



Your early learning guide for infants, toddlers and three-year-olds

— participant guide —

Module 2: Physical Health & Development

Our session objectives:

- Describe how an infant's experiences impact brain development
- List 5-7 classroom materials to encourage sensory exploration
- Assess gross motor development and describe 2 ways to scaffold development
- Identify 3 fine motor skill by observing and analyzing a video observation

Brain Development

As infants are given opportunities to learn, explore and interact with responsive caregivers, synapses connections in the brain are formed. As those connections are accessed repeatedly, they become permanent in a process called myelination. If stimulation declines, those connections disappear.

Activity 1: How can a caregiver support breastfeeding in their early child care programs?

Responsive Feeding

- Feed infants directly and assist older children when they feed themselves
- Feed slowly and patiently, and encourage children to eat, but do not force them
- If children refuse many foods, experiment with different food combinations, tastes, textures and methods of encouragement
- Minimize distractions during meals if children lose interest easily
- Remember that feeding times are periods of learning and love – talk to children during feeding, with eye to eye contact

Activity 2: Promoting Gross Motor Skills

AGE	NEW SKILL	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS
Infants	Crawling		
Toddlers	Climbing		
Three-year-olds	Hopping		

Video 1

Gross motor skills displayed:

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Caregiver response:

Activity 3: Promoting Fine Motor Skills

AGE	NEW SKILL	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS
Infants	Places objects in and out of dishpan		
Toddlers	Fits Objects together by pressing and turning		
Three-year-olds	Handle or squeeze delicate or tiny objects between thumb and forefinger		

Video 2

Fine motor skills displayed:

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Caregiver response:

Inclusion Scenario:

Xuan is a 23-month-old boy who has some sensory processing challenges. Children with sensory processing challenges have difficulty processing and acting upon information received through the senses. Mary, Xuan’s child care provider, and Xuan’s mother, Giang, have both been concerned for the last eight-ten months about Xuan’s sleeping and eating issues, and Mary has noticed his withdrawal and tantruming during open playtime with his peers.

Xuan has consistently not been able to sleep during naptime in Mary’s classroom and has trouble sleeping through the night at home, as well. He wakes up to the slightest noise, which makes it very difficult to sleep in the classroom and challenging for Giang, who worries about moving around or doing tasks around the house when Xuan sleeps. Mary discussed Xuan’s sleeping habits with Giang, letting Giang know that Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) may be able to help.

Inclusion Strategies

Action Plan

START DATE

WHAT CHANGES WILL I MAKE?

COMPLETED 

Additional Resources

Nutrition

Recommended Beverage Intake

AGE	SUGAR DRINK (punch, sports drink, soda)	JUICE	MILK
Birth - 12 months	None	None	Formula or breast milk only
1 - 2 years	None	Not needed. Limit to 4-6 oz. of 100% juice, diluted, served in a cup	Whole or 2% milk
2 years and older	None	Not needed. Limit to 4-6 oz. of 100% juice, diluted, served in a cup	1% or skim milk

Menu Planning Checklist

- Does the menu meet the CACFP requirements of the day for all children?
- Is a good source of vitamin C included?
- Is a good source of iron included?
- Is a good source of vitamin A included?
- Does each meal include foods with different textures?
- Does each meal include foods with different colors?
- Is a new food included along with some favorite foods?
- Are some foods that represent the culture of the children included?
- Are food safety standards followed for the ages of the children?
- Are you serving a variety of fruits and vegetables?

Benjamin, SE, ed. *Making Food Healthy and Safe for Children: How to Meet the National Health and Safety Performance Standards—Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs*. Second Edition. Chapel Hill, NC: The National Training Institute for Child Care Health Consultants, Department of Maternal and Child Health, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; 2007.

Common Food that Cause Choking	Common Items that Cause Choking
Hot dogs	Balloons (inflated or deflated)
Chunks of peanut butter	Coins
Chunks of meat or cheese	Marbles
Popcorn	Toys or games with small parts
Whole grapes	Buttons
Chewing gum	Pen and marker caps
Raisins	Small button-type batteries
Raw vegetables	Medicine syringes
Hard or sticky candy	Small balls
Nuts and seeds	Safety pins

Sleep Routines

Adequate sleep has a fundamental role in the physical, emotional, and behavioral health of young children. Sleep is the most important factor contributing to the release of growth hormones that stimulate physical growth and development.

How much sleep do children need?

0 – 2 months	10.5 – 18 hours
2 – 12 months	14 – 15 hours
1 – 3 years	12 – 14 hours
3 – 5 years	11 – 13 hours

Safe Sleep

- Always put infants on their backs to sleep.
- Place them in their cribs to sleep – even if they fall asleep elsewhere.
- Remove all other items from the crib, including blankets and toys.
- Supervise sleeping infants by sight and sound at all times.