

*Hand*ⁱⁿ*Hand*

Growing Together Everyday

Developmental Support Planning (DSP)



MANUAL

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Developmental Support Planning

INTRODUCTION

“Across Canada, more than a quarter of children are vulnerable before they even get to school. Most vulnerable children are not poor. This high rate of early vulnerability imposes social and economic costs.”

- (As cited in Early Years Study 3, 2011).

The early years (ages 0-4) are a period of unmatched physical and mental growth for all children. It is estimated that more than 1 million new synaptic connections are made per second (Center on the Developing Child, 2009 rev. 2017). It is in these early years that lifelong mental health trajectories such as temperament, attachment, and self-regulation are set. The environment a child is exposed to or lives in has a huge impact on their physical development. However, more subtly, a child’s mental development is also affected by this environment (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2017). Early developmental screening and support plans are essential in predicting and intervening in a child’s early life trajectory.

For infants and toddlers involved with child welfare, learning as much about the child from the biological and foster family, and the child’s early life is critical. Collecting this information should inform the creation of a plan that is focused on the child’s unique developmental needs.

A **Developmental Support Plan (DSP)** is an individualized plan developed to monitor and support the growth of a child in key areas of child development, namely: communication, problem-solving, personal-social, gross motor and fine motor.

Purpose of the Developmental Support Plans:

- Support the child’s development
- Provide strategies that can foster child’s development while he or she may be waiting for further assessment or referral to specialists
- Provide simple everyday strategies and activities to help a child reach appropriate developmental goals in a culturally appropriate and strength-based way.
- Provide an opportunity for caregivers and staff members to collaborate on a child’s development
- Helps parents and/or caregivers understand the type of experiences their child needs to meet their next developmental milestone.

GOAL:
To embed a system for monitoring and supporting infants and young children (birth to age 5) at risk for developmental concerns.

THE HAND IN HAND MODEL

The goal of this intervention model is to implement the use of standardized screening tools and the creation of interim strategies to support early development when working with children who may be at risk for social-emotional or developmental concerns (particularly those involved with child welfare).

Step 1: Developmental Screening & Semi Structured Caregiver Interview

- Administration of screening tool with social emotional component (e.g. Ages and Stages Questionnaires 3 and Ages and Stages Questionnaires Social Emotional)
- Semi-Structured Caregiver Interview

Recognize and utilize various sources from which practitioners can better understand a child's developmental status and developmental needs.

Step 2: Observation

- Floor time observation playing with the child (and caregiver) for approximately 45 minutes to one hour.

Use the time to better understand the child's specific strengths, temperament and other factors and useful information that may be key to developing a plan.

Step 3: Debrief

- Share the information discovered during the ASQ, caregiver interview, and observations with an appropriate team involved with the child and to determine any next steps that need to be fulfilled.

Based on the information gathered and developmentally appropriate milestones, determine what referrals and interim measures could be put in place to support the child's development. This will inform the Developmental Support Plan (DSP) which will be used as a gap measure to be used by all caregivers and practitioners while the child waits for more intensive services.

Step 4: Referrals

- Once areas of concern are identified any relevant referrals for further assessment or intervention are made.

Determine any referrals that are needed and process those in a timely manner. Have a protocol in place with local mental health agencies to share results of the screen and provide support when needed.

Step 5: Develop the Plan

- A *Hand in Hand* Developmental Support Plan is developed.

The DSP is created to provide caregiver strategies to promote development in areas of concern, while highlighting the child's strengths.

Step 6: Sharing of Plan with Caregiver and Other Services

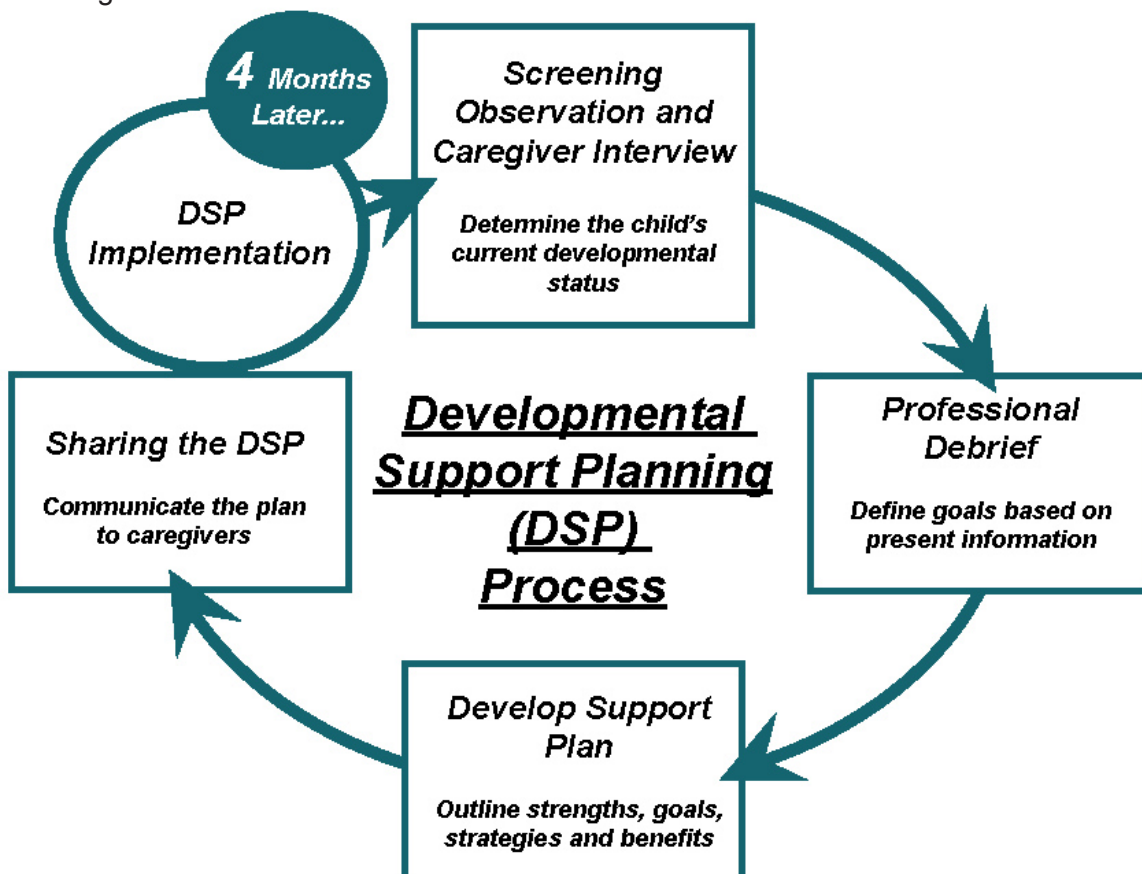
- A hard copy of the DSP is shared and discussed with the primary caregiver
- Determine (with the family) who else needs the DSP and agree upon a list of key contacts.

Share the developmental support plan with caregivers and other service providers, and ensure the plan is being used by foster and biological families during access visits as well as shared with the medical team and all others involved with a child.

Step 7: Rescreen

- Establish a schedule to repeat the process 3-4 months after the previous screen to capture and track the child's developmental progress

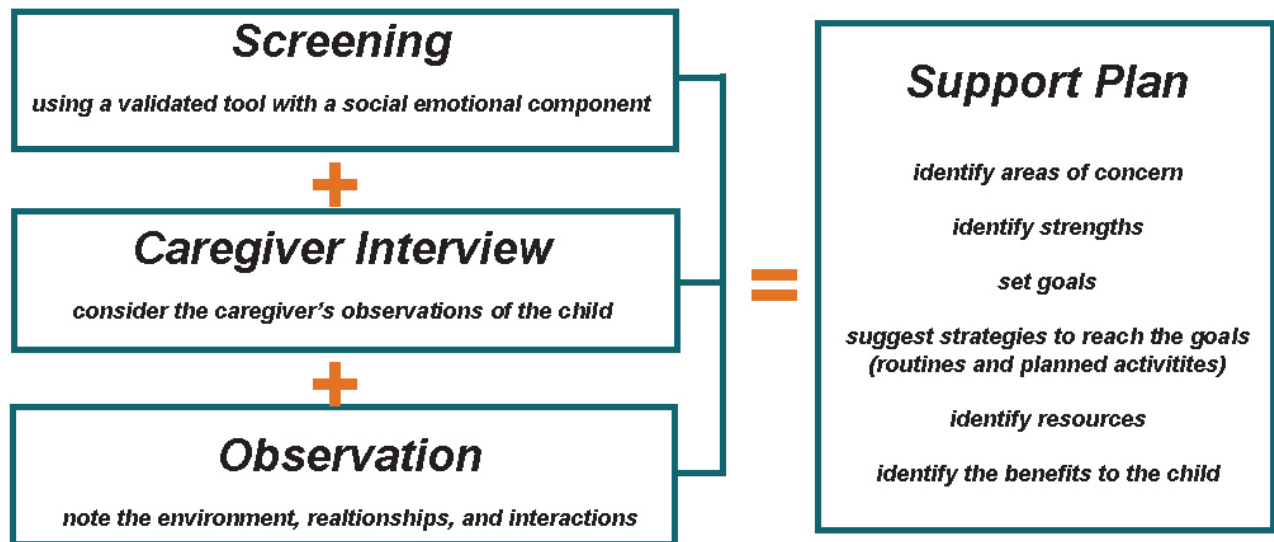
Continue the process until the child receives the referred support services or diagnosis.



SCREENING, CAREGIVER INTERVIEW, AND OBSERVATIONS

A Developmental Support Plan (DSP) is developed from:

1. The results of a developmental screening tool
2. Family/caregiver input
3. Observations of the child.



Developmental Screening Tools

Screening tools can help you identify when there are concerns about a child's development, or when a child is at risk of developing a concern in one or more key areas. Developmental screening tools with an emphasis on a child's social emotional development should be used with high-risk populations. Standardized and validated assessment tools for child development are much more accurate than clinical impressions when a concern is raised (Dotar, Stancin & Dworkin 2008).

Screening instruments differ with respect to their:

- Purpose - general screening or screening for specific concerns such as language or autism
- Methods - parent report or practitioner administered
- Function and accuracy - with different clients in different settings

A wide variety of screening tools are available. Agencies are encouraged to explore alternative screening methods which also incorporate social and emotional domains of screening and whose psychometric properties (i.e. reliability and validity) are strong. It should be noted that while a developmental screen may serve to indicate a possible delay, a referral to the appropriate professional must be completed to conduct a comprehensive assessment to then verify and diagnose a delay or disorder.

Example of a Validated Screening Tool

Please note that while the goals and strategies in Hand in Hand are consistent with the areas screened in the ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2 (described below and used as an example throughout this resource), the use of this screening tool is not imperative.

Please refer to Appendix D for information on alternative screening tools.

The Ages and Stages Questionnaires, Third Edition (ASQ-3) & Ages and Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional, Second Edition (ASQ:S E-2)

The ASQ-3 and the ASQ:SE-2 are screening tools in which the parent/caregiver completes questionnaires specific to the child's age. The tools can identify children at risk for developmental and/or social-emotional delay. The tool can be administered either in person with a worker or at the parent/guardian's pace by taking the questionnaire home and submitting it to the worker for evaluation.

| | ASQ-3 | ASQ:SE-2 |
|------------------------|---|---|
| AGE RANGE | 1 to 66 months | 1 to 72 months |
| AREAS SCREENED | Communication Gross Motor Fine Motor Problem solving Personal-social | Self-regulation Compliance Social-communication Adaptive functioning Autonomy Affect Interaction with people |
| WHO COMPLETES IT | Parents/caregivers complete questionnaires alone or with professional; Professionals, paraprofessionals, or clerical staff score them. | Parents/caregivers complete questionnaires alone or with professional; Professionals, paraprofessionals, or clerical staff score them. |
| HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE? | 10-15 minutes per questionnaire; 1-3 minutes to score. | 10-15 minutes per questionnaire; 1-3 minutes to score. |
| VALIDITY & RELIABILITY | Excellent – Validity: .82 to .88 Test-retest reliability: .91 Inter-rater reliability: .92 | Validity: 84% Reliability: 89% |

Caregiver Interview

While administering the developmental screening tool, a caregiver may mention additional comments or concerns. At the end or during the questionnaire administration, ask caregivers additional questions about their daily routine. This way, you can make the plan as meaningful and functional as possible by integrating the goals and strategies into every day activities.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is your child's daily routine?
2. What resources are accessible to you, e.g. parks, Ontario Early Years Centers, Libraries, community centre, parent child groups etc.? Are you currently taking advantage of any of these resources?
3. Are there parts of the routine that are particularly challenging?
4. Are there parts of the routine that go really well?
5. Are there any other children in the home? If so how old are they?
6. If the child lives with an alternative caregiver, does s/he attend access visits with biological caregivers? If so, how do these go? Do you have any concerns about the visits?
7. How long has the child been with the caregiver? (e.g. applicable for children who are placed in foster or kin care)
8. Are there any specific concerns that you have not mentioned during the completion of the screening tools?
9. What are your child's strengths? Weaknesses? Briefly describe your concerns for your child.
10. As we create the plan, are there specific goals that you think we need to address?
11. Who else will need to see the plan (e.g. Child Protection Agency)?

Make a point to ask about what they do on a daily basis, common activities that this child likes or dislikes, other supports, alternate caregivers, and resources.

Caregiver Interview – Social History

Equally as important as the screening tool, part of the caregiver interview includes getting a thorough understanding of the social history of the child and caregiving environment. This provides an empirical understanding of the child holistically.

Consider the following questions. Note that the answers may differ from current and previous caregiving environments and ask the appropriate questions to fully understand the child's social history.

The pregnancy

- Is your child biological, adopted, foster, child other?
- Mother's age at birth?
- Did mother receive routine medical prenatal care?
- Specify any medications used during pregnancy and reason used/
- Pregnancy lasted _____ weeks/months
- Child's birth weight _____ pounds _____ ounces
- Did the child go home at the same time as the mother? If no, explain why.
- How was the mother's pregnancy? Was it a difficult pregnancy?
- Were there any major stressful events during the pregnancy?
- How was mom feeling during the pregnancy (stressed, anxious, calm)?
- Was there any use of substances (alcohol or drugs) during the pregnancy?
- What did mom's home environment feel like while pregnant?

The birth

- How was the child's delivery?
- What was the child's condition at birth?
- How were the caregivers feeling after the birth?

Family history

- Is or was there any physical, emotional or sexual abuse happening in the home?
- Are the child's physical and emotional needs being met consistently?
- Is there history of household difficulties such as: divorce, mental health issues, substance abuse, incarceration, family member treated violently?

Ask follow up questions such as: if divorced, how do you feel the child has adjusted to the separation/divorce?

Caregiving environment

- Are there other adults who have a significant part in raising your child?
- As the primary caregiver, how supported do you feel in your role at home?
- Have there been any significant changes in the home over the last few years (such as new marriages, deaths, births, address change, parent dating, parent job change, money problems)?
- How well does the child get along with other members of the family?
- How much time does your child spend on electronic media? Watching TV? Playing video/computer games?

Observations

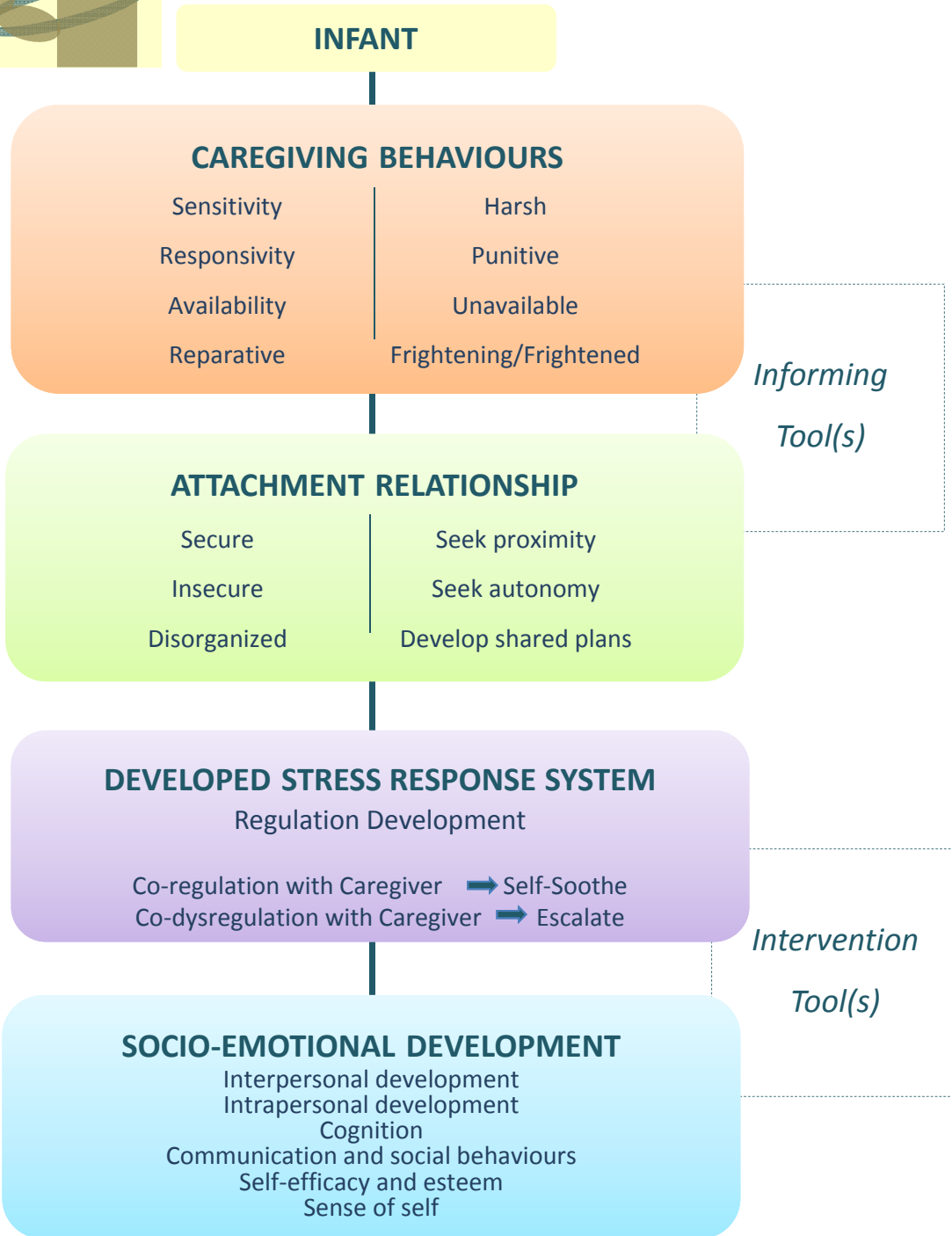
DSP's also rely on observing the child in an environment that is most familiar to him or her. Noting first hand observations of a child are valuable to developing a comprehensive DSP and informing the roles that adults can take in the child's learning and development.

Observation Tips:

- 1. Take a team approach to observations.** Find a time when at least two workers involved with the child can be present during the interview and observations (e.g. the child service worker, and foster parent support worker or a family service worker and a resource worker). This way, one staff can interview the caregiver, while the other interacts with the child, which will lead to a rich collection of information overall.
- 2. Know which materials you will need to use** and ensure that you have them ready. If the developmental screen is asking a child to write their name or colour a picture, you should bring crayons and paper for the child to demonstrate.
- 3. Parents are experts. No one knows that child better.** No matter what you are observing, you need to allow the parents to answer the questions. Your observations will inform the creation of the DSP just as much as the developmental screen, but the screen is a time for caregivers to relay their observations.
- 4. Observe how the parent and child interact and respond to one another.** Notes can be made on which of the child's developmental skills are strong, which are still being practiced, and which are emerging. It would be useful if observations are made during both structured (e.g. meal time) and unstructured activities (e.g. free play time). There are a number of observation techniques that can be employed.

It should be noted that being aware that one is being observed may influence the behaviors and interactions of the individual being observed. The purpose of observation is to better understand the parent and child dynamic in order to develop a plan that will be meaningful. Therefore for the purposes of informing DSP's, observational notes should be taken to supplement other sources of information such as the caregiver completed developmental screen, as third party observations can face the risk of inaccuracy and inadvertent bias.

Mary Rella (2014) has suggested that making observations on the caregiving relationship, attachment relationship, regulation capacity and the child's social emotional development can be particularly pertinent to developing an intervention plan for an infant.



(Used with Permission (Rella, M, May 2012). Formulating Infant Developmental Status, Workshop presented at Infant Mental Health Promotion, The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, ON)

Theoretical Rationale for Relationships with Family:

Developing a trusting relationship with all family members depends on the successful implementation of fundamental principles for a family-centred, strength-based approach, as follows:

- Babies are born relationship ready.
- The development of a baby's brain is highly dependent on relationships and the experiences these relationships have to offer.
- Families have the capacity for health.
- Getting to know families is a process that builds on mutual respect and trust.
- Families are involved in determining priorities and goals.
- Families identify and express their strengths, which are then validated when observed.
- Families experience their child's development and pose questions about what comes next for their child's development.
- Families believe that they are responsible for change; some may not expect change.
- If families refuse services, it may be because services are not provided in a manner/mode that the family is comfortable utilizing.

[Adapted from Theoretical Rationale for Protocols, Your Guide to Nurturing Parent-Child Relationships: Positive Parenting Activities for Home Visitors, Hall, Kulkarni, & Seneca, 2008, p.9]

PROFESSIONAL DEBRIEFING

The purpose of the professional debriefing is to embed a process for sharing information discovered during the ASQ, caregiver interview, and observations with an appropriate team involved with the child, and to determine any next steps that need to be fulfilled. Once the screen, observations, and caregiver interviews are complete, the team will engage in a group debrief. These individuals ideally include the family service worker, children service worker, any consultative professionals (Occupational Therapist Physical Therapist, Speech and Language Pathologist, Public Health Nurse...), supervisors, etc to go over the results of the developmental screen. The primary professionals who completed the screen should share the results either by phone or in person (email is not ideal for this part of the developmental support plan) or in a common electronic record (e.g. shared portal) with the other professionals involved with the family.

The professional debrief should first happen with just the professionals involved in the child's case. Caregivers should be brought in to share in the goal setting and strategy creating once a rough draft of the plan had already been created. While caregivers should be included as active partners in the creation of a developmental support plan, the professional debriefing that first takes place should be amongst professionals. When initially sharing the plan be open to suggestions, since each professional, parents and caregivers brings valuable perspectives, insight and understanding of the child and or their context.

Familiarize yourself with your local child development experts and infant and child mental health experts. These agencies and organizations will help you to identify where you can go for referrals when you are unsure. Ensure that both you and your infant mental health (IMH) professional have a protocol put in place when concerns are identified from the visit. Not every child may need to be brought to an IMH professional's attention; however they may be invaluable members of the early intervention team. Any referrals should be identified and made right away! A cover letter should be provided with ASQ results attached. Include in the letter identification of the concerns noted, and any referrals that are required or have been made. **COPY THIS TO YOUR SUPERVISOR.**

The primary concerns should be identified after the results of the screen have been shared. If the child is screening as delayed in communication and personal social areas, these results should be communicated to the entire team. This is where you can identify the areas of development requiring attention and intervention. Here, the team can determine what kinds of goals are most appropriate for the child and family.

The initial debrief occurs to determine who will take the lead in creating the plan, who is responsible for communicating the plan with the team, and who is going to follow-up with caregivers to ensure this plan is being implemented. Create a timeline of what needs to be accomplished and by when. This will make it easier to stay on task. (See p.22 for a DSP Timeline Checklist Template)

CREATING THE DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORT PLAN

Step 1 - Gather information

Score and review the developmental screen for the child. Conduct interviews with the child's caregivers and review any additional information that you have gathered.

Step 2 - Identify the areas of concern

Draw information from the screen, parent/caregiver/family feedback, and from your own observations and additional information gathered at the debriefing meeting.

Step 3 - Identify strengths

A child's strengths or "what the child can already do" can be identified by looking at items on the developmental screen a child can already accomplish, using parental comments, or your own observations. Championing Strengths - Every child and parent/caregiver has strengths. Specifically identifying and reviewing strengths with parents and caregivers can be an empowering experience for parents, who will get the chance to be viewed as experts on their child. This can be embedded within the DSP through identification of a baseline of what a child is capable of accomplishing in every goal.

Step 4 - Identify Resources

Include the people, places, services or supports a family can access for assistance in reaching the desired outcomes (e.g. family members, neighbourhood resources, parent resource centres, etc.).

Incorporate resources families may already be using in the DSP (e.g. daycare). A goal's strategies that incorporate learning areas that are in the child's daycare can be an asset in reaching the desired outcomes.

Step 5 - Identify Goals

Choose one or two key developmental goals for each of the developmental domains. The family should be included in the identification of goals. Goals may be developed through:

- i) concerns highlighted in the Developmental Screen (i.e. developmental vulnerabilities),
- ii) concerns of the parents/caregiver/ family, and your observations, or
- iii) the next developmental milestone the child could achieve.

Keep in mind, you can have a goal that directly relates to both the communication and social emotional domains like "I will put names to my feelings when I am happy, sad, mad, hungry, or tired".

Use your discretion when creating goals and strategies. The needs of the child and family will vary so focusing on fewer goals at one desired time may produce a better outcome and too many goals can leave a family discouraged. The needs of the caregiver should be considered throughout the development of the goals and strategies.

Setting goals:

Goals focus on a child's skill or behaviour. Goals are created according to the child's ability and skill level, not according to typical milestones for a given age. Exercise a functional approach and ask yourself: "What can the child do now? What do we want her/him to do next?" Goals and strategies should be challenging yet tangible, and strength-based. They need to be simple, specific and reflect a skill or behaviour that the child is unable to do right now but will be able to do with support from the caregiver. Therefore, goals should not have language like "will continue to, begin to, and be able to..." Goals should be as straight forward and measurable as possible. They should begin with "I will..." in the voice of the child.

Step 6 - Develop Strategies

Develop a few simple strategies that can be incorporated into everyday activities and routines that will help the child to meet identified goals. Remember to make the strategies positive, simple, and doable within the routine and culture of the family. Always ensure that strategies promote attachment and/or relationships, exploration and communication.

Guiding principles:

- **Strategies have to be relationship based.** Think of strategies that will nurture and strengthen relationships between the child and others. For the parents, the guidance from a strategy that nurtures relationships can provide a new understanding.
- **Strategies have to be simple and realistic** – not a complicated recipe as it will reduce the likelihood of strategies being adopted and practiced.
- **Strategies have to be integrated into everyday routines** as much as possible to make them relevant and tangible.
- **Strategies are about action** – what can the parent do to support the successful achievement of the goal?
- **Strategies have to reflect the family's culture.**
- **Strategies should not include technical jargon.** Strategies need to be understood by parents/caregivers and the team.
- **Providing at least 3 strategies per goal** will give parents the option to choose the strategy (or strategies) that fit with their routine, family structure, and child's personality best.

There are 2 kinds of strategies/ activities that can be included in a DSP.

- I. **Daily Routines**, for example, singing to baby when changing or feeding them, playing a game of “I spy” when in the car, talking to the child about their day while walking home from school, etc.
- II. **Planned Activities**, for example, take the child to a local Early Years Centre, arranging a play date with another child, signing the child up for a sports team, check the schedule of your local library, etc.

Whenever applicable, develop strategies that incorporate other primary relationships (siblings, grandparents, close peers) to strengthen relationships between the child and others.

Step 7 - Identify the benefits of the strategies

Consider the connections of the goals and strategies to the overall development of the child. Make sure to include benefits in all areas (physical, language, social-emotional). This will belong in the “Why this is important” section of the domain. State in clear and concise language why the intervention is important to both the parent and the child. For example:

“My fingers are small, but they help me do so many things! Whether I am making a puzzle, colouring a picture, or creating snowflakes, my hands, fingers and wrists are learning that they can all work together to help me become more independent.”

Step 8 - Huddle!

Consult with other professionals throughout the creation of the plan. If the child is seeing already involved with speech and language services, consult with that team around the communication goals, if the child is seeing an OT/PT, they should be involved in the creation of the gross and fine motor goals. Once the plan is created, it should be shared with other professionals involved in care. To make the plan as meaningful as possible, review the concerns, goals, strengths and strategies with anyone involved with the child so there is a shared understanding of the concerns and solutions being offered.

Professionals involved in this consultation would include: Children Service Worker, Family Service Worker, Resource Worker, Foster Parent Support Worker, Supervisors, public health nurses, medical team (Clinic staff), etc...

When initially sharing the plan, be open to suggestions, each profession including parents and caregivers brings valuable perspectives, insight and understanding of the child and or their context and provide valuable input.

Step 9 - Finalize The Hard Copy of the DSP

Once all elements of the DSP are fine tuned, it is essential that the DSP is presented as a written document that is shared so that strengths, goals, strategies and benefits are concrete and available to refer to by those involved.

At IMHP, we have developed two templates that we use to present the DSP in a user-friendly manner, both of which are essential for families. The *Hand in Hand* full DSP has strengths, goals, strategies and benefits detailed while the one–page version is a quick reference/ highlights version which can be posted and easily accessible.

Both versions are written from the perspective or “voice” of the child. This is helpful to prevent the strategies from being overly directive or prescriptive, and helps the parent connect with and personalize the suggested strategies as something that their child needs.

ANATOMY OF A DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORT PLAN

The full plan is broken into the following parts:

A. The Cover Page:

Hand in Hand
Growing Together Every Day

This Developmental Support Plan is full of activities created to help your child reach his/her developmental goals. These are activities you can do with your child during everyday routines such as:

- Meal time
- Story time
- Play time
- Tidy up time
- Walking and playing outside
- Quiet time

Remember, you are your child's favorite toy.

Infant Mental Health Promotion
IMHP

This plan was developed for BABY (SAMPLE DSP)

Age: 8 Months

On (date): _____

Place Your CHILD'S Photo Here...

This is the cover page of the full DSP. It provides a basic description of the purpose of the plan and how it can be implemented during routine activities.

Here you would enter the child's name after "This plan was developed for", his/her age and the date that the DSP was prepared. This will help you keep track of when the plan was created, and when to update this plan. You can place the child's photo in the bottom right corner

B. Why Our Relationship Matters?

The IMHP DSP full plan begins with establishing the social-emotional value of the relationship between parent/ caregiver and child in the context of the child's current stage of development. IMHP has created a document (*Hand in Hand - Social Emotional Milestones*) that is broken down by age which can be copied into this section, or you can create your own. Other supporting documents are available on the www.IMHPromotion.ca website. (See Appendix A: Supporting Resources for more information.)

WHY OUR RELATIONSHIP MATTERS:

I'm older now and I can wait my turn, and can be patient when you are getting my food or when we are going somewhere. I use my words a lot more often to express my wants and how I feel. I'm better at being ok in a strange place, even when you are not around; I know that it's only a matter of time before I get to see you again! I still really love playing make-believe, either by myself or with other children. I love coming up with stories on my own, or acting out the stories that we read together. I sometimes talk out loud, it helps me learn more words, but I still love our conversations. I am beginning to show affection to other children my age, and I work hard to get your approval. When you praise the work I do, it makes me feel special, which makes me feel loved. Knowing that you are proud of me and the things I do helps me gain self-confidence and gives me a sense of my abilities. By being my champion and cheering me on, you help me grow.



HELP ME GROW DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORT PLAN
© Infant Mental Health Promotion (IMHP), The Hospital for Sick Children, 2012

Note: This plan is not intended to replace any necessary intensive services.



2

C. Domain / Title

Written in parent-friendly language from the child's point of view, these are broken down by the domains in the ASQ-3. Each domain (areas of concern identified in Step #2) matches up as follows;

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Communication: | How I understand you and talk to others |
| Problem-Solving: | How I explore and figure things out |
| Personal-Social: | How I show feelings and act around others |
| Gross Motor: | How I move my body (large muscles including trunk, arms, legs) |
| Fine Motor: | How I use my hands (small muscles including fingers and palms) |

*Quick Tip: You do not have to be restricted to these five domains. If another domain needs to be addressed immediately, for example, attachment or self-regulation, feel free to change these domain names.

D. Child Strengths and Accomplishments

Labeled in the first section of the plan as “what I can already do”, this is where you have the opportunity to talk about the child’s strengths in relation to the goal. These can come from your own observations, parental comments, or something the child has accomplished on the ASQ’s. (Identified in Step #3)

E. Goal

Labeled “my next goal”, see Step #5 for more details around creating an appropriate goal.

| HOW I UNDERSTAND YOU AND TALK TO OTHERS C | | |
|---|---|--|
| What I can already do | My next goal | How you can help me reach my goal |
| D | E | <p>Encourage me to use my words whenever possible. Start with a few familiar things that I definitely have heard before, like milk or hat. When I want these things, ask me to label them first. If I don’t speak up, remind me by saying “do you want your <u>hat</u> Max? <u>Hat</u>? Then wait until I repeat to word to give me that object.</p> <p>Read the same story to me every night for two-three weeks. This can even be a simple board book with pictures and the words to label them. Read this book over and over each night so I can get familiar with everything inside. Encourage me to read along. F</p> <p>Play or sing music that has repetition like “Down by the Bay”, “If You’re Happy and You Know it”, and “The Wheels on the Bus”. Encourage me to sing along to the music.</p> |
| <p>Why this is important: <i>When you encourage me to name things I am familiar with, it helps remind me to use my voice! As I grow and become more independent, this voice will help me with my self-esteem, and language. Repeating things is a great way for me to become more familiar with certain words while books and songs are fun for me!</i> G</p> | | |

F. Strategies/Activities

Written as “How you can help me reach my goal” this is where you would enter any strategies or activities the child can work on to reach their goal. See Steps #4 & 6 for more information, and Appendix B: Using the DSP Strategies Database.

G. Importance of the goal

This is labeled “Why this is important”. In the final section of each page, it rationalizes the goals and the strategies. It explains the importance of this goal, and why it was chosen for this particular child. (Identified in Step #7)

SIMPLIFIED DSP - THE "FRIDGE" VERSION

The One-Page Plan is a quick reference sheet used to highlight all of the developmental goals and strategies in a single page format. This is also known as the "Refrigerator Version" as we encourage parents to put this page somewhere visible where it can be seen on a daily basis. We recognize that with parent's busy schedules it's not always easy to keep the full version of the plan available at all times. The one-page version serves as a reminder for parents of the types of experiences the child requires on a daily basis.

Creating the "One Phrase" Goals:

These should be taken directly from the goals for each domain. Each should contain a simple title, such as "Let's Explore Outdoors!", written from the voice of the child, and should then be followed up by a short one or two sentence summary of the strategies. Don't worry about including every strategy word for word; just capture the essence of the goals in the one page version.

For example...

YOU ARE MY FAVOURITE TOY!

I've got a lot of toys, but you are my favourite one by far! The time I spend with you is so special to me, let's play together as much as we can!



LET'S BABEL

When I am vocal, babble with me in give and take conversation style. Say things like "Polly Baby?" and "I'll be here!" Let me play with some toys that make noise and repeat the sounds back to me!

WHAT DOES THIS DO?

Provide me with a pop up toy that when I press the button, a toy pops up! Provide me with toys that shape sort and encourage me to figure out where each shape fits. Place me where I can try and when I get it right!

GET THAT TOY!

Move my toys out of my reach and encourage me to get them! Put me in a crawling position and shake noise making toys in front of me. Make sure there's nothing else around so I really want to move for that toy!

I CAN CRAWL

When I am in a crawling position, place my feet with your hands or place me against furniture so I can push myself off and begin to move! Hold me up! so I may fall over, but if I do just gently roll me back into crawling position. Try this with me every 2 hours.

BOTH HANDS!

Give me two blocks that I can bring together when I'm in my high chair. Give me noise making toys, one in each hand and encourage me to shake them! We can also spread some blocks on the ground and see what we can build.

YOU ARE MY FAVORITE TOY!

I've got a lot of toys, but you are my favourite one by far! Let my toy choose to play and play with me so I can learn and enjoy my time with you!

SHARING THE PLAN

Ideally the plan should be shared with all key stakeholders (parents, caregivers, and teachers, physicians, public health nurses, social workers, therapists, medical teams, etc) involved in the child's care to support a shared vision and consistent engagement with the child. When initially sharing the plan, be open to suggestions. Each profession, including parents and caregivers, bring valuable perspective, insight and understanding of the child and or their context and may have valuable input.

When sharing the plan it is imperative to communicate that:

1. the emphasis is on the child's development,
2. the focus is on the parent/caregiver-child interactions that support development,
3. the strategies expand on family/caregiver strengths to support early development, and
4. that the emphasis, focus, and strategies will help make parenting/care giving become easier. (Adapted from Roggman, Boyce, & Innocenti, 2008, p. 12)

Key Messages to Give Caregivers When Sharing the DSP's!

You are the expert!

No one knows this child and their current development like their caregiver.

A place to set common goals!

This plan can provide you, and everyone involved in the child's life with a consistent set of common goals.

If a child is waiting on referral services, the wait times don't have to be wasted time.

This is your opportunity to make the most of the wait times, regardless of how long or short.

Keep it simple.

Activities and strategies don't have to be overly complicated or involve a lot of time.

Even the smallest change can have a big impact.

When sharing the plan with the parent/ caregiver discuss each goal, why it was chosen, and how the strategies support the goal. This will give caregivers an opportunity to ask any questions and clarify concerns. Caregivers should understand that some of the strategies may or may not work. If the caregivers are already working on a goal or strategy then the plan will simply serve as a reinforcement that they are on the right track. Caregivers should be encouraged to share their input at any point. Change is part of the learning process.

IMPLEMENTATION - CHALLENGES

Where do you begin?

The screening tool is a great source of information. Go by domain and identify the greatest areas of need for the child. Talk with other professionals to identify the next immediate goals.

How can you ensure all caregivers are using this plan?

Communicate! As you are developing the DSP, you are creating goals that caregivers will view as tangible and reachable. When presenting the plan to caregivers, ensure that you are presenting the written plans as a conversation. Explain the importance of each goal and strategy while expanding on the child's strengths (what they are already doing), ask for feedback from the caregivers, and point out strengths of the caregivers (all the good things they are already doing for their child). These approaches will help empower the caregivers to feel that they can support their child in reaching their goals.

How do you share the support plan with other professionals?

It's important to get contact information of all professionals involved in the young child's life. Forwarding a copy of the DSP's will ensure that everyone is working on the same goals with regards to the child's development. This can also be useful for professionals who can utilize some of the strategies included in the plan, such as day-care providers.

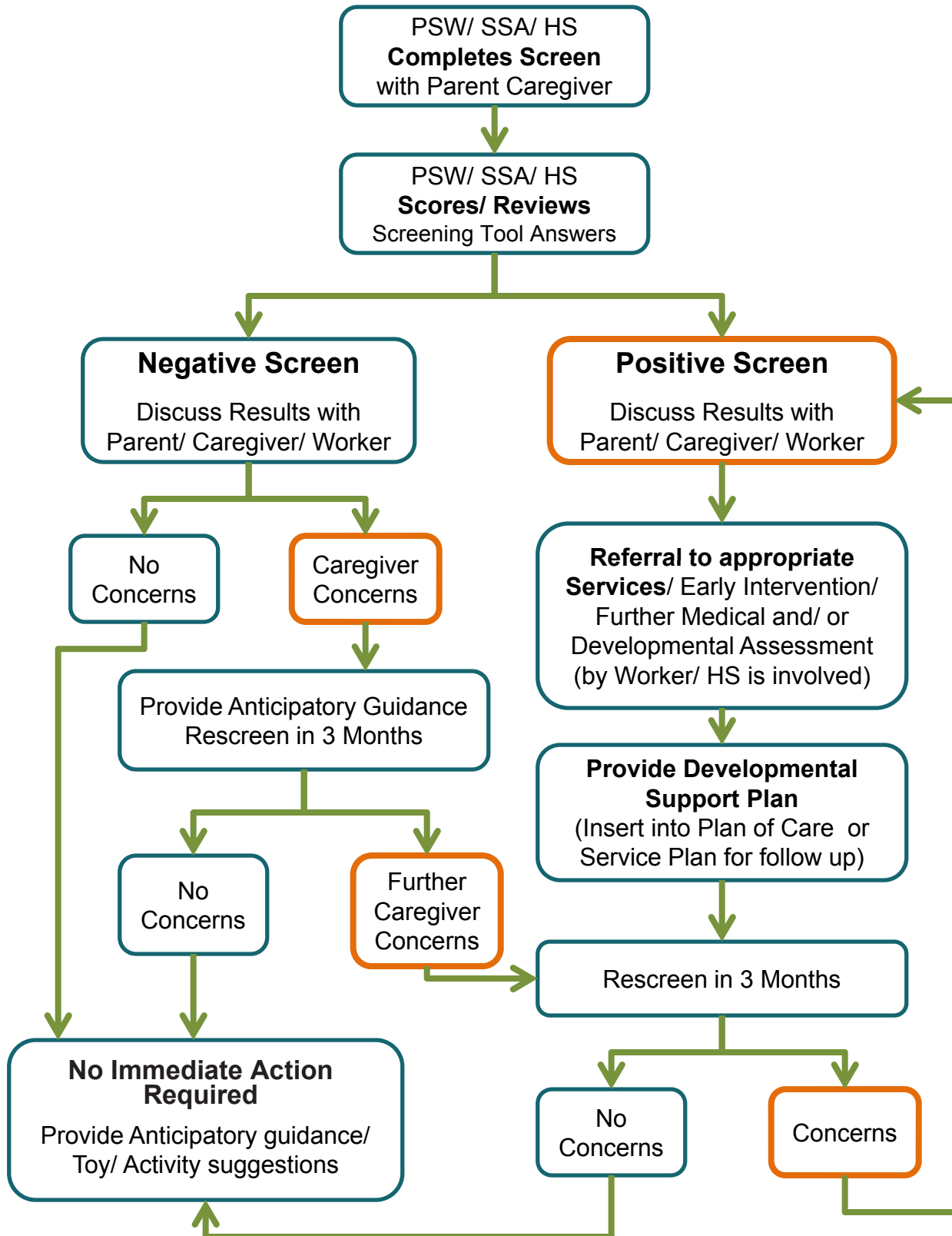
How can you ensure the right follow-up measures are taken?

Make yourself accountable for this child! Give yourself email reminders, write follow-up dates in your calendar, or keep file notes. Talk to caregivers about what they found helpful and what they didn't so you know how to make the plan more meaningful to them. The more meaningful the plan, the more likely it is to be used.

When do you stop screening and providing developmental support plans?

