is to improve developmental outcomes for young children through applied research, training, and outreach.

education.umn.edu/CEED/default.html

CEED produces newsletters, policy briefs, research reports, tip sheets, conference summaries, instructional videos, and CD-ROMs on a variety of topics related to early education and development. Many of these publications are free; some publications show price and ordering instructions. education.umn.edu/ceed/publications/default.html

Child Care and Early Education Research Connections

Research Connections provides [researchers](#), [policymakers](#), policy influencers, and practitioners with one-stop access to a continually updated, comprehensive, and searchable collection of [Original Research](#) and related resources including [Syntheses](#), [Datasets](#), [Statistics](#), [Instruments and Measures](#), and comparative [State Data Tools](#). *Research Connections'* goal is to promote high quality research and the use of that research in policymaking. <http://www.childcareresearch.org/discover/index.jsp>

The Child Development Institute

A site for information on child development, psychology, parenting, learning, health and safety as well as childhood disorders such as attention deficit disorder, dyslexia and autism. We provide comprehensive resources and practical suggestions for parents covering toddlers to teens.

Current Research On Language Development

www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/development/current_research_language_development.shtml

Children and Developmental Guidelines

www.umaine.edu/eceol/

This web page is a list of links to websites concerning the developmental stages of children.

Early Childhood Research and Practice

www.ecrp.uiuc.edu/

A peer-reviewed e-journal that focuses around the topics of child care, development and education. Currently has free access to current and past issues.

Early Connections: Learning and Development

www.netc.org/earlyconnections/childcare/development.html

This web page has five main subjects; social and emotional development, approaches towards learning, language development, cognition and general knowledge, and physical well-being and motor development. The five subjects are explained as to how it relates to children.

Early Head Start National Resource Center

The Early Head Start National Resource Center (EHS NRC) was created in 1995 by the [Head Start Bureau](#) (HSB), Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The EHS NRC is a storehouse of early childhood expertise that promotes the building of new knowledge and the sharing of information. www.ehsnrc.org/

Cognitive Learning and Development

www.ehsnrc.org/InformationResources/ResourceArticles/rmind.htm

The approach to infant learning taken by the Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers does not focus on teaching specific lessons. Rather, the focus is on facilitating natural interests and urges to learn. This is done by providing infants with close and responsive relationships with caregivers, by designing safe and interesting and developmentally appropriate environments, giving infants uninterrupted time to explore, and interacting with infants in ways that emotionally and intellectually support their initiations in discovery and learning.

Facts in Action

Facts in Action works to put research-based knowledge and tools into the hands of those who serve in the early childhood field, as well as those who influence or make policy that affects the field.

www.factsinaction.org/welcome.htm

From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development

On October 3, 2000, the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies released *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*, an update and synthesis of current scientific knowledge of child development from birth to age five. Guided by the Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development (Jack Shonkoff, Chair and Deborah Phillips, Study Director), the report addresses how scientific advances can be used to shape early childhood policy, services and research.

An online version of the report, the executive summary and other support materials can be viewed at www4.nationalacademies.org/onpi/webextra.nsf/web/investing?OpenDocument.

An Important Bond: Your Child and Caregiver

<http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/caregiver.n.p.t.2.html>

This article explains how important a caring bond between child and caregiver is important in helping the child learn and develop.

Kidsource Online:

It's so amazing to watching our newborns and toddlers grow and develop. The articles below will help you understand more about this process

www.kidsource.com/kidsource/pages/newborns.growth.html

www.kidsource.com/kidsource/pages/toddlers.growth.html

National Association for the Education of Young Children

Link to NAEYC's page of Early Childhood Education issues. Links to studies, reports, other websites.

www.naeyc.org/ece/

Searchable database of NAEYC's journal, *Young Children*.

www.journal.naeyc.org/search/

National Child Care Information Center's (NCCIC) site listing other state Infant Toddler guidelines and initiatives:

www.nccic.org/pubs/goodstart/state-infant-elg.html

NCCIC's topic papers and links to infant and toddler resources:

www.nccic.org/poptopics/index.html#infanttoddler

National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC)

www.nectac.org/

The NECTAC Clearinghouse on Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education is integral to NECTAC's role in linking people and knowledge. Through our working relationships with knowledge producers and users at all levels: researchers, policy makers, practitioners, families and advocates for young children with special needs, we identify new information resources and share them via our Web site, discussion groups, and eNotes.

www.nectac.org/chouse/adjhome.asp

National Institute for Early Education and Research

The National Institute for Early Education Research supports early childhood education initiatives by providing objective, nonpartisan information based on research. www.nieer.org/

**New Perspectives on Infant/Toddler Learning, Development, and Care
The Program for Infant and Toddler Caregivers (PITC)**

Training series developed by WestEd for the California Department of Education

www.pitc.org/pub/pitc_docs/newperspectives.html

North East Regional Resource Center

In partnership with State Education Agencies in the Northeast, the Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC) provides leadership and support to improve results and enhance the quality of life for children and youth with disabilities and their families. We strive to promote educational benefits for all students.

Resource list: www.wested.org/nerrc/parents.htm

Ounce of Prevention Fund

The Ounce of Prevention Fund invests in the healthy development of at-risk infants, toddlers, and preschool children. We use an innovative cycle of family focused programs, research, training, policy analysis and advocacy to help young children succeed in school and throughout life.

www.ounceofprevention.org/

This is where you can download and order copies of everything from special reports and fact sheets on important early childhood issues to annual reports and newsletters. We encourage you to download and share this information as widely as possible.

www.ounceofprevention.org/index.php?section=publications

U.S. Office of Head Start Searchable Bibliography on Infant / Toddler Interventions:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb2/it-biblio/index.jsp>

WestEd

Success for every learner is the goal of WestEd. A nonprofit research, development, and service agency, WestEd strives to enhance and increase education and human development within schools, families, and communities.

Link to a search screen of WestEd's searchable database of research and articles.

<http://search.wested.org/cgi-bin/htsearch?config=we.wested.org.htdig&words=infants>

ZERO TO THREE

ZERO TO THREE's mission is to promote the healthy development of our nation's infants and toddlers by supporting and strengthening families, communities, and those who work on their behalf. They are dedicated to advancing current knowledge; promoting beneficial policies and practices; communicating research and best practices to a wide variety of audiences; and providing training, technical assistance and leadership development. ZERO TO THREE is a national non-profit organization.

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

ZERO TO THREE has the following handouts on early childhood topics available – free, for your use and distribution.

Pointers For Parents

Camera-ready articles for your use “as-is” for educational, non-profit purposes. These articles can be “reprinted” or used as “handouts.” Suggestions for using the articles include the following: in newspapers, magazines and newsletter features; on Web sites; as a reproducible one-page flyer or handout. You do not need to obtain further permission to use this article “as-is”—just download and share with others.

<http://www.zerotothree.org/handouts/>



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Printing funded by Child Care and Development Fund
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Account 01510A0563 8747CCD7