

## Enhancing Early Brain Development What You Can Do!



Read, sing songs, tell stories to your toddler.

Respect your toddler's feelings and help her learn to express them. "You sound really angry!" or "Your smile tells me you're happy"

Expand your toddler's language. If he says "more", ask "Do you want more juice?"

Make an obstacle course from household objects which includes a pillow to jump on, a string to follow and a table to crawl under.

Let your toddler do things for himself like dressing, eating, clearing dishes, getting a diaper. Help him when he shows frustration or asks for help.



Allow your toddler to sort household objects such as socks, silverware or colored blocks.

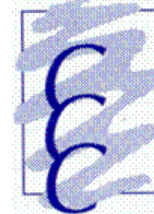


With proper supervision, allow your toddler get messy through sand and water play, fingerpainting or using washable markers.

Pretend play with your toddler.  
Talk on the phone or play tea party.



# Choosing the Best Care for Your Toddler



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## When choosing a toddler program you'll want to see:

- Furniture and equipment that is safe, appropriately sized for toddlers.
  - Large uncluttered spaces for active play.
  - A variety of equipment including push/pull toys, picture books, stacking or building toys, puzzles, musical instruments, dolls, telephones, balls and sand and water table. There should be duplicates of popular toys.
- Warm, responsive adults who get down on a child's level.
- Adults who respond quickly to cries or calls for assistance.
- Creative exploration with art materials (large crayons, markers, fingerpaints) with the focus on process rather than the finished product.
- Adults who respond to toddler's attempts to learn language by listening, expanding on toddler language, and simplify their own language.
- Adults who are patient with toddlers' attempts to acquire new skills and do things for themselves.
- Predictable but flexible daily routines.
- Unhurried routine times (diapering, meals, etc.) are opportunities for learning.
- Toddlers' preferences for toys, foods, or activities respected.
- Warm, responsive adults who get down on a child's level.
- Adults who frequently read, sing, do finger plays, look at picture books with individuals or small groups of toddlers.
- Adults who provide duplicate toys or redirection when disputes occur.
- Warm, responsive adults who get down on a child's level.



## You'll want to question when you see:



- Adults who are constantly saying "no"
- Sand and water play is not offered because it is too much trouble or too messy.
- The expectation that toddlers participate in the same activity at the same time.
- Staff that is untrained in caring for toddlers.
- Art projects where toddlers are "helped" to produce a product or follow a model.
- Forced toilet training at a certain age.
- Expectations of the staff that toddlers follow a preschool curriculum.



**Quality early care and education isn't costly.... It's priceless!**

## Oh Baby, What a Brain!

Recent brain research shows that early childhood experiences actually determine the learning pathways and connections that are formed in the brain- shaping the way a child will learn, think, and behave for the rest of his life.

Enhancing your baby's brain development doesn't take expensive toys- it happens during simple everyday interactions with a warm, responsive parent or caregiver.

