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Did you know

Educational material from birth to 2 years



Did you know

- Attachment is the emotional bond between you and your baby that builds trust and security in their world.
 - Children are wired to attach to the people who care for them!
 - Attachment helps your child learn about their world, feel safe and build relationships.
 - A secure child is curious, confident, ready and open to learning.

So...

- Look into my eyes; talk and sing to me.
 - Hug and cuddle me.
 - Hold me when you feed me.
 - Get to know me: watch and wonder about me.
 - Respond to me when I cry: I am hungry, wet or uncomfortable.



A close-up photograph of a woman with brown hair holding a newborn baby who is crying. The woman's face is partially visible on the left, looking down at the baby. The baby is wearing a white onesie and has its mouth open in a cry. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

Did you know

- Your baby's cry is the first step in communication.
 - When you respond to your infant's cries you also build trust.
 - Sometimes the only thing wrong when your baby cries is that they are bored or over-stimulated.

So...

- Try the 5 S's with me:

Sucking: natural calming reflex for babies.

Swaddling: reminds babies of being snug in the womb.

Side-lying: hold baby in side-lying position (never put baby to sleep on their side or tummy).

Shushing: shush-shush-shush reminds babies of sounds in the womb.

Swinging/Swaying: gentle rocking comforts babies. Take jiggle walks around the house.





Did you know

- While newborns sleep about 16 to 17 hours per day, they may only sleep 1 or 2 hours at a time.
- All babies have their own sleep patterns.
- It is normal for children to wake up during the night but go back to sleep after a few minutes.
- Toddlers sleep 12-14 hours, including their naps.
- With enough sleep, your child is happier, more alert and better prepared to learn about and explore their world.

So...

- Talk and play with me during the day. This will help me sleep for longer periods during the night.
- Replace screen time with calm bedtime routines for me: baths, stories, songs and rocking.
- When I wake in the night I might be hungry, hot, teething or just need to know you are near me.



Did you know

- Over 90% of your baby's brain growth happens in the first 5 years.
 - At birth, your baby has billions of brain cells but very few working connections between them.
 - Every second, 700 new connections are formed in your baby's brain.
 - When you interact with your baby and give repeated experiences, their brain makes pathways for new learning.
 - Babies' brains are wired for survival; they depend on you to soothe them and help them learn coping skills.

So...

- Feed my brain with words, songs, sights and touch to strengthen my growing pathways.
- Meet my needs with caring; this floods my brain with "love hormones" that prepares me for learning.
- Respond to me consistently and use routines to strengthen connections in my brain.





Did you know

- Talking is important for building your baby's brain.
 - Talking to your child throughout their first three years builds brain structure for later thinking and reading.
 - Research shows that children from talkative families often hear 30 million more words by age 3 than children from less talkative families.
 - Your child does not learn language from watching TV. You are your child's teacher of language.

So...

- Make eye contact, touch and talk to me about my world.
- Talk about what you are doing while you are feeding, bathing, dressing and cuddling me.
- Repeat my sounds and gestures; when you respond with smiles and words, I learn about conversation.
- Sing to me to help me learn and understand words.
- Use gestures and simple sign language to build my language.



Did you know

- When you sing to your baby, she bonds with you and your voice.
- Singing helps your baby learn about words, language and communication.
- Singing slows down language so your child can hear all the sounds in words.
- Special songs for waking up, sleeping, and other routines helps children know what comes next. Babies feel safe when life is predictable.
- Music forms connections in the brain that are different from connections made through other experiences.

So...

- Cuddle with me as we sing and I will learn to love words, books and music.
- Use silly rhyming words and sing them to familiar tunes.
- Sing special songs to me for getting up, going to sleep and other activities. I like when you sing them over and over!
- I like all kinds of music; soft, loud, fast and slow.





