



## IT SPECIALIST'S NOTE...

The Infant Toddler Project is gaining momentum and openings for additional sites will be available by November or December. If you are a STAR 2 program and are interested in applying for the Infant Toddler Project or need more information, please contact me at the email or phone number below.

slcohick@stepcorp.org      800-346-3020 x 9735

Best Regards, Shannon



# INFANT TODDLER TIDBITS

## STEP, INC.-CENTRAL REGIONAL KEY

### FOR THE CAREGIVER...Observation Tools

**Anecdotal records** – brief narrative accounts describing a child's behavior after it occurs (with this method, you observe first, then write)

**Checklists** – a list of specific traits or behaviors that are clearly observable

**Running records** – detailed narrative accounts of behavior written as it happens



**Frequency count** – a method of recording how often a specific event or behavior occurs

**Drawings, photographs and work samples** – documentation of children's work represented in various forms

### Keeping 'em...HEALTHY AND HAPPY

#### Read Your Child's Signals

Picky eating is when children refuse foods often or only want the same food over and over. Many parents worry that their picky eaters are not getting enough nutrition to grow. But in most cases, they are. In fact, 50% of parents think their children are picky eaters. But 95% of healthy babies and toddlers meet all their nutrient needs.

#### Babies and young children know when they are hungry or full.

They have many signals for letting us know what their bodies need by using their voices, faces, and actions. Reading your child's signals means watching and listening to her, and trying to understand what her behavior means.

Responding to your child's signals lets her know that she can trust herself to know when she is hungry and full and that she is a good communicator so her needs will be met.

**Babies have their own signals.** For example, when 3-month-old Jenna is hungry, she nuzzles her mother's shirt. When 3-month-old Damon is hungry, he sucks on his fingers and makes fussy noises.

**Toddlers have signals, too.** When 18-month-old Thomas is hungry, he takes his mother's hand, walks her to the counter, and points to the bananas. Liza, 24 months, simply says, "Want bana!"

Excerpt from *Healthy From the Start: How feeding nurtures your child's body, heart and mind*



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## GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT... **What is Normal?**

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*Like snowflakes, no two infants are exactly alike. A own rate. However, we sometimes expect babies to do the same talk, etc.) at the same time.*

### **Social Development**

Infants learn about the world through touch, sight, sound, taste, and smell. They learn about relationships from how people touch and hold them, and from the tones of voice and facial expressions people use when caring for them. When babies have their needs met - being fed when hungry, comforted when crying, held and touched gently, and kept warm and dry - they begin to trust the adults that care for them. This early sense of trust will help them develop positive relationships for the rest of their lives.

### **Physical Development**

Newborns usually cannot lift their heads. When on their stomachs, their heads will turn to one side. Although newborns cannot roll around, some infants may move their body the entire length of a crib by thrusting with their feet and legs.

### **Cognitive Development**

Infants use all their senses to learn about the world. They "talk" with others through actions and sounds, and experiment with objects and noises. They enjoy watching the results of their actions. This is how children learn, make sense of the world, and learn to communicate. When babies coo, babble, and interact with others, they are developing language skills.



## PARENT CORNER... **Tips for Bedtime**

Make sure your child gets plenty of exercise during the day.

Develop regular times for bed and naps and stick with them.

Develop a bedtime and naptime routine.

- \* Do and say the same things before naps and bedtime.
- \* Establish a predictable place for sleeping.
- \* Help your child understand the steps in the routines (e.g., use "first, then" statements, picture schedule).
- \* Tell your child what might happen when she wakes up.
- \* Let your child carry a favorite transition object to bed.
- \* Provide your child with calming and rest inducing activities, sounds, or objects in the routine.
- \* Put your baby or child down for sleep while she is still awake. Say, "Good night." and leave the room.

Give your child your undivided and unrushed attention. Avoid certain foods and drinks six hours before sleep (i.e., sodas, chocolate, fatty foods).

Try breast feeding or offering a warm bottle just before bed.

Provide choices whenever possible.

Reduce noise, light, and distractions in and near your child's room.

Keep a sleep diary so you will know what's working (or not).

Celebrate the little successes along the way.



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**PLAYTIME... 9 to 12 months**

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**Exploring...** Between nine and twelve months, baby's world is growing fast.

- He explores everything.
- He is showing his own moods and personality.
- He is beginning to learn the meaning of a few of your simple

words,

like "bye, bye" or "no".

- He may even take those exciting first steps (but many healthy babies don't walk until after their first birthday.)
- Loud noises and heights scare baby and baby gets upset when you leave.
- Baby is babbling more and more.

**SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL**

**Understanding A Child's Cues**

Over time, it becomes easier to understand your child's cues and messages. Young toddlers are skilled at using their bodies, expressions, and growing language skills to communicate their needs more clearly than ever before.

**STEP 1:** Observe and interpret your child's behavior:

**STEP 2:** Respond to your baby or toddler based on what you think the meaning of his or her behavior is. It's okay if you are not sure if your guess is right. Just try something.