This will be at your discretion, but you should not stop providing support until the child is no longer screening as delayed, or until they have had consultations from other professionals, or a developmental diagnosis. If you are at all concerned about the child, you should continue to screen and provide support plans.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING AND INTERIM PLANNING FLOWCHART



This flowchart presents an example of a model for implementation (Courtesy Catholic Children's Aid Society Toronto)

DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORT PLAN TIMELINE CHECKLIST

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Child's Name | | Child's Birthdate | | |
| Caregiver's Name | | | | |
| Email/ contact | | | | |
| Case Leads | | | | |
| Step 1 & 2: Info Gathered | Detail/ Tools Used | Administered by | Target Date | Date Complete |
| Screening Tool (s) Used | | | | |
| Caregiver Interview | | | | |
| Additional Observational Info | | | | |
| Step 3: Professional Debrief | Attendees | Role | Target Date | Date Complete |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Step 4: Referrals | Contact/ Agency | Concern | Date of Referral | Follow Up |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Step 5: Plan Development | Full DSP - Lead Author | One Page - Author | Target Date | Date Complete |
| | | | | |
| Step 6: Plan Shared | Identified Recipients/ Meeting Attendees | Role | Target Date | Date Complete |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Step 7: Date of Next Re-Screen | | | Target Date | Date Complete |
| | | | | |

ASQ-3/ ASQ:SE-2 DETAILS

| | | | |
|--|--------------|--|--|
| CHILD INFORMATION | | File#/ Case ID: | |
| Child Name | | | |
| Child Birthdate (D/M/Y) | | Sex <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female | |
| Caregiver (who completed the screen) NAME: | | Relationship to Child <input type="checkbox"/> Father <input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent <input type="checkbox"/> Foster parent/Legal Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ (please specify) | |
| Was the child receiving any intensive services at the time of this screen? | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| ASQ-3 & ASQ:SE-2 INFORMATION | | | |
| Date of screening (D/M/Y) | | Child's age at screening (Y/M/D) | |
| Adjusted for Prematurity <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | if premature please specify # weeks | |
| Which ASQ-3 was administered? (month interval) | | Which ASQ-3 screen in the cycle is this for the child? <input type="checkbox"/> 1st <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd <input type="checkbox"/> 4th <input type="checkbox"/> 5th <input type="checkbox"/> 6th <input type="checkbox"/> 7th <input type="checkbox"/> 8th <input type="checkbox"/> 9th | |
| DOMAIN | SCORE | CUTOFF RANGE | |
| Communication | | <input type="checkbox"/> Above <input type="checkbox"/> Close to <input type="checkbox"/> Below | |
| Gross Motor | | <input type="checkbox"/> Above <input type="checkbox"/> Close to <input type="checkbox"/> Below | |
| Fine Motor | | <input type="checkbox"/> Above <input type="checkbox"/> Close to <input type="checkbox"/> Below | |
| Problem solving | | <input type="checkbox"/> Above <input type="checkbox"/> Close to <input type="checkbox"/> Below | |
| Personal-social | | <input type="checkbox"/> Above <input type="checkbox"/> Close to <input type="checkbox"/> Below | |
| Comments/ Observations | | | |
| Which ASQ-3 was administered? (month interval) | | Which ASQ-3 screen in the cycle is this for the child? <input type="checkbox"/> 1st <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd <input type="checkbox"/> 4th <input type="checkbox"/> 5th <input type="checkbox"/> 6th | |
| DOMAIN | SCORE | CUTOFF RANGE | |
| ASQ:SE-2 | | <input type="checkbox"/> Above <input type="checkbox"/> Close to <input type="checkbox"/> Below | |
| Comments/ Observations | | | |

DSP DETAILS

| | |
|--|---|
| Child Name | Child's age at screening (Y/M/D) |
| DSP INFORMATION | |
| Which ASQ-3 screen in the cycle is this for the child? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1st <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd <input type="checkbox"/> 4th <input type="checkbox"/> 5th <input type="checkbox"/> 6th <input type="checkbox"/> 7th <input type="checkbox"/> 8th <input type="checkbox"/> 9th |
| Was a DSP plan created and implemented with the family? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| If No, why? | |
| If yes, what prompted you to create the plan? (please check all that apply) | <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioural observations <input type="checkbox"/> Parent interview <input type="checkbox"/> ASQ-3 cutoff score <input type="checkbox"/> ASQ-3 additional comments <input type="checkbox"/> ASQ-SE:2 cutoff score <input type="checkbox"/> ASQ-SE:2 additional comments <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ (please specify) |
| Which DSP in the cycle is this for the child? | <input type="checkbox"/> 1st <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd <input type="checkbox"/> 4th <input type="checkbox"/> 5th <input type="checkbox"/> 6th <input type="checkbox"/> 7th <input type="checkbox"/> 8th <input type="checkbox"/> 9th |
| What domains of development were highlighted as concerning in this current screening round? (based on screening, parent report, worker judgement; please check all that apply) | <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Gross Motor <input type="checkbox"/> Fine Motor <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Social <input type="checkbox"/> Social Emotional |
| What domains of development did the DSP target in this current screening round? (please check all that apply) | <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Gross Motor <input type="checkbox"/> Fine Motor <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Social <input type="checkbox"/> Social Emotional |
| Additional Observations/ Recommendations | |

APPENDIX A

SUPPORTING IMHP RESOURCES

The **Hand in Hand** family of resources (available from Infant Mental Health Promotion) is full of activities and tips for caregivers to support social and emotional development during the early years. These one page handouts provide simple strategies which can be shared with parents and caregivers to foster secure attachment relationships and support self regulation.

Hand in Hand - Social and Emotional Milestones provide an overview of a young child's typical social and emotional development by age:

- 0 - 3 Months
- 4 - 6 Months
- 7 - 12 Months
- 13 - 18 Months
- 19 - 24 Months
- and 25 - 36 Months

Hand in Hand - Supporting Your Child's Social and Emotional Development charts provide valuable age appropriate strategies for parents and caregivers to be:

- Engaged and Engaging
- Sensitive
- Consistent
- Responsive
- Enjoyable to be with
- Their baby's voice

Hand in Hand - Why our Relationship Matters

- Provides introductory text that can be used for the DSP full plans. These correspond with the child's age.

Hand in Hand Developmental Support Plan Strategies Database

- A selection of goals and strategies that can be included in the DSP.

Hand in Hand Developmental Support Plan

- Templates of the full and one page plans in word format.

Hand in hand - Developmental Support Planning Case Study

- Further demonstrates through a case example how to develop goals and strategies from observations and screening tools

Comfort Play & Teach - Parent Resources

- Developmental Milestones by age and activities to supplement the DSP.

Infant Mental Health & Family Law Initiative Learning Modules

Module 1 - Infant Mental Health

Module 2 - Infant Trauma

Module 3 - Creating and Nurturing Infant Parent Relationships

Module 4 - Service Planning and Coordination

Module 5 - A Push Towards Permanence

APPENDIX B

USING THE DSP STRATEGIES DATABASE

The **Developmental Support Plan Strategies Database** is a document for individuals working with at-risk infants and young children to help with the creation of the support plans. The support plan database, like the support plans, cover five major domains:

- Communication
- Gross Motor
- Fine Motor
- Problem Solving
- Personal Social

Each domain has major milestones from birth to age five highlighted with some examples of goals and strategies to support these milestones. Each plan should still be individualized to fit the different needs of each child screened, but the DSP Strategies Database provides examples to assist in the creation of goals and strategies.

Like the Developmental Support Plans, the DSP Strategies Database is written from the voice of the child. It is organized in such a way that all you'll need to do is identify an area that needs improvement for the child, and then search for appropriate goals and strategies. The first page of each database includes a table of contents which lists developmental milestones and their definitions.

Below each topic is a list of sub-topics, or headings, then the age range which each heading would cover, and the goal, written in the voice of the child. Topics can be chosen by looking through the list, or by using the search function if an area of concern has already been identified.

Once you have determined which area of concern you are going to address within the developmental support plan for a specific domain, you can skip to the chart with the goal and strategies for this area of concern. The topic is written at the top, with the goal below in the first part of the chart. Below the goal are a number of strategies. These are arranged from youngest to oldest, and can be copied into the plan to ensure the caregiver has a variety of strategies to choose. Below the strategies in the last part of the charts are the descriptions detailing "Why this is important". Every part of the plan should be personalized to reflect the individual child and family for which the plan is being created.

For example: If you have completed a developmental screen, made your own observations through spending some time with the child, completed a caregiver interview, and identified that attachment is an area of concern for the child, you would simply choose the appropriate DSP Strategies Database, Social Emotional in this case, and use links embedded in the table of contents, or the key word search function to find the attachment table, then tailor the goal so it's appropriate to the individual child. Next you'll choose 3 to 5 strategies that are age appropriate and include them in the strategies section of your Developmental Support Plan. Then choose some "*Why this is important*" phrases to support the goal and strategies you have selected. All you'll have left to complete are the child's strengths.

APPENDIX C

HELPFUL LINKS AND RESOURCES

1. Infant Mental Health Promotion Website - Comfort, Play and Teach
[http:// www.IMHPromotion.ca](http://www.IMHPromotion.ca)
Under the Parent Resources tab, click on CPT – Ages and Stages, and view the appropriate age range. Simple Parent-friendly activities are also available.
2. Brookes Publishing Website
<http://www.brookespublishing.com/store/books/squires-asq/system.htm>
3. Ages and Stages Website
<http://agesandstages.com/>
Everything you need to know and more about the ASQ-3 and ASQ: SE screening tools, including activities, sample questionnaires and scores, research on the tools, etc.
4. Frequently Asked Questions on the ASQ tools
<http://agesandstages.com/ask-jane/>
A list of specific questions asked about the ASQ's and a section where you can email the authors and ask your own question.
5. Age Calculator
<http://agesandstages.com/age-calculator/>
Enter in the child's date of birth and hit "calculate". The age in months will be shown and you can choose the appropriate ASQ from here.
6. ASQ Activity Books
<http://products.brookespublishing.com/ASQ-3-Learning-Activities-P624.aspx> -
Learning activities that accompany the Ages and Stages tools.
7. Toronto Early Childhood and Family Resource System
<http://healthykidstoronto.ca/>
Click on the Pathways tab, and use the interactive map to navigate services for children.
8. Hincks-Dellcrest Learning Through Play Calendars
<http://www.hincksdellcrest.org/Home/Resources-And-Publications/Learning-through-Play/Learning-through-Play.aspx>
9. Infant Caregiver Project
<http://www.infantcaregiverproject.com/#!>
Click on the tab "For Researchers"; look through the list of articles.

Resources are current as of January 2014

APPENDIX D

SCREENING TOOLS

| Name | Author and copyright year | Age Range | Administration | Psychometric Data |
|---|---|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Age & Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE) | J.Squires, D.Bricker, and E.Twombly (2002) | 3-66 months | 10-15 minutes, parent | Normative sample of 3,000 test-retest validity data; sensitivity: .78; specificity: .95 |
| Behavioral Assessment of Baby's Emotional and Social Style (BABES) | K.M. Finello and M.K. Poulsen (1996) | Birth-36 months | 10 minutes, parent | Limited; under development |
| Brief Infant-Toddler Social and Emotional Assessment (BITSEA) | A. Carter and M. Briggs-Gowan (2006) | Parent, child care provider | 10 minutes, parent | Normative sample of 600, not geographically distributed; test-retest: .80-.92; interrater: .64-.78 |
| Conners Rating Scales Revised (CRS-R) | C.K. Conners (1997) | 3-17 years | 10 minutes; parent, teacher | Sample size: 8000, multicultural |
| Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Infants and Toddlers (DECA-I/T) | Devereux Foundation (2007) | Birth- 3 years | 10 minutes; trained testers | Normative sample of 2,143, geographically distributed; interrater: .47-.64; test-retest: .83-.98; internal consistency: .79-.94; small validity sample |
| Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) | Devereux Foundation (1998) | 2-5 years | 10 minutes; trained testers | Normative sample of 2000; interrater: .59-.77; test-retest: .55-.94; sensitivity: .69 |
| Early Screening Project (ESP) | H.M. Walker, H.H. Severson, and E. Feil (1995) | 3-5 years | Stage 1: 1 hour; Stage 2: 1 hour; Stage 3: 40 min; teacher, counselor, parent | Normative sample of 2853; test-retest: .77; interrater: .87; sensitivity: .80; specificity: .94; concurrent validity: .72 |
| Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory (ECBI) | S. Eyberg and D. Pincus (1999) | 2-16 years | 10 minutes; parent | Test-retest: .75-86; interrater: .79-.86; sensitivity: .80; specificity: .86 |
| Functional Emotional Assessment Scale (FEAS) | S. Greenspan, G. Degangi, and S. Wieder (2001) | 7 months- 4 years | 15-20 minutes; professional | Norms not nationally representative; interrater: > .80 |
| Greenspan Social-Emotional Growth | S. Greenspan (2004) | 0-42 months | 10 minutes; family or caregiver | Reliability: .83-.94 depending on age band |
| Infant/toddler Symptom Checklist | G. DeGangi, S. Poisson R. Sickel and A.S. Wiener (1995) | 7-30 months | 10 minutes; parent | Normative sample of 94% white; limited validity studies; sensitivity: .78; specificity: .84 |
| Parenting Stress Index, Short Form (PSI-SF) | R.R. Abidin (1995) | Birth-12 years | 20-30 minutes; parent | Small sample; test-retest: .84 |
| Preschool and Kindergarten Behavioral Scales -Second Edition (PKBS-2) | K. Merrell (2002) | 3-6 years | 8-12 minutes; parent and teacher | Test-retest: .62-.87; interrater: .36-.63 |
| Social Skills Rating System (SSRS) | F.M. Gresham and S.N. Elliot (1990) | 3-18 years | 15-25 minutes; parent and teacher | Normative sample of 4000, stratified; test-retest: .65-.93 |
| Temperament and Atypical Behavior Scale (TABS) Screener | S.J. Bagnato, J.T. Neisworth, J. Salvia, and F.M. Hunt (1999) | 11-71 months | 5 minutes; parent, professional | Reliability: .42-.64; sensitivity: .60 |
| Vineland Social-Emotional Early Childhood Scales (SEEC) | S. Sparrow, D. Cicchetti, and D. Balla (2005) | Birth-5 years and 11 months | 15-20 minutes; professional | Based on 1984 data |

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Infant Mental Health Promotion

IMHP



VISION

Recognizing babies' minds and the relationship to lifelong health

MISSION

To develop and promote best practices for infant mental health through education, advocacy, and collaboration with families, professionals, and the communities that influence the lives of infants and young children in Canada.

education

resources

collaboration

advocacy

www.IMHPromotion.ca

Why our relationship matters...

0-3 mths (2 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I am new to this world and everything around me is strange and unfamiliar, except you. I have been listening to your voice as I have been growing and know that you will be taking good care of me as I grow even more. You will start to learn my cues and what I need, as my senses develop and I start to understand them. I need you to be near me so that I can see your face, hear your voice, feel your skin and smell your familiar scent. When you are nearby when I need you, and you consistently try to read my cues and meet my needs that helps me learn that I can trust you to help me understand the world around me, and that it is not so scary a place.



3-8 mths (6 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I am beginning to understand who the important people in my life are. You are a very important part of my development. When you consistently respond to my needs I learn that I can trust you to be there for me. You know when I need to be fed, changed or just held. Just like how you read my cues, I am learning to read your facial expressions and your tone of voice, but I also notice when you seem angry which can sometimes scare me. When you make eye-contact with me, and get down to my level it helps me interact with you. You play with me when I am happy, and you hold me when I am sad, this lets me know that you care about me which creates our bond. This special bond helps me grow.

9-14 mths (12 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I am curious about my world and like to explore the world around me, but I still need you near for when I am unsure. I like my new toys, but you are still my favourite, so when you aren't around I notice. Let me know when you are leaving, so I can prepare myself. I'm starting to mimic the sounds you make when you speak. When we have a conversation, I learn more words and will soon use them myself. I am learning to move around to explore my environment. I am becoming my own person with different likes and dislikes, and show my emotions as I feel them. I am beginning to become independent but still need you around to help me grow.

15-20 mths (18 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I am learning more words and enjoy using them to talk with you. You can help me expand my vocabulary by singing songs, reading books and having conversations with me any chance we get. While I've become more independent in my interactions and play, I still have a tough time of expressing my emotions and need your help to name and show my emotions. I've become good at letting you know when I like or dislike something. I am beginning to test my limits and yours, make sure to give me boundaries to keep me safe. Watch me build on my strengths and engage in the world and become a confident and independent toddler. Your encouragement helps me grow.

21-26 mths (24 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I am a toddler now! This means that I am becoming independent and testing my boundaries. I like making my own decisions and if you give me options I can choose my own clothes and activities for the day. I use more words to tell you what I want, need or like as well as dislike. You are still my favourite toy, but I am learning to play with other children my age. I am beginning to engage in imaginary play and role-playing which helps me to think about others' feelings. It also helps me learn about sharing and turn-taking. Talk to me about what we are doing today and let me know of any changes in our routine so I can prepare for them.

Supporting me as I become my own person will help me grow.

27-32 mths (30 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I love it when we read together; I am able to follow the stories and sometimes like to pretend to be the characters in the stories. My play is very important to my development and when you introduce me to new scenarios in our imaginary play it helps me to build on my social skills. I've begun to play with certain friends, but cooperative play is still a bit tough for me. Stay close and help me to remember my turn-taking and sharing skills. I like to share my experiences and my feelings, but please be patient, sensitive and supportive of me when I share my thoughts and ideas. Your consistent responses still make me feel safe, even though I am much more independent now. By following my lead and being my play partner, you help me grow.

33 – 41 mths (36 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I'm older now and I can wait my turn, and can be patient when you are getting my food or when we are going somewhere. I use my words a lot more often to express my wants and how I feel. I'm better at being ok in a strange place, even when you are not around. I know that it's only a matter of time before I get to see you again! I still really love playing make-believe, either by myself or with other children. I love coming up with stories on my own, or acting out the stories that we read together. I sometimes talk out loud, it helps me learn more words, but I still love our conversations. I am beginning to show affection to other children my age, and I work hard to get

your approval. When you praise the work I do, it makes me feel special, which makes me feel loved. Knowing that you are proud of me and the things I do helps me gain self-confidence and gives me a sense of my abilities. By being my champion and cheering me on, you help me grow.

42-53 mths (48 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I love playing with friends and being social, even though sometimes I prefer to be by myself, or just be with you. I can play with just one good friend or many friends. Sometimes I can be really good at taking turns and sharing, other times I have a harder time sharing my toys or letting others join in. I'm starting to understand things that have happened in the past, and things that will happen in the future. I've got a really good idea about the things I like, dislike, want and do not want. I know who I am and who the important people in my life are. I can understand small amounts of reason, like when you say I can't have that chocolate bar from the grocery store because it will spoil my dinner. I've got such a big imagination that sometimes I might get afraid of things like the dark! When you explain to me why things happen, and comfort me when I am scared, sick or tired, you help me grow.

54-65 mths (60 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I like to play games where I win. I know what I am good at and like to show off my talents and my accomplishments. I want to show you that I can get better at anything, so I will stay with one task and work hard at it until I finish it. I can get frustrated if I'm not doing as well as I think I should, so I will need your encouragement and your support when I'm feeling low and being too hard on myself. Helping me to see what I'm good at and bringing me to another activity when I am frustrated or upset helps me to feel better and manage my emotions. I like to play in groups, but I need you around to help with the rules and how we should all play together. I can listen to your guidance, but I am beginning to make suggestions of my own. I can bargain with you about what the rules are, and when they need to be followed. I know when I've done something I shouldn't have, and since I already feel bad about it, it helps when you are gentle and explain why I shouldn't have done it instead of getting upset with me and raising your voice. I am becoming my own person and when you embrace who I am and celebrate me and my abilities you help me grow.

0 - 3 Months

Babies are born relationship ready and in their first three months of life are actively trying to make sense of their world. Before they can even speak, babies communicate with their facial expressions, voices and body language. As caregivers and babies get to know each other, babies will depend on their caregivers to recognize their cues and respond to their needs in a sensitive, timely and consistent way. This is the beginning of a trusting relationship that will extend to the wider world in later years. Babies' relationships and experiences lay the foundation for their mental health now, throughout their childhood, and well into their adult years.

Over the first three months, a baby will:

- **Gaze at her caregiver's face and look in the direction of her caregiver's voice.**
Baby's caregivers should bring their faces close so that baby can see their features and expressions. Baby may not initially make eye contact since her vision has not fully developed, but she will enjoy looking up and seeing her caregivers' faces.
- **Smile spontaneously.**
By 2 – 3 months, a baby's social smiles are signs that she knows her caregivers.
- **Recognize a familiar voice.**
For months before baby was born, her mother's voice was what she heard most. She will follow that voice, turning her head in that direction, and will prefer it over others.
- **Make cooing sounds when she is happy, contented and communicative.**
- **Be soothed when picked up and comforted (most of the time).**
- **Express her emotions and needs through her cries and actions.**
Baby will find a way to let her caregivers know that she needs attention when hungry, tired or uncomfortable, e.g., in need of a diaper change.

4 - 6 Months

With loving, nurturing early relationships baby is beginning to understand his physical and social surroundings and learning to discover his world. He knows who his caregivers are and who he can trust to respond to his needs. This is the start of the attachment relationship and will be dependent on how well caregivers provide consistent, responsive and appropriate care. As baby continues to learn about his world and to make sense of the things around him, his caregivers need to continue to provide loving and responsive relationships to help guide him through those experiences.

By 6 months a baby will begin to:

- **Intentionally express his emotions.**
He will cry or get agitated when he wants attention, e.g., he may laugh and smile while interacting with his caregivers or he may show that he is excited by quickly waving his arms and legs around.
- **Recognize his primary caregivers.**
A baby feels safest around his primary caregivers and seeks a familiar presence. He knows who his primary caregivers are and that they will respond to his needs.
- **Make eye contact.**
Baby will begin to focus for longer periods of time as his vision has developed more since birth and he can now see things more clearly and farther away. When a caregiver sings, babbles or imitates the sounds baby makes, baby will look up at his caregiver and make eye contact. He engages by cooing and babbling back.
- **Read facial and vocal expressions and learn what different forms of interaction mean.**
When his caregivers engage with him, e.g., talking, singing, cooing or babbling, baby will respond and make eye contact. When he hears his caregivers getting angry and speaking in a voice that is louder than normal, he might become scared and cry. He will know something is not right and may become agitated and seek his caregivers' attention.
- **Form an attachment with his primary caregivers.**
When caregivers respond to their baby's needs especially when he is distressed, baby will know he can trust and depend on his caregivers. With positive, consistent care, baby will form secure attachments with his caregivers.

7 - 12 Months

By the age of one, baby is learning more about her world and may even have an opinion about things she likes or dislikes. She is beginning to get around by crawling, walking by holding onto furniture or perhaps even on her own with no support. She is curious to learn about the things around her and can now actively explore. Baby can now understand simple language and words like “no,” “bye,” or “shoes.”

Baby will:

- **Begin to intentionally tell her caregivers what she wants.**
Baby will make gestures or point at objects that she wants. She will begin to put her arms out or up when she wants to be picked up. She will begin to babble more and may even say a couple of words to interact and communicate.
- **Begin to miss her caregivers when they are not around.**
When her caregivers leave the room baby will notice, become upset and may begin to cry. She misses her caregivers when they're not there and looks for them.
- **Begin to seek comfort from her caregivers.**
When baby gets upset or hurt she will want and need to be comforted by her caregivers. It is important to respond to baby's distress by comforting her. Comfort her and give her words to help her label her feelings.
- **Show her caregivers her emotions.**
When baby gets scared she will want to be near her caregivers and maybe cling to them. When she gets mad she might make a frustrated face. Or when she feels shy she may hide behind them or try to cover her face.
- **Begin to show affection towards her caregivers.**
Baby will want to be hugged and kissed and in return she will hug and kiss her caregivers back. She will begin to understand the words “hug” and “kiss” and do these things spontaneously.
- **Develop a sense of herself as a separate person with her own likes and dislikes.**
Baby is starting to have dislikes and likes about her experiences, her toys and the people around her. She will let her caregivers know what she enjoys doing and being around, and what she does not like to do.

13 - 18 Months

Baby is starting to understand more of what he hears and is enjoying the use of language. He enjoys hearing short stories and simple songs. He will point at pictures in books and try and sing along to songs he is familiar with. Baby enjoys reading the same books and hearing the same songs over and over; he enjoys knowing what will happen next in the book or song. Repetition helps him memorize simple songs which will help him build his vocabulary.

Baby will:

- **Become more confident and have a greater sense of himself.**
Baby has more likes and dislikes when it comes to what he plays with, who he wants to play with and when he wants to interact with people.
- **Begin to take ownership of objects belonging to him, such as toys.**
Baby will have a difficult time with sharing since his toys right now belong to him. His caregivers will hear him using words like “no,” “mine,” etc.
- **Notice his peers.**
Baby is becoming interested in what others are doing or what they are playing with. He may not join in and play with them but rather sit beside them and play on his own. He will watch his peers but may not initiate any interaction with them.
- **Express his emotions to his caregivers.**
Baby will still feel a lot of emotions, so his caregivers should comfort him and help him label his feelings. Labeling feelings will give baby ownership of his emotions, and with time he will learn how to express them.

19 - 24 Months

Baby is growing into an independent toddler. She is mastering things on her own and seeks less help from her caregivers. She is beginning to engage in imaginary play. As she watches and observes her surroundings, she will begin to imitate the actions of others and try to role-play. She might pick up a broom to “houseclean,” or play “mom” with her dolls, etc. She is beginning to use simple sentences with the words she knows and is beginning to communicate and use language more easily. She notices her peers around her and enjoys their company but may need help mastering her social play skills, like sharing and turn taking.

A toddler will:

- **Begin to learn about others’ feelings and the concept of empathy.**
Baby is aware of her peers and is beginning to understand they have feelings just like she does. When someone takes a toy away from a friend or hits a friend, it hurts her and she may cry too. She is beginning to develop empathy for the people she cares for and realizes other people also get sad. Baby is developing the ability to take another person’s perspective.
- **Want to make her own choices and decisions about how she does things.**
Baby is becoming more independent as she masters doing things on her own. She will still look for assistance from her caregivers when she needs help. She is still dependent on them and knows they will comfort her and respond to her when needed.
- **Begin to develop a sense of imagination as she takes on different roles and engages in pretend play.**
- **Have more words that she uses to express herself and to get what she wants.**
By the age of two, baby’s communication will evolve from using simple two-word sentences to more complex complete sentences.
- **Parallel play starts with toddlers playing next to each other.**
They may not share or be doing the same activity but they will play next to each other.

25 - 36 Months

Toddlers are confidently exploring the world, and when given the chance, are socially engaged with other children and adults. They are beginning to understand the children's stories read to them and are talking about their own personal experiences and the events they are involved in. They are also engaged in more complex imaginary play, from watching and imitating people around them to pretending to be characters they hear about in the books read to them.

A toddler will:

- **Be actively forming friendships with his peers when given the chance.**
A toddler may have one specific friend that he always plays with and prefers to be around. He learns to play, engage and interact with others. Ensuring he has consistent play experiences is important for his development.
- **Use more language between these months.**
A toddler will communicate what he wants and how he feels. He is starting to have conversations with peers and the adults he's around, sharing details about himself and his adventures. He has a grasp of language and his speech is now more easily understood. His use of words, complete sentences and overall vocabulary will increase significantly.
- **Begin to use words to express his feelings.**
Caregivers will know when a toddler is happy, scared, sad or mad. With encouragement he will try and use words to express these feelings, but of course, he will still use gestures, such as walking away, crying or throwing something.
- **Engage in more imaginative play.**
Not only will a toddler imitate the people around him, but he will begin to use his imagination with several objects. He will enjoy pretending different objects symbolize something else—a block turns into a train or playdough turns into a dinosaur.
- **Become more aware of peers and will be increasingly sympathetic toward them when they are upset.**
A toddler will recognize others' feelings and might even comfort peers when he sees they are upset.
- **Become more engaged in social play skills.**
A toddler is beginning to learn how to share and take turns. Cooperative play may still be difficult but he is learning to play with others and enjoy their company.

37 - 48 Months

Preschoolers are becoming their own person and standing up for what they want. They show more self-esteem, confidence, optimism and enjoyment of daily activities. He will have endless questions about how things work and why things happen. Language development is still on the fast track and most three-year olds will have a vocabulary of over 700 words. Three-year olds are better at understanding and following simple rules and controlling their impulses. Four-year olds are more even-tempered and cooperative with parents though they still stand up for what they want. His imagination is developing with make-believe play and he enjoys playing out situations that are familiar in his life.

A preschooler will:

- **Enjoy playing with other children.**
He is socializing well and is showing improved skills in turn-taking, sharing, and co-operating.
- **Greet familiar adults.**
He will also be appropriately using words such “please” and “thank you”.
- **Experience a broad range of feelings.**
Preschoolers are learning and experiencing a broader range of emotions such as jealousy, excitement, fear, happiness, and anger.
- **Have the skills to express anger verbally.**
A preschooler near the end of this stage will use a vocabulary of approximately 900 words, including five-word sentences, which allows for him to be able to express his anger more specifically with words rather than physically.
- **Be an accomplished negotiator.**
With increased vocabulary, a preschooler will negotiate and try to make things go his way.
- **Become less egocentric.**
He will be more able to understand feelings and point of view of others, for example, showing empathy for a friend who is upset. Becoming less self-centered is helping him feel less upset with limits and discipline.

49 - 60 Months

A preschooler is a pretty capable person by now. A four-year old is full of energy, her imagination is developing with make-believe play and she enjoys playing out situations that are familiar in her life. By year five, she is embracing life fully. She is learning to cope with frustration and to understand rules. With the emergence of a conscience, she adopts rules, accepting them as her own. She is much better at taking turns and playing cooperatively, as well as planning and problem solving with others. She can now speak almost like an adult, using correct grammar 90% of the time, making navigating social-emotional situations more easily than previously.

A preschooler will:

- **Play games with simple rules.**
While she began with an egocentric view, she is learning that rules are important socially. Games like Follow the Leader, Red Rover, Simon Says, and soccer do not work if nobody is following the rules. She is consequently learning that life also has rules (laws) that help society function productively.
- **Enjoy dramatic play with other children.**
She loves using her imagination to play pretend with other children. This includes elements of imitative play and make-believe play. It requires verbal interaction between two or more children. Because it is interactive, it requires planning.
- **Begin to grasp the concept of sharing.**
She is starting to understand why sharing is important. There is an increased awareness of other people's minds, allowing her to negotiate, resolve conflict, and monitor the emotional state of a group.
- **Experience self-esteem.**
She will feel good about herself and take pride in her accomplishments.
- **Concentrates and works alone for up to 20-30 minutes.**
Her attention span is growing, allowing her to accomplish tasks she has never accomplished before.
- **Keep going on a difficult task for longer periods.**
Her ability to continue trying while working on a difficult task is expanding, and while she may need some guidance and help to accomplish the task, she is sometimes able to problem solve and accomplish the task independently.

Be engaged & engaging

0-3 months

Sing, cuddle, read, massage, touch and play.

Every baby is born ready for love and to interact with her caregivers with these activities.

At this stage, you are her favourite toy!

4-6 months

Talk, sing, and imitate your baby's coos and babbles. He will look at you and coo and babble back.

Being actively engaged in baby's life will allow you to learn his routines and what makes him content.

Watch for cues that baby needs a break, (e.g., looks away or needs some quiet time). He will let you know when he is ready to engage again. This is just his way of absorbing all that he is experiencing.

7-12 months

Pick up on her cues when she wants something.

Introduce her to new things, new places and new toys.

Follow her lead when she explores her world. You will come to learn what she enjoys doing and will be able to foster that interest and expand on it.

13-18 months

Get down to baby's level and follow his lead and imitate his actions.

Learn his interests and what he enjoys doing.

Become his play partner and expand on his interests.

19-24 months

Join in her play and help foster her social play skills, teach her sharing and turn taking skills that she can later use when she plays with her peers.

Baby is beginning to engage in pretend play and will imitate your actions. She sees you as her role model.

25-36 months

Continue to help him with turn taking and sharing.

These terrific toddler years are marked by independent exploration of his world, communicating thoughts and ideas, and becoming more easily understood.

Become a play partner and help him increase his imagination by introducing different scenarios.

37-48 months

Be available and ready to talk to him when needed to show him you are interested in his activities.

Play simple games with him that require turn-taking (e.g., Go Fish).

Engage in activities that make him happy (e.g., reading books, doing puzzles).

49-60 months

Encourage more sophisticated pretend play by providing props (e.g., restaurant, grocery store, doctor's visit). This will help him engage in more problem solving, making decisions and new conversations.

If you can, run with him, jump with him, and play on the floor with him. He is very active at this age and loves to share this with you. Taking him to environments (i.e., the park) where he can move his body will make him feel more in control during quieter activities.

Be sensitive

0-3 months

Respond quickly and appropriately to baby's needs.
Read her cues and give her what she needs to be content.

4-6 months

Baby's cries are his way of expressing his feelings.
Don't get frustrated at these times. If baby cries after his feeding or diaper change and does not settle, try other things, (e.g., burp or hold him for a bit), and see if he calms down.
Keep trying until you find something that works.

7-12 months

Your baby is her own person with her own personality which may be different from yours.
She may not like the same things as you and may prefer to do things differently than you. Respect and foster those differences.
Acknowledge her dislikes/likes, preferences and feelings.
Comfort her when she gets upset, and use words to help her label and express her feelings.

13-18 months

Learn what your baby likes/dislikes and what he prefers and continue to reassure him that it's okay for him to have his own preferences.

19-24 months

Give her space to explore her independence. Intervene only when necessary for safety or to set limits.
Provide her with options that allow her to make simple choices about what she wants, e.g., let her choose between two healthy dessert options—grapes or strawberries.

25-36 months

Your toddler is beginning to understand the sequence of events in familiar stories.
Help him understand the world around him. His words are now more clearly formed.
Give him the words he needs to be understood and to express himself.
Be patient.

37-48 months

Provide opportunities for him to make choices about play activities.
Avoid the urge to quickly fix things when he's upset. Support him while you allow him time to problem solve.
When he is crying, avoid the urge to tell him to stop crying, model the behaviour you are trying to change. Staying calm will help him become calm again.

49-60 months

Support him when he wants to try new things or take risks in social situations. He will learn that it's okay to try out new things and can bring success.
If transitioning to a new setting (i.e., school, daycare), it can be difficult for him to express what he's feeling. New experiences mean new emotions. Take time to talk to him to help him understand his new feelings and think of ways to cope with difficult ones.

Be consistent

0-3 months

Build routines and respond the same way to her cues.

Consistency will help baby find her world more predictable and reliable.

4-6 months

Continue to build routines and respond in the same ways to baby's cues.

By making his world more predictable, you will help him make sense of the world and to feel safe and secure.

7-12 months

The consistency of your daily routines and responses will let your baby know what is expected of her.

She will also know what to expect from you and will begin to learn what her limits are and what she can and cannot do in regards to her safety.

13-18 months

You and your child are building a trusting relationship.

As he learns what is expected of him, he is learning the limits for safe play.

He knows that when he is distressed or in need you will respond by comforting or redirecting him.

19-24 months

Toddlers are now testing their limits.

Keep her safe while nurturing her independence by allowing her to choose from options that are acceptable to you.

She will keep her sense of control

25-36 months

Providing consistent care and responses to behaviour lets your toddler feel safe and secure and lets him know what you expect from him.

He will know his limits and know what he can or cannot do

Be patient.

37-48 months

Be consistent with the rules, this will help her understand expectations.

Holding and cuddling helps her feel reconnected after being apart.

Create a schedule that he she can get used to. Predictability can help her understand time and time management.

49-60 months

Even though she now has a stronger character and will stand up for what she wants, she still needs you to direct her in the right direction and guide her daily decisions. She relies on you to feel safe and loved.

Be responsive

0-3 months

When baby smiles, smile back.

When she coos, talk to her.

When baby cries, she is telling you loud and clear that she needs you and you must respond appropriately and quickly.

Responding, especially when she is upset, is your number one job and she will learn that you will be there for her.

4-6 months

When baby is seeking your attention, respond with touch (e.g., picking him up) or with your voice (e.g., letting him know you are there).

When he cries, comfort him.

When he is babbling or cooing, talk to him.

Your baby will engage even more when you are responsive.

7-12 months

When baby cries, looks for you, or wants to play with you, respond and let her know that you're there when she needs you.

13-18 months

When baby seeks your attention, join in and play with him.

Be his play partner and follow his lead.

19-24 months

Although baby is seeking her independence, she is still dependent on you and needs to know you will comfort and help her when she is distressed.

25-36 months

Your independent toddler will still become distressed at times.

Comfort him and reassure him that you are always there.

37-48 months

Help her deal with tantrums by talking to her about what makes her feel better when she is angry or sad.

You still play a crucial role in responding consistently, especially when she is hurt, sick or scared.

49-60 months

This time period often brings big transitions (i.e., school). You may find that she needs additional support during this time and she adjusts to the new demands of her new routine. Be patient and extra supportive during this time to help her feel safe and confident to tackle what lies ahead.

Monitor and put a name to things that may cause her experience to be negative. This will help her experience lower levels of stress and feel your parental support.

Be enjoyable to be with

0-3 months

Babies can read your cues, too! Baby loves to be with you and to see your happy face.

Focus on baby and make yourself emotionally available to her.

If you are stressed out, ask for help.

4-6 months

Allow yourself to take a moment to sit back and enjoy the pleasures of being a caregiver.

Watch your baby while he is sleeping or playing and take pleasure in the fact that this little person is an important part of your life and you are a part of his.

7-12 months

Spend time with her.

Take pleasure in watching her, seeing how much she has grown, how much she has learned.

Take notice of her unique personality when she is with others, with you, and when playing on her own.

Take it all in and take pride in how much your little girl has grown.

13-18 months

Enjoy your baby's company.

Sit back and watch him play.

Watch him build on his strengths, engage with the world and become a confident independent little person.

19-24 months

Take pride in knowing your little toddler is becoming independent and mastering things on her own.

25-36 months

Enjoy being around your toddler and spending time with him.

You are helping him become a strong, independent individual. Take pleasure in this but know that you will always be his caregiver and will be there when he needs you.

Do not make him feel bad for making mistakes or for doing things in a different way.

Encourage him to try new things, build on his strengths and to do things on his own.

37-48 months

Model coping emotions so she can learn acceptable ways to cope.

Praise turn-taking during every day routines.

Even though she may be showing more independence, she still needs you to build her self-esteem, confidence, optimism, and enjoyment of everyday activities. Take pride that you are helping to shape how she views the world.

49-60 months

Tell her how proud you are of her abilities whenever you catch her doing something well. She will feel proud of what she's done and will have a strong sense of her strengths and abilities.

Engage in activities that she chooses and let her take the lead. This shows respect for her ideas and builds the relationship.

Be baby's voice

0-3 months

Until your baby can talk, you need to be her voice and to speak up for the things that she needs.

4-6 months

Be your baby's advocate.

Observe and learn his cues because that is how he is telling you that he needs you.

Respond with comfort and pleasure to make him feel safe and comfortable.

7-12 months

Try and help her understand things when she becomes overwhelmed by giving your baby words to describe her feelings and emotions.

By giving her words, you are also building her vocabulary which will help her put words together to make simple sentences.

13-18 months

Give him words to help him voice his feelings and express his emotions.

When he cannot, do it for him.

19-24 months

Your toddler is beginning to use her words.

Help her label objects and experiences.

When you can sense she is uncomfortable or needs something, help her by giving her the words to use or voice it for her.

25-36 months

Your toddler is on the road to becoming more and more independent but you have been his voice for most of his life to keep him safe and secure.

He is still very dependent on you. Continue to be his voice and comfort him especially when he is distressed.

While your toddler begins to interact with others more independently, you may need to step in to guide play.

37-48 months

Explore books about emotions and talk about times he has felt those emotions.

When he loses control, help him label his emotions and guide him on how to regain control.

When conflicts arise with peers, he will need your assistance to problem solve. Being nearby as he explores will allow him to feel safe.

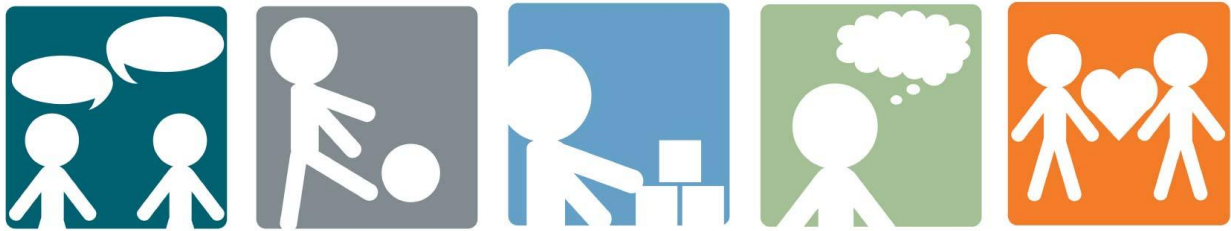
49-60 months

Encourage him to not give up on games or tasks when he plays with others. He will learn to persist at a task, especially when others are counting on him.

Show and coach him on how to handle emotions and feelings. You can teach him how to express anger and frustration safely.

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Growing Together Every Day



**Developmental
Support
Planning
(DSP)**

STRATEGIES

Using the Developmental Support Plan STRATEGIES Database

The Developmental Support Plan (DSP) Strategies Database is a document for individuals working with at risk infants and young children to help with the creation of the support plans. The support plan database, like the support plans, cover five major domains:

- Communication
- Gross Motor
- Fine Motor
- Problem Solving
- and Personal Social

Each domain has major milestones from birth to age five highlighted with some examples of goals and strategies to support these milestones. The DSP Strategies Database can help to provide a starting point with examples to help with the creation of your goals, and choosing the strategies to accompany these goals, however, each plan should also be individualized to fit the different needs of each child screened.

Like the Developmental Support Plans, the DSP Strategies Database is written from the voice of the child. It is organized in such a way that all you'll need to do is identify an area that needs improvement for the child, and search for appropriate goals and strategies from there.

The first page of each database includes a table of contents which includes a list of developmental milestones, and their definitions. Below each topic is a list of sub topics, or headings, then the goal, written in the voice of the child. Topics can be chosen by looking through the list, or by using the search function if an area of concern has already been identified.

Once you have determined which area of concern you are going to address within the developmental support plan for a specific domain, you can double click on the heading to skip to the chart with the goal and strategies for this area of concern. The topic is written at the top, with the goal below in the first part of the chart. Below each goal are a number of strategies. These are arranged by age range from youngest to oldest, and any number can be copied over to the plan to ensure the caregiver has varied strategies to choose from. Below the strategies in the last part of the charts are the descriptions detailing "Why this is important".

Every part of a Developmental Support Plan should be personalized to ensure that it is appropriate and meaningful to the specific child and family for whom the plan is being created, based on your observations, the strengths of the child, and the family needs and circumstances.

For example: If you have completed a developmental screen, made your own observations through spending some time with the child, completed a caregiver interview, and identified that attachment is an area of concern for the child, you would simply:

- choose the appropriate DSP Strategies Domain, (Social Emotional in this case),
- use either the links embedded in the table of contents or the key word search function to find the attachment table,
- copy the goal text to the DSP Template and edit to tailor the goal to the individual child.

Next you'll choose 3-5 strategies that are age appropriate and include them in the strategies section of your Developmental Support Plan.

Then choose some appropriate "Why this is important" phrases to support the goal, and strategies you have selected. All you'll have left to complete on the plan are the child's strengths.



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Growing Together Every Day

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES





Contents

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Overall Objective:

“I am learning to use and understand wordless cues through my everyday interactions. When you pick up on these cues, it will help build our relationship and boost my self confidence!”

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Goal: I will imitate my caregiver’s facial expressions58

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EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE

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"I am learning to use my words more and more as I grow and with your help I will be speaking in no time!"*

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NOTE: This is NOT a comprehensive list.

This resource is intended to give you suggestions for strategies that can support development. A Developmental Support Plan should be unique and customized to address the child’s developmental strengths and needs.

When preparing a Developmental Support Plan for a specific child, be sure to:

- Include/ modify the goals to be specific to the child’s strengths.
- Include something personal and meaningful to the family.
- Create your own goals and strategies for the child based on what you know about the child &



NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Overall Objective:

"I am learning to use and understand wordless cues through my everyday interactions. When you pick up on these cues, it will help build our relationship and boost my self confidence!"