Did you know

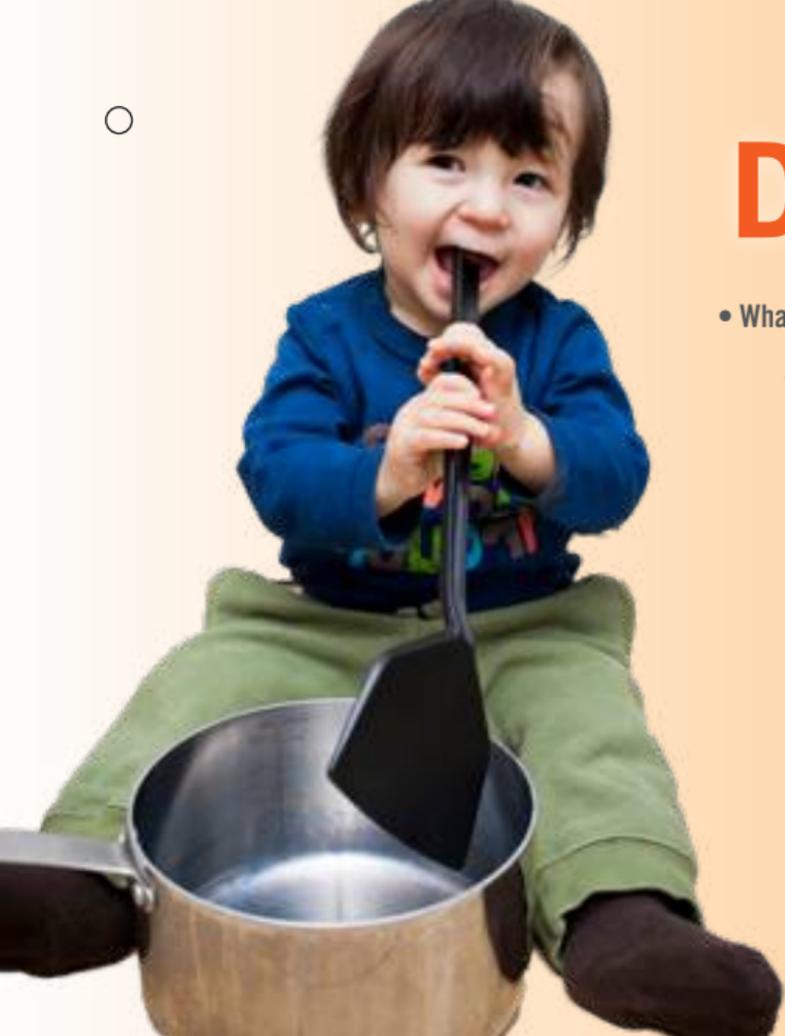
- Play is how your child learns, creates and discovers how things and people work.
- New brain pathways are made with new information.
- Play helps children make sense of their experiences and make it part of themselves.
- Playing together brings you and your baby closer.

So...

- Let me touch it, hold it, bang it; use simple household objects and play with me.
- Play games like peek-a-boo and patty-cake with me.
- I like to arrange and rearrange things: stack, fill and dump with cups, bowls and boxes.
- Sing songs and dance with me.
- Let me play on different textures like a fluffy bath rug, rubber floor mat, crunchy newspaper, grass.

PLAY





Did you know

- What your child needs most is loving care and new experiences, not expensive toys.
- The more simple the toy, the more ways a child can play with it.
- Children learn through seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and moving.

So...

- Let's play together in front of a mirror, make silly faces and talk about body parts.
- Let me explore interesting sounds: metal spoons, measuring cups, bells, crinkly paper.
- Please let me splash and play with floating and sinking toys. Bath time is not just for cleanliness!





Did you know

- Reading with your baby will expand his vocabulary, prepare him for learning in school, and make sure he'll enjoy reading for life!
- Snuggling up with a book lets the two of you slow down and helps your child feel loved.
- Reading gives you a different way of feeding words to your child's brain.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents read aloud to their child and talk about pictures and words. This strengthens early language, literacy and parent-child relationships.

So...

- Let's establish a fun routine. **READ** to me every day!
- Put my books where I can easily reach and explore them.
- Read different types of books to me, like nursery rhymes, ABC books, informational books and storybooks.
- I like to read the same books over and over. Repetition helps me **LEARN**.

READ





Did you know

- Taking your child on errands and outings increases their learning.
 - Children who explore will discover how things work and learn to solve problems.
 - New experiences help your child learn more words.
 - Outdoor play builds important large motor skills.
 - Exploring with my hands builds fine motor skills needed for drawing and writing.

So...