**STEP 3:** If your first try didn't work, try again. Trying different techniques increases the chances that you will figure out the meaning of your child's behavior, understand his needs, and validate his feelings.

**STE 4:** Remember that tantrums are a communication, too. A tantrum usually means that your child is not able to calm himself down.





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**GUIDING BEHAVIOR...BITING**

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**WHY CHILDREN BITE**

**EXPLORATION** - Infants and toddlers learn by touching, smelling, hearing, and tasting. Tasting or "mouthing" things is something that all children do. Children do not always understand the difference between gnawing on a toy and biting someone.

**TEETHING** - Children begin teething around the ages of 4 to 7 months. Swelling gums can be tender and can cause a great deal of discomfort. Infants sometimes find relief from this discomfort by chewing on something. Children do not understand the difference between chewing on a person or a toy.

**CAUSE AND EFFECT** - Around the age of 12 months, infants become interested in finding out what happens when they do something. When they bang a spoon on the table, they discover that it makes a loud sound. They may also discover that when they bite someone, they get a loud scream of protest!

**ATTENTION** - Older toddlers may sometimes bite to get attention. Biting is a quick way to become the center of attention - even if it is negative attention.

**IMITATION** - Older toddlers love to imitate others. Watching others and trying to do what they do is a great way to learn things. Sometimes children see others bite and decide to try it out themselves.

**INDEPENDENCE** - Toddlers are trying so hard to be independent. "Mine" and "Me do it" are favorite words. Learning to do things independently, making choices, and needing

control over a situation are part of growing up. Biting is a powerful way to control others.

**FRUSTRATION** - Young children experience a lot of frustration. Growing up is a real struggle. Toddlers don't have good control over their bodies yet. At times, when they can't find words to express their feelings, they resort to hitting, pushing, or biting.

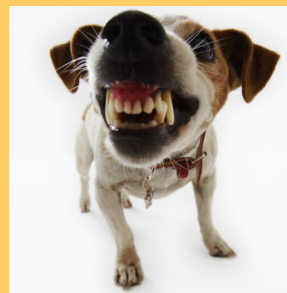
**STRESS** - A child's world can be stressful, too. A lack of daily routine, interesting things to do, or adult interaction are stressful situations for children. Biting is one way to express feelings and relieve tension.

**WHAT CAREGIVERS CAN DO**

**WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW METHOD TO PINPOINT THE PROBLEM.** When did the biting occur? Who was involved? Where did it happen? What happened before or after? How was the situation handled?

**PREVENTION.** If you determine that the biting occurs as the result of exploration or teething, you may want to provide the child with a cloth or teething ring to gnaw on.

**TEACH NEW BEHAVIORS.** When a child bites, show the biter with your voice and facial expression that biting is unacceptable.



**ITERS TIPS**

**Be sure that toys and materials are accessible to all of the children.** Accessible means that children can reach and are allowed to use toys, materials, furnishings, and/or equipment. Toys on open shelves must be within easy reach of children. No barriers can be present to prevent children from reaching them. For example, toys are not accessible if they are

in containers with lids that the children cannot manage, unless the provider regularly makes the toys accessible by opening the containers. At a minimum, toys and materials must be accessible to children for at least one hour daily.



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**RESOURCES**

**AWESOME WEB SITES**

[www.classroom.4teachers.org](http://www.classroom.4teachers.org)  
(create floor plans for room arrangement)

[www.gryphonhouse.com/activities](http://www.gryphonhouse.com/activities)

**AWESOME RESOURCES**

*Prime Times: A Handbook for  
Excellence in Infant Toddler Programs*  
by Greenman, Stonehouse and Schweikert

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**ACTIVITIES**

**Coming to life**

Pretend your child's favorite teddy or doll is real — make him walk, go to bed, or dance across the room. Talking about what you're doing will help your toddler with her language skills. Act out happy and sad times, too, so she can learn about feelings and emotions as she's developing her imagination.

**Push me, pull you**

Use a moveable object such as a child-size chair or plastic stacking box filled with soft toys. While she holds the edges for support you can hold the other side and keep it steady. Then slowly pull the box toward you to encourage her to step forward. Soon she'll start to push while you gently pull. This will build her confidence for the day she finally walks on her own.

**Clap happy**

By now your toddler can hold her hands open, but it may be a while before she claps independently. For now, clap them together for her, or let her hold your hands while you pat them together. Sit her facing you on the floor or on your lap, and sing clapping songs like patty-cake. These will boost her language skills as well as her hand-eye coordination.

**Who's hiding here?**

Just as she loved peek-a-boo as a baby, your toddler will love to play simple games of hide-and-seek. For extra fun and giggles you can gently prod her as she hides. "Hmm, is this a leg? Or is it an arm?" Games like this help teach your toddler that just because she can't see something,



*Sometimes, if you stand on the bottom rail of a bridge and lean over to watch the river slipping slowly away beneath you, you will suddenly know everything there is to be known. ~ Winnie the Pooh*