Making Eye Contact

Goal: I will make eye contact with my primary caregiver.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 0-3 months | Hearing your voice will draw my attention to your face, so talk to me often and let me see your face as much as possible. |
| 0-3 months | When you are talking to me, hold me facing you so that I can see your face. Watching you as you talk to me allows me to become familiar with your face. |
| 0-3 months | Hold me in your arms, look at my face and gently sway me while you sing lullabies. |
| 0-3 months | During bath time, give me a chance to be face to face with you and talk to me about what you are doing. |
| 0-6 months | When placing me in my stroller, if possible, have my stroller facing you so that as we walk I can continue to make eye contact with you and we can talk about what we are seeing |
| 0-6 months | With your face near mine, look at me, talk to me and make different facial expressions. This will encourage me to focus on you because your facial expressions will draw my eyes to your face. |
| 0-12 months | If we are taking a bus ride and I'm in my stroller, if possible, find a seat that allows you to place my stroller where I can see your face. |
| 0-12 months | When travelling in a car, if possible, have someone sit next to me, talk to me and make eye contact with me. |
| 0-12 months | Talk or sing to me while you change my diaper. Look at my face, use my name and gaze into my eyes. I will know that I have your attention. |
| 0-12 months | When feeding, hold me in your arms and talk to me. Gaze into my eyes as I feed, this will strengthen our relationship and allow me the opportunity to look into your eyes and become familiar with your face. |
| 0-24 months | When snuggling in your arms and reading a book, pause and make eye contact with me at regular intervals. After we finish each page, look at me and talk about what we can see. |
| 0-24 months | I know you can't be with me all the time, but when you are doing your daily chores, keep me near and make eye contact with me often so that I know you're there for me. |
| 3-6 months | Sitting on the floor with your knees slightly bent, lay me on my back on your thighs, hold my hands and gently sway your thighs back and forth and sing, "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." |



| | |
|---------------|--|
| | Look into my eyes and smile as you sing. This will show me that I am important and that you enjoy spending time with me. |
| 3-9 months | Lay me down facing you on the bed so that we can gaze into each other's eyes. Let me touch your face as you talk to me. Sharing your gaze will help me focus on you when you are talking to me. |
| 6-9 months | Use my name when you talk to me. As you continue to call me by my name, I will begin to recognize and respond to it by turning to look at you. |
| 6-9 months | Follow my lead as I start to 'babble' more and more. Look at my face and repeat my babbles back to me. When you copy what I am saying I will be encouraged to look at you and continue babbling. |
| 6-24 months | When you interact with me, make sure you have my attention by looking into my eyes. Then pause and wait for my reply before continuing. I will learn when it is my turn to respond to you as I look at your gaze. |
| 9-12 months | Play "peek-a-boo" with me sitting on your lap. Wait for a few seconds after each "boo" to let me look at you and giggle. |
| 12-24 months | Sit on the floor as I stand so that our eyes are at the same level. Roll a ball towards me and ask me to pick it up and roll it back to you. Look in to my eyes and smile at me as we play. |
| 12-60 months | Whenever you play or talk with me, be sure to get down to my level and look at my eyes. This will help me pay attention to what you are saying and let me know you are really hearing me. |
| 12-60 months | When sitting together during a meal, make sure that we are at the same level, facing each other and making eye contact as we talk. |
| 18-60 months | Sit with me on the carpet at my eye level. Point out facial parts and ask me to imitate you. Example: "This is my nose, where's (child's name) nose." If I do not understand, guide my hand to touch my nose. |
| 24-36 months | When you ask me to do something, like put on my coat or put something away, make sure you get down to my level and make eye contact. If I'm not looking at you, gently cradle my face with your hands so you have my full attention and say "__, please put your coat on." |
| 24 -60 months | Get down to my level when you are giving me instructions; speak clearly and gently. This way you will have my full attention and I will know what you need me to do. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Making eye contact will help me to focus and attend to you.
- I will learn to hold a gaze while interacting with others.
- When you get down to my level to look me in the eyes, it lets me know that I have your full attention and will help me to give you my attention.
- Eye contact helps build our relationship because it enables you to read my cues and helps me read yours.
- When you turn off any distractions (e.g., TV, computer) and get down to my level, I'll have an easier time paying attention to what you're trying to tell me.



Gestures

Goal: I will use gestures or point to objects that I want.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 3-9 months | Place an age appropriate toy in my hand or nearby for me to grab and/or put in my mouth. |
| 3-9 months | While I'm on my back, place a toy over my arms and encourage me to reach for the toy. Allow me to have some success in grabbing the toy. |
| 3-9 months | During tummy time, place my favourite toy in front of me but just out of my reach and encourage me to reach for the toy. |
| 6-12 months | When you see me point to something that catches my interest, label it for me. For example, when I point to a person say "Yes, that is Daddy sitting on the couch." |
| 6-12 months | Place me in front of a mirror and ask, "Where is ____?" See if I can point to myself. If I'm not ready yet, point to my reflection and say, "There is (child's name)!" or try taking my hand and pointing to my reflection. When I've mastered this, get me to point to my body parts such as my nose, eyes, ears, etc. |
| 6-18 months | Watch for my gestures when I am trying to communicate something to you. Ask me questions such as, "Do you want your special toy?" or "Do you need your diaper changed?" As I get older, I will be able to let you know what I need by nodding, shaking my head or pointing. Give me time to practice. |
| 6-12 months | Bring me outside for a walk and ask me about the trees and plants around us. Let me point to things that interest me and be ready to give me the words for each of the things that I point to. |
| 8-12 months | When someone leaves, show me how you wave goodbye and say "Bye-bye." I will begin to mimic these gestures in order to express myself. |
| 8-24 months | Ask me where familiar items in a book are and encourage me to point to them. For example you might say "____, show me the ball!" or "Where's the doggy?" |
| 9-12 months | Acknowledge my attempts to communicate when I hand you a toy by naming the toy and thanking me. For instance, if I hand you a teddy you could say, "Oh, you gave me Teddy, thank you!" |
| 9-14 months | When we walk into a room where there is a familiar person, ask "Do you see ____?" Point to that person and say "____ is sitting on the couch." |
| 9-18 months | Label my body parts for me as you touch them. Encourage me to point out my body parts such as my nose, eyes, ears, etc. Praise me for my attempts as this will encourage me to keep trying. |
| 9-24 months | When I use gestures, label them. For example, if I am holding my arms up to be picked up, say "up" as you pick me up. Or if I open and close my hand while looking at an object, ask me if I want the object. |
| 12-18 months | Ask me yes or no questions throughout the day. Giving me clear yes or no questions allows me to answer by nodding or shaking my head. |
| 12-36 months | Clap to show enthusiasm about exciting things. I am learning to use gestures in a symbolic way and seeing you clap will help me learn to clap and express my feelings. |



| | |
|--------------|--|
| 14-36 months | Ask me to point or use my gestures when I can't find the words for what I want to say. I will combine words with gestures in order to form a sentence that you can understand. |
| 18-36 months | Sing songs with me that combine words and gestures. For instance, "The Wheels on the Bus" or "This is the Way I Wash My Hands." |
| 30-60 months | Play a game of "I Spy" with me where you describe familiar objects and try to get me to guess what they are by pointing to them. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Using gestures will help me communicate what I want or I'm interested in. This will allow me to feel independent and help me feel good about myself.
- Giving me words that match my needs will encourage me to use words to communicate more often. Eventually it will help me connect words to objects and actions.
- Interacting through conversation, singing songs and reading books together will allow me to enjoy time spent together.
- Modeling appropriate gestures for me will help me understand what kinds of gestures are appropriate and help me express my emotions in non-verbal ways.

Imitation

Goal: I will imitate my caregivers' facial expressions.

| | |
|------------|---|
| 0-6 months | Provide me with toys that have a soft and safe mirror. Hold the mirror up in front of my face and watch the reactions that I make. |
| 0-6 months | Hold me facing a mirror and point to my reflection. Encourage me to interact with my reflection by saying things like, "There is (my name) and there is Mommy!" |
| 0-6 months | Hold me facing you and talk to me. Make different shapes with your mouth or stick out your tongue. Pause and wait for me to copy you. |
| 0-6 months | Rock me in your arms, gaze into my eyes and make cooing sounds with different facial expressions. Watch my reaction and mirror what I do. |
| 6-9 months | Copy the sounds that I make then pause, wait and lean in expectantly to encourage me to continue the interaction. |
| 6-9 months | Begin tapping on a hard surface such as the floor then encourage me to copy you by looking at me, waiting and saying, "It's your turn." When I do copy you say, "Bang, bang!" then repeat. |
| 6-9 months | Follow my lead when I play with toys. Join into my play and imitate what I do. |
| 6-9 months | Play games with me like "Peek-a-boo" using hands or a cloth to hide your face/my face. Encourage me to hide my face or your face in response. Try other activities that may catch my interest to copy you such as blowing raspberries, clapping hands or stomping feet. |



| | |
|-------------|---|
| 8-12 months | Play games with me where we practice making different faces. For example, when singing “If You’re Happy and You Know It” make a happy face, sad face, mad face, etc., to go along with the actions. |
|-------------|---|

Why this is important... *BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER*

- I begin to learn by observing and imitating. When I look at what adults, siblings or my peers are doing, I begin to see how they act in certain situations.
- When I learn that a smile means someone is happy and a frown means someone is sad, I learn to apply this to real-life situations later on.
- When you give me the opportunity to pretend play with dolls, I can recreate situations that I have experienced, such as feeding, diapering or being comforted. This builds my capacity for empathy without me having to use any words!



RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE

Overall Objective:

“I am learning to listen and respond to what others have to say. Reading, singing, giving directions and discussing daily routines helps me to learn the words I need to respond to you!”

Auditory Memory

Goal: I will recognize familiar sounds and voices.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 0-3 months | When I'm playing on the floor and can't see you, call my name and encourage me to look toward you. |
| 0-6 months | When I'm distressed, use your voice to comfort me and let me know that you are there. |
| 0-6 months | Always respond to my cries with a soothing and nurturing tone. |
| 0-6 months | Hold me and read a familiar board book to me a few times every day. Make eye contact with me as you describe what's on each page. I will start to use my voice cooing and babbling as I try to join in. |
| 0-6 months | Sing familiar songs to me such as “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” or “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.” You can even try making up your own songs. I will start to use my voice cooing and babbling as I try to join in. |
| 3-24 months | Name the sounds that we hear. For instance, while at the park, we may hear the sound of cars honking or animals in the park. |
| 3-36 months | While in the car, on a walk, or on the bus, tell me stories. Use your imagination and include the names of familiar people, objects and places in the stories. |
| 3-24 months | Call attention to familiar sounds in my environment such as the phone ringing or the dog barking. Ask me, “Do you hear the phone ringing? Let's answer it!” |
| 6-24 months | When we are with familiar people or pets, say their name and ask me to find him or her. For instance, ask, “Where is our dog, Theo?” and wait for me to turn and look in the direction of the person or pet. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- As you respond to my cries with a nurturing voice, I will learn to associate a positive tone with nurturing activities.



Auditory Memory

Goal: I will learn to repeat familiar games, songs and stories.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 0-6 months | Sing familiar songs to me such as “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” or “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.” I will start to use my voice cooing and babbling as I try to join in. |
| 6-24 months | Let’s play a game with a noisemaking toy. Hide a toy or object that makes sounds such as a musical toy and wait for me to find it. As I get older, we can make this more difficult by hiding the toy under a table, or in another room. |
| 6-24 months | Play “This Little Piggy” with my toes. As I listen to your voice, I will become familiar with the rhyme and anticipate what’s coming next. I will begin to anticipate which toe you’re going to touch next and may even offer my other foot to continue the game. |
| 12-36 months | I am getting good at recognizing familiar sounds in my environment because of the songs and books that we have shared. Keep on imitating the sounds of animals and pointing out important sounds like the ringing of the telephone, or the sirens of the fire trucks. This helps me to learn more about living and non-living objects in my world. |
| 12-48 months | As a toddler, I love to repeat the refrain of “Old McDonald” by yelling “E-I-E-I-O.” As a preschooler, singing the “Alphabet Song” will help me to remember the letters and order of the alphabet. |
| 12-60 months | “The Wheels on the Bus” is a good song to increase my memory because I will begin to associate the actions with the words in the song. Make sure to do the actions that go along with the songs such as waving your arms from side to side like the wipers on the bus, open and shutting your hands for the doors, making a honking motion for the horn on the bus, etc. |
| 24-48 months | Read me books that repeat sentences. I will enjoy filling in the words when you stop reading. “Good Night Moon” or “Are you My Mother” are just a couple of books that will allow me to participate if you let me tell you the punch lines. |
| 24-60 months | When we sing songs like “The Ants Go Marching” I will have fun stomping my feet in time with the song. I will also learn numbers at the same time by remembering what comes next. This song works well as a group activity with other children as we count aloud together. |
| 24-60 months | When I start to get used to a new routine (like getting dressed) ask me “what comes next” after each step of the process. Soon I will remember what I have to put on first, second and last until I am all dressed on my own. |
| 30-60 months | My memory takes a while to develop. If you hide small objects under cups and ask if I can remember where each item is, that will really make me think hard and work my memory. An example would be if you ask me, “Which cup has the monkey?” |
| 30-60 months | Card games are a good way to practice my memory skills. In the game “Go Fish” make sure to show me your card’s picture, describe it and then ask me if I have it as one of my cards. “Do you have a card with two symbols on it, like this one?” Remind me to say, “Go Fish” if I don’t have that card. As we play I will have to remember if you asked me for the card and then I can ask you for it when I pick it from the pile. This game really tests my memory! |
| 30-60 months | Let’s make up a story together without pictures. Every day we can add something new to our story. If we like once our story is finished, we can create some pictures to go with it. |



Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- When I sing songs over and over with you, my listening skills improve and I will be able to remember and repeat the verses along with you.
- I need continuous practice in order to master skills, but it is extra important to build my memory.

Auditory Memory

Goal: I will learn to repeat words and phrases used every day by my caregivers.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 0-3 months | Let me hear your voice throughout the day. I will know when you are near just from the sound of your voice. |
| 0-3 months | Sit near me and call my name so that I turn toward you. Soon my name and your voice will become familiar to me. |
| 0-3 months | Use different intonations when you speak to me so that I become familiar with the different emotions associated with these intonations. |
| 0-12 months | While engaging with me, label actions you are doing. For example, if you are changing my diaper, talk me through the process. I will begin to associate actions with words. |
| 0-18 months | Find times to talk to me throughout the day. When we are getting ready to eat, tell me what we're going to have. When we're about to go out, let me know where we will be going. I like being prepared for the day. |
| 6-9 months | Use my name when you talk and play with me. I am beginning to understand what my name is and when you repeat my name throughout the day it gives me the chance to respond to it. |
| 6-12 months | Talk with me as you prepare my meals and snacks. Give me the words for things like juice and cups. Soon, I will recognize these words and understand what they mean. |
| 6-12 months | Sit on the ground with me to play. Name the toys and other items that I play with as I pick them up. If you give me the words for common items, I will begin to recognize and understand them. |
| 12-36 months | Use pictures when you are describing what we'll be doing today. For example, if I am going to see mom today, show me a picture of a car and a picture of her. |
| 18-24 months | Emphasize pronouns when you talk to me. I get more familiar with words like me, you and my when you use them often. |
| 18-24 months | Give me opportunities to be with other toddlers so I can begin to learn how to talk with other children. |
| 18-24 months | Ask me to do a simple part of our routine. For instance, "Bring me the teddy." |
| 18-24 months | At bath time, count my fingers and toes so I hear the numbers as you count each one. |

How I Understand You and Talk to Others



| | |
|--------------|---|
| 18-36 months | If I don't want to go somewhere, give me a transition object, like a blanket, teddy or whatever is my special toy. Holding onto such objects makes me feel more secure. Acknowledge my feelings and let me know that when I come back, you'll be here and we can do something fun together. |
| 24-30 months | Talk to me about everything we do, see and share together. I can now understand as many as 300 words, but I need you to keep talking to me so that I learn to understand even more. |
| 24-48 months | When I get home from being out, tell me you are happy to see me again! When I am back, ask me to help you. For example, "Would you like to help me make dinner later on?" I enjoy being included in these activities. |
| 24-60 months | Let me know about things before they happen, such as when we are going to eat, when I have to tidy up my toys or when we are going to the park. Give me many reminders so I know what's coming next. Say things like "_____, in a few minutes we're going to eat" followed by, "Okay, in 5 minutes we're going to get ready to go to grandmas." This will help me transition during the different times of the day. |
| 24-60 months | If I am having trouble moving from one activity to another, help me by telling me what I can look forward to doing in the next activity. |
| 30-36 months | When I am eating, describe my food using words such as big, small, hot or cold. It is easier for me to learn about opposites when I am able to explore my food or other objects in order to understand the words. |
| 30-36 months | Bring me outside for a walk and talk to me about everything we see. Describe the colours and features of trees, plants and more. I am starting to understand concepts like colour, space and time but I need your help to strengthen my understanding. |
| 48-60 months | Give me lots of warning if I am going somewhere new or doing something out of the ordinary. Tell me what this new place is going to be like. It is comforting to be prepared for something different. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Letting me know what's going to happen throughout my day helps me to prepare myself for what's coming next. I like to know what is going to happen, so giving me little reminders is very helpful.
- Transitions can be hard for me at times, so it is important that you let me know what is going to be happening ahead of time. This will help me build trust in you.
- Learning to listen to you and follow directions is an important part of our relationship. I need boundaries and knowing about my daily routines helps me learn about my boundaries. Talk to me about what is coming next so I can prepare myself.
- Putting words to my actions helps me associate my actions with the correct words and this will help me understand what is happening and what I am doing.



Listening and Comprehending

Goal: I will listen to your voice.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| All ages | Read stories to me. As you are reading, stop and talk to me about what is going on in the book. |
| All ages | Talk to me as often as you can. I am listening to every word you are saying. If we are in the car, turn down the radio and talk to me. Whether we are playing, having lunch, or going to sleep, your words let me know that you are there for me. |
| 0-3 months | Speak to me gently with your face near mine. I treasure these comforting interactions. Soon, I will even quiet down and smile at you when you talk to me. |
| 0-6 months | When I make noises, repeat them back to me over and over again! |
| 0-6 months | Talk to me in a gentle and soothing voice while rocking me in your arms. I love listening to your voice! |
| 0-6 months | Lie down beside me and read books to me every day. Don't be surprised when your voice is the only one that I recognize from early on. I have been listening carefully and can tell it apart from anybody else's. |
| 0-24 months | When you are in another room and I get fussy or start to cry, call out my name and tell me you are coming. This helps me to know that you are near and makes me feel safe and secure. |
| 0-24 Months | Sing songs to me when you are changing my diaper or during other daily routines. |
| 0-24 months | Make eye contact with me when you are singing to me. |
| 3-6 months | Vary your tone of voice when you speak to me. Reflect your happiness, excitement and love in your voice and soon I will respond to these changes in your tone of voice. |
| 6-12 months | Use 3-4 word sentences to describe events or objects. Emphasize key words when you are speaking to me such as saying, "This is your CUP" as you hand the cup to me. This will allow me to begin understanding words for the things around me. |
| 6-24 months | Use different voices while reading my favourite books to emphasize emotions in the story. This will help me recognize tones and emotions. |
| 12-18 months | Point to or tickle my tummy or my toes as you are changing or bathing me. |
| 12-48 months | Let's play "I Spy" while we are in the car or walking. Encourage me to label the things I see. Help me out if I can't seem to find the word and ask me to repeat it back to you. |
| 36-48 months | Ask me about my day and listen to what I have to say with your full attention. This lets me know that you enjoy hearing my voice, too. |
| 36-48 months | When we visit new places or engage in new activities, describe where we are and what we are doing. Listening to you talk about our surroundings makes me feel secure and content. |



| | |
|--------------|--|
| 48-60 months | When I am having a difficult time sharing a toy, get down to my level, look me in the eyes and talk with me about my emotions and how to handle the situation. |
| 48-60 months | Point out the words in my surroundings that I see on an everyday basis, such as stop signs, words on food packages, and so on. |
| 48-60 months | Involve me in meal preparations by describing what we are doing and talk to me about how the ingredients become the final product. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Your voice does so many things. It lets me know that you are near; it teaches me new words; and it soothes me when I am upset.
- It is very important for me to hear your voice every day, whether we are talking back and forth, singing or reading. When you speak to me it makes me feel special and helps me grow!
- Encourage me to listen for your voice when you are not in the same room as me. This will make me feel safe and secure.
- By labelling my world, you give me the words I need to learn so that I can communicate with you and others in my life.
- When you help me work through my feelings and emotions and warn me about transitions or new situations, it lets me know that I can count on you to make me feel secure and help me calm down.

Listening and Comprehending

Goal: I will read a book with my primary caregiver.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| All ages | The best part of getting ready for bed is when you sit with me and read me books. I love hearing your voice as this soothes me before bedtime. |
| All ages | Change your voice when you read to me. I will start to recognize different parts of the story and will learn to anticipate changes in the way you speak. |
| All Ages | Read books with me any time of the day. I particularly like to listen to nursery rhymes. |
| 0-6 months | Sing me lullabies, rhymes and songs while you gently rock me back and forth and make eye contact with me. |
| 0-6 months | Read me books with colourful pictures everyday. If you use an animated voice to narrate the story it will make story time more engaging and interesting for me. |
| 0-18 months | Make up stories for me that include the people I love and activities I enjoy. |
| 3-9 months | If I make noises while we are reading, repeat these noises for me. |
| 6-12 months | Let me help you turn the pages while we are reading. I get to practice my small muscle skills as well as participate with you during reading time. |
| 6-12 months | Sing action songs with me like “Row, row, row your boat” where you sit me on your lap and hold my hands. Make eye contact with me and wait before leaning me back so I learn to |

How I Understand You and Talk to Others



| | |
|--------------|---|
| | anticipate what is coming next. With practice, I will push myself forwards and backwards in time to your singing. |
| 6-18 months | While reading with me, label the things I point to in the story. I will begin to connect words and objects. |
| 12-24 months | Show me board books with bright pictures and big words underneath. Repeat those words and ask me to say them back; ask me to point to the picture. For example, if the word is ball, point to the picture while you're reading, then ask me to point to the ball. |
| 12-36 months | When you read to me, point out the pictures and ask me, "What's that?" "Who's that?" If I'm not sure, tell me and wait for me to repeat what you have said. |
| 12-36 months | Choose books that I can relate to, such as a toddler playing, eating, and having bath time. Read the same book to me often so that I can become familiar with the story and begin to anticipate what comes next. |
| 12-48 months | Sing songs with me that involve repetition. Some examples of these types of songs are "Old Macdonald," "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star," "Wheels on the Bus," "Rolly Polly," or any other songs you know. |
| 18-36 months | When reading books or singing songs, leave out key words. For example if we are reading "Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See," point to the animals and ask me to name them before you tell me. If we are singing, leave out a word and wait for me to fill it in! |
| 18-36 months | Let's make up stories together in which I am the main character. I love hearing my name and being in your story. This makes me feel special and loved. |
| 18-48 months | Make a scrapbook containing photos and descriptions of me, my favourite toys, places, people and friends. Read and look through the scrapbook with me and talk with me about the photos. |
| 18-60 months | Sing songs with actions such as "Itsy, Bitsy Spider" or "Wheels on the Bus." With some practice, I will copy the actions and sing along with you. |
| 18-60 months | Sing songs during our daily activities such as "Clean up, clean up, everybody everywhere, clean up clean up, everybody do your share." |
| 18-60 months | Take me to the library at least once a week so I can choose some new books to read. Many libraries also have activities that I can participate in like story time. |
| 24-36 months | Pick 3 of my favorite books and read them to me every day. Occasionally, before turning to the next page ask me "can you tell me what is going to happen next?" Also, point to pictures in the book and ask, "who is that?" or "what is ____ doing?" |
| 24-48 months | Play a game of search and find when we are reading. Say something like, "Can you find the yellow duck in the picture?" or "Do you see a green frog?" When I find the object make sure to explain where I found the object saying things like, "That's right, the frog is under the leaf!" |
| 24-60 months | When we're reading together, give me a chance to make up a story that goes along with the pictures. I will love to take the lead during reading time and it is good for me to use my imagination and memory to come up with a story. |
| 24-60 months | At bedtime, let me choose two or three of my favorite books. It is good for me to have some choices during my day. |
| 24-60 months | Sing repeating, rhyming songs like "Down by the bay." The words are easy enough for me to sing or hum along with you. We should be singing together at least twice a day! |



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| 24-60 months | Read stories with me and ask me questions about what is going on. |
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Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Your voice is very important for me to hear every day, whether we are talking back and forth, singing or reading.
- Singing back and forth teaches me about turn taking and prepares me to have conversations later in life.
- Reading books and singing songs is a fun and easy way for me to increase my vocabulary. When I live in a world surrounded by language, I will begin to use my words to communicate with you.
- Putting pictures to words helps me to understand their names and remember what they are.
- Reading is a great way for me to learn about language. When we read the same story or play the same games, I begin to learn what to expect next. I am also building up my memory.
- Reading books together is time well spent. I get to learn new words to bond with you, see pictures and talk about everyday, regular actions such as eating, playing and bath time.
- Books can also teach me about feelings. When you connect the feelings of the characters to my own, I learn about empathy and that others have the same feelings that I do!
- Exploring new environments like the library is important because I will get a chance to spend some time in a safe, new place. I will also get a chance to explore different books that we don't have at home.
- Reading one on one with you is such a great experience for me because I get your full attention and I know you're listening to just me.
- Looking at photos of myself, my favourite places, friends and toys and talking about them, not only makes me feel happy and special, it also helps me learn words to describe the things and people that I love.

Listening and comprehending

Goal: I will learn to understand and follow instructions.

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| 5-12 months | While playing on the floor together with one of my favourite toys, drop it next to me and ask me to look for it. |
| 6-12 months | Label familiar objects in my environment including things like body parts. Point and label the object and then ask me to point to the object. For example, point to your nose and ask me to point to my nose. |
| 6-12 months | While I am in my high chair, give me a small bowl with some finger foods. Show me with your fingers how to pick up a piece of the food and put it in my mouth. Tell me to try to pick up a piece of the food. If I'm reluctant, continue to model for me and in between, again instruct me to try to pick it up myself. |
| 6-12 months | During tummy time, place a toy in front of me and ask me to reach for it. |
| 6-12 months | Using a toy I can comfortably hold, ask me to bang it on the floor or table to make noise. |

How I Understand You and Talk to Others



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| 6-12 months | Give me two toys I can comfortably hold in each hand and ask me to bang them together to make noise. You may have to show me or help me try this a few times |
| 6-18 months | Ask me to use simple greetings with familiar friends and family. For example, waving bye-bye or blowing kisses to familiar people. |
| 6-24 months | I get very excited when I push a button on a toy and something pops up. As I am playing with the toy say, "What happens when you push this button?" Show me how it works and tell me to push the button on the toy by using your hand over mine. |
| 6-36 months | While we are reading together, ask me to point to familiar objects/people/animals in the book. |
| 6-36 months | Sing songs such as "If You're Happy and you Know It" with me. These songs have instructions built right in for me to follow. |
| 9-18 months | Ask me for a turn when we're playing with toys. For example, if we are playing with a toy phone, put your hand out and ask, "Can I try the phone?" Then give the toy back to me for my turn. |
| 9-18 months | Give me simple directions throughout my day. For example, during bath time hand me the washcloth, point to my belly and say "wash your tummy!" Model this for me and then let me take over. |
| 9-18 months | At first I will be watching you as you draw lines with crayons. When my hands are able to grasp, I will pick up a crayon and hold it in my fist. I will probably gum it first before trying anything creative, this is okay, just don't let me eat them! My first attempts at drawing will be mark making because all I can really do is to bang the crayon on the paper. I am beginning to learn that I can use the crayon to make marks on the paper. When I can hold the crayon a bit better, I will start to push the crayon back and forth. The more opportunities I get to explore with these materials, the better I will become. |
| 12-24 months | Show me how to put two objects into a container. Take the objects out and ask me to try doing the same. |
| 12-60 months | Let me know that I am doing a good job when I help you with simple tasks such as tidying up my toys! It will make me feel confident and important. I am still learning how to follow instructions so it will be important for you to be with me and model what you are asking me to do. |
| 12-60 months | Get down to my level when you are giving me directions and speak clearly and gently. This way you'll have my full attention and I'll know what you need me to do. |
| 15-60 months | If I'm having trouble following instructions, create a picture board for me that illustrate each step or instruction you want me to do. Together say to me, "Let's look and see what the first instruction is" and continue to move through the various instructions with me. |
| 18-48 months | Ask me to help with simple daily routines and household chores such as tidying up toys, lining up shoes and putting my dirty clothes in the laundry. |
| 18-48 months | I am getting better at understanding what objects are for, so play a game that helps to strengthen my knowledge. Gather up a toothbrush, a hairbrush, a washcloth, a spoon and a bedtime book. Take out one object at a time and ask me to name the object, what do I do with it and when would I use it (morning, night). |
| 18-48 months | I can help around the house, too! Show me where the books and magazines go. Show me how to use a dustpan to pick up crumbs with a brush. We can sing songs like "Clean up, clean up" while we are tidying up my toys or other things in the house. |

How I Understand You and Talk to Others



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| 18-48 months | Ask me to put on my own jacket when getting ready to go outside. I can also begin to learn how to put on my own shoes and ask you to help me with the laces. |
| 24-48 months | Sometimes I might need help with following your directions. Bring me to where I need to be and show me what I should be doing. Then ask me to give it a try! |
| 24-48 months | When giving directions turn off the television or radio, get down at my eye-level and speak to me clearly. Repeat the directions more than once if I seem like I don't understand you. |
| 24-60 months | I am happy to be your special little helper while you are getting ready for dinner. There are certain things I can do that are safe. For example, I can mix ingredients together in a bowl or tear lettuce for a salad. Make sure to talk about safety while we are cooking. You should point out to me that the stove is hot and could burn me, so I need to be very careful around it. I will enjoy spending one-on-one time with you in any setting. |
| 24-60 months | When I am beginning to learn, if you only give me one thing to do at a time I won't get overwhelmed or forget. As I get older, I may be ready for two-step instructions such as, "Can you please put one placemat under each plate and put the napkins next to the plates?" |
| 24-60 months | When doing laundry, ask me to sort out my clothes when they are clean or put my dirty clothes in the laundry basket. It makes me feel grown up to imitate what I see you doing. |
| 24-60 months | I can be a special helper at the grocery store, too! You can ask me to find you a vegetable that is green and has leaves or a fruit that is furry and brown. You can ask me to show you our favourite cereal box or juice box. I am getting better and better at remembering what things look like when you label them or remind me. |
| 24-60 months | While we are walking to the park or the grocery store, let's play "Red Light, Green Light!" I get really excited about where we are going and forget the rules that keep me safe. Remind me about the safety rules as we play the game. If we practice at home I will remember how the game is played. |
| 36-60 months | Always keep directions short and simple. After you have asked me to do something, ask me to repeat your request back. If I can't repeat the direction, try to make it a little simpler. |
| 36-60 months | When I come in from playing outside, ask me to go to the sink, wash my hands with soap, and dry them off. I am learning to follow multi-step directions. |
| 36-60 months | When getting ready to go out, ask me to complete certain tasks such as getting my own coat and shoes, putting away my toys or packing my backpack. |
| 36-60 months | Introduce me to simple games that have a limited number of rules and instructions. For example, snakes and ladders, trouble, the memory game or hide and seek. |
| 36-60 months | Let's play "Simon Says!" This game helps me listen to directions and pay attention to the things you say! |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- When you make eye contact with me during conversations, it lets me know that I have your full attention. By keeping my attention, I understand what you're saying to me and that will help me understand your directions.
- I will start to understand and follow very simple directions even as a baby. When you ask me to get a toy or come and play with you this is, in fact, an instruction. Including these in my day will prepare me to understand and follow more complex instructions as I grow.

How I Understand You and Talk to Others



- Following simple directions will not only allow me to gain independence, but also to feel good about myself for being able to help. I will also learn that words are connected to actions, things and people.
- Routines and daily experiences help me to remember solutions to everyday problems (e.g. where my coat goes) and eventually I'll be able to handle new situations based on past experiences on my own, without your help.
- When you give me small responsibilities, I will develop new skills. This will help me become more independent and will increase my self-confidence.
- When you let me know that you appreciate my help, I will understand how good it can feel to help others.
- I get better at following directions when you give me lots of practice! Every day tasks can be easily made a part of my daily routines so that I eventually begin to do chores on my own, without being asked.
- I am learning to play my part in our house and in the world just by helping out!
- I like taking care of my own things and it will teach me responsibility and respect for my toys. Make sure to have a conversation with me about what we are doing and ask me questions about where I think things should go and why.
- I've got a lot of energy and I get really excited when I am playing with my toys. I often get so caught up in my own play that I sometimes forget that what I am doing might not be safe. I need you to remind me to be safe when we are playing outside by playing "Red Light, Green Light!"
- Learning to listen to you and follow directions is an important part of our relationship. I need boundaries and knowing about my daily routines helps me learn about my boundaries. Talk to me about what is coming next so I can prepare myself.



EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE

Overall Objective:

"I am learning to use my words more and more as I grow and with your help I will be speaking in no time!"

Babbling

Goal: I will make babbling and cooing sounds with my caregiver.

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| 0-3 months | I communicate with you by crying. Try to figure out what my needs are. When you respond, talk to me through your actions as I am listening. |
| 0-3 months | Look me in the eyes and talk to me every single day throughout the day. I am able to listen to your voice, watch your face as you talk to me and turn my head toward sounds. |
| 0-3 months | When I begin to make cooing noises, listen to my sounds and respond back to them. I will begin to understand how to use language before I can speak. |
| 0- 9 months | Find the times when I am the most vocal and talk with me. This might be during diaper change time or when I wake up from my nap. Even when making gurgling, cooing or babbling sounds, be sure to gaze into my eyes and imitate my sounds. |
| 3-9 months | As I start to make new sounds such as ba, ma, pa, respond to me by copying the sounds I make and say things like "tell me more!" Wait for me to make a sound back to you and then continue talking again. |
| 3- 9 months | When I am babbling for a few moments, talk back to me like we are having a conversation. You can say things like, "Oh really, _____!" and "Tell me more!" |
| 3-9 months | Use toys that make noise in my play such as a rattle, squeaky toy or a book that makes sounds. I might talk a little more when I hear other sounds throughout my day. |
| 3-9 months | I like to play with my tongue and make silly sounds, like blowing raspberries. When you smile and laugh at my noises it makes me want to do them again and again. If you imitate my sounds, then I will feel that I have something important to contribute to our relationship. |
| 6-12 months | When I start to play with sounds such as mama, baba, dada, I may not know what I am saying but your smile and excitement means that I am doing something positive. If you imitate me saying mama, say "mama, yes I am your mama" or "dada is coming home soon," then I will start to recognize that my sounds actually have a meaning. |
| 12-18 months | Say simple words, such as "dog" or "cat" and wait for me to imitate the words. When I say it back to you, show me that you are excited and proud of me! |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- It is very important for me to hear your voice every day. When you speak to me it lets me know that I'm special to you.
- Encouraging me to babble when I am a very young baby will help me participate in conversations later in life. It also starts my understanding of familiar words.



- Talking to me and listening to what I say shows me that you love me and that you are interested in helping me learn new sounds and words.
- Giving me the chance to speak for myself will help raise my self-esteem so I become more comfortable talking to others.
- Talking to me throughout the day gives me a chance to listen and imitate your words. This helps me with my language development later on.

Serve and Return Interactions

Goal: I will strengthen the connections in my brain through serve and return interactions with my primary caregiver(s).

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| All Ages | You are my favourite toy. Nothing else compares to the time you spend playing with me and delighting in our conversations back and forth. |
| All Ages | Use our everyday routines to interact with me. These serve and return (back and forth) interactions will create amazing connections in my brain and strengthen what's already there. |
| 0-3 months | Respond to my cooing and babbling sounds by cooing and babbling back at me. When you copy what I am saying I will be encouraged to look at you and continue babbling. |
| 0-3 months | Laying down together facing each other, copy my facial expressions or let me copy yours. It doesn't matter who starts serving in our interactions as long as we keep going back and forth. |
| 0-6 months | Make eye contact and talk to me when feeding me. Describe where we are or what you did today, or anything that interests you. Hearing your voice and looking into your eyes during this quiet time is soothing and comforting. I'll more than likely return your gaze. |
| 0-6 months | When I coo, interact with me and direct my attention to your face or hands. This will engage different parts of my brain and begin to build the foundation for later emotional and cognitive development. |
| 0-12 months | Let's look at a picture book together. Describe what's on each page and make eye contact with me frequently. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 0-12 months | Show me objects and label them. Let's explore them together. This helps me make connections in my brain between sounds and related objects. |
| 0-12 months | When I babble, make gestures or facial expressions respond with the same kind of behaviour back. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 12-36 months | During every day routines describe what's going on in my environment and give me a chance to respond to what you're saying. This will support my language skills and strengthen connections that are forming in my brain |
| 12-36 months | Let's get on the floor and play with some of my toys together. You can follow my lead or if I'm unsure how to start you can begin by showing me what we can do. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 12-36 months | Throughout the day, as you describe what we are doing, give me time to respond. Ask me questions so I can hear the change in your voice and over time it will prompt me to respond. |

How I Understand You and Talk to Others



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| 12-36 months | During mealtimes, let's have lots of conversation about our day, or our meal, or what we're going to do tomorrow. Remember to pause and give me a chance to add to the conversation so that there's lots of serve and return interaction between us. |
| 18-36 months | Sometimes what I serve you may not be verbal. It may be through eye contact or gestures that I let you know how I'm feeling about a situation we're in. For example, I may shake my head if I'm being asked to play with other children but don't want to. |
| 24-48 months | Let's go for a walk in our neighbourhood and talk about what we see. You can start by asking me to talk about the favourite things, people or places in our neighbourhood. Remember I would love to hear about yours too! |
| 36-60 months | Sometimes I may use things like my pictures to tell you how I'm feeling. Talk to me about my pictures and what they mean to me. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 36-60 months | Let's role play together. Allow me to choose what we're play-acting or if I'm having trouble give me a few suggestions to choose from. This is a great way for me to explore different emotions and reactions in a safe form of play! |
| 36-60 months | Let's create our own stories together. Let me choose the characters as well as the setting and together let's make an adventure that lets me explore different situations, emotions and reactions in a safe way. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 36-60 months | Encouraging me to share my feelings about events, my friends and things that might happen in our family is important. I need to know I can share these thoughts with you and that you will respond in a nurturing and caring way. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- When you engage in positive nurturing and responsive serve and return interactions with me, you are shaping my growing brain.
- New neural connections form in the brain as infants babble, engage and interact with their primary caregiver and their primary caregivers interact back.
- Serve and return interaction is a wonderful opportunity to share my emotions with you. Knowing that you will listen and respond in a caring way will encourage me to come to you with my feelings.
- Ensuring that I have adult caregivers who consistently engage in serve and return interactions with me builds a foundation in my brain for all the learning, behaviour and health that follow.
- Reading is a great opportunity to promote serve and return interactions because we can take time to make eye contact and talk about what we're seeing together.
- Role play is a great way to experiment with different feelings and reactions. When you engage me in role play activities where I get to choose the scenario, I learn that I get to have some control in our interactions.



Turn-taking

Goal: I will engage in back and forth conversations with my caregiver.

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| All Ages | Involve me in give and take conversation throughout the day. When we are in the car, turn the music down and talk with me. Wait for my response before you respond. |
| 0-3 months | When I am upset try different things to see what comforts me – music, rocking me softly, etc. |
| 0-6 months | Talk to me during feeding, looking into my eyes. Be present with me. |
| 0-6 months | Through daily routines talk to me about what we are doing. Pause, giving me a chance to respond with some cooing or a smile. |
| 0-6 months | Place me on your lap and gaze into my eyes. When I coo and make noises, repeat them back to me while smiling. |
| 0-12 months | As you begin to recognize my needs, talk to me about them. For instance, when I yawn say “you’re telling me you’re tired. Let’s get you settled for a nap.” I will begin to understand that you will meet my needs. |
| 0-12 months | Read books and sing songs to me every day! Change your voice when something exciting happens. Gaze into my eyes while we’re talking so I know that you are fully present in the moment with me. |
| 3-9 months | If you are out of the room and I start to cry, let me know you hear me by saying, “I’m coming, _____, don’t worry I’ll be right there.” This way I will know that you hear me and are responding to my needs. |
| 3-12 months | Play turn-taking games with me. You can start off by handing me a rattle or a soft ball and encourage me to hand it back to you. Encourage me to keep handing the rattle or the ball back and forth between you and me. This simple activity prepares me for having conversations later on. |
| 6-12 months | Initiate a game of “Peek-a-boo” with me. Use my hands to cover your eyes and then gently pull them away and say “Peek-a-boo!” The more we practice, the more I will understand that we can take turns at this simple but fun game. |
| 6-18 months | Talk to me at mealtime about what I am eating. Ask me questions and wait for my response before answering me. Sit at my eye level so I can look at you while we are eating together. |
| 6-24 months | Find times to talk to me and ask me questions throughout the day. In the morning, tell me what we are going to do today. When we are getting ready to eat tell me what we are going to have and ask me if I’m ready! When we are about to go out let me know where we will be going. I like being prepared for the day. |
| 9-12 months | Play “Peek-a-boo” with me sitting on your lap. Wait for a few seconds after each “boo” to let me look at you and giggle. This will begin to teach me how to take turns. |
| 9-18 months | Read a book about animals to me. As you are reading the book point to the animal and imitate the sounds that the animal makes in the book. Then, wait for me to repeat that sound back to you. |
| 12-36 months | Sit on the floor with me and encourage me to roll or kick a ball back and forth between me and you. This action copies the back and forth interaction that takes place during verbal communication. |



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| 24-48 months | Make time throughout the day to get down to my level to talk to me. Ask me to describe how my day went, how school was, what I did when I went to the park, and so on. Then talk to me about your day as well! |
| 24-48 months | Show me I'm important to you by giving me your full attention when we are talking to each other. Get down to my level and make eye contact with me. Respond to what I'm telling you and give me time to use my words to respond. All of this tells me I'm important to you and you are interested in what I'm saying. |
| 24-48 months | Take the opportunity during mealtime, bath time, bedtime and any other times you are with me to get me talking by asking questions or playing with me. I like it when you listen to what I have to say. |
| 24-48 months | Minimize distractions like a computer, television and video games during our time together so I can have your full, undivided attention! |
| 24-60 months | When I create things with boxes, blocks or other materials ask me about my creation. For example, ask me what I made and what it does. |
| 48-60 months | Read a book with me and encourage me to talk to you about the pictures that I see. We can take turns talking about the pictures and what we think will happen next. |
| 36-60 months | When I draw a picture, ask me to tell you the story that goes with the picture. Then write it on the back of my work. |
| 36-60 months | Play games with me that involve communication and turn taking. For example, a simple game of "Go Fish" is an opportunity to talk to me about whose turn is next! |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- Your voice does so many things: it lets me know that you are near, it teaches me new words, and it soothes me when I am upset.
- It is very important for me to hear your voice every day, whether we are talking, singing or reading. When you speak to me, it lets me know that I'm special to you.
- I will learn that when I stop talking, you respond, and when you stop talking, it's my turn! This give and take teaches me about turn-taking and prepares me to have conversations later in life.
- When I am upset and you try to comfort me with a song or quiet talk, I am learning that I can depend on you to understand my needs and take care of me. This helps me to establish trust and attachment.
- The more you talk to me throughout the day, the more I will learn to talk about the world around me.
- When you talk to me and listen to what I say, it shows me that you love me and that you are interested in helping me learn new sounds and words.
- When we have conversations, I learn how to recognize what your facial expressions mean and what the different levels in your voice mean. You get to learn these things about me, too! Understanding each other is important for my development and our relationship!
- Getting down on my level and making eye contact will let me know that I have your full attention. This tells me that I am important to you!
- Reading, singing songs and having conversations throughout the day will help me learn new words.