- Take me to the grocery store, library, park, zoo and museum.
 - Show me your closet so that I can see the beautiful colors and touch the different textures.
 - Take me outside often to feel the wind, sun, cold, and rain.
 - Let me feed myself and squish things to build finger strength.
 - Let's go places in a stroller, on a bike, bus or train.





Did you know

- Math is more than counting.
 - You are teaching math when you use words to describe positions, sizes, shapes, etc.
 - Babies learn math through daily routines.
 - “More” is one of the first math concepts your baby will learn.
 - Sorting toys or laundry is an early math skill.

So...

- Count my toes when you change my diapers.
 - Count steps when you carry me up and down.
 - Show me shapes around the house.
 - Use words to compare things in my world: big/little, more/less, same/different, under/over, etc.
 - Stack books or blocks and count them with me.



A photograph of a man with short dark hair, wearing a checkered shirt, smiling warmly at a baby. The baby is looking up at him with an open mouth, appearing happy. The background is a solid light blue color.

Did you know

Research shows that...

- Dad's touch, voice and handling is different than mom's, giving more variety to your baby's experiences.
- Men are more likely to roughhouse with their child, helping them gain control over their bodies and emotions.
- Children with involved, nurturing dads do better in school, are better behaved and have higher self-esteem.

So...

- Give me lots of "dad time."
 - I love skin-to-skin time with daddy, too.
 - Daddy, be involved in my daily care: bathing, rocking, feeding and changing me.
 - Get on the floor and play with my blocks, books, dolls and action figures.
 - Daddy, include me in your activities: I want to learn what you do.

DADS





Did you know

- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the third leading cause of death in children under age 1.
- Hundreds of young children die each year because of injuries that could have been prevented.
- Every 45 minutes a child visits the emergency room because of a TV falling on them.
- American Pediatric Association recommends safely-installed, rear-facing car seats until age 2.

So...

- Always place me on my back to sleep.
- Keep knives, medications and cleaning supplies out of my reach.
- Lock up weapons in a safe.
- Anchor things I might climb: dressers, bookshelves, TV stands, etc.
- Keep me safe in a car seat currently approved for my size and properly installed.

SAFETY





Did you know

- Breast milk or formula should be your child's only food for about the first six months and the major source of nutrition throughout the first twelve months.
- Your newborn feeds on demand; he cries when he is hungry. As time passes, he'll begin a regular timetable of his own.
As you learn his signals, you'll be able to plan feedings around his routine.
- Your baby doesn't need solid foods until 4-6 months.
- Your 1 to 2 year-old needs the fat in whole milk for healthy brain development.
- Foods that may cause choking are whole grapes, raisins, bigger pieces of chewy meat or hot dogs, chips, hard candy, nuts.

So...

- Always hold me when you feed me a bottle; this is our special time together.
- Wait until 4-6 months to give me baby food, when I can sit up and eat from a spoon.
- Make meals a family time to enjoy with me.
- Always cut my food into small pieces and watch me while I eat.
- Offer me different types of fruits and vegetables over and over.





Did you know

- You need to take care of yourself so you can take care of your child.
- Your own sleep, healthy eating and exercise is important to raising a healthy child.
- Plenty of water and well-balanced meals help with your recovery and energy.
- Getting information helps relieve anxiety and build your skills.

So...

- Don't be afraid to ask questions; write them down to ask the doctor, friends and family.
- Seek and accept help.
- Sleep and alone time will prepare you for taking better care of me.
- Rest when I sleep and avoid caffeine.
- You and I will benefit from parent educators, play groups and moms' groups.



People to know

- families.naeyc.org
- zerotothree.org
- toosmall.org
- babycenter.com
- urbanchildinstitute.org
- bornlearning.org
- healthychildren.org
- **Poison Control Hotline: 1-800-222-1222**
- kidshealth.org
- **1-800-25abuse**
- www.happiestbaby.com

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Elgin Partnership for Early Learning engages the whole community in preparing children to succeed in school and in life. Through a collaboration of over 40 partners, EPEL works to increase access to high-quality early learning programs and increase the percentage of children meeting kindergarten readiness benchmarks. For additional materials and local resources, please visit www.elginpartnership.org. If you need help finding an early learning program or any other resources, please call **844-KID-INFO**.



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