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Promising, Promoting, and Preparing our Youngest with Project ACT

Infant and Toddler Newsletter

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The Young Brain

The infant and toddler brain is such a precious and intriguing thing! In the first few years of life over 1 million new connections are made in the brain, every second. What are you doing to make these connections meaningful and supportive of a bright future for your little learners? Are you making the most out of each interaction? Are you providing new, exciting experiences? Are you maintaining a safe and secure environment? These are the things that nourish and grow a developing brain!

Making the most out of diaper changes, meal times, rest times, or even free play may come naturally too you. However, there's some really wonderful

research out there calling these moments "Serve and Return" interactions. Research shows that the more often you respond to a child's "serve" there are more connections made in the brain, you better understand the child's unique needs (and being responsive becomes easier), you reduce stress in the child's brain, and you build a strong foundation for the rest of the child's life!

We also know that young children's brains can multi-task way better than our adult brains ever will! They can focus on the sound of a peer playing the toy drum while eating cheerios in their highchair and watching another Mommy walk into the classroom. Their



brains are always going! It's just like they are on their 5th expresso, in love, while in Paris. What kind of experiences are you providing that support this kind of brain activity!

To learn more about the information in this article, visit the Center on the Developing Child at <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/>

You can also join me at our next Infant and Toddler Workgroup to learn more about growing a healthy brain!

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Sign up for any of our events or follow us to stay up-to-date through our website or social media pages!

ANPROJECTACT.ORG

<https://www.facebook.com/ChildResourceCenter/>

Favorite Infant and Toddler Resources

As an Infant and Toddler specialist I do enjoy a really good infant and toddler resource! I have outlined some of my favorites below!

JOINVROOM.ORG: This is a really great website (which also has a great app) all about brain building activities. This is a great resource to share with your families, as well!

BABY TALK: I receive this monthly newsletter and it has some really great up-to-date research and information on many topics! To join the listserv, send an email with no message to subscribe-babytalk@listserv.unc.edu

ZERO TO THREE: Great, easy to read articles on any and

all things infants and toddlers. These articles are great to share with parents, as well!

Here are some of my favorite pages to follow on Facebook: Fred Rogers Center, Zero to Three, Mind in the Making, Pathways, Motherly, Sesame Street in Communities, and Let the Babies Play.

Info from the Office of Child Care

When thinking specifically about infants and toddlers, licensing specialists have been seeing a few things that they thought would be beneficial to discuss with providers.

One, is the amber necklaces that many infants and toddlers use for teething pain. The concern with these necklaces is that it can be both a choking and a strangulation hazard. According to HealthyChildren.org, "It oc-

curs when the necklaces are worn around a child's neck, especially when unsupervised (such as while sleeping) or if the child were to break the necklace and swallow the beads."

The second concern is around swaddling. According to Caring for our Children, "Swaddling is not necessary or recommended. " The rationale behind this is that "There is evidence that

swaddling can increase the risk of serious health outcomes, especially in certain situations. The risk of sudden infant death is increased if an infant is swaddled and placed on his/her stomach to sleep or if the infant can roll over from back to stomach. Loose blankets around the head can be a risk factor for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). With swaddling, there is an increased risk of developmental dysplasia of the hip, a

hip condition that can result in long-term disability. Hip dysplasia is felt to be more common with swaddling because infants' legs can be forcibly extended. With excessive swaddling, infants may overheat (i.e., hyperthermia)"

For more information on specific COMAR regulations around amber necklaces and swaddling, contact your licensing specialist.

Of Fairies and Potties



This piece was written by Katie Renzi from Infants N' More! Below is a tip on potty training and how she has made it *magical* for the children in her classroom!

"Potty training can be tough for the child and the adult. Some kids get it right away while others will struggle. Children will start the potty training routine when they are ready in their minds. They need to know that using the potty is a good thing and rewarding.

While in the process of potty training the children in my center, I came up with The Potty Fairy. The Potty Fairy is a cousin to the tooth fairy. Just like how the Tooth Fairy wants your teeth, the Potty Fairy wants your peepee and poop! The Potty Fairy lives in a magical land with the Easter Bunny and even has connections to Santa! Before the child sits on the potty we talk into the potty. We say "Hi Potty Fairy"! When you talk into the potty, it

echoes through the pipes and goes right to her house. She can hear every word and waits patiently for something to happen. The children love the fact that they think there's a fairy in the potty. As they sit, I tell them, "Try really hard to peepee for the Potty Fairy. Over night, she goes to the house and daycares then leaves the children a little bag of treats and toys that they get when the peepee or poop! This method helps in my center. It makes potty training fun and unique."

Upcoming Events

Infant and Toddler

Community of Practice

Earn 1 PAU for attending 3 sessions!

If you would like to sign up for our events, visit our website!

ANPROJECTACT.ORG

Baltimore County

8503 LaSalle Rd. Towson

Growing Healthy Brains

January 22nd, 6:30-8:30

Universal Design for Learning

April 2nd, 6:30-8:30

Harford County

3103 Emmorton Rd. Abingdon

Universal Design for Learning

March 5th, 6:30-8:30



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