- Giving me the chance to speak for myself will help raise my self-esteem so I become more comfortable talking to others.
- Playing back and forth games help me begin to understand that talking with another person requires taking turns. This will prepare me for holding conversations in the future!

Labelling and Naming

Goal: I will use words to label the world around me/ I will put names to familiar objects.

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| 0-6 months | Imitate the sounds that I make all the time. |
| 0-6 months | Sit with me in front of a mirror and point to me while saying my name. |
| 0-6 months | Encourage me to match sounds with objects I point to. |
| 0-6 months | Name the people and objects that are part of my daily routine. For instance, during my bath time, describe the water to me is warm and soothing. |
| 3-12 months | When you see me either pointing to or looking at an object, help me by naming it for me. This will teach me how to say it correctly. |
| 3-12 months | When you sit/hold me in front of a mirror, I don't know who that baby is staring back at me. Stay with me while I watch my reflection, or the "other" baby in the mirror! |
| 3-18 months | Use my name all the time so I will finally understand you are referring to me. Call me by my name, "____, look at the dog." |
| 6-18 months | Use my name to show me that things belong to me. For example, "this is ____'s hat. Let's put ____'s hat on." |
| 6-18 months | Label familiar actions for me. For example, tell me "up" when you are going to pick me up. Repeat the word every time you pick me up. If I want milk repeat the word before you give it to me. Eventually I will begin to remember these familiar words and start to use them throughout the day. |
| 6-18 months | Describe my body parts as we play throughout the day. For instance, when you tickle me tell me "I am tickling your arm!" or after I take a bath spend time pointing to and describing my body parts. |
| 6-18 months | Label objects around me. Say the word "milk" before you give me my milk. If I am starting to make noises or saying short words like "mama" repeat these sounds/words often to me. |
| 6-18 months | Name yourself and others so I get used to hearing the names for people. Soon enough, I'll start to use the right words for my favorite things and people. Don't forget to use my name so I get to recognize it as well! |
| 8-18 months | Talk to me about my favorite things throughout the day. These things can be food, toys, people, and so on. |

How I Understand You and Talk to Others

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| 12-18 months | As I begin to make sounds resembling words, acknowledge these efforts and repeat the words back to me properly. For instance, if I say “no, no!” while pointing to the snow outside, you could respond by saying “yes, there is snow on the ground today!” |
| 12-36 months | Describe my body parts and repeat my name while I look in the mirror to help me understand that you are talking about me. For example, “there’s ___ in the mirror. Here is ___’s nose (touch my nose.) Here is ___’s mouth (touch my mouth).” |
| 12-36 months | When we read books together, point to the characters and ask me who or what they are. If I don’t know, give me the word and wait for me to repeat. |
| 12-36 months | Show me pictures of toys, people and other things that I see and use every day. Putting a word to the picture can help me remember what it is. When we are outside, point out the real object and say, “Here’s the car. Remember we saw a picture of the car in the book?” |
| 12-36 months | Give me choices throughout the day. For example, ask me which cup or plate I would like to use for lunch. Ask me to tell you which one I want before handing it over to me. Provide positive reinforcement every time I try even if I don’t say the right thing. Things like “good talking _____!” or “that was a good try!” will keep me wanting to try harder. |
| 12-48 months | Incorporate songs with labelling and repetition into my everyday routine. Songs like “Head and Shoulders” are great for labelling, and ‘Down by the Bay” encourages repetition and rhyming. Make sure I am repeating every word rather than just the last one. Slow the song down if I am having trouble with the rhymes or the repetition. |
| 12-60 months | Label and describe everything in my world throughout the day. When we are getting dressed, label what I am wearing and the colors or patterns that are on the clothing. For example, “Now we’re going to put on your red shirt, _____!” “These pants have stripes!” |
| 18-24 months | I’m beginning to understand what things in the house are mine. Put my name in places where I can see them (toothbrush, refrigerator and bedroom) and point my name out to me. |
| 18- 24 months | Encourage me to use my words when I want something. If I point to an object and you know what I am asking for, wait to give me the object until I’ve used the word, even if it’s not perfect! If I don’t remember the name, you can say, “Does ___ want his [object]?” |
| 18-36 months | If I say something to you that you can’t understand, say “Sorry ___ I didn’t hear that, could you please tell me again?” or say “Use your words, ___” as a gentle reminder that in order for you to understand what I want, I will have to tell you by using words. |
| 24-60 months | When I have finished a picture, ask “Who made this interesting picture?” “What name should we write on the bottom of the page?” and ask me to tell you the story about the picture. |
| 36-48 months | When we play games like “I Spy” point out things around our home or when we are out for a walk. Speak slowly and clearly so that I can have a chance to repeat it back to you. |
| 48-60 months | When I meet new people, encourage me to introduce myself to them! Ask me to share with them what I enjoy doing or anything interesting about myself so that I can practice using simple sentences to describe myself. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- Repetition helps me to remember words and sounds. When you point to what I want and label it, I will begin to put names to everyday things in my world.
- Resist the urge to jump in and say the word for me, even if it’s difficult at first. It’s important for me to start using my words with you.



- Playing games like “I Spy” are fun ways to introduce me to new words and help give me confidence to say them out loud!
- Your voice does so many things; it lets me know that you are near, it teaches me new words and it soothes me when I am upset. Your voice is very important for me to hear every day, whether we are talking back and forth, singing or reading. When you speak to me it makes me feel special.
- When you help me say my name and attach it to things that belong to me, I feel loved and that I deserve attention and respect.
- Listening to you talking and engaging in a conversation with me lets me know that you are interested in the things I like and want to know more about. By labelling my world, you give me the words I need to learn so that I can communicate with you and others.
- When I am able to speak for myself, I get a sense of self-worth that can never be taken away!
- Giving me the opportunity to talk about myself in front of others will help me get better at using simple sentences and become more confident in my communication skills.

Labelling Feelings

Goal: I will use sounds and words to let you know how I am feeling.

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| All ages | When I am upset, sad or frustrated, comfort me by hugging or holding me. Talk to me, too and reassure me you are there for me. Ask me things like, “You seem upset right now, what can I do to help?” |
| All ages | If I need comfort, comfort me and if I am laughing, join in with me! This will show me that you understand my feelings, as well as help me learn about different emotions. |
| 0-3 months | When I cry, respond to me by picking me up and comforting me. Recognize my distress and try to address my needs. Crying is my way of telling you that I am sad, hungry, scared, and I need your help. While you may not always know why I am crying, comforting me lets me know that I can count on you to help me feel better. |
| 3-6 months | I now have distinct cries to communicate my different needs. Recognize this advance in my communication by responding to each of my cries in a different way. For instance, if I am using my hungry cry then say “I understand you are hungry, I will feed you now.” |
| 3-6 months | When I coo and babble to communicate joy or interest, look me in the eyes and verbalize my emotions for me. You can say “I can see that you are feeling happy!” This will show me that you understand me. |
| 3-6 months | If you see me smiling, frowning or laughing, label or name what I am feeling. |
| 12-18 months | Ask me how I am feeling throughout the day. If I seem sad, ask me what happened and if I seem happy, tell me that you are happy to see me happy. |
| 18-24 months | Help me find the right words for how I am feeling. I am learning to understand some words like sad and happy and with your encouragement, I can learn more. |
| 18-48 months | When I am upset, sad, frustrated or angry, get down to my level and make sure to help me manage my emotions. I need to know that you will be there for me even when I am upset or angry. |



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| 18-48 months | If you are in another room and I begin to cry, tell me you hear me and you are coming. It is important for me to know that you will be with me when I am upset, angry and/or sad. |
| 18-48 months | When you give me the names for my emotions I will start to recognize them. If I am upset, say things like, "You seem angry right now. How can I help you?" |
| 18-48 months | Label your own feelings so I become familiar with the feelings of others. When you tell me, "I'm so happy you helped me clean up today," that makes me feel proud. |
| 18-48 months | Singing songs and reading books about feelings will help me recognize all the possible, different feelings. Sing songs like "If you're happy and you know it" and read books like "The Runaway Bunny" which helps me to explore how people feel in different situations and how they communicate those feelings. |
| 18-60 months | When I tell you how I am feeling, acknowledge my emotions and tell me that you understand. If I cannot find the words to describe my emotions, make sure to tell me so I will be able to use it next time. |
| 18-60 months | Talk to me about how I'm feeling. Let me know you understand, by saying something like, "I understand you're feeling mad right now because you have to share your toys. It is hard to share your favourite book." |
| 24-60 months | Make sure there is a space at home where I can go to calm down when I am feeling upset. If I have a favourite doll, blanket or book, give it to me. This will help me calm down. When I'm feeling a little better talk to me about what happened. Confirm my feelings and tell me the best way to express them without hurting myself or others. |
| 24-60 months | While we are reading books about children my own age you can ask me how do I think they are feeling and why? This will give me an opportunity to identify what situations may cause sadness, happiness or anger. I get to practice labelling feelings for others. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Learning about feelings is important so that I can recognize my own feelings and the feelings of others. This is all helping me communicate better with you!
- It's important for you to recognize my feelings so that I know I have a safe place to go when I am upset. When you give me the space I need and objects that are soothing to me, it helps me to calm down without hurting myself or hurting others. With practice, I'll learn to calm myself down without so much help from you.
- When I am sad, upset or angry I need to know that you are here for me. When you stop what you are doing and cuddle me, it lets me know that I am loved and helps me to trust you.
- I will be better able to talk to you about how I am feeling when I have words for my emotions. Listening to you talk about your own emotions, hearing songs about feelings and reading books where we can talk about how the characters are feeling, are all ways that teach me how to communicate better with you and others.
- As I learn to communicate my feelings, I am becoming more independent and my self-esteem is growing stronger.
- When you teach me words to name my feelings, I am able to tell you how I feel without getting frustrated or angry. I will learn how to communicate better with other adults and my friends when I know names for my feelings.
- You are my greatest teacher and I love to spend this time with you.
- When you attend to my needs every time, I feel secure that I can depend on you to be there for me all the time. This helps me to develop a secure attachment relationship with you



Communicating with Sounds and Words

Goal: I will use sounds and words to interact with others around me.

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| 0-6 months | Acknowledge the sounds I make and repeat them back to me. |
| 0-6 months | When you are feeding me, look into my eyes and talk to me. |
| 12-18 months | When I use my first words such as mama or dada, respond to me with a full sentence. For instance, if I say mama and point to you as you are leaving, respond by saying “yes, mama is leaving now.” |
| 12-24 months | When you tell me the name of all my favourite things throughout the day, I will get used to hearing the names for people and objects. Soon, I will start to use the right words for my favourite things. |
| 12-36 months | Put pictures of you, me, and other familiar people, as well as my favorite toys into a small album. Write the name of the object or person on top of the picture. I will enjoy pointing to and naming the people and objects. |
| 12-36 months | When we are getting ready for bed, sit and look at the album with me. Point to each picture and ask me what/who it is. Give me positive reinforcement every time I try to guess, even if I don't get it right! Saying, “You are thinking very hard, _____!” will make me want to keep trying. |
| 12-36 months | Sing repetitive songs like “Down by the bay,” “Bingo” or “Old MacDonald” with me. I will listen to how you sing the words and then I can repeat them. |
| 18-36 months | Let me help plan our day. Ask me what I would want to do and take my input into consideration. |
| 18-36 months | If I am not speaking in full sentences, repeat the correct sentence back to me. For example, if I say “Go park?” repeat back to me, “Yes! We're going to the park.” |
| 18-36 months | Ask me to describe pictures or photos to you when I am looking at books or images on the television. Talking to you throughout the day will help me learn more words and their meanings. |
| 18-36 months | Tell me what you are doing using action words. For example, “I am brushing my hair. Would you like to brush my hair?” “I am squeezing the play dough. Do you want to squeeze it, too?” |
| 18-48 months | Talk to me slowly, pronouncing every word. Sometimes I get excited when I talk and my words come out quickly. Get down to my level so you can see my eyes and repeat my words back to me. |
| 24-60 months | Ask me lots of questions throughout the day. While we are playing or cleaning up, ask me about my friends or questions about what I enjoyed doing the most today. |
| 24-60 months | Ask questions that will encourage me to use my verb tenses, such as “what did we do today?” If I respond with “we go swimming,” you can say “right, we went swimming today.” I will learn by hearing the correct tense rather than if you correct me all the time. |
| 24-60 months | Encourage me to describe things that I'm doing during the day. For instance, if I am building a block tower ask me how high I want it to be. |



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| 48-60 months | Encourage me to create an imaginary “story” or talk about imaginary things. For example, “a little girl saw a crocodile in a rainforest. The little girl quickly ran home.” |
| 24-60 months | When I am colouring, ask me to describe what I have drawn. Write a story to go along with my picture on the back or bottom of the page, using the correct tenses. Read the story back to me. I will get better at creating longer stories. |
| 24-60 months | Encourage me to talk to family and friends when they come over. If you invite some friends over, encourage them to say hello to me. You could also show family members a picture I have drawn so I can talk to them about it. |
| 36-48 months | Ask me lots of open ended questions (this means questions that don’t end in yes or no). For example “What did you do at the park today?” or “What do you think we should do this morning?” This gives me the practice I need to form sentences and tell you what I like. |
| 36-60 months | Encourage me to compare and contrast two things using my five senses. For example, “Apples are sweet and oranges are sour.” |
| 36-60 months | Whenever possible, offer me real choices. You can ask, “Do you want to put your pajamas on or brush your teeth first?” “Would you like to wear the red shirt or the blue one?” Letting me participate in the decision making process makes me feel that you value my opinion. |
| 48-60 months | Ask me to tell stories of my past experiences. For example, you could ask “Do you remember when we went to the zoo?” “What was your favourite animal?” Your child is able to tell longer stories now and will love sharing these memories with you. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- When you give me the words to describe things, I am learning how to use words to express myself and relate to others.
- Keeping eye contact with me and getting down to my level will help me pay attention to everything you say to me!
- Resist the urge to interrupt and finish my sentences. I know it is hard to wait, but it is important for me to start using my words. This skill takes a while to get perfected.
- When you let me make decisions, it lets me know that what I think is valued and important. It also shows me that you are interested in me and the things that are important to me.
- It is so important to me that you are being patient and help me learn. When you speak slowly and clearly, showing me what I should be doing, I know that you care. I also know that you believe that I am capable of becoming independent.
- Playing games like “I Spy” are fun ways to introduce me to new words and help give me confidence to say them out loud!
- Communication is an important skill for me to develop. Building my word vocabulary and knowledge of word tenses will allow for me to translate ideas into simple and eventually complex sentences.
- When you speak in full sentences, it encourages me to do the same. I will finally start to use more words to tell you a story or let you know what I want to do today.
- I can understand your words when you ask me to do something, but still need time and encouragement to use my own words. When you support me while still giving me space, I learn to become more independent.
- Being able to communicate to others in my world will help me build confidence and independence.

How I Understand You and Talk to Others



- I need to learn that my voice matters. When you encourage me to speak in a clear and loud voice, my confidence grows! Soon, I will be able to talk to you about what I want and need. This will help me become more independent as I grow.

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Growing Together Every Day

GROSS MOTOR STRATEGIES





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“I will gain exposure to daily activities that require me to build and strengthen the muscles in my arms, legs, and trunk.”

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NOTE: This is NOT a comprehensive list.

This resource is intended to give you suggestions for strategies that can support development. A Developmental Support Plan should be unique and customized to address the child’s developmental strengths and needs.

When preparing a Developmental Support Plan for a specific child, be sure to:

- Include/ modify the goals to be specific to the child’s strengths.
- Include something personal and meaningful to the family.
- Create your own goals and strategies for the child based on what you know about the child & family.



LARGE MUSCLE BUILDING

Overall Objective:

"I will gain exposure to daily activities that require me to build and strengthen the muscles in my arms, legs and trunk."

Tummy Time/ Floor Time

Goal: I will spend time each day playing on my tummy/ on the floor with my caregiver.

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| 0-12 months | Try infant massage with me. When I come out of the bath (or before bed), use some baby lotion and give me a soft massage, focusing on my legs! Wiggle my toes around, and push on my legs so I get used to using my leg muscles. Then focus on my arms, belly and back, if I seem to like it! Call it quits when I protest – For example if I seem fussy, am grunting, turning away from you, my face seems red, or I look uncomfortable, take a break from this and try coming back to it later. It will help me to be relaxed and also feel close to you because you noticed when I had enough. |
| 2-6 months | Tummy time is very important to my physical development because it forces me to strengthen my neck and back muscles that hold up my head. If you make sure that I get a chance to do it for a little while at least once a day, then I will slowly start to enjoy this position. |
| 2-6 months | You can make tummy time fun by being on my level, singing, talking and playing with me to keep me interested. It is boring staring at the blanket underneath me so you are a good distraction while I strengthen my muscles in this position. Cut it short when I protest, I want it to be short and sweet, so I will want to try again longer next time. |
| 2-6 months | Give me more and more time on my tummy (based on my ability to tolerate it longer!) during the day so I can learn to push up on my arms and hold my head higher. If I seem to get frustrated or cranky, switch me to my back and try again later. Put out my favourite rattle or book to encourage me to hold my chest off the floor. |
| 4- 12 months | When I'm on my back on the floor, raise my legs up to hide my face. Hold my legs there for a few seconds, as long as I seem to be having fun, and then move them away, saying "peek-a-boo!" Sing songs moving my legs and arms in rhythm. I love to feel my body moving in space. |
| 4-12 months | When I'm lying on my back, suspend some soft toys or rattles over my legs to encourage me to kick the toys with my feet. When I accidentally hit them and watch them move I am slowly learning what my body can do. I will start to do this on purpose later on. |
| 5-12 months | I love to hold my toes when I am lying on my back. As I rock gently, I may tip over and get stuck on my side. Help me learn that I can roll from my back to my tummy for a change in scenery. I may accidentally roll over from my tummy to my back as well. Please never leave me alone on the change table as I could roll off it! |
| 6-12 months | Place me on my back and play with my legs to try strengthening them by pushing on the bottom of my feet. Only do this if I'm having fun. Pay attention to my cues. I will let you know when I've had enough by grunting, turning away, fussing, crying etc., but I'll also let you know when I'm having fun by looking at you, smiling, giggling, reaching for you, seem attentive to you, and so on. |
| 6-12 months | You will know that I am sitting well when I stretch my arms out to the side to stop myself from toppling over. If I am not doing so yet, play games where you tip me from side to side and get |

GROSS MOTOR: How I Move My Body



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| | my arms extended out. This way I can feel what it is like to support my weight and learn that I can prevent myself from falling. |
| 6-12 months | When I am sitting well by myself, place toys around me. This will encourage me to reach and grasp toys that are not necessarily close to me. I need practice changing from my sitting position to one where I am in a semi-crawl position. Learning to move my body through space is essential before I start to walk. |
| 6-12 months | Place some pillows and cushions from the couch on the floor. I will enjoy playing comfortably on the floor and will work on my large muscles to crawl around new obstacles. |
| 6-18 months | Move around the room and play, "Peek-a-boo". Encourage me to come and find you while your face hides behind a piece of furniture in my view. Remember to praise me for my efforts and only play this as long as I am having fun. Once I get the hang of it, mix it up by surprising me with a song or a funny face when you find me! I love surprises! |
| 6-18 months | Play games with me like, "Row, row your boat." Sit on the floor in front of me, holding my hands while singing the song. When we rock back and forth, let me try to help pull myself up on my own! |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Spending time on the floor lets me see the world in a whole new way! I can strengthen my arms, back and neck while I try to figure out how to use my legs and my arms in new ways.
- I like keeping active. This is how I learn about and test my abilities every day. Gross motor activities are important for me to develop strength, flexibility and control in my large muscles.
- Tummy time is important as it prepares me for the crawling position. I'll be crawling in no time!
- Massage is a relaxing way to keep my blood circulating, and it feels nice too! Your touch is very important to our relationship and my development. When you give me one on one attention, I know that I am loved and feel secure knowing that I can trust you to take care of my needs.

Pulling and Pushing

Goal: I will practice pushing or pulling myself up.

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| 5-12 months | Let me spend some time in my baby bouncer activity centre. I will gain practice holding my back muscles while I am in here! |
| 6-12 months | When I'm on the floor in a crawling position, place your hands at my feet and encourage me to push off of your hands to move forward. |
| 8-12 months | Sit me on your lap facing you and hold my arms. Gently encourage me to lift myself up into a standing position by using your hands to pull my arms above my head. |
| 8-12 months | Put my favorite toy on the couch and encourage me to lift myself up from the floor to get the toy. You can help me do this by showing me how to pull myself up to stand by the couch. |
| 8-12 months | Play games with me when I am spending time on my feet. You can try standing me up in front of you, and have me bounce so I get used to putting more weight on my legs. |
| 8-12 months | Place my favourite toy on a table or a sofa and encourage me to come and get it. Now that I can lift myself up to standing, I need to start practicing walking sideways while holding onto the edge of furniture. Make sure the furniture is secure so when I pull it won't fall down on top of |

GROSS MOTOR: How I Move My Body



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| | me. I will cruise like this for a while, holding on with one hand, even before I take the plunge and try walking without any hands. |
| 24 – 60 months | Provide me with pull toys such as a pretend pet that I can move around the house with. |
| 24-60 months | Provide me with push toys where I have to practice pushing something around the house. An example might be a pretend stroller that I can practice pushing around. |
| <p>Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you encourage me to pull myself up to a standing position, you're helping me learn that I will soon use my legs to walk! This is an important milestone for me! • Encouraging me to reach for a favorite toy is the beginning of problem solving. I'll have to figure out different ways to move my body in order to get that toy. This is an important skill for my development. • Learning to put weight on my legs and feet are the first steps toward learning to walk. When you give me lots of opportunities to strengthen my leg muscles, I will learn to bear my own weight, and eventually stand on my own. This takes practice and a lot of patience. • Providing me with lots of opportunities to pull myself up is great for my trunk and leg muscles. | |

Standing & Walking

Goal: I will learn to stand and walk with the help of my caregiver.

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| 3-12 months | Provide me with opportunities to stand up while you hold me. For example, when we're playing on the floor, hold me and put a little bit of weight on my feet. Watch to make sure I'm not uncomfortable or in distress. |
| 3-12 months | During infant massage, play with my legs by moving them in a bicycle motion, and pushing them towards me, and then allow me to push back with my legs. Make sure I'm comfortable and having fun while we play. |
| 5-12 months | Place me in my bouncy activity centre and allow me to bounce around. This will help strengthen the leg muscles I'll soon use for walking. |
| 8-12 months | Make sure my environment is safe as I start to show interest in pulling myself to a standing position. For example, make sure there are no sharp table corners that I can fall into or objects on the table that I can knock over. Then provide me with opportunities to pull myself up from a crawling or sitting position into a standing position beside the couch. |
| 8-12 months | Encourage me to begin cruising by helping me to stand next to the couch, and then placing my favourite toy further down on the couch so I have to walk to retrieve that toy. |
| 8-12 months | Place some of my favorite objects on the couch, and when I can successfully pull myself up to grab them, move them back to the ground. This way I'll have an opportunity to practice standing and lowering myself back down to the ground. Make sure my environment is safe for this by eliminating tables with sharp corners and the number of items around me. |

GROSS MOTOR: How I Move My Body



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| 12-18 months | When I can stand on my own, try crouching just a few feet away from me and holding out your arms. Then encourage me to take a few steps towards you. This will take lots and lots of practice at first, but eventually I'll be strong enough to take a few steps! |
| 12-18 months | Encourage me to begin walking by offering me physical support like holding my arms or standing near me to make sure you can catch me if I fall. |
| 12-18 months | When I am more stable on my feet, hold only one of my hands when we are walking. Gradually reduce the amount of support you give to me. |
| 12-24 months | As I learn to walk it feels comforting to push a sturdy toy. A baby stroller, toy shopping cart or wagon gives me more support as I walk and push at the same time. When I am really stable on my feet I will love to pull toys behind me, especially if they make noise. |
| 12-24 months | Give me lots of opportunities to practice walking and keeping my balance. For example, allow me to walk to you if you are standing 10 feet away. The more practice I get, the better I'll be! |
| 12-24 months | Allow me to walk on different surfaces, as long as they are safe. For example, take me to the park and encourage me to walk on the wood chips or through the grass! This will feel different than the carpet or floors at our home. |
| <p>Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to walk is an important developmental milestone for me! As I go through the steps of pulling myself up, cruising along the couch, standing on my own, and walking, make sure to keep my environment safe and clear of all hazards. • Supporting me as I learn to walk is important as I become more confident in my abilities. • Providing me with lots of opportunities to pull myself up, and encouraging me to move for my favorite toys shows me I have control over my environment. As I move around to reach those toys, I'm also working on my problem solving skills. • Giving me opportunities to walk daily helps me to strengthen my leg muscles. Remember, practice makes perfect! • Taking me to the park where I can explore walking on different surfaces will improve my coordination and balance. It will also be fun for me to explore a familiar environment on my feet! | |



BALANCE AND COORDINATION

Overall Objective:

"I will participate in daily activities that promote large muscle movement as well as my balance and coordination."

Stairs

Goal: I will practice climbing up and down the stairs with the help of my caregiver.

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| 12-48 months | Take me to the park and encourage me to climb any of the play structures. Encourage me to climb up the ladder and go down the slide. If I do not feel comfortable climbing the structure by myself, stand behind me with each step until I feel safe to do it on my own. |
| 18-36 months | When we are walking up and down the stairs, hold my hand while my other hand holds onto the railing. Remember, I will not alternate my feet at first, but step up/down on the same foot each time. |
| 18-36 months | Let me go up and down stairs while I am holding onto the railing. Give me some help if I'm unsteady at first, but then stay close by and let me try on my own. |
| 18-36 months | Encourage me to keep going. Say things like, "Ready? One foot at a time!" and "Good job! We're almost there!" |
| 18-60 months | Put a small step stool in front of the sink in the kitchen or in the bathroom. I will learn to step up one foot at a time whenever I need to wash my hands or help you in the kitchen. |

Why this is important... **BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER**

- Being able to climb stairs will increase my independence and allow me to explore places that are higher than I am. Walking up and down stairs develops strength and balance in the large muscles of my legs and body.
- Building my leg muscles is important for me as I grow! Being able to play on uneven surfaces helps my balance and coordination develop. When you give me the chance to try out new things and take small risks, I learn what my body can do and I learn that you will be there to make sure I am being safe!

Outdoor Play

Goal: I will spend time every day playing outdoors.

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| 0-18 months | Provide me with lots of opportunities to explore the outdoors, both inside and outside of my stroller. |
| 12 -60 months | Take me to the park where I can practice running, climbing, balancing and jumping at least once a day. Encourage me to climb the stairs up to the slide, up inside closed spaces, balance on the beam, enjoy the swing, etc. |

GROSS MOTOR: How I Move My Body



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| 12-60 months | Take me outside to blow bubbles if it's a nice day. I will be endlessly amused trying to catch and burst the bubbles. In the wintertime we can make a snowman or a snow fort and in the summer I can practice riding my tricycle around the pathways. |
| 15-30 months | As a toddler, I love to be physically active, using my muscles in different ways. I need lots of space to run around and chase balls, opportunities to climb up and jump down, and to ride my wheeled toys. You will be happier if I do this outside rather than inside! |
| 18-60 months | Encourage me to spend some time outdoors playing with you, my siblings, or friends. We can practice kicking a ball around while playing a game of soccer, or chasing one another in a game of tag. |
| 18-60 months | Encourage active outdoor play. Stay close by so I don't get nervous, but let me try new things too. See if I can balance on the beam or climb the stairs and get down the slide on my own! |
| 18-60 months | Bring out my favourite creative materials outside. Painting in the sunshine or drawing with chalk on the sidewalk means I can use my larger muscles in a different way. |
| 18-60 months | Take me on neighbourhood walks. I need to learn where the local stores, library or parks are. |
| 18-60 months | Nature play outdoors is one of my favourite things to do. Give me a bag and encourage me to bend and pick up interesting large stones, flowers, acorns and leaves. |
| 18-60 months | When we go for a walk in the park I will have the opportunity to watch animals and observe insects up close. It is important for me to learn about birds, bugs and other creatures outdoors. |
| 24-60 months | At the park create an obstacle course that I can do with you. For example, say "Let's climb up the ladder!" and "Then let's slide down the slide!" and "Then we will try to walk along this beam while I hold your hand." |
| 36-60 months | Let's make a hopscotch game on our driveway/street with some chalk. We can hop and jump our way to the end! |
| 36-60 months | Bring a skipping rope outside. If I'm not ready to start skipping yet, place the skipping rope along the ground and have me hop over it! You can also try sitting on the ground, moving the rope around and encouraging me to jump over the rope when it comes by my feet! |
| 36-60 months | Play "Red Light, Green Light" with me outside where there is a lot of space to move (you can also try this while walking to the park or the grocery store). Tell me that when you say, "Green light!" I can run or walk ahead, but when you say, "Yellow light!" I have to slow down, and when you say, "Red light" it means STOP. This game is good practice to help me control my impulses to keep on moving. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Jumping, hopping, climbing and running are important ways to learn how to use my body. I am building my leg muscles, balance, coordination and endurance. These physical activities will keep me healthy.
- Spending time outdoors increases my options for moving around and exploring physical space.
- Playing outside everyday is a great way for me to see and explore my community. I can also meet new friends when we go to the park.



Peer Interaction

Goal: I will spend time playing games that require lots of movement with kids my age.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| ALL Ages | Bring me to an Ontario Early Years Centre. I will get the chance to meet new friends my age! To find an Ontario Early Years Centre near us, try www.ontarioearlyyears.ca – and look up the location closest to our home. |
| 18-24 months | Take me to the park a couple of times a week and stay close to me. Staying close to me will let me know that you are there if I need anything, but will also make me feel safe enough to play with others. I can make new friends and try new things with others. |
| 24-60 months | Plan a play date with a friend. We can play with my toys at home or we can go to the park. We can play cooperative games together like catch, rolling balls to each other when we're outside. |
| 24-60 months | Let's put on some music and dance with my siblings or friends. We can try all kinds of dance moves like twisting, squatting, turning and hopping. |
| 24-60 months | Get some of my friends together and teach us how to play "FREEZE". Clear some space and put on some music. When the music is on, we can dance and move around freely, but when you stop the music, we have to FREEZE quickly and stay frozen on the spot until you turn the music back on. This game also helps me to control my impulses over my body while having lots of fun with others. |
| 30-60 months | Initiate a team game either outside or inside like soccer or tag, with some friends or my siblings. Stay close so you can supervise and help when we have problems with the rules. |
| 30-60 months | Teach me a movement game like "Simon Says" or "Follow the Leader" that requires cooperating with other children and following instructions. Not only will we be labelling our body parts, but we will also be working on our listening skills, moving our bodies in different ways and following directions. |
| 36-60 months | Set up an active physical game outside for me and some of my friends. The game can vary, such as throwing bean bags or balls into a large basket, rolling hula hoops around the grass, or setting up a bowling game using old plastic soda bottles and a ball. Explain the rules of the game to me, making sure that I understand, but stay close to supervise. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Being around other children my age is important because I need to understand how to get along with my peers. By spending time with others I will learn cooperation, empathy, listening, leading, and turn taking.
- Playing movement games with other children my age helps me to work on all the large muscles in my body.
- Staying close by and supervising me when I am exploring a new environment helps me feel secure and trust you to be there if I need you. In this way, I will feel more comfortable getting out and playing with other children.
- Playing games with other children helps me learn how to interact and socialize, as well as follow the rules. Active physical play strengthens coordination, balance and other large muscle skills.



Ball Play

Goal: I will spend time kicking, rolling and bouncing a ball inside and outside.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 18-36 months | Practice kicking a ball back and forth with me. Move around and encourage me to try to kick the ball to you and then do the same for me so I can practice stopping the ball when it comes back to me. |
| 24-60 months | Blow up a balloon and play keep away so that I don't let the balloon touch the ground. |
| 24-48 months | Bring a beach ball or large ball along when we go to the park. Invite other children to come kick the ball around with us. Make a game to see who can kick the ball the farthest or set up a net with two markers so we can try to score a goal! |
| 24-60 months | Teach me how to catch a thrown ball. Position my feet slightly apart for balance, and then toss the ball up in my direction. Encourage me to try and catch the ball. Gradually add distance, and remember to praise my efforts as I learn how to coordinate my eyes and hands in catching the ball. You can let some of the air out of a beach ball to make it easier for me in the beginning. |
| 30-60 months | Teach me how to catch a bouncing ball. Stand a few feet away from me and gently bounce a ball toward me. Bouncing puts my hands in a better catching position, as they clasp and hug the bouncing ball. |
| 30-60 months | Play basketball with me! Provide a net or even a big empty bin and let's practice throwing a ball overhand into the bin. Place the bin or net close to my level so I can get the hang of it first. |
| 30-60 months | We can make our own bowling game by using recycled plastic bottles for the pins and a beach ball. I can practice my hand eye coordination by trying to hit the pins. |

Why this is important... *BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER*

- Playing these types of ball games improves my coordination. When I practice throwing and kicking a ball, I am strengthening my sense of balance and aim.
- Throwing a ball overhead or learning how to catch a bounced or thrown ball allows me to exercise the muscles in my hands, arms and legs and strengthens my hand-eye coordination.
- Rolling or throwing a ball toward a target also develops my hand eye coordination and builds upper and lower body strength.
- Playing ball is a great activity for everyone in the family to join in and have fun together.

Hand in Hand

Growing Together Every Day

FINE MOTOR STRATEGIES





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“I will learn to use the muscles in my hands to make small hand and finger movements.”

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NOTE: This is NOT a comprehensive list.

This resource is intended to give you suggestions for strategies that can support development. A Developmental Support Plan should be unique and customized to address the child’s developmental strengths and needs.

When preparing a Developmental Support Plan for a specific child, be sure to:

- Include/ modify the goals to be specific to the child’s strengths.
- Include something personal and meaningful to the family.
- Create your own goals and strategies for the child based on what you know about the child & family.



SMALL HAND MOVEMENTS

Overall Objective:

“I will learn to use the muscles in my hands to make small hand and finger movements.”

Hand-Eye Coordination

Goal: I will practice coordinating my eyes with my hands as I try to reach for objects.

| | |
|------------|---|
| 2-4 months | I have little control over my movements at this stage since my reflexes are strong, but I am looking attentively at your face and watching your mouth move. I love looking into your face and watching all your facial expressions. I also like staring at mobiles or objects that move overhead. I am practicing looking first and then I will start to reach for things. |
| 3-5 months | I will start to bat at a toy dangling from my car seat/stroller, or over the change table. I am still not having much success hitting suspended objects accurately, but I like it when whatever I hit accidentally moves. Change those objects from time to time because I am very interested to look at new patterns, new shapes and colours close to me. It will motivate me to try and grab them. |
| 4-6 months | I am now starting to reach more smoothly with one hand for objects that are close to me. Hold out a rattle, my teething toy, or a small soft toy in front of my eyes. I am getting better and better at coordinating what I see with a more targeted reach and grab action. Move the object slightly around on both sides so I practice using both of my hands independently. Be careful when you lean over to kiss me! I am going to grab your hair, your glasses and probably won't let go easily. |
| 4-6 months | Offer me toys that I can hold, like a rattle or another toy that is similar in size to a rattle. Watch me as I will now bring these objects to my mouth to explore them. Be sure not to give me toys that are too small because I could easily choke on them. Also make sure that the toys are clean and safe with no sharp edges, no small parts that can get loose. I will probably guide your fingers into my mouth to massage my gums as well when I am teething, so make sure your hands are always clean. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- I'm beginning to learn that I can use my eyes and hands together to touch what interests me. I will need lots of practice but soon this challenge will be mastered.
- Everything becomes a new adventure when I put something new in my hands! Touching with my hands helps me connect with the world through feeling textures, weight and shape.
- Touching your face, holding your finger, or my comfort toy helps me understand the things I need in my life - someone and something that I can always count on to comfort me and make me feel loved and special!



Grasp and Release

Goal: I will practice my grasp and release in everyday play and exploration of my toys.

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|--------------|---|
| All Ages | Read board books with me every day. Try to choose books that have thicker pages (like board books) so that my little hands can grab without tearing. When you pat the book and describe to me what I am looking at, I will start to touch, hit and rake at the pictures, too. If the book has different textures, I will really enjoy touching and holding them. |
| All Ages | Try choosing board books for me that include large pictures. It's more about our conversation while reading than the actual words in the book. I'll begin to identify pictures with names the more we read! Talk to me about what we're seeing and ask me questions like, "What's that?" "It's a dog! What colour is the dog?" |
| 3-12 months | When you pick me up after I have been upset, have just woken up, or anytime we sit together, let me hold your finger or explore your face. |
| 4-12 months | Tummy time is a perfect opportunity to put a favorite toy in front of me so I can try to reach for and pick it up. If I'm having trouble, put the toy in my hand and hold it there until I have a firm grip and then you can let go. On the change table offer me a toy to hold while you clean me up. When I am young I will drop it and not know where to look for it, but when I am a bit older, if I drop it I will look for it. I like holding things, even if I am looking at you at the same time. |
| 6-12 months | I am now beginning to open my hand and release a toy on purpose. This happens more when you are playing with me and offering me another toy. I will drop what I have in my hand to take what you are showing me. Remember to give me time to explore each toy, otherwise I will get distracted and frustrated. I trust that you will show me both familiar and new objects to explore. Kitchen stuff, like plastic bowls, measuring cups, measuring spoons, and plastic lids are my favourite items to hold and drop. |
| 6-30 months | Give and Take is the name of the game. After watching and experiencing you offering me toys/objects, I will now try to do the same for you. You can encourage me by stretching out your hands to me and asking, "Can you give ___ your ball?" When I have given it to you, give it back saying, "Here is ___'s ball back. Take it." This game is fun at meal time. I will offer you my food when you feed me. Your hard work is paying off as now I can take and release an object back to you. |
| 8-48 months | Encourage me to turn the pages of books on my own. If I need some help, take my hand in yours and try to guide me. Allow me to point to the pictures and label them for me when I do. When I am older I may turn pages faster because I know what is coming up and that may be my favourite page to gaze at while you talk. Let me have that control as I am showing you what I like best and how I can take charge during my favourite activity. |
| 9-18 months | At mealtime, place finger foods into an empty cup or plastic container. I can practice picking up my finger foods, but can also practice putting food back into my cup. My grasp is going to be so amazing that I will be able to grasp a small Cheerio and put it in my mouth. Feeding myself is a great way to practice this grasp and release skill. |
| 15-60 months | Ask me to help you tidy up and put things away where they belong. For example, get me to help you tidy up all my Legos/blocks by putting them in a bin. I'll be working on my sorting skills while practicing grasping and releasing. |



Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- Grasp and release is an important milestone to get my hands used to working in a more coordinated way.
- When I learn how to turn pages of a book as well as hold and drop play objects, I am working on my hand and eye coordination, an important skill for me to learn to master as I grow.
- Practicing grasp and release in different situations in my environment helps me to learn this trait in everyday life.

Using my fingers (Pincer grasp)

Goal: I will use my forefingers and thumbs when playing with toys and objects.

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| 8-24 months | When I am in my high chair, provide me with my favorite foods that I can easily pick up like cheerios, macaroni or peas. Sit in front of me and eat with me, too. I won't need too much encouragement to copy you. |
| 8-24 months | I might need some hand-over-hand help for the first couple of mouthfuls, but let me try to do it all by myself after that. Sometimes having a special spoon or fork that's just for me can help! |
| 8-24 months | Praise me whenever I try to feed myself by saying things like, "Great job eating all by yourself _____!" Feeding myself might get a little messy, but practice makes perfect! Try to keep meal-time fun and enjoyable for me by engaging me in conversation about what we are eating. |
| 8-36 months | At the end of the day, ask me to help get myself undressed. I'll be able to practice my pincer grasp in daily activities like pulling off my socks and shoes. |
| 9-24 months | Provide me with toys that require me to safely use my thumb and forefingers such as sorting toys where I get to place blocks inside of a bin or a container. |
| 9-24 months | Cut my food into small pieces before you serve it to me so I can easily pick it up and feed myself. Provide me with small finger foods like Cheerios or small pieces of fruit so I can use my hands to feed myself. |
| 12-24 months | Give me opportunities to use my fingers and thumbs while colouring. Provide me with child sized crayons or chalk and encourage me to draw you a picture. You may use your hand over mine at first until I get used to doing this on my own. |
| 12-24 | While we're reading, help me learn to turn the pages of board books. If I need help at first, you can pick up the page and allow me to turn it, but encourage me to turn the pages on my own after some practice. |
| 12-36 months | Give me my own fork or spoon so I can try feeding myself while you are feeding me. Meal time may take a bit longer, but I need practice moving my hands towards my mouth. Try feeding me one spoonful and letting me have a turn to practice. I love participating because it gives me a sense of control. |
| 12-36 months | Provide me with a small ball and let's try throwing the ball to one another. |



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| 18-60 months | Let's play with play dough! This is a great way to get me moving my fingers and thumbs to create something. Pull apart the play dough and encourage me to do the same, and then try making a shape like a ball and see if I can copy you. |
| 24-60 months | I need to show you that I can do things for myself. Make sure that you have child sized, plastic pitchers so I can pour milk or juice into my own cup; cups with two handles will make it much easier for me to drink; using plastic bowls also means that you don't have to worry about anything breaking. The more I can do for myself, the more powerful I feel. |
| 36-60 months | Let me help dress myself! I can put on my socks or pull up my pants on my own with your encouragement! |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Using my fingers to make small muscle movements in an important milestone in learning how I can use my hands to help myself.
- Giving me opportunities to feed myself helps me feel independent and gives me a sense that I have control over things in my life.
- Toys and books that require me to use my fingers and thumbs together are a fun way of teaching me to master my pincer grasp.
- Learning to feed myself is an important life skill. When you give me lots of opportunities to practice, I know that I am capable enough to do some things on my own and boost my confidence in myself.

Use my Hands/Wrist Movement

Goal: I will move my hands and wrists together to pick up toys or objects.

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| 0-18 months | Encourage me to wave bye-bye to friends and family. This is a fun and simple way of getting me to move my hands and wrists. |
| 0-18 months | Position a toy above my wrist level to encourage me to stretch my wrist and extend my fingers to grab it. |
| 0-18 months | To promote turning my wrists, try using colourful wristbands with bells attached. Banging and shaking objects helps to encourage me to practice moving my wrists. |
| 12-60 months | We can play with play-dough together. There are so many things we can make using our hands and fingers! I can pat and bang the dough when my hands are really small. When I am a bit older I can poke it to make holes or squeeze it through my fingers. When I am a preschooler you can give me cookie cutters so I can practice pushing in and pulling out the cutter to create different shapes. You will have to teach me how to roll the dough. It's a hard movement for me but it feels good. Look at all the amazing things that one play material can teach me to do with my hands! |
| 12-60 months | During bath time, give me a sponge to soak and squeeze, so I can feel and see how the water sprinkles out. Give me lots of practice opportunities to try and wring the water out for myself. |



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| 18-60 months | Give me some large, easy to open containers with twist off lids. Encourage me to twist the lid off to see what is inside. You may need to show me a couple of times how to do it. If I need a little bit of help, you can loosen the lid for me. |
| 24-60 months | Throw a small ball back and forth with me. I can practice throwing the ball both overhead and underhand to you. Either way, I'll be using my hands and wrists to aim and throw. |
| 30-60 months | Let me help you stir when we cooking something safe and simple. I'll be practicing using my hands and wrists to stir! We can do this in pretend play as well with a big mixing bowl and small blocks. Give me a spoon and I will pretend to be making block soup for you. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Practicing moving my hands and wrists together sets the foundation for later coordination. When you give me lots of opportunities to move and use the muscles in my fingers and hands in different ways, it strengthens my muscles which improve later skills like printing.
- Giving me various chances throughout the day to move my hands and wrists while under your supervision, especially when we're doing something together like cooking, helps me work on my overall eye-hand coordination and skills like grasping and releasing. These are all skills that I will use throughout my life.

Spatial Exploration

Goal: I will learn about how things occupy space by moving things in and out.

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| 8-18 months | I really enjoy filling and dumping things. I never get bored putting things inside a container and then either tipping them out or taking them out one by one. You can help to keep my curiosity by providing different containers (yogurt, ice cream, coffee cans) and objects that will fit inside (please make sure there are no choking hazards with these objects). When I drop keys, cloths pegs, Ping-Pong balls inside the coffee can, it makes an interesting sound. This activity will keep me occupied for a long time which helps to keep my focus and attention. Just remember when I am very young, I will put everything in my mouth first before I drop it into the container, so keep my safety in mind always. |
| 8-18 months | The first and simplest puzzle is a muffin tin. Almost anything fits into the tin, but Ping-Pong balls are a perfect fit and just settle in nicely. Please make sure there are no choking hazards with these objects. Because the tin is shallow, I will have no difficulty dropping objects in and getting them out. When I am older, you can turn the muffin tin into a matching game by adding a coloured sticker onto the bottom and giving me objects to sort according to the colours in the holes. |
| 12-24 months | Provide me with a shape form puzzle (puzzle with large shapes and a board rather than interlocking pieces) to explore. Encourage me to match the pieces to the picture on the board. Coach me to rotate the pieces around so they fit into the proper hole. |
| 12-60 months | During bath time, under your supervision, make sure that I have cups or bowls to scoop and dump into the tub and into one another. This is a great way for me to discover how containers can hold a substance. |
| 12-24 months | Shape sorter toys help me learn that certain shapes fit within certain shaped holes. I will learn to match them up very quickly. When I am young, make sure the toy only has a few |



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| | shapes to choose from, otherwise I will get frustrated and confused and lose interest. When I am older, I will happily stay focused and try to match more shapes. |
| 18-48 months | Sand play allows me to continue practice my filling and dumping skills. I love to watch how the sand pours from my shovel into a bucket and the different shapes it makes when I turn the bucket upside down. Sometimes I just like scooping the sand out with other utensils or my fingers. Sand, like water, just fascinates me, so take me to the playground where I can practice this hand development skill. |
| 24-36 months | Provide me with a small puzzle with 4-9 interlocking pieces that I can put together at the table or on the floor. Sit with me and encourage me by telling me that I am doing a good job! |
| 36-60 months | When I am doing a much more complicated puzzle, put the picture of the puzzle in front of me so I can see what my puzzle needs to look like when it is finished. Encourage me to find pieces that look like the picture so I can put it all together! |
| 36-60 months | Provide me with some large beads and a string/shoe lace. If I am not sure how to thread the string through the bead show me once and then I will imitate your actions. If we don't have beads, we can use fruit loops or big tube pasta instead. This task will challenge my hand-eye coordination as I have to hold the bead with one hand, insert the lace inside and then change hands to pull the string out. See how far I have come. |
| 48-60 months | Start a simple beading pattern for me like blue bead, red bead, yellow bead and encourage me to keep the pattern going! It does not matter if I don't get the pattern exactly right, I'm still learning about how to sequence colours. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- When I have strength and control in the small muscles of my fingers, hands, and wrists, I can work with small items with growing accuracy.
- I am discovering the physical properties of objects when I fill and dump, put things into containers and take them out.
- Puzzles help me develop problem solving skills while also working on my small muscle development. I will learn how two pieces can fit together or turn the pieces when they are not fitting together properly.
- Beading also helps to develop the muscles in my fingers and hands, while using my eyes. When we bead together, I'm working on the kind of grasping skills that will help me to hold a pen or pencil. I also am starting to use planning skills as I will be thinking about how many beads, what colours, and in what order I need to thread them to make the necklace I want.

Self-Help: Getting Dressed

Goal: I will help to get myself ready for the day in the morning or ready for bed at night.

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| 12-24 months | Give me opportunities to try putting things on, or taking things off. For example, I can try pulling off my socks or putting on my hat! |
| 12-24 months | Allow me to help put on my pyjamas at night. I can push my arm through the sleeve of my shirt and help get my leg through my pants when we're getting dressed. |

**FINE MOTOR:
How I Use My Hands**



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|--------------|--|
| 12-24 months | Ask me to help when we're getting dressed in the morning. I can put my hands in the air so you can get my shirt on and pull up my socks with your help! |
| 18-60 months | Give me the opportunity to get myself dressed in the morning. Always encourage me to dress myself. Help me when I ask, but let me try on my own first. You can get me started from helping me get my head through my shirt and then I can take over from here. |
| 18-60 months | When going out of the house, give me the opportunity to try to do up my jacket, put on my hat, mitts and practice doing up buttons. Support me as I need it. |
| 18-60 months | Have me practice zippers and buttons by providing me with clothes that have them. If there is something I am unable to do, you can get me started, like zipping up the bottom of my coat and then asking me to zip up the rest. If possible, place a mirror where I can see myself. Talk to me about, "Who is in the mirror?" and what I am wearing. |
| 18-60 months | Provide me with a box of small child-size clothes, such as hats, mitts, tops, skirts and pants so that I can dress up dolls or stuffed animals. Add additional accessories to make the pretend play with the dolls more interesting. |
| 18-60 months | When I come in from playing outside, let me take my shoes or boots off and line them up beside the door. The more practice I get with this the better! |
| 24-48 months | Encourage me to take off my shoes when I get inside the house, or to pull my socks off at the end of the day. |
| 24-48 months | When we're going outside to play, let me try putting on my own shoes and jacket. Start my zipper for me, but let me pull it all the way up. |
| 24-60 months | When I wake up in the morning, let me pick out my own outfit. Then encourage me to put everything on, helping as I need it. Don't worry if it takes me a little longer to get dressed, I'm still learning. |
| 24-48 Months | Give me lots of time to try to put my clothes on myself before you jump in and help me. A lot of the time it will just take a bit longer for me to dress myself. |
| 36-60 months | When playing with dolls, model positive hygiene behaviours for me. Ask me to change my doll's diaper when it is 'wet' or brush the doll's hair and teeth so s/he is ready for the day. |

Why this is important... *BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER*

- When you encourage me to participate in getting dressed in the morning and getting ready for bed at night, it shows me that I can be independent!
- I will become independent when I learn to help myself with certain tasks like brushing my teeth and getting dressed. I will have a sense of pride and control in being able to do things on my own, without too much help from you.
- My fingers are small, but they help me do so many things. Giving me opportunities to dress myself helps me feel independent as well as strengthens my hands. I will take pride in being able to do things on my own, without much help from you.
- Being able to dress by myself, doing up buttons, zippers and Velcro, will increase my hand-eye coordination.
- Allowing me to choose what I want to wear in the morning will motivate me more. It makes me feel powerful when I have some say in the decision making process. If you do not rush me in the



morning when I am trying to get dressed, it lets me know that you think that I am capable of dressing myself. I will feel proud that I can do things all by myself.

- When you show me that you think I am capable, my confidence to try things out for myself grows.

LARGE HAND MOVEMENTS

Overall Objective:

“I will learn to use the muscles in my hands to make large hand movements.”

Coordinated Hand Movements

Goal: I will transfer objects from one hand to the other. I will become more comfortable using both my left and right hands equally.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 3-9 months | When we're playing, place my favorite toys near the hand I do not use as often to encourage me to play with my toy in my non-dominant hand. |
| 4-18 months | Provide me with noise making toys that I can hold in each hand and shake. Encourage me to shake them when we play. Show me how it makes noise when I move it up or down, side to side and from one hand to another. Small vitamin containers with gravel, small rocks or pasta in them will produce lovely, different sounds. Make sure you glue on the lid for safety! |
| 6-18 months | You will discover how much I like to make noise. My shaking abilities will turn into banging, as I pat lightly, and then with more force using my hands on any surface. Soon, I will learn how much force to use on an object that I bang to get different sounds. Banging a pot lid will be a great source of pleasure to me. If I haven't figured it out yet, show me how to clap my hands together and then I will use other objects, in each hand, to bang together. I need practice to bring my hands together and this is a good way to achieve this skill. |
| 6-18 months | If I'm holding a favorite toy in one hand, try to get me interested in another toy so that I'm holding one in each hand. If I am holding a toy in each hand, offer me a third one and see what I will do. I will most probably drop one and take the new one. Encourage me to switch the toy from hand to hand. |
| 9-18 months | When I am in my high chair, give me two crackers, cheerios or food items to hold on to. Ask me to "share" with you by holding your hand out and then give me a food item in return. |
| 6-24 months | Spread some blocks out on the floor and let's see what we can build. Give me a good selection so I can explore, using one in each hand. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Learning to use my hands to transfer objects from one hand to the other is an important motor skill. I am becoming more accurate in my coordination, smoother in my control, all of which means I will be able to use both hands for block building, beading, cutting and pasting and eventually writing.
- It's important that my hands get lots of practice doing all these different things so that I can continue to learn about all the wonderful things my hands and fingers can do!



Reaching Objects

Goal: I will move to get an object that is out of my reach.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 3-9 months | While I'm on my tummy, put a favourite toy in front of me and encourage me to reach for it. I will be more motivated to stay on my tummy if you are lying down beside or in front of me so I can see your encouraging face. It's important to also watch for when I need a break from tummy time! Remember to keep it short and sweet so I'm having fun rather than spending most of the time struggling. |
| 3-9 months | Shake a rattle or noise making toy. Put it near my hands and move it slowly away, so I can reach for and catch it. Encourage me with your words to get that toy. Dangle it over my tummy so I can reach for it with both my arms and legs. |
| 4-9 months | When lying on my back, hold a toy over my tummy so I can begin to reach for the toys. Do this with me once a day so I get better and better at controlling my body. |
| 4-12 months | Give me equal opportunity to grab items with both my hands. Place objects on either side of me or give me an object in the hand I don't use as often to build up my strength. |
| 4-9 months | When I'm lying on my back, show me a toy I really like. Slowly move it to either side of my head and place it on the ground by my head. Encourage me to try to reach for it. If I don't move, show me where the toy is. Give me verbal encouragements to reach that toy. It may take a few tries, but I'll be rolling or moving to reach that toy in no time. |
| 6-12 months | When I'm sitting in my high chair, let me reach for my food, even if I make a bit of a mess! Place me in an area where it's okay if I spill. For example, away from a carpeted area where we can sweep or mop up any mess afterwards, or use a plastic bib to catch dropped food. |
| 7-18 months | When I am in a crawling position, move a favourite toy just out of my reach. Encourage me to get that toy. Make noise with the toy to motivate me. Make sure there is nothing in my way so I have a clear path to reach it. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Giving me opportunities to reach for the things I want helps me to develop my sense of competency. I am learning that I can use my body and brain to figure out how to get what I want.
- Encouraging me to move to get a toy that is out of reach will help the development of crawling skills.

Exploration of Textures

Goal: I will play with materials that allow me to explore new and different textures.

| | |
|----------|--|
| All Ages | Read books with me where I get to feel different textures. Talk to me about how these different things feel, for example, sandpaper is rough, velvet is soft, feathers are tickly and cellophane is crinkly. |
|----------|--|



| | |
|--------------|--|
| 12-60 months | Let's make play-dough. It lets me understand how combining materials make something new. I will learn to squeeze, roll, punch and poke the dough. As I get older I will get to use my imagination and create new things without your assistance. |
| 12-60 months | Let's set aside an area for drawing, painting, colouring and making crafts. We can use different textures to make all sorts of creations. Save up old scraps of different materials, bubble wrap, holiday paper, etc. Adding a bit of salt to the finger paint makes for a crunchy texture too. |
| 18-60 months | When we walk outside, let's collect twigs, rocks, acorns and leaves. Give me the words to describe how they feel. We can bring back colourful leaves and trace them, or put them under a piece of paper and colour with a crayon ovetop to produce a leaf print. All of these activities keeps developing my hand-eye coordination and refining my hand muscles. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- My fingers and hands are important muscles to exercise. They allow me do all sorts of things that let me become more capable of doing things for myself.
- Playing with new textures and being creative lets me show you what I am thinking and gives me the opportunity to express myself in different ways. Many new textures are great stress relievers too.

Block Play

Goal: I will explore use blocks in my daily play/ I will stack blocks to make a tower/ I will use blocks to build a structure.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 5-24 months | When I am in my high chair, give me two blocks that I can bang together or bang on the table. I will enjoy seeing the kind of noises I can make. |
| 8-24 months | Spread some blocks out on the floor. Let's see what we can build. Give me a wide selection of blocks to choose from, so I can explore using both my hands. |
| 18-60 months | Tape the ends of empty cereal boxes, pasta boxes or milk cartons of different sizes. Keep these on hand so we can build and stack our homemade blocks one on top of another. Let me experiment with stacking the boxes in different ways and challenge me to see how tall I can build a tower. These larger blocks will really exercise my fingers and arms. |
| 18-60 months | Provide me with blocks that are of different shapes. Add some animal figures or cars so that I can use my imagination to create a scene with these materials. For example, you can show how to use a square for the base of a house, and a triangle block for the roof. I can then problem solve how to build a garage for the cars or a farm for the animals. |
| 30-60 months | Duplo and Lego come in different sizes. These types of blocks require me to attach two blocks together. This means I have to line them up and see how they fit together. These blocks can be open-ended and I can create anything I want or sometimes the blocks come with instructions. Let me practice doing what I want, solving my own problems or trying to follow a set of instructions. Either option is a challenge to get my brain and hands working together. |



Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- I use my hands for everything I do, and providing me with blocks to build things develops all the muscles in my hands.
- Lining up objects will help me to strengthen my hand-eye coordination and allow me to group items by space and size.
- Using blocks will enable me to work with small objects and learn to how to place and balance items.

EMERGENT WRITING SKILLS AND TOOL USE

Overall Objective:

"I will begin to draw and write through the use of tools and the fine motor muscles in my hands and wrists."

Self Help: Feeding and Drinking

Goal: I will feed myself (using a spoon or fork, fingers or chopsticks) during mealtimes/ I will learn to use a cup on my own.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| All Ages | Try to keep meal-time fun and enjoyable for me. It is a good habit to develop family meal times when all members eat and enjoy meals together. Engage me in conversation about the different foods we are eating, as well as the colours and shapes. |
| 0-6 months | When nursing, make eye contact with me and hold my gaze. This will help me focus my attention. |
| 0-6 months | Recognize my cues for telling you I'm hungry. I may cry or I may put things in my mouth. Whatever my cue, I need you to watch and to respond appropriately. |
| 9-18 months | Provide me with my favorite foods that I can easily pick up like cheerios, macaroni or peas. Sit in front of me and eat with me too. I won't need too much encouragement to copy you. |
| 9-18 months | I might need some hand-over-hand help for the first couple of mouthfuls, but let me try to do it all by myself after that. Sometimes having a special spoon or fork that's just for me can help! |
| 9-24 months | Give me my own fork or spoon so I can try feeding myself while you are feeding me. Meal time may take a bit longer but I need practice moving my hands towards my mouth. Try feeding me one spoonful and letting me have a turn to practice. I love participating because it gives me a sense of control. |
| 9-24 months | Cut my food into small pieces before you serve it to me so I can easily pick it up and feed myself. Provide me with small finger foods like Cheerios or small pieces of fruit so I can use my hands to feed myself. |

**FINE MOTOR:
How I Use My Hands**



| | |
|--------------|---|
| 9-24 months | When I start getting the hang of it, resist the urge to jump in if I am going slowly. I will need to go at my own pace when I am first learning. Try not to pressure me as meal time should be pleasurable for everyone. |
| 9-24 months | Praise me whenever I try to feed myself by saying things like, “Great job eating all by yourself _____!” Feeding myself might get a little messy, but practice makes perfect! Try to keep meal-time fun and enjoyable for me by engaging me in conversation about what we are eating. |
| 9-24 months | Just because I have my own spoon does not mean I don’t need your help. You and I can take turns feeding myself so you can make sure I’m getting all the nutrients I need to grow big and strong. Remember, I will also like to bang my spoon so while I am banging you can feed me my mouthful. |
| 9-24 months | Give me my very own sippy cup and let me try drinking on my own! Show me how to raise the cup to my mouth and tip it up to drink. Encourage me to hold the cup with both hands - a full cup may be too heavy for me to hold with one hand. You might begin with filling the cup up with only a little bit of water so it does not get too messy. Allow me to play and explore the cup - even if it means I bang and toss it around. |
| 18-48 months | If I make a mess while eating encourage me to help clean it up. I am better coordinated now and can wipe up spills, so give me an opportunity to share in this chore. |
| 24-60 months | Allow me to serve myself when we’re having meals. I can transfer food from a container onto my plate, or use tongs to pick things up and pour into my cup from a child sized pitcher. Either way I will be using my hands and eyes together! |
| 24-36 months | I need to show you that I can do things for myself. Make sure that you have child sized, plastic pitchers so I can pour milk or juice into my own cup; cups with two handles will make it much easier for me to drink; using plastic bowls also means that you don’t have to worry about anything breaking. The more I can do for myself, the more independent I feel. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Giving me opportunities to feed myself is helping me feel independent and giving me a sense that I have control over things in my life.
- Learning to feed myself is an important life skill. When you give me lots of opportunities to practice, I know that I am capable enough to do some things on my own and it boosts my confidence in myself.
- My hands are becoming coordinated and I can now use them to do many different things. I can hold things with one hand, both hands and grasp small items between my thumb and forefinger. Encouraging me to feed myself and drink from a cup is allowing me to develop important self-help skills.
- I am learning that I can depend on myself to take care of my own feeding needs. Providing me with opportunities to feed myself helps me to develop independence!
- I gain more self-confidence in my abilities when you encourage me to do things on my own! I feel so special when you believe in me and what I can do!



Drawing, Writing, Painting

Goal: I will colour/draw using different materials such as pencils, crayons and paints.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 9-18 months | At first, I will be watching you as you draw lines with crayons. When my hands are able to grasp, I will pick up a crayon and hold it in my fist. I will probably gum it first before trying anything creative, this is okay, just don't let me eat them! My first attempts at drawing will be mark making because all I can really do is to bang the crayon on the paper. I am still learning how crayon and paper go together. When I can hold the crayon a bit better I will start to push the crayon back and forth. The more opportunities I get to explore with these materials the better I will become. |
| 9-24 months | Let's try ice cube painting for a change. Freeze some ice with food colouring or different Kool- Aid colours. Then let me create my own masterpiece with the ice cubes and some paper. I'll be working on my small muscles when I try to pick up the ice and move it around without it slipping out of my hands. The experience of the cold sensation will be more important than actually making too many marks. This will be a totally new experience for me so let me enjoy the sensory pleasure of it, while I strengthen my small hand muscles. |
| 12-24 months | Provide me with washable markers and paper as a change. I most likely will run the marker on my hands and palm. Encourage me to make marks on the paper by putting your hand over mine; then let me try on my own. Markers are easier to move than crayons and much brighter in colour. This will motivate me to experiment with it. This skill will take me a while to master, so keep offering me opportunities. |
| 12-60 months | Let's set aside an area for drawing, painting and colouring. We can work together to make all sorts of art and hang it up on the refrigerator for everyone to see! Try this at first in an area that's easy to clean so we don't have to worry so much about making a mess. Give me the chance to tell you and others what I have drawn when they ask. |
| 12-60 months | Finger painting on shiny paper is a nice change. Again, this is a messy activity and it will allow me to use all my fingers to spread the paint around on the paper. It will feel soft and I will be more focused on how the colours merge and change, rather than creating anything. If my palm is open, you can show me how to make a palm print with the paint that is on it. This will be another very new experience for me. You can add a little dishwashing soap to the paints to make them washable so don't worry too much about the mess. |
| 18-48 months | Give me big, thick crayons that my little hands can hold and watch how well I will scribble all over the paper. I am watching what I am drawing and soon I will change the kind of scribbles on different parts of the paper. My scribbles will turn into shapes that have meaning only to me. |
| 18-60 months | Provide me with paper and crayons, or a paintbrush and paint. Try to encourage me to make long strokes across the paper. I now can hold the paper with one hand and move the crayon or paintbrush with the other. When I'm starting out, I will move the tools across the paper to make lines. As I get older, my lines will become circles and eventually stick figures. |
| 18-60 months | Always keep paper or colouring books and different materials like crayons, washable markers, paints, or pencil crayons handy so that I can create a picture whenever I want to! |
| 24-60 months | Ask me questions about my drawing and let me tell you about it. Give me a little help by saying, "I love the colours you picked for your picture – is that a tree you drew?" Ask me to describe what the picture is and write what I've described on the page. |



| | |
|--------------|---|
| 36-60 months | If I seem interested in writing, have me pretend to write a story. Even if I'm just scribbling in a line, I'm beginning to imitate what I have seen others do. This is how writing skills begin to develop. |
| 36-60 months | Trace letters for me and challenge me to see if I can write something similar. Start with big letters first until I get used to writing. I will want to write my name, so show me how to draw the first letter of my name. This will motivate me to practice. |
| 36-60 months | Label familiar things in my environment. Write my name on the bottom of my artwork, my plates or bowls at the dinner table. We can even write my name on a sign to hang on my door. The more I get used to seeing my name in print, the easier it will be for me to print it later. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Painting in long strokes across the paper from left to right encourages eye movements from side to side. These side to side eye movements promote scanning, which is a skill I will use when I begin to read later on.
- My hands are small and my muscles are still growing. Spending time colouring and playing with paints and markers is not only fun, but it is helping me develop my hand-eye coordination while using my imagination!
- My hands are very important because I use them every day! By learning how to hold markers or crayons, I am building my coordination, strength and control in in my hands and fingers. When the small muscles in my wrists, fingers and eyes all work together, there are so many things that I can do.
- Drawing pictures is a way that I can show you the things that are important to me. It is also another way for me to communicate how I feel, when I don't know what words to use. My drawings tell stories about me and my life. When you hang my artwork up around the house, it lets me know that you are proud of me, which helps with my self-esteem.
- Practicing writing and drawing shapes allows me to master the coordination required for better accuracy in my small muscle development.
- Writing my name is important and with these activities I'll be able to do it in no time. Activities like these help me to think creatively and to pay attention to what I'm doing.

Child Safe Scissors

Goal: I will practice using child safe scissors under the supervision of a caregiver/adult.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 36-60 months | Have a craft bin that I can have access to which includes child safe scissors. A few times a week sit down with me and pull some items out of the bin so we can make a craft. With your supervision I can use child-safe scissors to cut, paste, and create! |
| 36-60 months | Ask me to create a picture collage for you. Give me child-safe scissors to practice cutting and some colourful paper to cut into shapes. After I have finished ask me to describe what I made and why. |

**FINE MOTOR:
How I Use My Hands**



| | |
|--------------|--|
| 36-60 months | Make snowflakes with me! We can do this by folding some paper in half, then quarters, and using child safe scissors to cut little pieces out. Then when we unfold the paper we can see the designs and patterns that we made. |
| 36-60 months | Create a paper chain and decorations. I can draw designs on brightly coloured paper and then show me how to cut the paper into strips. Show me how to glue the paper strips together to form a chain. When we are done I can decide where the chains could be hung around the house. |
| 36-60 months | Encourage me to cut out my own shapes for crafts out of paper. We can make flowers, birds and animals out of the shapes I have cut out of paper. The more practice I get cutting, the more confident I will become in using this tool. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Using scissors, paints and markers are different ways through which I can strengthen the small muscles in my fingers and hands.
- All of these experiences are the foundation for the development of my writing skills. This will become more and more important as I begin to print letters and numbers in school. You can help prepare me for this by trying one of these activities each and every day.
- Allowing me to use tools like child safe scissors helps me to work on the small muscles in my hands in new ways.

Hand in Hand

Growing Together Every Day

PROBLEM SOLVING STRATEGIES





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"I am learning to retain and think about information in my head over short periods of time."

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NOTE: This is NOT a comprehensive list.

This resource is intended to give you suggestions for strategies that can support development. A Developmental Support Plan should be unique and customized to address the child’s developmental strengths and needs.

When preparing a Developmental Support Plan for a specific child, be sure to:

Include/ modify the goals to be specific to the child’s strengths.

Include something personal and meaningful to the family.

Create your own goals and strategies for the child based on what you know about the child & family.

PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out



WORKING MEMORY

Overall Objective:

"I am learning to retain and think about information in my head over short periods of time."

Auditory Memory

Goal: I will recognize familiar sounds and voices.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 0-3 months | When I'm playing on the floor and can't see you, call my name and encourage me to look toward you. |
| 0-6 months | When I'm distressed, use your voice to comfort me and let me know that you are there. |
| 0-6 months | Always respond to my cries with a soothing and nurturing tone. |
| 0-6 months | Hold me and read a familiar board book to me a few times every day. Make eye contact with me as you describe what's on each page. I will start to use my voice cooing and babbling as I try to join in. |
| 0-6 months | Sing familiar songs to me such as "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" or "Row, Row, Row Your Boat". You can even try making up your own songs. I will start to use my voice cooing and babbling as I try to join in. |
| 3-24 months | Name the sounds that we hear. For instance, while at the park, we may hear the sound of cars honking or animals in the park. |
| 3-36 months | While in the car, on a walk, or on the bus, tell me stories. Use your imagination and include the names of familiar people objects and places in the stories. |
| 3-24 months | Call attention to familiar sounds in my environment such as the phone ringing or the dog barking. Ask me, "do you hear the phone ringing? Let's answer it!" |
| 6-24 months | When we are with familiar people or pets, say their name and ask me to find him or her. For instance ask, "Where is our dog Theo?", and wait for me to turn and look in the direction of the person or pet. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- As you respond to my cries with a nurturing voice, I will learn to associate a positive tone with nurturing activities

PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out



Auditory Memory

Goal: I will play games, sing songs and recount stories that involve repetition and/or memory.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 0-6 months | Sing familiar songs to me such as “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” or “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.” I will start to use my voice cooing and babbling as I try to join in. |
| 6-24 months | Let’s play a game with a noisemaking toy. Hide a toy or object that makes sounds such as a musical toy and wait for me to find it. As I get older, we can make this more difficult by hiding the toy under a table, or in another room. |
| 6-24 months | Play “This Little Piggy” with my toes. As I listen to your voice, I will become familiar with the rhyme and anticipate what’s coming next. I will begin to anticipate which toe you’re going to touch next and may even offer my other foot to continue the game. |
| 12-36 months | I am getting good at recognizing familiar sounds in my environment because of the songs and books that we have shared. Keep on imitating the sounds of animals, and pointing out important sounds like the ringing of the telephone, or the sirens of the fire trucks. This helps me learn more about living and non-living objects in my world. |
| 12-48 months | As a toddler, I love to repeat the refrain of “Old McDonald” by yelling “E-I-E-I-O.” As a preschooler, singing the “Alphabet Song” will help me to remember the letters and order of the alphabet. |
| 12-60 months | “The Wheels on the Bus” is a good song to increase my memory because I will begin to associate the actions with the words in the song. Make sure to do the actions that go along with the songs such as waving your arms from side to side like the wipers on the bus, open and shutting your hands for the doors, making a honking motion for the horn on the bus, etc. |
| 24-48 months | Read me books that repeat sentences. I will enjoy filling in the words when you stop reading. “Good Night Moon” or “Are you My Mother” are just a couple of books that will allow me to participate if you let me tell you the punch lines. |
| 24-60 months | When we sing songs like “The Ants Go Marching” I will have fun stomping my feet in time with the song and I will learn my numbers at the same time by remembering what comes next. This song works well as a group activity with other children as we count aloud together. |
| 24-60 months | When I start to get used to a new routine (like getting dressed) ask me, “What comes next?” after each step of the process. Soon I will remember what I have to put on first, second, and last until I am all dressed on my own. |
| 30-60 months | My memory takes a while to develop. If you hide small objects under cups and ask if I can remember where each item is, that will really make me think hard and work my memory. An example would be if you ask me, “Which cup has the monkey?” |
| 30-60 months | Card games are a good way to practice my memory skills. In the game “Go Fish” make sure to show me your card’s picture, describe it and then ask me if I have it as one of my cards. “Do you have a card with two symbols on it, like this one?” Remind me to say, “Go Fish” if I don’t have that card. As we play I will have to remember if you asked |



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

| | |
|--------------|---|
| | me for the card and then I can ask you for it when I pick it from the pile. This game really tests my memory! |
| 30-60 months | Let's make up a story together without pictures. Every day we can add something new to our story. If we like once our story is finished, we can create some pictures to go with it. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- When I sing songs over and over with you, my listening skills improve and I will be able to remember and repeat the verses along with you.
- I need continuous practice in order to master skills, but it is extra important to build my memory.

Object Permanence

Goal: I will understand that even when an object is not seen, it still exists.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 0-6 months | When I'm on my back (during diapering or floor time), move an object in front of me from side to side or up and down slowly. This will help me get familiar with tracking objects. |
| 0-6 months | While I'm sitting on your lap, try placing a toy in front of me and then moving it to one side. I'll follow the object with my eyes as you move it |
| 0-12 months | Use daily routines, such as feeding and diapering, as an opportunity to play peek-a-boo. Hide your face behind a cloth or bowl; when you reveal your face to me, smile and say out loud, "Peek-a-boo!" Eventually I will pull the cloth off your head or move an object to find you. |
| 0-12 months | Try playing games with me where I'm encouraged to find a hidden object. Place a toy under a blanket and encourage me to find the toy. If I'm having trouble, try lifting up the blanket to remind me where the toy is or place the toy somewhere where I can see part of it but not all of it. Give me lots of chances to find that toy! |
| 4-12 months | Play games with me that allow me to follow a disappearing object with my eyes. For example, try placing some cheerios under my bowl and allow me to find them. |
| 6-12 months | When I am not afraid to have my face covered, play the same peek-a-boo game where my face is lightly covered with a cloth. Don't let me stay under for longer than a second, removing the cloth and say, "Peek-a-boo - I found you." Encourage me to take the cloth off my own head so I can make the discovery on my own. |
| 8-16 months | Finding hidden objects is fun for me so provide me with opportunities during mealtime, playtime and bath time to find something that is not in view like a toy inside a bucket in the bath or food inside a bowl during mealtimes. |
| 8-36 months | Provide me with any kind of pop-up toy. You can wind the toy up so that something will pop-out or you can push a puppet up through a container. This will help me recognize that when you put a puppet or any object back in the box it is still there. I |



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

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| | will need lots of practice to get this idea, but it gets easier when I can make this happen by myself. |
| 10-18 months | Pull out a photo album with photos of familiar faces and ask me to find someone I know, or point at a picture and ask me who it is. |
| 12-36 months | While I am watching, hide a favourite toy under a blanket or towel, and ask me, "Where did the ___ go?" Encourage me to look for the hidden object. Show lots of surprise when I remove the cover and find the object. When I get good at this game, put a toy in a box with a lid. Again, encourage me to lift the lid to find the toy. |
| 12-60 months | I like to play "Hide and Seek." Pretend you can't see me and call out my name, "_____, where are you?"..."Oh, where could he/she be?" Act surprised when we make eye-contact. "Oh, there you are!" |
| 12-24 months | Turn a shoe box into a magic game. Place a few scarves tied together inside, make a hole in the side of the box and thread part of the first scarf through. I will be curious and interested in the colours and designs of the scarf. Encourage me to start pulling. It will feel like a never-ending scarf that continuously changes colour. Repeat the game until I tire of pulling the scarves or I figure out that I can put the scarves inside myself and try to play the game with you. |
| 24-60 months | Start a treasure hunt with me where you hide some of my favourite toys in one room and I try to find them. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Playing games like Peek-a-Boo will help me begin to understand that people and things still exist, even when I cannot see them. Pulling the cover off our faces will help strengthen my reaching and grasping, and reasoning abilities.
- Games like "Hide and Seek" are so much fun, as they give me a chance to understand we can take turns hiding and seeking. Encouraging me to recognize and search for objects also lets me practice my growing vocabulary.
- I will improve my memory and learn to look for things when they are out of sight. Learning that something is still there when it is hiding will help me understand that when you disappear from my sight, it is not forever and you will be back! This helps me feel secure in your love.

Self-Recognition

Goal: I will learn that I am a separate person from my caregivers.

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| 0-6 months | While facing you, make different facial gestures and watch how I try to copy some of these. For example, stick your tongue out, open your mouth wide, or pucker your lips. Make the gesture and give me some time to imitate it. |
| 0-6 months | While playing on my back, raise my hands and encourage me to watch how you help me move my hands gently from side to side. |



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

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| 0-6 months | While I'm lying on my back and my hands are up, encourage me to watch my hands as they move around. |
| 0-8 months | As we settle into our daily routines, talk to me about what's coming up or what's happening and acknowledge my needs. For example, if I'm hungry say, "I know you're hungry, let's settle down and get you fed" or if I need to be changed say, "I know your diaper is dirty, I'm going to change you soon." |
| 6-18 months | Place me in front of a mirror and ask me, "Where is ____?" See if I can point to myself. If I'm not ready yet, point to my reflection and say, "There is ____!" or try taking my hand and point to my reflection. When I have mastered this, encourage me to point to my body parts when you ask me, "Where is ____'s nose? Ears? Etc." |
| 6-24 months | Cover the mirror with a cloth and play Peek-a-boo with me. Lift the cloth, show a surprised face while you say, "Look who is there. It is ____!" When I am more coordinated and can move, try the same game and encourage me to lift the cloth to find both of us. |
| 8-18 months | Show me pictures of myself and pictures of you. Say things like, "Who's that ____? Who is she/he? It's you!" Do this often so I can become familiar with my own image. |
| 12-60 months | Make funny faces with me in the mirror. It is fun to watch and I can try to imitate you. |
| 12-36 months | Each morning when we are brushing our teeth, tap the mirror and say, "Where's ____? There he/she is!" to show me my reflection. Label your own reflection as well. Ask me, "Where is mommy?" and wait for me to shout out my name for you or point to your image. |
| 12-60 months | Sing, "Head and shoulders, knees and toes" with me in front of a big mirror so I can begin to recognize my body parts. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Recognizing myself in a mirror or in pictures gives me a sense of identity. I will learn who I am and who the familiar people around me are. Soon I will be able to put a name to myself and to others.
- Playing with the mirror helps me to recognize myself and understand the different parts of my body!
- Looking at myself in the mirror next to your image is helping me to realize that I am a separate individual from you. This idea is going to take a long time to understand.

Numbers or 1:1 Correspondence

Goal: I will learn about numbers and what they represent.

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| 12-48 months | While you are completing everyday tasks, count aloud with me. Count the number of fingers I have while I wash my hands, count the socks that you are putting on my feet, or the number of toys I have helped pick up when we are tidying. |
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PROBLEM SOLVING: *How I Explore and Figure Things Out*

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| 24-60 months | It will take me a long time to understand the concept of a number. The easiest way for me to see this relationship is when you ask me to put a cup next to each plate or to put a brush into each container of paint at the easel. When you explain to me that each person gets one cup, or each paint container has room for one brush, I will start to understand the 1:1 correspondence among objects. |
| 24-60 months | When you are giving me objects, say the number for each object you hand to me. For example, if we are building a tower, hand me the blocks and count them, "One, two, three..." As I get older I will be able to count them myself and tell you how many I used to build a structure. |
| 24-60 months | Finger-plays and songs are great for counting. Some of my favourites are: "Five Green and Speckled Frogs," "Ten Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed," "Five Little Ducks," or "One, Two, Buckle my Shoe." Don't forget to use your fingers to show me the number while you are singing. As you go through the verses, put one finger down or add a finger, and have me do the same. |
| 30-60 months | Outside is a good place to practice counting. We can count the cars we see, or how many flowers I can pick. |
| 30-60 months | I love helping you cook and this is a fun way to learn numbers. Show me the ingredients and tell me how many cups of flour we need, how many eggs I have to beat, how many chocolate chips I need to stir in, etc. |
| 36-60 months | Make a game of lining up or stacking objects and see if I can count them. You can help me out at first, but then encourage me to try on my own. Make sure you point to the object so I know that the number means one, and then next will be two. |
| 36-60 months | Card games are another fun way to learn my numbers. When playing "Go Fish" you can show your card to me and ask if I have the same number in my hand. We can start with numbers only and then move on to numbers and colours, or symbols. |
| 48-60 months | The game "What Time is it Mr. Wolf?" is a good way for me to play with a group of children. |
| 48-60 months | Play a matching game with me where we match the written number to a corresponding number of objects. For example, create cards with the numbers 1 -10, and create a matching set of cards with the corresponding number of objects and ask me to match them. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Learning numbers means understanding how to compare size and quantities. For example, big and small, short and tall, more and less. This helps me to organize what I see in my world.
- Learning how to count helps me to understand the value of things. For example, I know that I have one nose but two eyes and two ears. This will help me to solve problems later on as I will understand the value of a number.
- With time I will be able to understand number sequence, quantity and the relationships between objects.

PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out



Labelling Similarities and Differences

Goal: I will understand the concept of same and different.

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| 6-24 months | Point out things that are the same. For example, at the local library point to other babies and say, "Look, there's another baby just like you!" |
| 6-24 months | When going for a walk, point to the dogs that we see and say to me, "Look, there's another doggy!" |
| 6-24 months | When we are in front of a mirror, point to things such as your eyes and my eyes, your nose and my nose, and say, "Look, we both have eyes," or "We both have a nose." |
| 12-36 months | While playing with blocks, talk to me about the blocks that are the same shape and colour compared to blocks that are different colours. |
| 12-36 months | As we tidy up my toys, let's sort things based on same and different. For example, have a toy box for all my blocks and ask me to put all my blocks into the box. Have another box for all my toy cars and ask me to put all my cars into the box. |
| 12-36 months | As we go for a walk, point at dogs and cats. Talk to me about how they are different. For example, cats say, "Meow," and dogs say, "Woof!" |
| 12-36 months | Let's go to the library and find books that have pictures of things that are the same and different. We can read them together and talk about what's the same and what's different. |
| 15-36 months | While playing with the blocks, show me a blue block, and ask me to find another blue block. |
| 36-60 months | While grocery shopping, ask me to find items that are the same. For example, ask me to find 3 yellow bananas, or 4 more red apples. |

Labelling Similarities and Differences

Goal: I will begin to match, sort and compare different objects based on size/colour/shape.

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| 12-36 months | I need a lot of practice holding and manipulating objects to understand their shape. Give me shape-sorter toys and sit with me while I try to figure out where each shape goes. Label each shape for me as we put them in the right holes. Praise me whenever I try or get it right! |
| 18-36 months | Point out the size of animals in books, particularly when I am looking at pictures of parent animals and their babies. |
| 15-48 months | Use play dough to make different shapes and objects. Let's sort them according to size and shape from smallest to biggest. |



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

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| 18-48 months | Let's try painting together. Let me explore with one colour at a time so I get to recognize blue, red, or yellow. Then, let me experiment with two or more colours so I can blend them and create new colours. This might be a good activity for us to do at our local drop in centre. |
| 18-60 months | If my physical space is organized, I will learn quickly how to group my toys. When it is time to tidy up, guide me to put the cars/trucks in the vehicle bin, the blocks in the block bin and the people figures in their special bin. |
| 24-60 months | When I am no longer putting things in my mouth bring out an assortment of coloured buttons. Show me how to put all the green ones or blue ones in a separate pile. Label the colours for me so I begin to associate colour along with the object. Encourage me to label the colours of objects. I will do so when you point out the colours of familiar objects. |
| 24-60 months | Give me different containers and a group of similar things that I can sort by size, shape, or colour. I will start to see the different ways I can group things together! We can find things to group outside like leaves, pine cones, shells; or inside items such as plastic bottle caps, coloured pegs and crayons. |
| 24-60 months | I need your help to sort blocks according to their shapes, sizes and colours. Make sure to label everything so I can learn the words too! For example, "Let's use the big red block. I need the green square. Which one does ___ want?" |
| 36-60 months | Compare objects with me when we are grocery shopping. We can talk about the "big", "bigger", and "biggest" containers of milk. Ask me to choose the size you need. |
| 36-60 months | As I get older I will be able to sort buttons not only by colour, but by size, shape and even how many holes are in each. This will take a while but I need lots of practice exploring how objects are the same and how they are different. |
| 36-60 months | Patterns are another way that I can learn about size and colour of objects. When my small muscle coordination improves I can make necklaces by lacing big coloured beads. I will experiment by alternating colours or choose to make a few of each colour. These materials allow me to create endless patterns and really learn my colours. |
| 48-60 months | Play a matching game with me where we match the written number to a corresponding number of objects. For example, create cards with the numbers 1 -10, and create a matching set of cards with the corresponding number of objects and ask me to match them. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- The world is a complex place to me, so I learn by touching and manipulating. Matching, sorting and grouping help me to understand how some things can be the same, similar, or different. This helps me make sense of the world and how it can be organized.
- Playing memory games teach me the essential skill of turn taking. I will also learn how to be patient and to focus better when playing games.
- Learning the abstract concepts of colour, shape and size is going to take a long time. First, I need to understand what things do, rather than the characteristics of what they look like.



COGNITIVE MENTAL FLEXIBILITY

Overall Objective:

"I will learn to adjust to new demands/priorities/perspectives."

Attention Regulation

Goal: I will stay with one activity for an extended period of time/ I will play with just one thing at a time.

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| 0-6 months | Provide me with some soothing activities like swaddling me, talking to me gently with a calm voice, or using your face to mimic mine. I'll find these activities relaxing so I'll be able to enjoy them for extended periods of time. |
| 0-6 months | Engage me in activities that I find soothing. If I seem to be getting a little fussy, try giving me a pacifier or helping me find my fingers to suck on. This may help me maintain my attention for a little longer. |
| 0-6 months | When nursing, make eye contact with me and hold my gaze. This will help me focus my attention. |
| 0-6 months | Take time to read with me each and every day. Spending time with me looking at a book will help me develop the ability to stay focused for a short period of time. |
| 0-6 months | I like baby talk and parentese, so use it often with me. It actually helps me to stay focused and engaged in what you are saying. |
| 0-6 months | Mimic and exaggerate my facial expressions. If I'm happy, mimic these expressions. This will help me to stay focused on our interaction. |
| 0-12 months | Sing songs or play games with me that require my full attention. This may include peek-a-boo, "Row, row, row your boat", or the "Itsy Bitsy Spider". |
| 0-12 months | Try giving me 1 or 2 toys at a time to hold and play with. Having too many toys around can be overwhelming for me as I won't know which one I should focus on. |
| 0-12 months | Play some one-on-one games with me in front of the mirror. Point out my eyes, nose, mouth, etc., and label them appropriately for me. |
| 3-6 months | Get my attention with toys that make noise like safety-approved rattles or small shakers. Shake them gently then lower them to the middle of my body so I have to bring both my hands to my midline to get them. |
| 3-6 months | While I'm on my tummy put a favourite toy in front of me and encourage me to reach for it. Watch me and see how hard I work to get it. Some frustration, but not too much (e.g. I don't want to cry!) is actually good for my development. |
| 6-18 months | Talk to me about my routine, for example, "I need to change your diaper; let's take a toy for you to play with while we do this". |

PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out



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| 6-12 months | While you're close by me, give me a chance to remain in my crib looking at a mobile, or on my tummy playing with toys. I will learn to be content playing in my crib with one or two toys |
| 10-18 months | During floor time, try rolling a ball back and forth with me. Encourage me to return the ball once it's rolled to me. |
| 12-36 months | Provide me with opportunities to play on my own for short periods of time while you're still close by. I'm learning to be self-reliant for short periods of time so giving me opportunities to play on my own helps with this. |
| 18-48 months | I have lots of toys so it can be overwhelming to choose what to play with. Give me a choice of 2 games or toys and let me pick which one I want to play. Help me stick with it by playing with me. |
| 18-60 months | Give me a warning close to the meal time. Five minutes before we have lunch or dinner, tell me, "Okay _____, in 5 minutes we have to put everything away because we are going to eat." Let me know that we are going to eat together and afterwards we can go back to playing. |
| 18-60 months | When transitioning from one task to another give me options (about 2 or 3). Tell me well in advance that we will be moving from one task to another and then offer me a choice. For example, if I'm going to bed ask me if I would rather brush my teeth or take a bath first, or let me choose the story we're going to read. |
| 24-60 months | <p>Step 1: Let me choose which toy or activity I want to play with.</p> <p>Step 2: Sit next to me and make sure only my activity is on the table.</p> <p>Step 3: Encourage me to stay at my activity for at least a few minutes (10 minutes if I'm 4 or 5 years old). If I get distracted and want to play with something else, remind me that when we are done our activity we can play with something else.</p> <p>Step 4: When our activity is done ask me to help you clean up and to put my activity away.</p> |
| 24-60 months | Plan a shopping excursion with me where we look at flyers, and make a list of what we need to buy. When we're at the store, remind me about what we need to buy, and ask me to find those items. |
| 24-60 months | Remind me throughout the day what is coming next so that I can begin to focus my attention onto the next activity or task. |
| 24-60 months | Let's sit and do puzzles together. Allow me to find the pieces that go together. Make it a challenge to finish the whole puzzle before we put it away. |
| 24-60 months | Give me a choice of 2 games or toys and let me choose which one I want to play. Help me stick with it by playing with me. |
| 24-60 months | Choose toys or games that have an end point. For example, we can play a short board game, complete a full puzzle, or complete a colour by number picture. Activity books at the dollar store have lots of games and puzzles we can work on together or I can try on my own. |

PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out



Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- Staying with one activity at a time is important because I am learning how to concentrate. This will help me focus better as I get older. With your help, I'll be able to finish a picture or a whole game.
- Staying with one activity, even for a short time, is how I learn to concentrate and improve my attention span.
- I am learning that I can work my body and my brain to help me figure out how I'm going to get what I want!
- When I only have a few choices it will be easier for me to pick an activity or toy, and I won't be distracted by other activities or toys as easily.
- Talking to me about my day and what choices I can make throughout the day help develop my critical thinking skills.
- Allowing me some say in what goes on throughout the day will help me to gain independence and help me to express myself.

Little Transitions

Goal: I will move smoothly from one activity to another.

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| 6-60 months | Sometimes transitions take a long time. For example, if we have to wait in line, sing me a song, play word-guessing games with me, or recite rhymes. I enjoy playing with you and this will keep my mind busy while we wait for the next activity. |
| 12-60 months | Give me positive attention and specific good feedback if I transition smoothly from one activity to the next. I love making you happy and will try extra hard to do a good job next time. |
| 18-60 months | Make sure you give me enough time to get into my playtime before it's time to clean up. If I often don't get the chance to finish my activity, I may get frustrated and protest when you tell me it's time to do something else. |
| 24-60 months | Let me know when it will soon be time to clean up. Even if I can't tell time yet, I need some warning to anticipate the clean up. When you give me a 2-minute heads up, then a 1-minute, a 10-second, and then tell me "it's clean up time", it will help me be ready for the transition. As I get better at this, you can give me 3 warnings, and then even 2 warnings. |
| 24-60 months | Help me understand what clean up means. Sometimes I don't remember where to put the toys. If you direct my transitioning activity (e.g., I'll put the blocks away and you put the balls in the blue bin (while pointing)), it will help me stay on task. Keep me busy because I love to move my body and I might find something silly to do if you don't give me a task right away. |
| 24-60 months | Let me know what activity is coming up next. Knowing what is to come helps me feel calm and helps me finish the current activity to move on to the next. |



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

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| 36-60 months | If I am working in a group setting and I finish early, have an activity planned for me so I'm not left waiting with nothing to do. When I have a purposeful activity, I am more likely to show the behaviour you are hoping to see. |
| 36-60 months | Give me 2 options. When it's time to transition to an activity that I don't like as much, give me 2 choices (e.g., It's snack time! would you like apples or grapes?). This allows me to feel some ownership over the next activity and will ease the transition. |
| 48-60 months | Teach me the expectation for the routine. Sometimes just talking about it isn't enough. We can create a picture board together that gives me a visual schedule of the activities to come and what I need to do to transition successfully from one activity to the next. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Transitions can be a stressful and frustrating experience. Being able to transition smoothly from one activity to the next is an essential skill needed for group contexts. When I can handle small transitions without disrupting others, I am maximizing my time to learn new things.
- A well-directed and practiced transition can minimize the time needed for instructions and managing behaviours, which interrupts the cycle of learning.

Big Transitions

Goal: I will be prepared for a big change in my life.

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| 12-60 months | Talk to me about this big change that is coming up. The more we talk about it, the more it will become familiar to me, and the less it will be scary. I might even become excited for the change when you tell of all the great things I will be able to do in this new setting. |
| 12-60 months | If we can, let's practice the new routine that this new setting will bring. (i.e., If I'm going to daycare, let's practice having our nap when they do it at the day care so it will be one thing less to get used to when I get there). |
| 18-60 months | Remind me that it's okay to be afraid. But reassure me and tell me that I'll feel better each day that I'm there. Tell me that lots of other kids feel like I do. Acknowledge my fear and offer reassurance. |
| 36-60 months | Let's make a puppet show with my stuffed animals and act out what this transition will feel like. You can show me first, but the next time, let me play one of the characters. Engage me by saying things like: "Mr. Elephant feels scared, what can he do?" |
| 36-60 months | Find a book (i.e., Franklin Goes to School) where a character is experiencing something similar and read it to me. Let's take time while reading the book to talk about how the character is feeling and how he faces the new adventure. (Note: If finding a book is difficult or going to the library, you can use an online video or make your own.) |



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

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| 36-60 months | Help me understand what my day will look like in this new setting (i.e., day care, school). Let's make a collage with pictures to help me see visually what is ahead. |
| 48-60 months | A type of "ceremony" can help me acknowledge that I am graduating from one phase of my life to the next. Fill it with my favourite things (i.e., food, games, people) to celebrate the past and look forward to the future. This can be as simple as a game pizza night. Let me pick the game as we celebrate together. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Big transitions are a part of human life. Learning the skills to transition from the known to the unknown is an important lifelong skill. Transitions can include but are not limited to childcare, school, high school, moving, graduating from college, taking a new job as an adult, getting married, divorced, retirement, and ultimately death. Big transitions can bring forward lots of feelings such as anxiety, fear, and excitement. Help me learn to prepare for a big transition to help me manage my big emotions.

Serve and Return Interactions

Goal: I will strengthen the connections in my brain through serve and return interactions with my primary caregiver(s).

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| All Ages | You are my favourite toy. Nothing else compares to the time you spend playing with me and delighting in our conversations back and forth. |
| All Ages | Use our everyday routines to interact with me. This serve and return (back and forth) interaction will create amazing connections in my brain and strengthen what's already there. |
| 0-3 months | Respond to my cooing and babbling sounds by cooing and babbling back at me. When you copy what I am saying I will be encouraged to look at you and continue babbling. |
| 0-3 months | Laying down together facing each other, copy my facial expressions or let e copy yours. It doesn't matter who starts serving in our interactions as long as we keep going back and forth. |
| 0-6 months | Make eye contact and talk to me when feeding me. Describe where we are or what you did today, or anything that interests you. Hearing your voice and looking into your eyes during this quiet time is soothing and comforting. More than likely I'll return your gaze. |
| 0-6 months | When I coo, interact with me and direct my attention to a face or hand. This will engage different parts of my brain and begin to build the foundation for later emotional and cognitive development |
| 0-12 months | Let's look at a picture book together. Describe what's on each page, and make eye contact with me frequently. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

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| 0-12 months | Show me objects, and label them. Let's explore them together. This helps me make connections in my brain between sounds and related objects. |
| 0-12 months | When I babble, make gestures, or facial expressions, respond with the same kind of behaviour back. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 12-36 months | During every day routines, describe what's going on in my environment and give me a chance to respond to what you're saying. This will support my language skills and strengthen connections that are forming in my brain |
| 12-36 months | Let's get on the floor and play with some of my toys together. You can follow my lead or if I'm unsure how to start, you begin by showing me what we can do. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 12-36 months | Throughout the day, as you describe what we are doing give me a chance to respond. Ask me questions so I can hear the change in your voice and over time it will prompt me to respond. |
| 12-36 months | During mealtimes, let's have lots of conversation about our day, or our meal, or what we're going to do tomorrow. Remember to pause and give me a chance to contribute to the conversation so that there's lots of serve and return between us. |
| 18-36 months | Sometimes what I serve you may not be verbal. It may be through eye contact or gestures that I let you know how I'm feeling about a situation we're in. For example, I may shake my head if I'm being asked to play with other children but don't want to. |
| 24-48 months | Let's go for a walk in our neighbourhood and talk about what we see. You can start by asking me to talk about the favourite things people or places in our neighbourhood. Remember I would love to hear about yours. |
| 36-60 months | Sometimes I may use things like my pictures to tell you how I'm feeling. Talk to me about my pictures and what they mean to me. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 36-60 months | Let's role play together. Allow me to choose what we're play-acting or if I'm having trouble give me a few suggestions to choose from. This is a great way for me to explore different emotions and reactions in a safe form of play. |
| 36-60 months | Let's create our own stories together. Let me choose the characters and the setting and together let's make an adventure that lets me explore different situations, emotions, and reactions in a safe way. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 36-60 months | Encouraging me to share my feelings about events, my friends, things that might happen in our family is important. I need to know I can share these thoughts with you and you will respond in a nurturing and caring way. |
| <p><u>Why this is important...</u> BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you engage in positive nurturing and responsive serve and return interactions with me, you are shaping my growing brain. | |

PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out



- New neural connections form in the brain as infants babble, engage, and interact with their primary caregiver, and their primary caregivers interact back.
- Serve and return is a wonderful opportunity to share my emotions with you. Knowing that you will listen and respond in a caring way will encourage me to come to you with my feelings.
- Ensuring that I have adult caregivers who consistently engage in serve and return interactions with me builds a foundation in my brain for all the learning, behaviour and health that follow.
- Reading is a great opportunity to promote serve and return interactions because we can take time to make eye contact and talk about what we're seeing together.
- Role play is a great way to experiment with different feelings and reactions. When you engage me in role play activities where I get to choose the scenario, I learn that I get to have some control in our interactions.

Understanding and Following Instructions

Goal: I will learn to understand and follow instructions.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 5-12 months | While playing with one of my favourite toys on the floor, drop it next to me and ask me to look for it. |
| 6-12 months | Label familiar objects in my environment including things like body parts. Point and label the object and then ask me to point to the object. For example, point to my nose and ask me to point to my nose. |
| 6-12 months | While I am in my high chair, give me a small bowl with some finger foods. Show me with your fingers how to pick up a piece of the food and put it in my mouth. Tell me to try to pick up a piece of the food. If I'm reluctant, continue to model for me and in between, again instruct me to try to pick it up myself. |
| 6-12 months | During tummy time, place a toy in front of me and ask me to reach for it. |
| 6-12 months | Using a toy I can comfortably hold, ask me to bang it on the floor or table to make noise. |
| 6-12 months | Give me two toys I can comfortably hold in each hand and ask me to bang them together to make noise. You may have to show me or help me try this a few times |
| 6-18 months | Ask me to use simple greetings with familiar friends and family. For example, waving bye-bye or blowing kisses to familiar people. |
| 6-24 months | I get very excited when I push a button on a toy and something pops up. As I am playing with the toy say, "What happens when you push this button?" Show me how it works and tell me to push the button on the toy by using your hand over mine. |



PROBLEM SOLVING: *How I Explore and Figure Things Out*

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 6-36 months | While we are reading together, ask me to point to familiar objects/people/animals in the book. |
| 6-36 months | Sing songs such as “If You’re Happy and you Know It” with me. These songs have instructions built right in for me to follow. |
| 9-18 months | Ask me for a turn when we’re playing with toys. For example, if we are playing with a toy phone, put your hand out and ask, “Can I try the phone?” Then give the toy back to me for my turn. |
| 9-18 months | Give me simple directions throughout my day. For example, when I am getting a bath, hand me the washcloth, point to my belly, and say, “Wash your tummy!” Model this for me and then let me take over. |
| 9-18 months | At first I will be watching you as you draw lines with crayons. When my hands are able to grasp I will pick up a crayon and hold it in my fist. I will probably gum it first before trying anything creative, this is okay, just don’t let me eat them! My first attempts at drawing will be mark making because all I can really do is to bang the crayon on the paper. I am beginning to learn that I can use the crayon to make marks on the paper. When I can hold the crayon a bit better I will start to push the crayon back and forth. The more opportunities I get to explore with these materials the better I will become. |
| 12-24 months | Show me how to put two objects into a container. Take the objects out and ask me to try doing the same. |
| 12-60 months | Let me know that I am doing a good job when I help you with simple tasks such as tidying up my toys! It will make me feel confident and important. I am still learning how to follow instructions so it will be important for you to be with me and model what you are asking me to do. |
| 12-60 months | Get down to my level when you are giving me directions and speak clearly and gently. This way you’ll have my full attention and I know what you need me to do. |
| 15-60 months | If I’m having trouble following instructions, create a picture board for me that illustrate each step or instruction you want me to do. Together say to me, “Let’s look and see what the first instruction is,” and continue to move through the various instructions with me. |
| 18-48 months | Ask me to help with simple daily routines and household chores, such as tidying up toys, lining up shoes, and putting my dirty clothes in the laundry. |
| 18-48 months | I am getting better at understanding what the functions of objects are so play a game that helps to strengthen my knowledge. Gather up a toothbrush, a hairbrush, a washcloth, a spoon and a bedtime book. Take out one object at a time and ask me to name the object, what do I do with it, and when would I use it (morning, night). |
| 18-48 months | I can help around the house, too! Show me where the books and magazines go. Show me how to use a dustpan to pick up crumbs with a brush. We can sing songs like “Clean up, clean up” while we are tidying up my toys or other things in the house. |
| 18-48 months | Ask me to put on my own jacket when getting ready to go outside. I can also begin to learn how to put on my own shoes, and ask you to help me with the laces. |



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 24-48 months | Sometimes I might need help with following your directions. Bring me to where I need to be and show me what I should be doing. Then ask me to give it a try! |
| 24-48 months | When giving directions turn off the television or radio, get down at my eye-level and speak to me clearly. Repeat the direction more than once if I seem like I don't understand you. |
| 24-60 months | I am happy to be your special little helper while you are getting ready for dinner. There are certain things I can do that are safe. For example, I can mix ingredients together in a bowl, or tear lettuce for a salad. Make sure to talk about safety while we are cooking. You should point out to me that the stove is hot and could burn me, so I need to be very careful around it. I will enjoy spending one-on-one time with you in any setting. |
| 24-60 months | I may be ready for two step instructions such as, "Please put one placemat at each place" and "Can you put the napkins next to the plates?" If you only give me one thing to do at a time I won't get overwhelmed or forget. |
| 24-60 months | When doing laundry ask me to sort out my clothes when they are clean, or put my dirty clothes in the laundry basket. It makes me feel grown up to imitate what I see you doing. |
| 24-60 months | I can be a special helper at the grocery store, too! You can ask me to find you a vegetable that is green and has leaves, or a fruit that is furry and brown. You can ask me to show you our favourite cereal box or juice box. I am getting better and better at remembering what things look like when you label them or remind me. |
| 24-60 months | While we are walking to the park or the grocery store let's play "Red Light, Green Light!" I get really excited about where we are going and forget the rules that keep me safe. If we practice at home, I will remember how the game is played. |
| 36-60 months | Always keep directions short and simple. After you have asked me to do something, ask me to repeat your request back. If I can't repeat the direction, try to make it a little simpler. |
| 36-60 months | When I come in from playing outside ask me to go to the sink, wash my hands with soap, and dry them off. I am learning to follow multi-step directions. |
| 36-60 months | When getting ready to go out, ask me to complete certain tasks such as getting my own coat and shoes, putting away my toys, or packing my backpack. |
| 36-60 months | Introduce me to simple games that have a limited number of rules and instructions. For example, snakes and ladders, trouble, the memory game, or hide and seek. |
| 36-60 months | Let's play "Simon Says!" This game helps me listen to directions and pay attention to the things you say! |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- When you make eye contact with me during conversations, it lets me know that I have your full attention. By keeping my attention, I understand what you're saying to me and that will help me understand your directions.



PROBLEM SOLVING: *How I Explore and Figure Things Out*

- I will start to understand and follow very simple directions even as a baby. When you ask me to get a toy or come and play with you this is, in fact, an instruction. Including these in my day will prepare me to understand and follow more complex instructions as I grow.
- Following simple directions will not only allow me to gain independence, but also to feel good about myself for being able to help. I will also learn that words are connected to actions, things and people
- Routines and daily experiences help me to remember solutions to everyday problems (e.g. where my coat goes), and eventually I'll be able to handle new situations based on past experiences on my own, without your help.
- When you give me small responsibilities, I will develop new skills. This will help me become more independent and will increase my self-confidence.
- When you let me know that you appreciate my help, I will understand how good it can feel to help others.
- I get better at following directions when you give me lots of practice! Every day tasks can be easily made a part of my daily routines so that I eventually begin to do chores on my own, without being asked.
- I am learning to play my part in our house and in the world just by helping out!
- I like taking care of my own things and it will teach me responsibility and respect for my toys. Make sure to have a conversation with me about what we are doing and ask me questions about where I think things should go and why.
- I've got a lot of energy and I get really excited when I am playing with my toys. I often get so caught up in my own play that I sometimes forget that what I am doing might not be safe. I need you to remind me to be safe when we are playing outside by playing "Red Light, Green Light!"
- Learning to listen to you and follow directions is an important part of our relationship. I need boundaries and knowing about my daily routines helps me learn about my boundaries. Talk to me about what is coming next so I can prepare myself.

Cause and Effect

Goal: I will learn how I can make things happen in my environment

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 0-6 months | When I cry, it's my way of telling you I need you, so it's important that you respond to me quickly. This will help me learn that when I express myself, I can count on you to respond. |
| 0-6 months | When I'm on my back, dangle a familiar toy above me but within my reach. Encourage me to reach for that toy and praise me when I get it. |
| 0-6 months | Play a game of taking turns by copying the sounds I make. I will learn that I can begin conversations with you and others in my world. |
| 0-12 months | During tummy time, place a toy in front of me and encourage me to reach for it. |



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 0-12 months | Using a toy I can comfortably hold, encourage me to bang it on the floor or table to make noise. |
| 5-12 months | While we are playing with one of my favourite toys on the floor, put it beside me and encourage me to look for it. |
| 6-12 months | Give me two toys I can comfortably hold in each hand and encourage me to bang them together to make noise. You may have to show me or help me try this a few times |
| 6-18 months | If I throw an object from my high chair, ask me, "Where did ... go?" and encourage me to look for the object. |
| 9-18 months | During mealtimes, place some of my favourite finger foods in a bowl and give me the opportunity to pick it up and put it in my mouth. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- When we play games that include back and forth conversation (as simple as cooing and gurgling if I'm a baby), I begin to understand that conversation is a partnership and my sounds are equally valued and can initiate interactions.

Cause and Effect

Goal: I will explore my toys and the different things I can do with them.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 0-6 months | Engage with me in 'serve and return' activities. These are activities where you respond to something I have done and I respond back to you again. For example, when I'm babbling or cooing, talk back to me in a similar tone and voice, then wait for me to respond back to you! |
| 0-6 months | Place a toy close enough to my feet so my kicks can hit it and make a sound. |
| 0-9 months | If I let you know I need something like a diaper change, or something to eat, respond quickly to me. Talk to me about what I might need like, "Does ___ need to be changed? Let's get you into a clean diaper," or "Are you hungry? Mommy/Daddy is getting your breakfast ready right now." When you respond to my needs it shows me that I can trust you to take care of me. |
| 0-9 months | Respond to my needs quickly! This means within 15 seconds, if you can, especially if I'm distressed (e.g. crying, grunting, frowning, turning away from you). This will build security and trust in our relationship. |
| 6-12 months | Making noise is my favourite activity at this age. Give me a pot and a wooden spoon and see if I can hit the two objects. Encourage my actions by telling me, "Good banging. You are making a lovely, loud noise." Even though I am enjoying myself it will take me a while to understand that it is my physical action on another object that is resulting in this noise production. |



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 6-12 months | You know how much I love my bath time. The first time I slapped the water it hit me in the face. Encourage me to make lots of splashes so I can learn that I can make the water move. |
| 6-24 months | I get very excited when I push a button on a toy and something pops up. As I am playing with the toy say, "What happens when you push this button?" Show me how it works and encourage me to push the button on the toy by using your hand over mine. |
| 10-18 months | It is hard for me to stack blocks into a perfect tower at the younger age, but I love it when I hit the blocks and the tower comes tumbling down. You make the game so much fun because you never tire of rebuilding the tower and letting me push it over. When I am older, I will be able to build the tower myself and knock it down. |
| 9-18 months | At first I will be watching you as you draw lines with crayons. When my hands are able to grasp I will pick up a crayon and hold it in my fist. I will probably gum it first before trying anything creative, this is okay, just don't let me eat them! My first attempts at drawing will be mark making because all I can really do is to bang the crayon on the paper. I am beginning to learn that I can use the crayon to make marks on the paper. When I can hold the crayon a bit better I will start to push the crayon back and forth. The more opportunities I get to explore with these materials the better I will become. |
| 12-24 months | Offer a toy with wheels that can be pulled by a string and encourage me to watch what happens when I pull the string. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- When you place objects and toys within my reach, I will discover that I can cause something to move and make a noise.
- Experimenting with toys and objects is the only way I will begin to understand what objects can do and how my actions can create different reactions. By exploring them I get to practice my newly mastered hand-eye coordination and problem solving skills.
- With your encouragement, I can figure out how things work or go together. I am beginning to learn that I can do things myself and that you are there to support me. When you encourage me to figure things out, I feel confident that I can do it!

Safety Recognition

Goal: I will learn about what is safe and what is dangerous in my environment.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| All ages | When you need to tell me something, take the time to make eye-contact with me, so you know that I am paying attention. I will know that I need to listen to your words. |
| All ages | Never leave me unsupervised or in the care of an unfamiliar caregiver. |
| 8-60 months | Talk to me about safety with animals. If we have a cat or dog, show me how to pet them gently. Remind me when I'm around others' pets that I need to be gentle, or ask the owner for permission before petting an animal. |



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 18-60 months | Role play with me so I know how to play nicely with other children and animals. Talk to me about gentle touching. Let me know when I am not being gentle. |
| 18-60 months | Read books with me about safety. Talk to me and ask me questions about the story to make sure I understand what I am reading. |
| 24-60 months | Help me to understand the concept of hurting someone by explaining to me why it's not nice to hit, pinch, kick or bite. If these behaviours happen make sure to exclaim loudly "Ouch! That hurts when you hit!" |
| 24-60 months | Tell me about all the dangerous things in my home. For example, if the stove has been on to cook food, tell me that it is hot and can burn me. It is hard for me to control my desire to touch things. |
| 24-60 months | Explain that cars are dangerous and that I could get hurt if I ran out on the road alone. Remind me that in order to go anywhere and to cross the street I must hold your hand and wait for you to say it is okay. |
| 24-60 months | When we're out on a walk, explain to me what the "walk" symbol means and what the "hand" symbol means. It will take time for me to control my impulse to run across the street, but taking the time to teach me this safety rule is important. |
| 24-60 months | Let's play "Simon Says!" This game helps me listen to directions and pay attention to the things you say! |
| 24-60 months | While we are walking to the park or the grocery store let's play "Red Light, Green Light!" I get really excited about where we are going and forget the rules that keep me safe. If we practice at home I will remember how the game is played. |
| 24-60 months | Talk to me about all the people in our neighbourhood and family who will keep me safe. This might include aunts and uncles, as well as first responders such as police. |
| 24-60 months | When I'm unsure about what is safe or unsafe, encourage me to speak to you or other adults in our home about this. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- I'm still learning to control my impulses, so sometimes my emotions lead my behaviours. I need your support to understand why I cannot do things the way I would like to.
- The world is a very exciting place, but sometimes I forget all the rules that keep me safe. When you help me understand my world, I know I can rely on you to keep me safe.
- I need boundaries! Show me what kind of behaviour is appropriate and talk to me about what kind of behaviour is not appropriate and why. When you read books to me, it helps me to understand.



FOSTERING CREATIVE THINKING

Overall Objective:

"I will learn to think in a more abstract way through the use of various materials."

Tactile Discrimination

Goal: I will explore different textures in my environment.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 0-6 months | Sucking helps me maintain attention so talk to me when I am breastfeeding or bottle feeding. Hearing your voice while I am in a soothing situation will help for us bond. |
| 3-12 months | My mouth is the best scientific organ of my body. I put everything into it and I find out if objects are hard, soft, have ridges, or are smooth. I know that you think it is an annoying habit but I am learning so much about the textures of objects this way. |
| 6-12 months | The best place to learn about how things feel and taste is at meal time. I know you don't like it when I make a mess but I love to mash the soft banana pieces and squeeze the peas, and the potatoes. Be patient with me as I am learning the differences in textures. It is harder to hold the banana because it is slippery and a pea requires an exact grasp of my fingers. |
| 18-60 months | If we make play-dough I will have a better idea of how combining ingredients can make something new. In the process I get to knead the dough and then we have something to play with once we're done! If you add rice to the play-dough, the texture changes again and I will enjoy playing with bumpy dough. |
| 18-60 months | Outside, let's collect twigs, rocks, acorns, pine cones and leaves. Label all of the items and give me the words to describe how they feel in my hands. For example, soft is safe and hard can hurt. Pointy will prick you! If I know the difference I can keep myself safe. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- The world is such a complicated place and the best way to learn about it is by touching and manipulating.
- When you help me understand my world I feel safe and know that I can learn what is safe and what might be dangerous to explore.

Spatial Relations

Goal: I will put together a puzzle with my caregiver.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 12-24 months | Simple puzzles made of 2 - 3 large pieces will really challenge my thinking. Sit down with me and encourage me to figure out where the round piece goes, where the square piece goes and where the triangular piece goes. The puzzles that have knobs on them make it easier for me to handle. I need you to coach me by saying, "Try the circle over here. You got it in!" or, "This piece doesn't fit in this hole. Let's see if it goes in here." |
|--------------|--|



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 24-60 months | Encourage me if I get frustrated but let me work it out on my own! It may take some time, but with practice I'll be able to figure it out on my own. |
| 24-60 months | Introduce me to a small puzzle with 4 to 10 pieces that I can put together, either at the table or on the floor. You can help me by handing me a piece and asking me if I can see where it goes, but by the time I am a preschooler I will have mastered this perceptual skill. |
| 24-60 months | I like it when we make our own puzzles out of family pictures by gluing them onto stiff cardboard, covering them with clear mac-tac, and cutting them into different pieces. I like to see how separate pieces of my daddy's face come together into one, whole picture. As I get older, I need more complicated puzzles to keep my attention and build my persistence. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Puzzles get me thinking about how things go together and how parts of something make a whole picture. When you provide me with puzzles or building materials, I learn how to make something new!

Spatial Relations

Goal: I will explore with my caregiver how objects occupy space and fit together.

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 6-48 months | When I'm in the bathtub, add different sized cups, plastic bottles, sponges, and spoons for me to play with. Filling and emptying them with water lets me figure out how much space they can hold. |
| 8-36 months | Wherever we are (i.e. at home, on the bus, at a store, etc.), teach and ask me whether I am under, over or next to objects in my surroundings. Practicing this will help me learn about positioning as it relates to my world. |
| 12 -24 months | Have stacking rings for me to sequence from large to small. Give me different patterns to keep the activity exciting and interesting. |
| 12-24 months | Play the "Matching Game" with me! Use different sized containers with lids and have me find the lid that fits the right container. We can use small yogurt, medium cottage cheese, and large ice cream tubs. |
| 12-30 months | Give me different sized bowls, boxes, and containers for me to play and experiment with. Nesting them by size will let me explore if they can or cannot fit in one another. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Playing and experimenting with containers of different sizes will help me understand the difference between sizes and how each size has a unique amount it can hold.



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

- By matching and arranging objects and toys by size, I am figuring out how they relate to one another. Let me take my time, the best way for me to learn is by trial and error play. I am learning and exploring mathematics through this type of play.
- Discovering the physical world around me is important as I like to experiment as if I am a scientist. Pouring and emptying water using assorted containers is my way of finding out how much they can hold.
- I can learn about location and position by crawling and walking under, around, over, and through things in my surroundings. Using these terms will help me identify where objects are in the world around me.

Spatial Relations – Stacking and Sorting

Goal: I will learn to stack and/or sort objects.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 6-24 months | Give me different objects to play with in the bath. Provide me with different sized containers to explore and experiment with in the water. For example, pouring water from a large container into a small container. |
| 12-36 months | Provide a variety of interesting objects and boxes or containers for me to explore. For example, cereal boxes, yogurt containers, sponges, etc. Together, let's see what we can build, stacking and sorting the various shapes. |
| 12-24 months | Show me how to build a tower and encourage me to do the same. We can see how high we can build the tower using all our blocks, knock it down, and build it all up again! Remember, when I am young it is hard work to hold a block and release it on top of another one. |
| 18-48 months | Let's build a tower together! If we don't have any blocks, a variety of large stackable items such as old cereal boxes, tissue boxes, yogurt containers, or milk cartons will do nicely! I can use these to build by putting one on top of the other or, when I am older, by making a base and building upwards. |
| 24-60 months | Provide me with different shaped blocks and show me how they can fit together into different shapes. Four triangles can make a square. Two squares can make a rectangle. Two semi-circles put together make a full circle. I bet you did not know that you were teaching me mathematical relationships! This kind of play is getting me ready for school skills, so I need a lot of time to practice building and recreating. |
| 24-60 months | Encourage me to sort the blocks based on their shape, size and colour. Describe the patterns that I am making as I use them. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- Providing me with a variety of interesting objects allows me to explore the objects and begin to have an understanding of functions and dimensions (size and shape).
- I will learn to coordinate what I see with my hand movements in order to stack blocks. I am slowly learning about the power I have on the world around me.
- Providing me with a variety of building tools will help me understand which blocks or shapes fit together. By building structures I will begin to develop an understanding of gravity and



PROBLEM SOLVING: How I Explore and Figure Things Out

which blocks will hold more weight and support a growing structure. This is basic engineering.

- Labelling the names of the shapes, as well as the size and colour of the blocks will get me used to naming these shapes and colours in other places, too. By being right there with me, you encourage me to keep going and to figure it out!

Constructive Play

Goal: I will create something using recyclable materials around the house.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 24-60 months | If we don't have a bed for my baby bear we can use a shoe box! If I don't have a house for my little people, we can make one with a tissue box! We can create just about anything if we have some good recyclable materials handy. |
| 36-60 months | What can we use? Have a craft box of safe, recycled materials like egg cartons, cardboard boxes, paper towel rolls, tissue boxes, newspaper, construction paper, glue, tape, string, etc., readily available for me to use. This will provide me with the opportunity to be creative with the materials. Pull this craft box out and let me decide what we should create today! |
| 36-60 months | Keep clear plastic containers like pop bottles around the house. You will be amazed that we can create our own lava lamp or snow globe with just a few materials from around the house. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- I need the opportunity to be creative and resourceful with the materials that we have on hand.
- Constructive play means that I have to solve problems when the materials are hard to combine. We can make caterpillars from the egg cartons - but what do we use for the legs? I have to consider many possibilities of what might work and how we can use things in many different ways.

*Hand*ⁱⁿ*Hand*

Growing Together Every Day

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL STRATEGIES





SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

Contents

ENCOURAGING ATTACHMENT

Overall Objective:

“I know that I can count on you to respond quickly and consistently when I am upset or in distress.”

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ESTABLISHING AND STRENGTHENING A BOND

Overall Objective:

“Our relationship matters, and when we spend one-on-one time we are working on the connection that we share.”

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SELF-REGULATION

Overall Objective

“As I am developing my emotions I will need your support to learn how to regulate them, along with my attention and behaviour. This includes my knowledge of what is safe or unsafe, how I can hold my attention, and be able to calm myself when I get upset.”

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Overall Objective

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PROMOTING THE EXPRESSION OF EMOTION

Overall Objective

“I am developing a full range of emotions that will later lead to qualities of empathy of perspective taking. By giving me the words to use to express my emotions and letting me know how my actions affect others, I am gaining the ability to rise to life’s challenges.”

Feelings

Goal: I will use words to describe how I’m feeling throughout the day 174



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ENCOURAGING SOCIAL INTERACTION/SKILLS

Overall Objective

“Encouraging my social interactions and skills will help me to make friends and get along with others. I will also learn about my community and whom to trust.”

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NOTE: This is NOT a comprehensive list.

This resource is intended to give you suggestions for strategies that can support development. A Developmental Support Plan should be unique and customized to address the child’s developmental strengths and needs.

When preparing a Developmental Support Plan for a specific child, be sure to:

- Include/ modify the goals to be specific to the child’s strengths.
- Include something personal and meaningful to the family.
- Create your own goals and strategies for the child based on what you know about the child & family.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

ENCOURAGING ATTACHMENT

Overall Objective:

"I know that I can count on you to respond quickly and consistently when I am upset or in distress."

Attachment

Goal: When I am in distress (e.g. sad, angry, frustrated, upset, sick) I will cue my caregiver to help me calm down by crying or using facial expressions and gestures.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| All Ages | If I am in another room and am distressed, call out to me to let me know you are coming! I know your voice and it will comfort me to know that you hear me and are on your way. |
| 0-6 months | When I cry, pick me up promptly and comfort me. |
| 0-12 months | Whether my distress is due to a physical or emotional issue, promptly respond with comfort. This will help me learn that you are emotionally available to me. This is when I start to form a model for what healthy relationships should look like. |
| 0-12 months | Help me find ways to soothe myself, either through use of a comfort toy, my thumb, music or a soft blanket, so when you can't come right away I will search for these things to help me to soothe myself. |
| 0-12 months | Respond to every cry with a soothing voice or touch. Pick me up when I cry so I learn that I can count on you to meet my needs when I'm in distress. |
| 0-12 months | Ensure that I am with a consistent caregiver(s) throughout the day so I always know where to turn when I am in distress. |
| 0-12 months | Observe my patterns and the events or time of day when I am most likely to get distressed. Ensure that you are there to help me during these times. |
| 0-12 months | Hearing your voice regularly helps me feel safe and feel that I am in a familiar space. |
| 0-12 months | As I explore different setting or environments, stay close to me so that you are physically and emotionally available to be my secure base from which to explore. |
| 0-12 months | If I get distressed in and unfamiliar environment, comfort me right away. Knowing you are near me in a new space will help me feel more confident about exploring. |
| 0-12 months | It is not easy to figure out what I need or want when I have no words to communicate with you. Interpreting my cues and responding appropriately signals to me that you understand me and are taking my cues seriously. This shows me how much you love me. |
| 0-12 months | Sometimes I just need to be reassured that you are here for me. If I fuss or cry respond to me and let me know that you are around when I need you. |
| 0-18 months | Hold and cuddle me when I am upset. I need to be comforted when I am feeling sad, mad, frustrated, and especially when I am crying. This simple act will tell me that you are here for |



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|--------------|---|
| | me and help me learn to trust you. Our relationship is being built on trust and that I can rely on you to meet my many needs. |
| 0-18 months | When I am crying it could be because I am feeling lonely, overwhelmed, scared or sick. Comfort me and acknowledge that you understand how I am feeling. Singing a favourite song or talking calmly will help to settle me. |
| 0-48 months | Be warm, responsive, and affectionate with all children. I will learn from observing your interactions with others. |
| 0-48 months | Try and keep my routines predictable. Even as my routines change over these early years, keeping them as consistent as possible will give me a sense of safety and security. |
| 18-60 months | Talk to me about my daily routine. If we are doing something different, give me lots of advance notice so I can prepare myself. I like knowing what's coming next, so talking to me about what my day is going to be like, and giving me some input in my routine helps build our relationship and my trust in you. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Forming a secure attachment with you is something we need to work on in the first year of my life.
- Responding to my cries or distress promptly help me learn how to calm down and eventually, how to soothe myself.
- Attachment is a relationship that develops between me and my primary caregiver(s). As you consistently, predictably and lovingly meet my needs, I learn that I can count on you to be there for me. This is how our trusting relationship is built.
- Comforting me when I am upset communicates to me that I can depend on you. When I am upset or sad, pick me up and comfort me. My cries are my way of letting you know that I need something from you. Being able to count on you to take care of my needs is a big part of our relationship.
- I need you in different ways at different times. You are my playmate, my nurturer, my protector in all the ways that you take care of me. I know that I can trust you to make good decisions about what is best for me and it makes me feel loved and respected!
- Letting me know that you are still close when you are out of my sight helps me feel secure.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:

How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

ESTABLISHING AND STRENGTHENING A BOND

Overall Objective:

“Our relationship matters, and when we spend one-on-one time we are working on the connection that we share.”

Creating an Emotional Bond

Goal: *I will establish an emotional bond with my primary caregiver.*

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 0-3 months | Hearing your voice will draw my attention to your face so talk to me often and let me see your face as much as possible. |
| 0-3 months | When you are talking to me hold me facing you so that I can see your face. Watching you as you talk to me allows me to become familiar with your face. |
| 0-3 months | Hold me in your arms, look at my face and gently sway me while you sing lullabies. |
| 0-3 months | During bath time, give me a chance to be face to face with you and talk to me about what you are doing. |
| 0-6 months | When placing me in my stroller, if possible, have my stroller facing you so that as we walk I can continue to make eye contact with you and we can talk about what we are seeing |
| 0-6 months | With your face near mine, look at me, talk to me and make different facial expressions. This will encourage me to focus on you because your facial expressions will draw my eyes to your face. |
| 0-12 months | If we are taking a bus ride, and I'm in my stroller, if possible, find a seat that allows you to place my stroller where I can see your face. |
| 0-12 months | When travelling in a car, if possible, have someone sit next to me, talking to me and making eye contact. |
| 0-12 months | Talk or sing to me while you change my diaper. Look at my face, use my name and gaze into my eyes. I will know that I have your attention. |
| 0-12 months | When feeding, hold me in your arms and talk to me. Gaze into my eyes as I feed, this will strengthen our relationship and allow me the opportunity to look into your eyes and become familiar with your face. |
| 0-24 months | When snuggling in your arms and reading or looking at a book, pause and make eye contact with me at regular intervals. For example, after we finish a page, look at me and talk about what's on the page. |
| 0-24 months | I know you can't be with me all the time, but when you are doing your daily chores, keep me near and make eye contact me often so that I know you're there for me. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 3-6 months | Sitting on the floor with your knees slightly bent, lay me on my back on your thighs, hold my hands and gently sway your thighs back and forth and sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." Look in to my eyes and smile as you sing. This will show me that I am important and that you enjoy spending time with me. |
| 3-9 months | Lay me down facing you on the bed so that we can gaze in to each other's eyes. Let me touch your face as you talk to me. Sharing your gaze will help me focus on you when you are talking to me. |
| 6-9 months | Use my name when you talk to me. As you continue to call me by my name, I will begin to recognize and respond to it by turning to look at you. |
| 6-9 months | Follow my lead as I start to 'babble' more and more, look at my face and repeat my babbles back to me. When you copy what I am saying I will be encouraged to look at you and continue babbling. |
| 6-24 months | When you interact with me, make sure you have my attention by looking into my eyes. Then pause and wait for my reply before continuing. I will learn when it is my turn to respond to you as I look at your gaze. |
| 9-12 months | Play "peek-a-boo" with me sitting on your lap. Wait for a few seconds after each "boo" to let me look at you and giggle. |
| 12-24 months | Sit on the floor as I stand so that our eyes are at the same level. Roll a ball towards me and ask me to pick it up and roll it back to you. Look in to my eyes and smile at me as we play. |
| 12-60 months | Whenever you play or talk with me, be sure to get down to my level and look at my eyes. This will help me pay attention to what you are saying, and let me know you are really hearing me. |
| 12-60 months | When sitting together during a meal, make sure that we are at the same level, facing each other, making eye contact as we talk. |
| 18-60 months | Sit with me on the carpet at my eye level. Point out facial parts and ask me to imitate you. Example: "This is my nose, where's (child's name) nose." If I do not understand, guide my hand to touch my nose. |
| 24-36 months | When you ask me to do something, like put on my coat or put something away, make sure you get down to my level and make eye contact. If I'm not looking at you, gently cradle my face with your hands so you have my full attention and say "___, please put your coat on." |
| 24 -60 months | Get down to my level when you are giving me instructions; speak clearly and gently. This way you will have my full attention and I will know what you need me to do. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Making eye contact will help me to focus and attend to you.
- I will learn to hold a gaze while interacting with others.
- When you get down to my level to look me in the eyes, it lets me know that I have your full attention, and will help me to give you my attention.
- Eye contact helps build our relationship. It lets you read my cues, and helps me read yours.
- When you turn off any distractions (e.g., TV, computer) and get down to my level, I'll have an easier time paying attention to what you're trying to tell me.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

Strengthening the Bond

Goal: I will use one on one time to strengthen my bond with my primary caregiver.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| All ages | Any time is a good time to sing a song, do a finger play and make me laugh. I love to listen to the sound of your voice. A soothing lullaby before bed is particularly pleasurable as I will settle quickly and fall asleep. |
| All Ages | Spend 30 minutes before bedtime reading to me. This is our extra special time when I have you all to myself, wrapped up in my blanket and listening to your voice. It is the perfect way to end a busy day. |
| All Ages | We don't need to have words to read a book! We can still spend time "reading" together even if we're simply sitting down together looking at a picture book and talking about what we see, or looking at a photo album. |
| All ages | Get down at my level and involve me in some form of play every day. Minimize distractions by keeping the TV and the cell phone off so we can have quality time together. |
| All Ages | Let's go out on a walk together! Exploring the neighborhood is a fun way for us to get some fresh air and spend time together. |
| All Ages | Make some time just for me every day. I love having you around and want to have you to myself sometimes. |
| All Ages | Try infant massage with me. When I come out of the bath or before bed, use some baby lotion and give me a soft massage, focusing on my legs! Wiggle my toes around and push on my legs so I get used to using my leg muscles. Then focus on my arms, belly and back, if I seem to like it! Call it quits when I protest – For example if I seem fussy, begin to grunt, turn away from you, my face seems red, or I look uncomfortable, take a break from this and try coming back to it later. It will help me relax and also feel close to you because you noticed when I had enough. |
| All Ages | Tell me all the things you love about me: my smile, my sense of humour, my curiosity, my persistence with certain toys, the way I make wonderful pictures for you, etc. |
| 0-12 months | When I am relaxed or getting sleepy, gently massage me. I will become calmer and happier. You can use some unscented fruit and vegetable oil so I can feel soft and smooth. Pay attention to my cues to know when to stop or when I am uncomfortable. |
| 6-18 months | We can play "Peek-a-Boo/Hide and Find" throughout the day in endless variations. Remember to keep eye contact with me when we play so you have my full attention! This game in particular is helping me to strengthen the mental picture of you, so that I will understand that you exist even when I don't see you. |
| 8-18 months | Sit across from me with your legs open. Gently roll a ball over to me and encourage me to roll it back! Remember to keep eye contact with me as we play. Remember to keep this fun. If I seem like I'm uncomfortable or start to fuss, stop the activity and start it again another time. |
| 12-60 months | Let's do one special project together once a week. We could bake cookies for the family, take the dog for a walk, pick up leaves and acorns in the fall and do a collage, etc. |
| 24-60 months | Set aside some outdoor time every day for just you and me. We can play games like catch, tag, climb the slide, swing in the swings, fill buckets of sand, or play soccer at the park. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 36-60 months | Ask me to describe how my day went, how school/child care was, what I did when I went to the park, what was my favourite part of the day. Be attentive and responsive. Let me speak for myself, but join in my conversation too. |
| <p><u>Why this is important...</u> <i>BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are my favorite toy and I love spending time just with you. Having our own one-on-one time is letting us bond together! Having time to be with just you makes me feel special and lets me know that I am someone who is deserving of your love and respect. When we spend this time together we get to know each other better and I begin to build my self-confidence, and a sense of who I am and my role in our family. By including massage as part of our daily routine I will get to feel your soft touch more of the time! The one-on-one time with you and the reassurance of your physical contact make me feel our closeness even more. Infant massage will help me feel relaxed, calm, and ready for bed. This is also a great way to spend more time with you so we can bond! | |

Engaging in Serve and Return Interactions

Goal: I will strengthen the connections in my brain through serve and return interactions with my primary caregiver(s).

| | |
|-------------|--|
| All Ages | You are my favourite toy. Nothing else compares to the time you spend playing with me and delighting in our conversations back and forth. |
| All Ages | Use our everyday routines to interact with me. This serve and return (back and forth) interaction will create amazing connections in my brain and strengthen what's already there. |
| 0-3 months | Respond to my cooing and babbling sounds by cooing and babbling back at me. When you copy what I am saying I will be encouraged to look at you and continue babbling. |
| 0-3 months | Laying down together facing each other, copy my facial expressions or let e copy yours. It doesn't matter who starts serving in our interactions as long as we keep going back and forth. |
| 0-6 months | Make eye contact and talk to me when feeding me. Describe where we are or what you did today, or anything that interests you. Hearing your voice and looking into your eyes during this quiet time is soothing and comforting. More than likely I'll return your gaze. |
| 0-6 months | When I coo, interact with me and direct my attention to a face or hand. This will engage different parts of my brain and begin to build the foundation for later emotional and cognitive development |
| 0-12 months | Let's look at a picture book together. Describe what's on each page, and make eye contact with me frequently. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 0-12 months | Show me objects, and label them. Let's explore them together. This helps me make connections in my brain between sounds and words and their related objects. |
| 0-12 months | When I babble, make gestures, or facial expressions, respond with the same kind of behaviour back. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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|--------------|---|
| 12-36 months | During every day routines, describe what's going on in my environment and give me a chance to respond to what you're saying. This will support my language skills and strengthen connections that are forming in my brain |
| 12-36 months | Let's get on the floor and play with some of my toys together. You can follow my lead or if I'm unsure how to start, you begin by showing me what we can do. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 12-36 months | Throughout the day, as you describe what we are doing give me a chance to respond. Ask me questions so I can hear the change in your voice and over time it will prompt me to respond. |
| 12-36 months | During mealtimes, let's have lots of conversation about our day, or our meal, or what we're going to do tomorrow. Remember to pause and give me a chance to contribute to the conversation so that there's lots of serve and return between us. |
| 18-36 months | Sometimes what I serve you may not be verbal. It may be through eye contact or gestures that I let you know how I'm feeling about a situation we're in. For example, I may shake my head if I'm being asked to play with other children but don't want to. |
| 24-48 months | Let's go for a walk in our neighbourhood and talk about what we see. You can start by asking me to talk about the favourite things people or places in our neighbourhood. Remember I would love to hear about yours. |
| 36-60 months | Sometimes I may use things like my pictures to tell you how I'm feeling. Talk to me about my pictures and what they mean to me. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 36-60 months | Let's role play together. Allow me to choose what we're play-acting or if I'm having trouble give me a few suggestions to choose from. This is a great way for me to explore different emotions and reactions in a safe form of play. |
| 36-60 months | Let's create our own stories together. Let me choose the characters and the setting and together let's make an adventure that lets me explore different situations, emotions, and reactions in a safe way. This time together will create new connections in my brain and strengthen the ones I already have. |
| 36-60 months | Encouraging me to share my feelings about events, my friends, things that might happen in our family is important. I need to know I can share these thoughts with you and you will respond in a nurturing and caring way. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- When you engage in positive nurturing and responsive serve and return interactions with me, you are shaping my growing brain.
- New neural connections form in the brain as infants babble, engage, and interact with their primary caregiver, and their primary caregivers interact back.
- Serve and return is a wonderful opportunity to share my emotions with you. Knowing that you will listen and respond in a caring way will encourage me to come to you with my feelings.
- Ensuring that I have adult caregivers who consistently engage in serve and return interactions with me builds a foundation in my brain for all the learning, behaviour and health that follow.
- Reading is a great opportunity to promote serve and return interactions because we can take time to make eye contact and talk about what we're seeing together.
- Role play is a great way to experiment with different feelings and reactions. When you engage me in role play activities where I get to choose the scenario, I learn that I get to have some control in our interactions.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

SELF-REGULATION

Overall Objective:

“As I am developing my emotions I will need your support to learn how to regulate them, along with my attention and behaviour. This includes my knowledge of what is safe or unsafe, how I can hold my attention, and be able to calm myself when I get upset.”

Regulation of Emotions

Goal: I will learn to recognize what I am feeling and communicate my different emotions.

| | |
|------------|--|
| ALL ages | Create a daily routine for me and follow it. This will help me begin to learn about structure because I can predict what is going to come next in my day. |
| ALL ages | As I grow, the experiences that help me manage my emotions are likely to change. You will need to watch closely to recognize what helps me to calm down when I'm upset at different stages of my development. |
| ALL ages | Recognize what can cause distress or discomfort for me. Certain sounds or smells may cause some discomfort for me. Either avoid these or help me find ways to cope. For example, if I find the sound of the dishwasher upsetting, if there's a door to the kitchen, close it or put music on in the room we're spending time in. |
| 0-3 months | When I express my emotions, name these emotions and provide the appropriate response. For example, when uncomfortable because of a wet diaper or hunger, I will cry. |
| 0-3 month | In the first few months of life, you will start to recognize my different expressions. Always provide me with a consistent response to these different specific expressions. For example, delight in my happiness with me or comfort me when I'm in distress. |
| 0-3 months | Respond to all aspects of my distress or discomfort including my cries, or my physical reaction which may include some loss of control of my arms and legs due to my distress. Hold me close when this happens. |
| 0-3 months | Recognize and respond to my different cries. I will use different expressions of affect to express my feelings. For example, gurgles may mean I'm happy compared to crying and sucking on my thumb which may mean I'm hungry. |
| 0-3 months | Recognize the different signals, cries or expressions and what I'm trying to communicate through these expressions. Your appropriate response helps me learn to regulate. |
| 0-6 months | When I cry, pick me up promptly and comfort me. Your prompt response will help me learn how to manage my emotions. |
| 0-6 months | Provide me with some soothing activities like swaddling me, talking to me gently with a calm voice, or using your face to mimic mine. I'll find these activities relaxing so I'll be able to enjoy them for extended periods of time. |
| 0-6 months | Engage me in activities that I find soothing. If I seem to be getting a little fussy try giving me a comfort object. This may help me maintain my attention for a little longer. |
| 0-6 months | Talk to me or sing a song to me when I'm upset to help calm me down. This can be very calming for me as I'll recognize different sounds such as your voice which will help me regulate my emotions. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 0-12 months | Watch me closely when I am distressed to see what experiences, toys, sounds, or touches help me to calm down. As you do this more, I will begin to learn how to soothe myself in certain situations. For example, when I'm tired I may suck on my thumb and fall asleep on my own. |
| 0-12 months | As I express different emotions, name them for me. As you respond to these emotions, talk about the ways in which you are comforting me. For example, "you're telling me you're hungry, so I'm going to nurse you now". |
| 0-12 months | Hold me close to you or get down on my level so I can see your facial expressions. The more expressive, the better! When I see you smiling and being happy I can imitate and follow your mood. Your face is becoming familiar to me and it can be used to calm me down when I'm upset. |
| 0-12 months | Know and respond to my cues so if I show you I'm happy through smiling, giggling, looking at you, or reaching for you then you know I'm having fun. If I'm grunting, turning away from you, fussing, crying or seem distressed, I probably need a rest. |
| 0-12 months | Share stories with me (your own or books) that describe different emotions. Talk to me about what we're reading and how it relates to my life. |
| 0-12 months | Recognize when I'm tired or had enough. It's likely time for some down time. |
| 0-12 months | When I am happy and enjoying our time together, remember to give me rest periods so I don't get overtired and stressed. |
| 0-18 months | If I get fussy or start crying and you are in a different room, I need to hear your voice so I know that you are near. This helps me to calm down. |
| 6-24 months | I may use grunts, babbling and eye-contact to let you know what I need. Describe to me what you think I need so I can learn the words. |
| 12-48 months | When I am upset, please comfort me. It is important to me that you are consistently available to give me comfort when I need it. |
| 12-60 months | When I am overwhelmed, and maybe even misbehaving because I'm overwhelmed, it's important that you stay near me and talk to me about what I'm feeling, and that you are there to help me manage those feelings. |
| 12-60 months | At bedtime, make sure I have my favourite comfort toy (like a stuffed animal). Let me know that everything will be okay because you are nearby and that I have my special toy close by. |
| 12-60 months | As an older preschooler it really helps when you acknowledge how I am feeling, "I know that you are angry and that's alright. I'm here to help you calm down so that you don't hurt anyone." |
| 18-60 months | Redirect me to another activity when I seem to be overwhelmed by my current activity or environment. Blowing bubbles gives me an opportunity to take deep breaths in and out, and may help me calm down as well. |
| 18-60 months | It helps when you label my feelings so then I can tell you when I am angry or frustrated. If I have a tantrum, talk to me about those feelings and give me another way of handling my anger. For example, if I am angry, tell me "I can see that you are feeling angry." Encourage me to talk about what I'm feeling. |
| 24-60 months | When I begin to calm down after an overwhelming experience, talk to me about what happened. This might include a disagreement with my friend, or wanting something that I |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| | can't have and me getting upset. Acknowledge my feelings but talk to me about ways that I can address them without hurting myself or others. Show me what I can do to calm down when I get upset. Let me know that I can come to you for help or remind me that I can go to my own special space to calm down on my own. |
| 18-60 months | When I am able to calm down, please move me to an activity that is calm and quieting such as reading a book, water play, or squeezing Play Dough. All these activities are very helpful in relieving stress. |
| 24-60 months | When I am overwhelmed by negative emotions I will need you to help me understand my feelings and how to manage them. For example, sit with me in a quiet space so I can first focus on calming down. As I calm down talk to me about what I'm feeling, why I'm feeling this way, and how to resolve me feelings. |
| 24-48 months | Books that show children or animals who are afraid, mad, scared, or sad are good to read from time to time. When we talk about why these characters may be feeling the way they do, I can understand that what I feel is normal. |
| 24-60 months | Create a safe space (you can call it a "cozy corner") in your home with comfort objects such as pillows, stuffed animals and books. Show me that this is where I can go when I am feeling angry, sad, or just need a break from everyone and everything. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- Routines are important because they keep things predictable for me.
- The consistent and appropriate responses I get from my caregiver(s) when I am little have long term effect on how my brain is wired. If you comfort me when I need you I will learn from experience that when I'm upset I can depend on you to help me feel better.
- I'm learning to filter stimulation rather than being overwhelmed by it, so when you respond to help me calm down, I also begin to recognize ways to soothe and calm myself.
- When you help me understand my distress or discomfort and try to comfort me, I will begin to learn to recognize what helps me feel better.
- By providing warmth and support to me as a newborn I will know that you are there for me to help me meet my needs. Responding to me, especially when I am upset, shows me that I am loved and cared for. Try to notice my tiny signals of my needs and respond to them (responding to my little fusses may prevent me from crying!) This helps to build a strong trusting relationship between us.
- Face to face interactions are important as I study your face and its many expressions. I will recognize your expressions and moods and learn how to connect my actions with my emotions through imitating you.
- Be sure to adjust your reactions and responses to meet my changing needs and responses. For example, if I am very happy, you can use more exaggerated expressions with me or if I am upset, you can use calmer and more relaxed expressions.
- I need a variety of soothing techniques that will help me regain my composure and control of myself. Self-soothing will help me to refocus my attention on what I was doing before.
- Modeling positive behaviours and interactions will teach me how to interact with others in a socially appropriate way. Learning how to express my feelings and emotions in a way that does not hurt or disturb others is important for my overall development, especially my thinking skills.
- Providing me with clear boundaries and structure, help me manage my emotions and behaviour
- It is important that I have a safe place to go when I am upset. When you give me the space I need, and objects that are soothing to me, it helps me to calm down without hurting myself or hurting others. When I am calm I can focus and learn.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

Attention Regulation

**Goal: I will stay with one activity for an extended period of time/
I will play with just one thing at a time.**

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| 0-6 months | Provide me with some soothing activities like swaddling me, talking to me gently with a calm voice, or using your face to mimic mine. I'll find these activities relaxing so I'll be able to enjoy them for extended periods of time. |
| 0-6 months | Engage me in activities that I find soothing. If I seem to be getting a little fussy, try giving me a comfort object or helping me find my fingers to suck on. This may help me maintain my attention for a little longer. |
| 0-6 months | When nursing, make eye contact with me and hold my gaze. This will help me focus my attention. |
| 0-6 months | Take time to read with me each and every day. Spending time with me looking at a book will help me develop the ability to stay focused for a short period of time. |
| 0-6 months | I like baby talk and parentese, so use it often with me. It actually helps me to stay focused and engaged in what you are saying. |
| 0-6 months | Mimic and exaggerate my facial expressions. If I'm happy, mimic these expressions. This will help me to stay focused on our interaction. |
| 0-12 months | Sing songs or play games with me that require my full attention. This may include peek-a-boo, "Row, Row, Row Your Boat", or the "Itsy Bitsy Spider". |
| 0-12 months | Try giving me 1 or 2 toys at a time to hold and play with. Having too many toys around can be overwhelming for me as I won't know which one I should focus on. |
| 0-12 months | Play some one-on-one games with me in front of the mirror. Point out my eyes, nose, mouth, etc., and label them appropriately for me. |
| 3-6 months | Get my attention with toys that make noise like safety-approved rattles or small shakers. Shake them gently then lower them to the middle of my body so I have to bring both my hands to my midline to get them. |
| 3-6 months | While I'm on my tummy put a favourite toy in front of me and encourage me to reach for it. Watch me and see how hard I work to get it. Some frustration, but not too much (e.g. I don't want to cry!) is actually good for my development. |
| 6-18 months | Talk to me about my routine, for example, "I need to change your diaper; let's take a toy for you to play with while we do this". |
| 6-12 months | While you're close by me, give me a chance to remain in my crib looking at a mobile, or on my tummy playing with toys. I will learn to be content playing in my crib with one or two toys |
| 10-18 months | During floor time, try rolling a ball back and forth with me. Encourage me to return the ball once it's rolled to me. |
| 12-36 months | Provide me with opportunities to play on my own for short periods of time while you're still close by. I'm learning to be self-reliant for short periods of time so giving me opportunities to play on my own helps with this. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:

How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 18-48 months | I have lots of toys so it can be overwhelming to choose what to play with. Give me a choice of 2 games or toys and let me pick which one I want to play. Help me stick with it by playing with me. |
| 18-60 months | Give me a warning close to the meal time. Five minutes before we have lunch or dinner, tell me, "Okay, in 5 minutes we have to put everything away because we are going to eat." Let me know that we are going to eat together and afterwards we can go back to playing. |
| 18-60 months | When transitioning from one task to another give me options (about 2 or 3). Tell me well in advance that we will be moving from one task to another and then offer me a choice. For example, if I'm going to bed ask me if I would rather brush my teeth or take a bath first, or let me choose the story we're going to read. |
| 24-60 months | Step 1: Let me choose which toy or activity I want to play with. Step 2: Sit next to me and make sure only my activity is on the table. Step 3: Encourage me to stay at my activity for at least a few minutes (10 minutes if I'm 4 or 5 years old). If I get distracted and want to play with something else, remind me that when we are done our activity we can play with something else. Step 4: When our activity is done ask me to help you clean up and to put my activity away. |
| 24-60 months | Plan a shopping excursion with me where we look at flyers, and make a list of what we need to buy. When we're at the store, remind me about what we need to buy, and ask me to find those items. |
| 24-60 months | Remind me throughout the day what is coming next so that I can begin to focus my attention onto the next activity or task. |
| 24-60 months | Let's sit and do puzzles together. Allow me to find the pieces that go together. Make it a challenge to finish the whole puzzle before we put it away. |
| 24-60 months | Give me a choice of 2 games or toys and let me choose which one I want to play. Help me stick with it by playing with me. |
| 24-60 months | Choose toys or games that have an end point. For example, we can play a short board game, complete a full puzzle, or complete a colour by number picture. Activity books at the dollar store have lots of games and puzzles we can work on together or I can try on my own. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- Staying with one activity at a time is important because I am learning how to concentrate. This will help me focus better as I get older. With your help, I'll be able to finish a picture or a whole game.
- Staying with one activity, even for a short time, is how I learn to concentrate and improve my attention span.
- I am learning that I can work my body and my brain to help me figure out how I'm going to get what I want!
- When I only have a few choices it will be easier for me to pick an activity or toy, and I won't be distracted by other activities or toys as easily.
- Talking to me about my day and what choices I can make throughout the day help develop my critical thinking skills.
- Allowing me some say in what goes on throughout the day will help me to gain independence and help me to express myself.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

Managing my Behaviour

Goal: I will be gentle with people/objects/toys in my environment.

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| 6-18 months | Model for me how to use my toys. For example, if we're playing with a doll, model for me how we gently hold the doll. |
| 6-18 months | When playing with other babies, show me how to be gentle. Hold my hand and have me reach out to the other baby and touch them gently. Say "gentle" as we touch the baby's hair. |
| 6-60 months | Read stories that explore different emotions. For example, "Llama Llama Misses Mama". Talk to me about the different emotions the animals and people are feeling in the book and relate it back to my own life. |
| 18-60 months | Remind me with words, and using your hands over mine to be gentle. Let me know that if I'm not gentle with my toys they could break, then I won't be able to play with them anymore. |
| 18-60 months | Model what being gentle looks like. Hug a doll and show me that being gentle means hugging or patting lightly. Label the way I can use my hands, for example, "hands are for hugging" or "hands are for tidying up." Praise me when I am gentle. |
| 18-60 months | Talk to me about appropriate behaviours. Help me understand the concept of hurting someone by explaining to me why it's not nice to hit, pinch, kick or bite. If these behaviours happen make sure to exclaim loudly "Ouch! That hurts when you hit!" |
| 18-60 months | If I am getting too rough, respond to me using an exaggerated reaction to make sure I understand. For example: "Ouch that hurts! We need to be gentle". |
| 18-60 months | Help me to consider other's feelings. For example, "What should we do with your dolly who is crying?" "Your dolly loves it when you hug her to make her feel better!" You are teaching me how to be empathetic and take care of others. |
| 18-60 months | Use lots of positive language when I am having trouble managing my emotions. Give me examples of the behaviours that would be more appropriate. For example, "You are being so gentle! That makes me feel happy!" |
| 24-60 months | Show me all the different things that I can do when I am angry rather than hurting others. I can stop and count to five, I can breathe deeply or I can come to you for help with my feelings. |
| 24-60 months | During bath time let me wash a doll while in the bathtub. Show me how to hold the baby and how to wash the baby gently, just like how you help wash me in the bathtub! |
| 24-60 months | Encourage me to share with my siblings and friends. If two of us want to use a toy tell me I can play with it for a few minutes, but then give me lots of warning that I will have to give someone else a turn soon. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- I have difficulty controlling my impulses, especially when my feelings get the better of me. I need your support, understanding and coaching in order to curb behaviours that arise from negative emotions. Please be patient with me.
- When you show me what gentle and being nice means then I begin to understand the appropriate way to treat people. Letting me know if something hurts your feelings or makes you happy will allow me to be aware of how others feel.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

- Learning to be gentle with my toys and others is my first step towards empathy. When you use clear language to let me know hitting hurts and being gentle is nice, I learn that my actions can cause a positive or negative reaction.

Safety Recognition

Goal: I will learn about what is safe and what is dangerous in my environment.

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| All ages | When you need to tell me something, take the time to make eye-contact with me, so you know that I am paying attention. I will know that I need to listen to your words. |
| All ages | Never leave me unsupervised or in the care of an unfamiliar caregiver. |
| 8-60 months | Talk to me about safety with animals. If we have a cat or dog, show me how to pet them gently. Remind me when I'm around others' pets that I need to be gentle, or ask the owner for permission before petting an animal. |
| 18-60 months | Role play with me so I know how to play nicely with other children and animals. Talk to me about gentle touching. Let me know when I am not being gentle. |
| 18-60 months | Read books with me about safety. Talk to me and ask me questions about the story to make sure I understand what I am reading. |
| 24-60 months | Help me to understand the concept of hurting someone by explaining to me why it's not nice to hit, pinch, kick or bite. If these behaviours happen make sure to exclaim loudly "Ouch! That hurts when you hit!" |
| 24-60 months | Tell me about all the dangerous things in my home. For example, if the stove has been on to cook food, tell me that it is hot and can burn me. It is hard for me to control my desire to touch things. |
| 24-60 months | Explain that cars are dangerous and that I could get hurt if I ran out on the road alone. Remind me that in order to go anywhere and to cross the street I must hold your hand and wait for you to say it is okay. |
| 24-60 months | When we're out on a walk, explain to me what the traffic signs, "walk" symbol, and the "hand" symbol mean. It will take time for me to control my impulse to run across the street, but taking the time to teach me these safety rules is important. |
| 24-60 months | Let's play "Simon Says!" This game helps me listen to directions and pay attention to the things you say! |
| 24-60 months | While we are walking to the park or the grocery store let's play "Red Light, Green Light!" I get really excited about where we are going and forget the rules that keep me safe. If we practice at home I will remember how the game is played. |
| 24-60 months | Talk to me about all the people in our neighbourhood and family who will keep me safe. This might include aunts and uncles, as well as helpers such as police or doctors. |
| 24-60 months | When I'm unsure about what is safe or unsafe, encourage me to speak to you or other adults in our home about this. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- I'm still learning to control my impulses, so sometimes my emotions lead my behaviours. I need your support to understand why I cannot do things the way I would like to.
- The world is a very exciting place, but sometimes I forget all the rules that keep me safe. When you help me understand my world, I know I can rely on you to keep me safe.
- I need boundaries! Show me what kind of behaviour is appropriate and talk to me about what kind of behaviour is not appropriate and why. When you read books to me, it helps me to understand.

Little Transitions

Goal: I will move smoothly from one activity to another.

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| 6-60 months | Sometimes transitions take a long time. For example, if we have to wait in line, sing me a song, play word-guessing games with me, or recite rhymes. I enjoy playing with you and this will keep my mind busy while we wait for the next activity. |
| 12-60 months | Give me positive attention and specific good feedback if I transition smoothly from one activity to the next. I love making you happy and will try extra hard to do a good job next time. |
| 18-60 months | Make sure you give me enough time to get into my playtime before it's time to clean up. If I often don't get the chance to finish my activity, I may get frustrated and protest when you tell me it's time to do something else. |
| 24-60 months | Let me know when it will soon be time to clean up. Even if I can't tell time yet, I need some warning to anticipate the clean-up. When you give me a 2-minute heads up, then a 1-minute, a 10-second, and then tell me "it's clean up time", it will help me be ready for the transition. As I get better at this, you can give me 3 warnings, and then even 2 warnings. |
| 24-60 months | Help me understand what clean up means. Sometimes I don't remember where to put the toys. If you direct my transitioning activity (e.g., I'll put the blocks away and you put the balls in the blue bin (while pointing)), it will help me stay on task. Keep me busy because I love to move my body and I might find something silly to do if you don't give me a task right away. |
| 24-60 months | Let me know what activity is coming up next. Knowing what is to come helps me feel calm and helps me finish the current activity to move on to the next. |
| 36-60 months | If I am working in a group setting and I finish early, have an activity planned for me so I'm not left waiting with nothing to do. When I have a purposeful activity, I am more likely to show the behaviour you are hoping to see. |
| 36-60 months | Give me 2 options. When it's time to transition to an activity that I don't like as much, give me 2 choices (e.g., It's snack time! would you like apples or grapes?). This allows me to feel some ownership over the next activity and will ease the transition. |
| 48-60 months | Teach me the expectation for the routine. Sometimes just talking about it isn't enough. We can create a picture board together that gives me a visual schedule of the activities to come and what I need to do to transition successfully from one activity to the next. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Transitions can be a stressful and frustrating experience. Being able to transition smoothly from one activity to the next is an essential skill needed for group contexts. When I can handle small transitions without disrupting others, I am maximizing my time to learn new things.
- A well-directed and practiced transition can minimize the time needed for instructions and managing behaviours, which interrupts the cycle of learning.

Big Transitions

Goal: I will be prepared for a big change in my life.

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| 12-60 months | Talk to me about this big change that is coming up. The more we talk about it, the more it will become familiar to me, and the less it will be scary. I might even become excited for the change when you tell of all the great things I will be able to do in this new setting. |
| 12-60 months | If we can, let's practice the new routine that this new setting will bring. (i.e., If I'm going to daycare, let's practice having our nap when they do it at the day care so it will be one thing less to get used to when I get there). |
| 18-60 months | Remind me that it's okay to be afraid. But reassure me and tell me that I'll feel better each day that I'm there. Tell me that lots of other kids feel like I do. Acknowledge my fear and offer reassurance. |
| 36-60 months | Let's make a puppet show with my stuffed animals and act out what this transition will feel like. You can show me first, but the next time, let me play one of the characters. Engage me by saying things like: "Mr. Elephant feels scared, what can he do?" |
| 36-60 months | Find a book (i.e., Franklin Goes to School) where a character is experiencing something similar and read it to me. Let's take time while reading the book to talk about how the character is feeling and how he faces the new adventure. (Note: If finding a book is difficult or going to the library, you can use an online video or make your own.) |
| 36-60 months | Help me understand what my day will look like in this new setting (i.e., day care, school). Let's make a collage with pictures to help me see visually what is ahead. |
| 48-60 months | A type of "ceremony" can help me acknowledge that I am graduating from one phase of my life to the next. Fill it with my favourite things (i.e., food, games, people) to celebrate the past and look forward to the future. This can be as simple as a game pizza night. Let me pick the game as we celebrate together. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Big transitions are a part of human life. Learning the skills to transition from the known to the unknown is an important lifelong skill. Transitions can include but are not limited to childcare, school, high school, moving, graduating from college, taking a new job as an adult, getting married, divorced, retirement, and ultimately death. Big transitions can bring forward lots of feelings such as anxiety, fear, and excitement. Help me learn to prepare for a big transition to help me manage my big emotions.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:

How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

PROMOTING A SENSE OF SELF AND INDEPENDENCE

Overall Objective:

"I will begin to build my self-esteem, self-confidence, and be more aware of whom I am. With your encouragement I know I can do anything!"

Self-Recognition

Goal: I will learn that I am a separate person from my caregivers.

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| ALL ages | Always try to provide me with a secure base when I need you. Encourage me when I try things on my own, but if I come back to you it's because I need your support and reassurance, so be sure to provide me with this as I grow! |
| 0-6 months | While facing you, make different facial gestures and watch how I try to copy some of these. For example, stick your tongue out, open your mouth wide, or pucker your lips. Make the gesture and give me some time to imitate it. |
| 0-6 months | While playing on my back, raise my hands and encourage me to watch how you help me move my hands gently from side to side. |
| 0-6 months | When I lay on my back and my hands are up, encourage me to watch my hands as I move them around. |
| 0-8 months | As we settle into our daily routines, talk to me about what's coming up or what's happening and acknowledge my needs. For example, if I'm hungry, say "I know you're hungry, let's settle down and get you fed" or if I need to be changed, say "I know your diaper is dirty, I'm going to change you soon". |
| 6-18 months | Place me in front of a mirror and ask me, "Where is ____?" See if I can point to myself. If I'm not ready yet, point to my reflection and say "There is ____!" or try taking my hand and point to my reflection. When I have mastered this, encourage me to point to my body parts when you ask me, "Where is ____'s nose? Ears?" |
| 6-24 months | Cover the mirror with a cloth and play peek-a-boo with me. Lift the cloth, show a surprised face while you say, "Look who is there. It is ____!" When I am more coordinated and can move, try the same game and encourage me to lift the cloth to find both of us. |
| 8-18 months | Show me pictures of myself and pictures of you. Say things like "Who's that ____? Who is she/he? It's you!" Do this often so I can become familiar with my own image. |
| 12-18 months | Allow me to test my own limits in a safe and secure setting. If I feel like putting my coat on without your help, let me try! If I seem like I'm struggling, ask if I need help, and then step in. This is all part of a learning experience for me. |
| 12-18 months | Although I may be seeking more independence, I still need you to comfort me when I'm upset. Sometimes I feel anxious when we are apart from one another. Help me with these anxious feelings by reminding me that we'll see each other again soon! |
| 12-36 months | Resist the urge to "sneak away" when you're leaving me somewhere with another caregiver (e.g. at daycare). This may be harder, but it helps me to cope when I can say goodbye to |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| | you, feel reassured that you're coming back for me, and that the new person will take care of me. |
| 12-36 months | Each morning when we are brushing our teeth, tap the mirror and say "Where's ____? There he/she is!" to show me my reflection. Label your own reflection as well. Ask me, "Where is mommy?" and wait for me to shout out my name for you or point to your image. |
| 12-60 months | Make funny faces with me in the mirror. It is fun to watch and I can try to imitate you. |
| 12-60 months | Sing "Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes" with me in front of a big mirror so I can begin to recognize my body parts. |
| 18-60 months | I'm beginning to learn I can do things for myself. As I gain independence, I'll start to test my limits more and more. You can support my independence by keeping dangerous items out of reach, and safe object within my reach! This way I'll be able to explore my environment while staying safe. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Recognizing myself in a mirror or in pictures gives me a sense of identity. I will learn who I am and who the familiar people around me are. Soon I will be able to put a name to myself and to others.
- Playing with the mirror helps me to recognize myself and understand the different parts of my body!
- Looking at myself in the mirror next to your image is helping me to realize that I am a separate individual from you. This idea is going to take a long time to understand.
- Independence is an important skill I'll test more and more as I get older. When you give me the time and space to explore, I learn about all the new things I can do on my own as I get older.
- Separation anxiety is normal at my age. When you comfort and reassure me, it helps me to understand that we won't be away from each other for too long so I won't worry.
- Sneaking away may seem like the easier thing to do, but it may make me more afraid that you aren't coming back. In the long run, it's important to me that we say goodbye before you leave!
- Providing me with opportunities to explore my environment is great for my independence. I'll soon recognize that I am an individual and can try things on my own! Keeping the environment safe, and providing comfort when I need it help me to continue to grow!

Understanding and Following Instructions

Goal: I will learn to understand and follow instructions.

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| 5-12 months | While playing together on the floor with one of my favourite toys drop it beside me and ask me to look for it. |
| 6-12 months | Label familiar objects in my environment including things like body parts. Point and label the object and then ask me to point to the object. For example, point to my nose and ask me to point to my nose. |
| 6-12 months | While I am in my high chair give me a small bowl with some finger foods. Show me with your fingers how to pick up a piece of the food and put it in my mouth. Tell me to try to pick up a piece of the food. If I'm reluctant, continue to model for me and in between, again instruct me to try to pick it up myself. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 6-12 months | During tummy time, place a toy in front of me and ask me to reach for it. |
| 6-12 months | Using a toy I can comfortably hold, ask me to bang it on the floor or table to make noise. |
| 6-12 months | Give me two toys I can comfortably hold in each hand and ask me to bang them together to make noise. You may have to show me or help me try this a few times |
| 6-18 months | Ask me to use simple greetings with familiar friends and family. For example, waving bye-bye or blowing kisses to familiar people. |
| 6-24 months | I get very excited when I push a button on a toy and something pops up. As I am playing with the toy say, "What happens when you push this button?" Show me how it works and tell me to push the button on the toy by using your hand over mine. |
| 6-36 months | While we are reading together, ask me to point to familiar objects/people/animals in the book. |
| 6-36 months | Sing songs such as "If You're Happy and You Know It" with me. These songs have instructions built right in for me to follow. |
| 9-18 months | At first I will be watching you as you draw lines with crayons. When my hands are able to grasp I will pick up a crayon and hold it in my fist. I will probably gum it first before trying anything creative, this is okay, just don't let me eat them! My first attempts at drawing will be mark making because all I can really do is to bang the crayon on the paper. I am beginning to learn that I can use the crayon to make marks on the paper. When I can hold the crayon a bit better I will start to push the crayon back and forth. The more opportunities I get to explore with these materials the easier it will become. |
| 12-24 months | Show me how to put two objects into a container. Take the objects out and ask me to try doing the same. |
| 12-60 months | Let me know that I am doing a good job when I help you with simple tasks such as tidying up my toys! It will make me feel confident and important. I am still learning how to follow instructions so it will be important for you to be with me and model what you are asking me to do. |
| 15-60 months | If I'm having trouble following instructions, create a picture board for me to illustrate each step or instruction you want me to do. Together say to me, "let's look and see what the first instruction is" and continue to move through the various instructions with me. |
| 18-48 months | Ask me to help with simple daily routines and household chores, such as tidying up toys, lining up shoes, and putting my dirty clothes in the laundry. |
| 18-48 months | I am getting better at understanding what the functions of objects are, so play a game that helps to strengthen my knowledge. Gather up a toothbrush, a hairbrush, a washcloth, a spoon and a bedtime book. Take out one object at a time and ask me to name the object, what do I do with it, and when would I use it (morning, night). |
| 18-48 months | I can help around the house too! Show me where the books and magazines go. Show me how to use a dustpan to pick up crumbs with a brush. We can sing songs like "clean up, clean up" while we are tidying up my toys or other things in the house. |
| 18-48 months | Ask me to put on my own jacket when getting ready to go outside. I can also begin to learn how to put on my own shoes, and ask you to help me with the laces. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 24-60 months | I am happy to be your special little helper while you are getting ready for dinner. There are certain things I can do that are safe, for example, I can mix ingredients together in a bowl, or tear lettuce for a salad. Make sure to talk about safety while we are cooking. You should point out to me that the stove is hot and could burn me, so I need to be very careful around it. I will enjoy spending one-on-one time with you in any setting. |
| 24-60 months | I may be ready for two step instructions such as, "Please put one placemat at each place" and "can you put the napkins next to the plates?" If you only give me one thing to do at a time I won't get overwhelmed or forget. |
| 24-60 months | When doing laundry ask me to sort out my clothes when they are clean, or put my dirty clothes in the laundry basket. It makes me feel grown up to imitate what I see you doing. |
| 24-60 months | I can be a special helper at the grocery store too! You can ask me to find you a vegetable that is green and has leaves, or a fruit that is furry and brown. You can ask me to show you our favourite cereal box or juice box. I am getting better and better at remembering what things look like when you label them or remind me. |
| 24-60 months | While we are walking to the park or the grocery store let's play "Red Light, Green Light!" I get really excited about where we are going and forget the rules that keep me safe. If we practice at home I will remember how the game is played. |
| 36-60 months | When I come in from playing outside ask me to go to the sink, wash my hands with soap, and dry them off. I am learning to follow multi-step directions. |
| 36-60 months | When getting ready to go out, ask me to complete certain tasks such as getting my own coat and shoes, putting away my toys, or packing my backpack. |
| 36-60 months | Introduce me to simple games that have a limited number of rules and instructions. For example, snakes and ladders, trouble, the memory game, or hide and seek. |
| 36-60 months | Let's play "Simon Says!" This game helps me listen to directions and pay attention to the things you say! |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- I will start to understand and follow very simple directions even as a baby. When you ask me to get a toy or come and play with you this is, in fact an instruction. Including these in my day will prepare me to understand and follow more complex instructions as I grow.
- Routines and daily experiences help me to remember solutions to everyday problems (e.g. where my coat goes), and eventually I'll be able to handle new situations based on past experiences on my own, without your help.
- When you give me small responsibilities, I will develop new skills. This will help me become more independent and will increase my self-confidence.
- When you let me know that you appreciate my help, I will understand how good it can feel to help others.
- I get better at following directions when you give me lots of practice! Everyday tasks can be easily made a part of my daily routines so that I eventually begin to do chores on my own, without being asked.
- I am learning to play my part in our house and in the world just by helping out!
- I like taking care of my own things and it will teach me responsibility and respect for my toys. Make sure to have a conversation with me about what we are doing and ask me questions about where I think things should go and why.



Self Help: Feeding and Drinking

Goal: I will feed myself (using a spoon or fork, fingers or chopsticks) during mealtimes. / I will learn to use a cup on my own.

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| All Ages | Try to keep meal-time fun and enjoyable for me. It is a good habit to develop family meal times when all members eat and enjoy meals together. Engage me in conversation about the different foods we are eating, as well as the colours and shapes. |
| 0-6 months | When nursing, make eye contact with me and hold my gaze. This will help me focus my attention. |
| 0-6 months | Recognize my cues for telling you I'm hungry. I may cry, or I may put things in my mouth. Whatever my cue, I need you to watch, and to respond appropriately. |
| 9-18 months | Provide me with my favorite foods that I can easily pick up like cheerios, macaroni or peas. Sit in front of me and eat with me too. I won't need too much encouragement to copy you. |
| 9-18 months | I might need some hand-over-hand help for the first couple of mouthfuls, but let me try to do it all by myself after that. Sometimes having a special spoon or fork that's just for me can help! |
| 9-24 months | Give me my own fork or spoon so I can try feeding myself while you are feeding me. Meal time may take a bit longer but I need practice moving my hands towards my mouth. Try feeding me one spoonful and letting me have a turn to practice. I love participating because it gives me a sense of control. |
| 9-24 months | Cut my food into small pieces before you serve it to me so I can easily pick it up and feed myself. Provide me with small finger foods like Cheerios or small pieces of fruit so I can use my hands to feed myself. |
| 9-24 months | When I start getting the hang of it, resist the urge to jump in if I am going slowly. I will need to go at my own pace when I am first learning. Try not to pressure me as meal time should be pleasurable for everyone. |
| 9-24 months | Praise me whenever I try to feed myself by saying things like "You did a great job eating all by yourself _____!" When feeding myself it might get a little messy, but practice makes perfect! Try to keep meal-time fun and enjoyable for me by engaging me in conversation about what we are eating. |
| 9-24 months | Just because I have my own spoon does not mean I don't need your help. You and I can take turns feeding me so you can make sure I'm getting all the nutrients I need to grow big and strong. Remember I will also like to bang my spoon so while I am banging you can feed me my mouthful. |
| 9-24 months | Give me my very own sippy cup and let me try drinking on my own! Show me how to raise the cup to my mouth and tip it up to drink. Encourage me to hold the cup with both hands - a full cup may be too heavy for me to hold with one hand. You might begin with filling the cup up with only a little bit of water so it does not get too messy. Allow me to play and explore the cup - even if it means I bang and toss it around. |
| 18-48 months | If I make a mess while eating encourage me to help clean it up. I am better coordinated now and can wipe up spills, so give me an opportunity to share in this chore. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:

How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 24-60 months | Allow me to serve myself when we're having meals. I can transfer food from a container onto my plate, or use tongs to pick things up and pour into my cup from a child sized pitcher. Either way I will be using my hands and eyes together! |
| 24-36 months | I need to show you that I can do things for myself. Make sure that you have child sized, plastic pitchers so I can pour milk or juice into my own cup; cups with two handles will make it much easier for me to drink; using plastic bowls also means that you don't have to worry about anything breaking. The more I can do for myself, the more independent I feel. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Giving me opportunities to feed myself is helping me feel independent and giving me a sense that I have control over things in my life.
- Learning to feed myself is an important life skill. When you give me lots of opportunities to practice I know that I am capable enough to do some things on my own and it boosts my confidence in myself.
- My hands are becoming coordinated and I can now use them to do many different things. I can hold things with one hand, both hands and grasp small items between my thumb and forefinger. Encouraging me to feed myself and drink from a cup gives me the chance to develop important self-help skills.
- I am learning that I can depend on myself to take care of my own feeding needs. Providing me with opportunities to feed myself helps me to develop independence!
- I gain more self-confidence in my abilities when you encourage me to do things on my own! I feel so special when you believe in me and what I can do!

Toileting

Goal: I will use a potty or toilet when I need to.

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| 15-36 months | Follow my lead when it comes to potty training. I'll let you know I'm ready by showing some interest in potty training such as asking if I wear "big boy or girl" underpants, recognizing when my diaper is wet, or asking to use the toilet myself. |
| 15-36 months | Try to avoid beginning to potty train me if I'm going through a big change like starting child care, moving houses, or a family crisis. Also be aware that if I'm in the middle of potty training during a stressful time, it's normal for me to have more accidents than usual. |
| 15-36 months | Create a supportive learning environment for me. Let me decide whether to use a pull up, diaper, or potty each day, teach me the appropriate words for my body parts, urine, and bowel movements, and handle my potty accidents without anger. |
| 15-36 months | Allow me to have some control over my potty training, and try not to show you're very disappointed or angry when I have accidents. I'm trying to learn, and that means I may have a number of accidents, but when you keep calm it encourages me to keep trying. |
| 15-36 months | I may need some help at first with checking my diaper, so make it part of our daily routines. Throughout the day let me know that we are going to check my diaper first, then the next time just ask me, "Are you wet?" and I will let you know if I need to be changed or not. |
| 15-36 months | Respond appropriately and quickly to change me when I have an accident. If I haven't told you, ask me or let me know "Oh-oh, did you have an accident? Let's go get changed!" |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 15-36 months | If I make a mistake, let me know it's okay. I'm still learning! It's important to avoid shaming me when I've had an accident. Instead, ask me to help get my wet clothes off and some clean ones on! |
| 15-36 months | Ask me if I have to go to the washroom at various times throughout the day. These little reminders are helpful. If I usually have a bowel movement at the same time each day, try leaving my diaper off and suggesting I use the potty. If I get upset at this idea, simply put my diaper back on and try again in a few weeks. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- Choosing the right time for me to begin potty training is important because it can avoid disappointment, anger, and frustration for us both. I'm at an age when I'm learning I have control over my body, so following my lead when it comes to potty training may help me to be more successful.
- Being patient is the best way to support me as I begin to potty train. I may have a number of accidents along the way, but I'm still learning, and your patience is important to me getting there!
- Learning when the right time to change my diaper can be hard, but with your help I will begin to be able to recognize on my own. This will help me with potty training later.
- Responding to me when I have an accident will let me know that you noticed, and will draw my attention to it.
- I'm starting to identify when I am wet and when I am dry. Asking me throughout the day if I need to go to the washroom will eventually result in my going to the washroom by myself. I am gaining a sense of control over my body, and your patience and support is important as I learn how to potty train.

Getting Dressed

Goal: I will help to get myself ready for the day in the morning or ready for bed at night.

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| 12-24 months | Give me opportunities to try putting things on, or taking things off. For example, I can try pulling off my socks or putting on my hat! |
| 12-24 months | Allow me to help put on my pyjamas at night. I can push my arm through the sleeve of my shirt, and help get my leg through my pants when we're getting dressed. |
| 12-24 months | Ask me to help when we're getting dressed in the morning. I can put my hands in the air so you can get my shirt on, and pull up my socks with your help! |
| 18-60 months | Give me the opportunity to get myself dressed in the morning. Always encourage me to dress myself. Help me when I ask, but let me try on my own first. You can get me started my helping me get my head through my shirt and then I can take over from here. |
| 18-60 months | When going out of the house give me the opportunity to try to do up my jacket, put on my hat, mitts and practice doing up buttons. Support me as I need it. |
| 18-60 months | Have me practice zippers and buttons by providing me with clothes that have them. If there is something I am unable to do, you can get me started, like zipping up the bottom of my coat and asking me to zip up the rest. If possible place a mirror where I can see myself. Talk to me about "Who is in the mirror" and what am I wearing. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:

How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 18-60 months | Provide me with a box of small child-size clothes, such as hats, mitts, tops, skirts and pants with which to dress up dolls or stuffed animals. Add additional accessories to make the pretend play with the dolls more interesting. |
| 18-60 months | When I come in from playing outside, let me take my shoes or boots off and line them up beside the door. The more practice I get with this the better! |
| 24-48 months | Encourage me to take off my shoes when I get inside the house, or to pull my socks off at the end of the day. |
| 24-48 months | When we're going outside to play let me try putting on my own shoes and jacket. Start my zipper for me, but let me pull it all the way up. |
| 24-60 months | When I wake up in the morning, let me pick out my own outfit. Then encourage me to put everything on, helping as I need it. Don't worry if it takes me a little longer to get dressed. I'm still learning. |
| 24-48 Months | Give me lots of time to try to put my clothes on myself before you jump in and help me. A lot of the time it will just take a bit longer for me to dress myself. |
| 36-60 months | When playing with dolls, model positive hygiene behaviours for me. Ask me to change my doll's diaper when it is 'wet' or brush the doll's hair and teeth so s/he is ready for the day. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- When you encourage me to participate in getting dressed in the morning, and getting ready for bed at night, it shows me that I can be independent!
- I will become independent when I learn to help myself with certain tasks, like brushing my teeth and getting dressed. I will have a sense of pride and control in being able to do things on my own, without too much help from you.
- My fingers are small, but they help me do so many things. Giving me opportunities to dress myself helps me feel independent as well as strengthens my hands. I will take pride in being able to do things on my own, without much help from you.
- Being able to dress by myself, doing up buttons and zippers and Velcro, will increase my hand-eye coordination.
- Allowing me to choose what I want to wear in the morning will motivate me more. It feels powerful when I have some say in the decision making process. If you do not rush me in the morning when I am trying to get dressed it lets me know that you think that I am capable of dressing myself. I will feel proud that I can do things all by myself.
- When you show me that you think I am capable, my confidence to try things out for myself grows.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:

How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

PROMOTING THE EXPRESSION OF EMOTION

Overall Objective:

"I am developing a full range of emotions that will later lead to qualities of empathy of perspective taking. By giving me the words to use to express my emotions and letting me know how my actions affect others, I am gaining the ability to rise to life's challenges."

Feelings

Goal: I will use words to describe how I'm feeling throughout the day.

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| All Ages | Respond to my cues as quickly and consistently as possible. This lets me know that you care about my needs. |
| All Ages | Pay attention and learn to read my cues no matter what kind of mood I'm in. I will let you know when I've had enough by grunting, turning away, fussing, crying etc., but I'll also let you know when I'm having fun by looking at you, smiling, giggling, reaching for you, being attentive to you, and so on. |
| All ages | Give me the words for all the possible reasons that I am crying. For example, if I am hungry say, "I think you may be hungry. Shall we get you something to eat?" If I am tired say, "You look sleepy. Let's have a nap." If I am wet say, "I think your diaper/pants might need changing. Shall we change you and then you will feel better?" Or if I am hurt say, "Oh-oh. Did you hurt your hand? Let's make it better." Each time you acknowledge how I am feeling, I will learn you are here to help me. |
| All Ages | Label my feelings throughout the day so I will be able to recognize them. Before we get ready for nap time, say things like "your tears are telling me that you're upset right now" or "your smile tells me that you're happy." |
| 0-3 months | When I express my emotions, name these emotions and provide the appropriate response For example, when uncomfortable because of a wet diaper or hunger, I will cry. |
| 0-3 month | In the first few months of life, you will start to recognize my different expressions. Always provide me with a consistent response to these different specific expressions. For example, delight in my happiness with me or comfort me when I'm in distress. |
| 0-3 months | Respond to all aspects of my distress or discomfort including my cries, or my physical reaction which may include some loss of control of my arms and legs due to my distress. Hold me close when this happens. |
| 0-3 months | Recognize and respond to my different cries. I will use different expressions of affect to express my feelings. For example, gurgles may mean I'm happy compared to crying and sucking on my thumb which may mean I'm hungry. |
| 0-3 months | Recognize the different signals, cries or expressions and what I'm trying to communicate through these expressions. Your appropriate response helps me learn to regulate |
| 0-6 months | When I cry, pick me up promptly and comfort me. Your prompt response will help me learn how to manage my emotions. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 0-6 months | Talk to me or sing a song to me when I'm upset to help calm me down. This can be very calming for me as I'll recognize different sounds such as your voice which will help me regulate my emotions. |
| 0-12 months | Watch me closely when I am distressed to see what experiences, toys, sounds, or touches help me to calm down. As you do this more, I will begin to learn how to soothe myself in certain situations. For example, when I'm tired I may suck on my thumb and fall asleep on my own. |
| 0-12 months | As I express different emotions, name them for me. As you respond to these emotions, talk about the ways in which you are comforting me. For example, "you're telling me you're hungry, so I'm going to nurse you now". |
| 0-12 months | Know and respond to my cues so if I show you I'm happy through smiling, giggling, looking at you, or reaching for you then you know I'm having fun. If I'm grunting, turning away from you, fussing, crying or seem distressed, I probably need a rest. |
| 0-12 months | Share stories with me (oral or books) that describe different emotions. Talk to me about what we're reading and how it relates to my life. |
| 12-60 months | When I am overwhelmed, and maybe even misbehaving because I'm overwhelmed, it's important that you stay near me and talk to me about what I'm feeling, and that you are there to help me manage those feelings. |
| 12-60 months | When I am frustrated or upset, give me the words for how I'm feeling. Say, "You seem mad right now. How can I help?" |
| 12-60 months | Label your own feelings too! When you tell me, "I am so happy to see you!" or "It makes me sad when you hit me!" I am learning how I make others feel with my behaviours. |
| 18-60 months | Read books with me which describe feelings and show emotions, such as: "I Have Feelings" by Bobbie Kalman and "The Feelings Book" by Todd Parr. (These books can be found at the local library). Exploring how others feel is important as I start to understand another person's perspective. |
| 18-60 months | When I am overly upset or disruptive, redirect me to a more quiet activity such as colouring. Say, "We are going to colour for a bit. When you are calmer we can go back to playing _____." |
| 18-60 months | Remind me that my actions cause a reaction in others as I don't understand it or cannot control myself well yet. When you tell me, "Ouch _____! Kicking or hitting hurts," I will begin to make that connection. |
| 24-60 months | Provide me with a space in the house where I can go to calm down when I am getting upset. Give me my favourite doll, blanket, or book, to help me calm down and stay with me as I try to calm down. |
| 24-60 months | Tape pictures of me and other family members on the refrigerator, where I can look at them. Talk about the emotions that they are displaying, for example, sadness, happiness, excitement. When I am showing that emotion, point to the picture and tell me that I am showing the same feeling of ____ (fill in the blank). |
| 24-60 months | When I have caused another child to be upset, ask me to look at his/her face and say, "Sam's face is showing you that he doesn't like it when you took away his block." When you continually point out how people's faces reflect how they are feeling, I will start to become more sensitive and empathetic. It will still take me time to control my actions because my emotions are more important to me than others for now. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 24-60 months | When you reflect on my behaviour I can tell you are paying attention to me. Every time I hear, "I see..... you emptied all the cars on the floor and are having trouble tidying up," I am learning words for my feelings in situations. |
| 24-60 months | Whenever we are outside, in the store, at the playground, etc., point out children who are upset, crying or angry. Ask me to wonder why I think they are feeling sad, mad or happy. This gives me more practice thinking about why others might be feeling the way they do and what I could do to make it better. You are turning me into a caring and empathetic individual. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- It's important when you recognize my emotions because I then feel safe and secure.
- I will learn to label my feelings and identify when I am happy, sad, angry, etc. This will enable me to connect how I feel with how to deal with those emotions appropriately.
- Understanding emotions helps me to develop the capacity for caring, being empathetic, and the ability to take on new challenges.
- The consistent and appropriate responses I get from my caregiver(s) when I am little have long term effect on how my brain is wired. If you comfort me when I need you I will learn from experience that when I'm upset I can depend on you to help me feel better.
- I'm learning to filter stimulation rather than being overwhelmed by it, so when you respond to help me calm down, I also begin to recognize ways to soothe and calm myself.
- When you give me the appropriate response to my distress or discomfort, I will learn to begin to recognize what helps me feel better.
- By providing warmth and support to me as a newborn I will know that you are there for me to help me meet my needs. Responding to me, especially when I am upset, shows me that I am loved and cared for. Try to notice my tiny signals of my needs and respond to them (responding to my little fusses may prevent me from crying!) This helps to build a strong trusting relationship between us.
- Face to face interactions are important as I study your face and its many expressions. I will recognize your expressions and moods and learn how to connect my actions with my emotions through imitating you.
- Be sure to adjust your reactions and responses to meet my changing needs and responses. For example, if I am very happy, you can use more exaggerated expressions with me or if I am upset, you can use calmer and more relaxed expressions.
- I need a variety of soothing techniques that will help me regain my composure and control of myself. Self-soothing will help me to refocus my attention on what I was doing before.
- Modeling positive behaviours and interactions will teach me how to interact with others in a socially appropriate way. Learning how to express my feelings and emotions in a way that does not hurt or disturb others is important for my overall development, especially my thinking skills.
- Providing me with clear boundaries and structure, help me manage my emotions and behaviour
- It is important that I have a safe place to go when I am upset. When you give me the space I need, and objects that are soothing to me, it helps me to calm down without hurting myself or hurting others. When I am calm I can focus and learn.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

ENCOURAGING SOCIAL INTERACTION/SKILLS

Overall Objective:

“Encouraging my social interactions and skills will help me to make friends and get along with others. I will also learn about my community and whom to trust.”

Symbolic & Pretend Play

Goal: I will play with objects in an unconventional way.

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| 2-8 months | Let's explore objects together! Give me things I can grasp and explore with all of my senses |
| 2-8 months | When we're out of the house, talk to me about all the things around us. The different people, what they're doing, etc. |
| 6-12 months | Give me toys like a baby comb that I can use to brush my hair. Show me how you use the brush to comb your hair and encourage me to do the same! |
| 6-12 months | When I'm able to sit up, provide me with a kitchen pot and spoon to play with while you're cooking dinner. |
| 6-12 months | Give me toys I can hold in my hand, put in my mouth, wave around or bang together to make noises. I like to explore the different things I can do with these toys. |
| 10-18 months | When you are doing an everyday task (e.g. cooking, cleaning, etc.) also include me by giving me the same items (e.g. spoons, cups, cloths, etc.) you are using so I can copy and learn what these items do. I will get to know how these objects are a part of my world. |
| 10-24 months | Provide me with materials such as a pretend telephone that I can use to imitate phone calls. I'll pick up on what I've seen you do, and begin to copy these actions. |
| 18-30 months | Have a variety of materials and objects around the house that I can use whenever I get an idea for play. We can use any object and pretend that it is something else with our imaginations. Blocks, boxes, furniture, clothing, and dolls are some of the many things we can use in our pretend play time. |
| 18-30 months | Let me bring my teddy bear, or doll around with me so I can practice the new things I learn with them such as feeding or getting dressed. The more I practice these new life skills the better I will be at doing them myself. |
| 24-60 months | If we don't have a bed for my baby bear we can use a shoe box! If I don't have a house for my little people, we can make one with a tissue box! We can create just about anything if we have some good recyclable materials handy. |
| 30-60 months | Pretending to be mommy, daddy, or other family members is fun for me! Allow me to guide some of the pretend play and decide who I want to be. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:

How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

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| 30-60 months | Playing games such as teacher, doctor/patient, restaurant, and shopping let me experience roles that I have experienced or observed happening in my world. Re-enacting these scenarios will be a fun way for me to learn about the world around me. |
| 30-60 months | Pretending to be new and exciting roles I have yet to experience such as firefighter, astronaut, and ballerina is fun. My imagination lets me think of and try so many different things. |
| 30-60 months | Provide me with cushions, pillows, blankets, and other things we have in our home to build castles, and stores. Allow me to direct our pretend play, and you follow my lead! |
| 36-60 months | Let's play bus driver, train conductor, or pilot by lining up a row of chairs and allowing me to be the engineer or pilot! We can even imitate the sounds we've heard like "All aboard" when we're playing. |
| 36-60 months | When you and I are engaged in pretend play, describe the actions. For example, when you're pouring the tea into my cup at our pretend tea party, say "Here, I'll pour me some tea". |
| 36-60 months | We can pretend play with my stuffed animals and dolls too! For example, my teddies can be my students, and my dolls can come to a pretend tea party. |
| 36-60 months | Let's give each other different roles! You can be a cashier and I can be the customer, or you can be a teacher and I'll be the student. |
| 36-60 months | What can we use? Have a craft box of safe, recycled materials like egg cartons, cardboard boxes, paper towel rolls, tissue boxes, newspaper, construction paper, glue, tape, string, etc., readily available for me to use. This will provide me with the opportunity to be creative with the materials. Pull this craft box out and let me decide what we should create today! |
| 36-60 months | Keep clear plastic containers like pop bottles around the house. You will be amazed that we can create our own lava lamp or snow globe with just a few materials from around the house. |
| 36-60 months | We can create our very own bowling alley with plastic bottles and a ball. Then we can play-act going to the bowling alley. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- I am learning and figuring out how I use and what I can do with the objects around me. Learning and exploring the many ways an object can be used is important for me to understand how these things are a part of my world.
- Pretend play lets me practice and learn about important routines and activities I may not be familiar with yet. Practicing and re-enacting these experiences will allow me to become more comfortable with them.
- Playing out and practicing everyday experiences and routines teaches me valuable and important life skills that will boost my confidence and independence as I grow.
- Using my imagination allows me to safely explore new and exciting activities and roles that are different from my environment. I can express my creativity as well as feed my curiosity about unfamiliar roles.
- I need the opportunity to be creative and resourceful with the materials that we have on hand.
- Constructive play means that I have to solve problems to put materials together. We can make caterpillars from the egg cartons - but what do we use for the legs? I have to consider many possibilities of what might work and how we can use things in many different ways.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

Solitary Play

Goal: I will learn how to play on my own for a few minutes

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| 0-6 months | Quiet time on the floor with you nearby is a chance for me to begin to learn to be on my own for very brief periods of time. |
| 0-6 months | Take me places where I can watch other children play. For example, take me to the park and allow me to watch other children run around. While I may not be ready to play with them, I'll still enjoy watching others. |
| 0-24 months | While travelling on the bus or in a car, let me have some of my favourite toys or a soft book that I can hold and explore |
| 0-24 months | During diapering, provide me with a small toy to hold and explore while you change me. I still want to hear your voice, but this is also a chance for me to focus a little bit on a toy in your presence. |
| 0-24 months | If I have an older sibling, let me be nearby to watch as they play. While I may not be ready to participate, I'll still enjoy seeing what they're doing. |
| 3-6 months | In between our time together, give me brief periods to play with my toys not necessarily with you, but close to you. |
| 6-18 months | When doing daily chores like getting dinner ready, place me in a baby friendly space where I can still see you with some of my familiar toys. |
| 12-60 months | Daycare is a great place for me to learn to be with other children. I will have lots of opportunities to play in the presence, side by side, and as I get much older, cooperatively. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/ CAREGIVER

- Learning to play on my own is an important part of my social development. Playing near you, but independently helps me to work on my attention span.
- Because I'm so young, even when I'm playing on my own it will still be important for me to know that you are nearby. This gives me a sense of security and the confidence I need to explore my world
- Paying attention to my cues and recognizing when I've had enough or you need to change the activity shows me that you are in tune with my feelings and emotions. Knowing this will help me to build trust in you and will show me that we have a secure relationship where I can count on you to keep me happy!
- Solitary play leads to parallel play, which then leads to cooperative play. Playing independently, but while other children are nearby is a wonderful way for me to learn how to work with others in my earliest years.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

Parallel Play

Goal: I will learn how to play alongside other children.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| All ages | Take me to an Ontario Early Years Centre, library or a play group. You can meet other parents and I will get to play with other kids my age! Meeting children my age is important because it will give me the opportunity to practice getting along with others. |
| 0-12 months | Take time each day to play with me using the toys I'm familiar with. |
| 0-12 months | Let's explore some picture books. Describe what's on the pages to me and give me time to look and touch each page. |
| 0-12 months | Sing songs to me throughout my day. If you don't know any children's songs that's okay. Any song is fine with me! |
| 0-24 months | If I have an older sibling, let me be nearby to watch as they play. While I may not be ready to participate, I'll still enjoy seeing what they're doing. |
| 6-24 months | Let's visit a play group where I can spend time with you, other babies, and their moms. |
| 18-24 months | Let's go for a walk with another baby and her mom. While we will each be in our own strollers, we'll enjoy being next to one another. |
| 18-24 months | Let's go to the park and put me on an infant swing next to another child. |
| 18-24 months | Like little Prince George, I might, on occasion, get a little aggressive when around other children. Redirect my attention and show me other, more positive ways to be with other children by modelling. |
| 18-24 months | Help me engage in simple conversations with other children. We can start just by saying hello. Encourage me to make eye contact when doing so, and model for me. |
| 18-24 months | When playing next to other children, I may have trouble sharing. Stay close to me and help me manage such situation by redirecting my attention to the toys that are closest to me. |
| 18-36 months | When visiting any drop in centres, let me play at a table where there are other children also playing independently. We may be colouring, or using play dough but we are playing independently. |
| 18-36 months | At the park make sure to bring my pail, shovel, digger truck and other sand toys. Invite another child to sit near me and help me play in the sand. It will be hard for me to share my toys, but you can teach me how we can take turns with the truck. If there are two of everything then sharing will be easier. |
| 18-36 months | When I try to copy the things my sibling do, or you are doing, encourage me. I may not want to do it with them, but doing it like them is another stage in my ability to play with others. |
| 18-36 months | While at the park encourage me to play on the equipment that other children are using. I may not want to play with them, but following their lead is an important step to learning how to play cooperatively. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:

How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 18-36 months | At the library, let me pick books off the shelf and sit in a quiet place to look at the books while other children are around. |
| 24-60 months | Daycare is a great place for me to make friends. I will have lots of opportunities to play in small and large groups. It will be hard at first but I will learn to join in games with a supportive caregiver. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- Paying attention to my cues and recognizing when I've had enough or you need to change the activity shows me that you are in tune with my feelings and emotions. Knowing this will help me to build trust in you and will show me that we have a secure relationship where I can count on you to keep me happy!
- Playing side my side with other children is an important step before cooperative play begins.
- Engaging in my own activity while beside other children allows me to watch and listen to the activities other children are engaged with
- At this stage, everything I see, I want! Playing side by side other children with access to the same toys is a first step toward helping me learn how to share.
- Knowing that I can't have everything I see will also help me manage my feelings with your support.

Cooperative Play

Goal: I will learn how to play cooperatively with other children.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| All ages | Take me to an Ontario Early Years Centre, library or a play group. You can meet other parents and I will get to play with other kids my age! Meeting children my age is important because it will give me the opportunity to practice getting along with others. |
| 0-12 months | Let's explore some picture books. Describe what's on the pages to me and give me time to look and touch each page. |
| 0-12 months | Sing songs to me throughout my day. If you don't know any children's songs that's okay. Any song is fine with me! |
| 0-24 months | I love playing games like "Peek-a-boo" with you. It is fun to see your smile when your face is revealed. You can move my hands in front of my face so that I can surprise you too! Take turns with me but don't be afraid to change the activity slightly if I seem to be getting uncomfortable. I love it when you're sensitive to my needs and can adjust the activity if we need to. |
| 6-24 months | As you sing "Row, Row, Row your Boat," hold my hands and rock me gently back and forth. Let me do some of the work and pull myself up when you are leaning me back. I will show you when I know it is my turn to do the action. |
| 6-36 months | Let's play "Pat-a-cake". You can teach me how to put my hands together to make a clapping noise, and how to pat our hands together too. I will especially love the way we roll our arms around to make the dough! This song is about team work. |
| 8-24 months | Sit in front of me with a small, soft ball and roll it towards me; then encourage me to roll it back to you. I may not be ready to catch it yet but that's okay. What I am learning is turn taking and cooperation to make a game successful. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:

How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 12-48 months | Give me some noise makers and see what kind of music we can make together. We can use pots and pans, containers filled with beans to shake, or containers with a wooden spoon for drums. |
| 12-60 months | If possible, try to arrange a play date for me with one of my friends. Plan activities for us to go to the library together, or to go swimming at the local recreation centre, or to other free community events. It is also fun just to stay home and play with other children and my toys. |
| 18-60 months | We can try playing hide and seek in the house – or you can hide my favourite toy and I can try to find it. |
| 24-48 months | Sometimes it is fun to colour on a large piece of paper that has room for you and for me. If you put the crayons in the middle than I will learn to share them. Model by asking, “Can I use the purple crayon now if you are finished with it?” Or when I say, “Green”, you can reply, “Does ___ want the green crayon now? Here it is”. Sharing crayons can be fun. |
| 24-60 months | I love pretend play because I get to practice being you. Get out my dollies and ask me to help you feed them, put them to sleep, change their diapers, etc. Talk to me about what we can do to make the dollies feel better when they’re crying. For example, “The baby has a tummy ache, what should we do?” |
| 24-60 months | When we go to the playground or park nearby, encourage me to join same aged peers in play. Please stay close in case I need you. My social skills are only just developing. |
| 24-60 months | Daycare is a great place for me to make friends. I will have lots of opportunities to play in small and large groups. It will be hard at first but I will learn to join in games with a supportive caregiver. |
| 36-60 months | Let’s play bus driver, train conductor, or pilot by lining up a row of chairs and allowing me to be the engineer or pilot! We can even imitate the sounds we’ve heard like “All aboard” when we’re playing |
| 36-60 months | When you and I are engaged in pretend play, describe the actions. For example, when you’re pouring the tea into my cup at our pretend tea party, say “Here, I’ll pour me some tea”. |
| 36-60 months | We can pretend play with my stuffed animals and dolls too! For example, my teddies can be my students, and my dolls can come to a pretend tea party. |
| 36-60 months | Let’s give each other different roles! You can be a cashier and I can be the customer, or you can be a teacher and I’ll be the student. |
| 36-60 months | Play a fun board game with me like Trouble, Snakes and Ladders, Memory Game or other easy board games. This is a good way to practice taking turns. Make sure you explain the rules clearly to me so I understand that I need to wait until your turn is over before it is my turn again. |
| 36-60 months | We can play active games inside the house too like Follow the Leader or “What time is it Mr. Wolf?” We can take turns being the wolf. It may be a good idea to remind me that my turn is coming up so I should wait patiently. |
| 36-60 months | Try to play/arrange group games if I am at the park with friends. We can play games like freeze tag and soccer and that is where we can all take turns. |
| 48-60 months | When playing with my friends or siblings encourage us to create or invent our own games and stories and then play them. |
| 48-60 months | Try to enroll me in a local activity club, sports team or with Scouts. I will get to meet new people and will learn to participate with other children. |



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 48-60 months | Games like “Simon Says” and “What Time is it Mr. Wolf?” are good ways to teach me about turn-taking. I get a turn being Simon, but I will also learn just to be a participant when someone else has the turn to be the leader. |
| 48-60 months | Involve me in some turn taking games outside. We can play soccer, where each of us takes a turn being the goalie and the other person gets to shoot, and then we can switch! We can also set up a game of bowling with some empty recycled bottles and a ball where I take turns with you, my siblings, or my friends to see how many bottles can be knocked down. |
| 48-60 months | Teach me how to play some simple card games like Go Fish! I'll be learning how to take turns and play cooperatively with you, a friend, or a sibling. |

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- Learning to work with others is important for me because it prepares me for the kind of things I'm going to learn when I go to preschool or Kindergarten. I will get an opportunity to meet other children my age and start to learn how we can play together.
- Playing with others will help me to learn to take turns, how to be cooperative, and how to be patient in order to achieve a goal. Later on such school skills such as leadership and teamwork will be easy for me.
- Paying attention to my cues and recognizing when I've had enough or you need to change the activity shows me that you are in tune with my feelings and emotions. Knowing this will help me to build trust in you and will show me that we have a secure relationship where I can count on you to keep me happy!
- Learning how to share with others is important. I'll be able to make friends and work as part of a team. Learning how to take turns and share will also make me a good leader!
- When we play games together, I begin to understand rules, turn-taking and sharing. This will help me to learn how to play nicely with others, listen to rules, and follow them.
- Outdoor turn taking games teaches me about teamwork, sharing, leadership, and is a great way for me to get some exercise.
- Learning how to share and take turns teaches me patience. When I spend time with other children my age, I learn how to play and cooperate with others in an age appropriate way. I'm also learning how to recognize my own feelings and the feelings of others.
- Spending time with other children my age is an important experience before I start school. In my interactions with other children I will learn to take turns, follow rules, share, and be cooperative. Making friends at the park, at the Early Years Centre or any other community group, will help prepare me for making friends at school.
- Building relationships with children my age requires a capacity to control impulses, listen to another's perspective and try to behave in an independent manner. I am learning lifelong skills.
- Spending time in the community will provide me with new opportunities to meet and play with other children. It gives me more practice interacting with peers, while learning about safe and interesting places in my neighbourhood.

Infant mental health

the social, emotional & cognitive well being of infants & young children

Every child has an inner life built on relationships and a developing understanding of the world around them.

Research and clinical evidence increasingly demonstrates that:

- The early years have a unique and formative impact on development, relationships and functioning throughout life
- Many adverse outcomes can be prevented when parents are provided with support and information that enables them to be optimally responsive to their infants and young children
- When there are identified risks and disorders in young children or in family functioning, well planned early intervention can promote optimal outcomes

The goal of infant mental health practice is to ensure optimal child outcomes, a sense of security and self-esteem and the abilities to

- form satisfying relationships
- engage with the world
- cope and problem solve
- continue positive development throughout life

IMHP was created in 1988 by The Department of Psychiatry at The Hospital for Sick Children, in partnership with a variety of community agencies in response to the community need for increased awareness and education on mental health issues of the birth to age three group. Today, IMHP is a national, multi-disciplinary organization supporting agencies and professionals working with infants and families across Canada.

The goal of IMHP is to promote the development of infants through education, information dissemination, networking and advocacy.

Our objectives:

- To increase the knowledge and skill of caregivers to meet the needs of infants, toddlers and families
- To provide information on the development of infants and toddlers
- To provide information on prevention, interventions and resources available
- To provide specialized education programs and support to service providers
- To advocate for policy and funding needed to promote the well-being of infants and their families
- To increase the responsiveness of services to the needs of parents
- To raise society's awareness of its responsibility for infant rights and outcomes

IMHP continues to build a strong network of advocates for infant mental health across Canada and internationally.

We invite you to become a part of our collective voice for education, advocacy and change.



**Infant Mental
Health Promotion**

Canadian Centre for the Advancement of
Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

www.IMHPromotion.ca

You are a part of shaping the future.

Hand in Hand

Growing Together Every Day

This Developmental Support Plan is full of activities created to help your child reach his/her developmental goals. These are activities you can do with your child during everyday routines such as:

- Meal time
- Story time
- Play time
- Tidy up time
- Walking and playing outside
- Quiet time



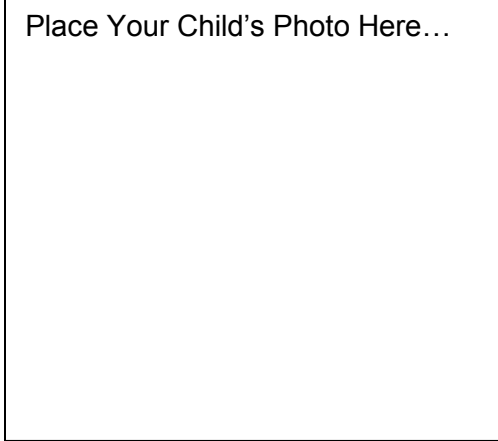
Remember, **you are your child's favorite toy.**



This plan was developed for BABY (SAMPLE DSP)

Age: 8 Months

On (date):



WHY OUR RELATIONSHIP MATTERS:

I am beginning to understand who the important people in my life are. You are a very important part of my development. When you consistently respond to my needs I learn that I can trust you to be there for me. You know when I need to be fed, changed or just held. Just like how you read my cues, I am learning to read your facial expressions and your tone of voice, but I also notice when you seem angry which can sometimes scare me. When you make eye-contact with me, and get down to my level it helps me interact with you. You play with me when I am happy, and you hold me when I am sad, this lets me know that you care about me which creates our bond. This special bond helps me grow.





HOW I UNDERSTAND YOU AND TALK TO OTHERS



| What I can already do | My next goal | How you can help me reach my goal |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| I am making “ba-ba” sounds! | I will engage in back and forth babbling with my caregiver. | <p>When spending time with me begin to talk to me in a give and take conversation style. Let me babble for a few moments, and when I stop, talk back to me like we are having a conversation. You can say things like “Oh really, _____”, and “tell me more!”</p> <p>Find times when I am the most vocal. This might be during mealtime or when I wake up from my nap. Use these times to engage in back and forth babbling with me and repeat the sounds I make.</p> <p>Include some toys that make noise in my play such as a rattle, squeak toy, or talking doll. I might talk a little more when I can listen for other objects. Then you can imitate my actions with objects and sounds.</p> |

Why this is important:

Engaging in communication where we give and take sets me up for later conversations in life. I will learn that when I stop talking, you start, and when you stop talking, it’s my turn! The more you talk to me throughout the day, the more I learn so talk about the world around me.



HOW I MOVE MY BODY



| What I can already do | My next goal | How you can help me reach my goal |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| I can roll over! | I will begin to crawl! | <p>When I am in a crawling position, brace my feet with your hands so I can push myself off your hands. This will help me begin to move forward.</p> <p>Place me against furniture and shake a toy in front of me. I will use the furniture to push myself off and help me get that toy!</p> <p>When I am in a crawling position, I may roll over. Gently move me back into place before I roll over. Do these exercises with me every 2 hours.</p> |

Why this is important:

Encouraging me to crawl is helping me develop my big muscles! It may be a little tricky so I need your help every day! Soon enough, I'll be moving around all on my own.

HOW I USE MY HANDS



| What I can already do | My next goal | How you can help me reach my goal |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| I can pick up my toys! | I will hold toys in both hands! | <p>When I am in my high chair, give me two blocks that I can bang together to bang on the table. Put one block in each hand and I will enjoy seeing what kind of noises I can make.</p> <p>Provide me with noise making toys like little maracas that I can hold in each hand and shake. Encourage me to shake them when we play.</p> <p>Spread some blocks out on the ground. Let's see what we can build! Give me lots to choose from, so I can explore more than one in each hand. Engage in play with me so we can use our imagination together.</p> |

Why this is important:

Learning to use my hands to do things like transfer objects from one hand to the other, and building things using blocks are so important to my development. I am becoming more and more independent as I learn to master these kinds of skills. Practice makes perfect so the more opportunities you give me, the better I'll get!



HOW I EXPLORE AND FIGURE THINGS OUT



| What I can already do | My next goal | How you can help me reach my goal |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| I like to put my toys in my mouth! | I will explore my toys and what they can do. | <p>During bath time provide me with a bubble wand and bubble mixture so I can blow bubbles while I am in the tub. Encourage me to blow bubbles through the bubble wand. This will help me learn that when I blow through the bubble wand bubbles come out.</p> <p>Provide me with a pop up toy that when I push the button on the toy the figure will pop up. As I am playing with the toy say, “what happens when you push this button?” Encourage me to push the button on the toy.</p> <p>Provide me with toys like a shape sorter or other simple matching games. Encourage me to figure out where each shape goes. Praise me whenever I try or get it right!</p> |

Why this is important:

Exploring what my toys can do will help me improve my problem solving skills. This will also help me develop my imagination! When you encourage me to figure things out, I feel confident that I can do it!



HOW I SHOW FEELINGS & ACT AROUND OTHERS



| What I can already do | My next goal | How you can help me reach my goal |
|--|---|---|
| I can grab my feet when I am lying down! | I will move to get a toy that is out of my reach. | <p>When we're lying on the ground playing, move one of my favorite toys away from me so I can begin to move around to get it.</p> <p>When I am in a crawling position, move noise making toys out of my reach. Encourage me to get that toy! Make noise with the toy and make eye contact with me so I can move to get it.</p> <p>Play with me by providing me with noise making toys. Put them in my hands and take them away. Do this while encouraging me with your words to get that toy! Dangle it over my tummy so I can reach for it with my arms.</p> |

Why this is important:

Encouraging me to move to get a toy out of reach helps me with my problem solving skills because I am learning that I can use my body to get what I want. This will encourage me to begin crawling, and eventually walking.

Hand in Hand

Growing Together Every Day

This Developmental Support Plan is full of activities created to help your child reach his/her developmental goals. These are activities you can do with your child during everyday routines such as:

- Meal time
- Story time
- Play time
- Tidy up time
- Walking and playing outside
- Quiet time



This plan is for:
BABY



Remember, you are your child's favorite toy.

LET'S BABBLE!

When I am most vocal, babble with me in give and take conversation style. Say things like "Really Baby?" and "Tell me more!" Let me play with some toys that make noise and repeat the sounds back to me!

WHAT DOES THIS DO?

Provide me with a pop up toy that when I press the button, a toy pops up! Provide me with toys like a shape sorter and encourage me to figure out where each shape fits. Praise me whenever I try and when I get it right!

GET THAT TOY!

Move my toys out of my reach and encourage me to get them! Put me in a crawling position and shake noise making toys in front of me. Make sure there's nothing else around so I really want to move for that toy!

I CAN CRAWL

When I am in a crawling position, brace my feet with your hands or place me against furniture so I can push myself off and begin to move! This is hard stuff so I may roll over, but if I do just gently roll me back into crawling position. Try this with me every 2 hours.

BOTH HANDS!

Give me two blocks that I can bang together when I'm in my high chair. Give two noise making toys, one in each hand and encourage me to shake them! We can also spread some blocks on the ground and see what we can build.

YOU ARE MY FAVOURITE TOY!

I've got a lot of toys, but you are my favourite one by far! Limit my toy choices to a few and play with me so I can learn and enjoy my time with you!

Hand in Hand

Growing Together Every Day

This Developmental Support Plan is full of activities created to help your child reach his/her developmental goals. These are activities you can do with your child during everyday routines such as:

- Meal time
- Story time
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- Walking and playing outside
- Quiet time



Remember, **you are your child's favorite toy.**

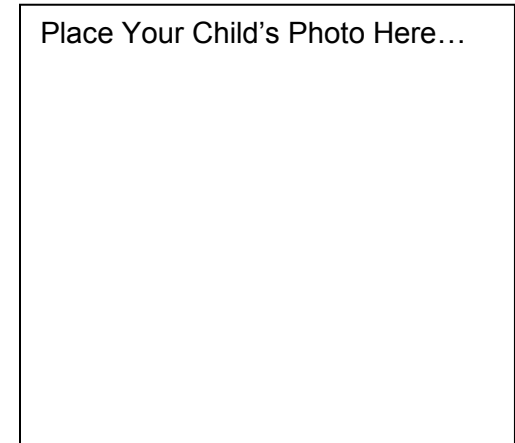


This plan was developed for TODDLER (SAMPLE DSP)

Age: 3 Years

On (date): _____

Place Your Child's Photo Here...



WHY OUR RELATIONSHIP MATTERS:

I'm older now and I can wait my turn, and can be patient when you are getting my food or when we are going somewhere. I use my words a lot more often to express my wants and how I feel. I'm better at being ok in a strange place, even when you are not around; I know that it's only a matter of time before I get to see you again! I still really love playing make-believe, either by myself or with other children. I love coming up with stories on my own, or acting out the stories that we read together. I sometimes talk out loud, it helps me learn more words, but I still love our conversations. I am beginning to show affection to other children my age, and I work hard to get your approval. When you praise the work I do, it makes me feel special, which makes me feel loved. Knowing that you are proud of me and the things I do helps me gain self-confidence and gives me a sense of my abilities. By being my champion and cheering me on, you help me grow.





HOW I UNDERSTAND YOU AND TALK TO OTHERS



| What I can already do | My next goal | How you can help me reach my goal |
|--|--|---|
| I can speak in full sentences and tell you about objects | I will let you know when I am feeling angry, happy, sad, or tired using my words | <p>When I am upset, sad, frustrated or angry come down to my level and make sure that I am ok. I need to know that you will be there for me.</p> <p>If you are in another room and I begin to cry, tell me you are coming it is important for me to know that you will be with me when I am upset, angry and/or sad.</p> <p>When I am upset, sad, or frustrated, comfort me by hugging or holding me. Talk to me too; ask me things like “_____ you seem upset right now, what can I do to help?”</p> |

Why this is important:

I need to know that I can trust you and be able to share everything with you when I need you. As I spend more time with you, I learn that I can count on you to take care of my needs when I am upset. This builds trust in our relationship.



HOW I MOVE MY BODY



| What I can already do | My next goal | How you can help me reach my goal |
|--|---|--|
| <p>I can throw and catch a large ball, and climb the ladder on a playground!</p> | <p>I will play cooperative games with one other child and my caregiver at least once a day.</p> | <p>Once a week play a fun board game with me like Trouble, Snakes and Ladders, the Memory Game or other easy board games where we take turns.</p> <p>Explain the rules to me so I understand that I need to wait until your turn is over in order to have my turn again.</p> <p>Take me outside 2 times a day and play games with me such as baseball, or soccer.</p> <p>We can play some fun active games inside the house too like "What time is it Mr.Wolf". We can take turns being the wolf. If I get fussy during a game, remind me that my turn is coming up.</p> |

Why this is important:

Playing games such as these will help me to learn about taking turns with others. Taking turns teaches me how to be cooperative and patient. This will lead to school skills like leadership and teamwork later on for me.

HOW I USE MY HANDS



| What I can already do | My next goal | How you can help me reach my goal |
|---|---|--|
| I can put together a 4-6 piece interlocking puzzle. | I will stay with one activity at a Time. | <p>Give me a choice of 2 games or toys and let me pick which one I want to play. Help me stick with it by playing with me.</p> <p>Show me how to use toys in the ways that they are meant to be used. Let's use pots and pans for a cooking show, and telephones for calling each other and having a conversation.</p> <p>Leave out a couple of toys to choose from, and change up my options every other week so I stay interested and figure out which ones are my favourite.</p> |
| I can unbutton my own buttons. | I will use crayons, scissors, and paints at least once a day. | <p>Provide me with crayons, washable markers, paints, or pencil crayons every day. Sit with me at least once a day and create art with me!</p> <p>When I am drawing something, ask me lots of questions about what I am making. When I tell you what the picture is about, write the word or sentence on the bottom or back of the page in big letters so I can read about my picture.</p> <p>We can also try making paper snowflakes by folding paper in half, then quarters, and cutting little designs into the paper. Then unfold it so I can see what I have created.</p> |

Why this is important:

Sticking with one activity at a time helps my attention and focus. My fingers are small, but they help me do so many things! Whether I am making a puzzle, colouring a picture, or creating snowflakes, my hands, fingers and wrists are learning that they can all work together to help me become more independent.



HOW I EXPLORE AND FIGURE THINGS OUT



| What I can already do | My next goal | How you can help me reach my goal |
|---|---|---|
| <p>I can move from one activity to the next without any problems like mealtime to playtime.</p> | <p>I will get to know my daily routine!</p> | <p>Let me know what's coming next. If we are tidying up our toys, or getting ready to eat, let me know beforehand so I can prepare. This will help me transition when I am having trouble.</p> <p>Talk to me about what my day is going to be like when I wake up. If I'm going somewhere new, or doing something out of the ordinary, give me lots of warning and talk to me about what this new place is going to be like.</p> <p>Give me a transition object if it will make me feel better like a blanket or teddy. If I don't want to go somewhere, give me this object and let me know that when I come back, you'll be here and we can do something fun.</p> |
| <p>I like to build with blocks and can stack a tower as tall as my height!</p> | <p>I will count objects up to ten!</p> | <p>When you are giving me a lots of objects, put a number name to each object you hand me. For example, if we are building a tower, hand me the blocks and label them "one, two, three..." and so on. Make a game of lining up objects and seeing if I can count them.</p> <p>You can help me out at first, but then encourage me to try on my own. Make sure you point to the object so I know that the number means one, and then next will be two.</p> |

Why this is important:

Spending time with you is most important to me and when you talk to me about what I am going to be doing during the day it allows me to understand routines. Allowing me to have choices is a way for me to learn to make decisions. Helping you makes me feel special and allows me to spend more time with you.



HOW I SHOW FEELINGS & ACT AROUND OTHERS



| What I can already do | My next goal | How you can help me reach my goal |
|---|--|---|
| <p>I can listen to the instructions you have given to me.</p> | <p>I will find ways to calm down without hurting myself or anything around me.</p> | <p>Get down to my eye level when you can tell I'm feeling angry, upset or tired. If you think I need space, step back, but let me know you're around if I need you.</p> <p>Talk to me about how I'm feeling. Let me know "I understand you're feeling mad right now because you have to share your toys, but you will get a turn next."</p> <p>Let me have a space where I can go to cool down when I am getting upset. If I have a favourite doll, blanket, or book, provide me with this to calm me down.</p> <p>When I'm feeling a little better, talk to me about what happened. Show me what I can do to calm down when I get upset. Let me know that I can come to you for help or remind me that I can go my own special space to calm down on my own.</p> |

Why this is important:

It's important for you to recognize my feelings so I feel that I have a safe place to go when I am upset. When you give me the space I need, and objects that are soothing to me, it helps me to calm down without hurting myself or hurting others. With practice, I'll learn to calm myself down without so much help from you.

Hand in Hand

Growing Together Every Day

This Developmental Support Plan is full of activities created to help your child reach his/her developmental goals. These are activities you can do with your child during everyday routines such as:

- Meal time
- Story time
- Play time
- Tidy up time
- Walking and playing outside
- Quiet time



Remember, you are your child's favorite toy.

This plan is for:
TODDLER



TALK TO ME ABOUT FEELINGS!

Give me names for my feelings so I learn to use them when I am happy, mad, sad or tired. Label your own feelings and read books and sing songs to help me understand.

I CAN FOLLOW DIRECTIONS!

Engage me in games like 'Simon Says'. They will help me learn to listen and follow directions. When you are asking me to do something, make sure you have my full attention by getting on my eye level.

I WILL COOL OFF WHEN I'M UPSET.

Step in when you can tell I'm starting to get upset. If I need space, let me know you're around when I'm ready to talk. Provide me with a place where I can calm down in the house. I'll quickly learn you're there to help me when I'm angry, sad, or tired.

OUTDOOR TIME!

Give me a chance to play outside once or twice a day.

HELP ME STAY WITH ONE ACTIVITY AT A TIME!

Give me only a few options throughout the day so I can choose something and stick to it. Help me keep with a task by engaging with me so you can help me stay focused.

MAKE ME YOUR SPECIAL HELPER!

Give me opportunities to help you around the house. I can help you with getting lunch ready, cleaning up, or getting dressed in the morning.

FOLLOW MY ROUTINE

Talk to me about what I am doing each day! It helps me to move from one thing to another when you talk to me about what's coming next.

COUNTING!

Start putting the names of numbers to everyday objects. For example, when you're handing me my shoes, label them one and two or line up blocks and label them for me.