



# KEEPING IN TOUCH

FALL 2012

## PARTICIPATING AGENCIES:

Aisling Discoveries Child & Family Centre, Child Care Consultation

Boys & Girls Club of East Scarborough, Special Needs Services

The Etobicoke Children's Centre, Special Needs Consultation

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Community Outreach Service

Humber College, Child Care Consultation Services

Toronto Children's Services, Home Childcare

Toronto Children's Services, Special Services Unit

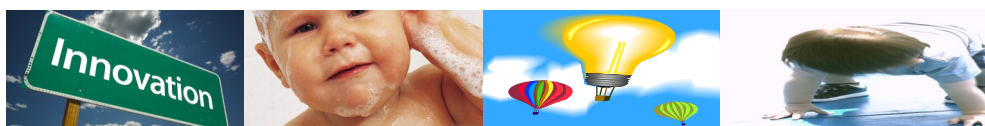
Toronto Foundation for Student Success

## Inside this issue:

Sharing Playground Space . . .	1
Emergent Curriculum . . .	2
Activities & Games . . .	3
Creative Ideas . . .	4
Dressing for Outdoors . . .	5
Resources for Infants & Toddlers . . .	6

## LET'S GET CREATIVE!

Welcome to the Fall Edition of "Keeping In Touch". The focus of this edition is to keep thinking of fresh and new ideas for our younger age groups, specifically infants and toddlers. With changes in the way programs are now being developed one may get stuck from time to time to keep things fresh. Hopefully the ideas in this issue will inspire you to be innovative and creative in your work with children.



## YOU DON'T HAVE AN INFANT PLAYGROUND? BUT WANT ONE? NOT A PROBLEM . . .

We all know the importance of children being able to experience gross motor activities as well as being able to explore the outdoor world. We also know that not all childcare centres have playground areas that are licensed for infants. As a result many infants experience the outdoor world in a stroller, watching the world pass by. The good news is that centres can be creative in order to solve this dilemma.

Why not try **Playground Sharing**? This is where a centre shares its infant playground space with another centre that does not have an infant playground space. This can work very well and a wonderful example of this occurs every day at Hester How Childcare Centre. In the morning a group of infants arrive by stroller from **Scotia Plaza Child Care Centre** to use the infant playground space at **Hester How Child Care Centre**. The two centres have come together and arranged playground times to accommodate each group of children with a common goal, that the infants get an opportunity to have outdoor gross motor play.

Congratulations to both, **Hester How Child Care Centre** and **Scotia Plaza Child Care Centre** for working together to offer infants a wonderful experience!

Janet Scott  
Toronto Foundation for Student Success

## BRINGING EMERGENT CURRICULUM TO OUR CLASSROOM



Being an Early Childhood Educator for close to 20 years, change is not something that is purposely met with the intent to accept. Adapting to a new way of programming was challenging for all of us. We were all set in our ways. However, through seminars, networking, researching and ultimately knowledge, the transition from a theme based/ teacher oriented classroom to an emergent-child-focused environment has “emerged” quite easily, with baby steps!

Our learning areas still encourage children to explore materials and express themselves in endless ways. The difference now is we follow the children’s lead. Through observations and documentation, we provide learning opportunities that allow the children to make the decisions. We try to excite the children’s learning through the pursuit of their interests. The best part is that we as educators also learn and become excited about the new ideas.

Our philosophy remains the same; *children learn through play*. Adapting to emergent curriculum just took us a step further. Emergent curriculum has laid the foundation for a beautiful relationship between child, educator, home and learning.

Joanne Zilli, RECE, BA  
Sunburst Children’s Centre



Patience is bitter, but its fruits are sweet.

~Jean-Jacques Rousseau~

## ACTIVITIES & GAMES FOR INFANTS & TODDLERS

### THE PAPER GAME

Collect various kinds of paper; wrapping paper, aluminum foil, tissue paper, etc.



- Crumple a piece of paper in your hand.
- Give the same kind of paper to the infant or toddler and help them crumple it in their hand.
- Select a different kind of paper and crinkle it in your hand.
- Give this kind of paper to the child and let them crinkle it, too.
- Crumple the paper and drop it into a paper sack.
- Encourage the child to copy you.

An infant or toddler will enjoy not only the various crinkling sounds, but also dropping the crumpled-up paper into a sack.

### STICKY FEET

#### Materials

Clear contact paper and Tape

#### Directions

- Cut a piece of clear contact paper at least 2 feet long.
- Remove the backing and tape the contact paper, sticky side up, to the floor or carpeting.
- Infants and toddlers will have fun crawling, walking, running, jumping, dancing, or just standing on the paper.
- Not only will their feet stick to the paper, but lifting them also makes a wonderful sound.



### DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES FOR INFANTS & TODDLERS

- Let young babies lie on a big piece of paper and hear the crunching noise when they move.
- Hang aluminum pie plates on a string. Let a breeze or the babies move them. Enjoy the sound!
- Put bright toys near babies so they can reach out or move towards them.



- Put a big cardboard box on the floor so the babies can crawl inside and play. Add doors and windows to expand the experience. The children can decorate with non-toxic crayons or paint.
- Children love to play with water. Put water in buckets or tubs. Give the children plastic spoons and cups, plastic bottles, butter tubs, and sponges to play with in the water. Put towels on the floor so the children will not slip. Always remember to supervise young children when utilizing water!
- Toddlers like goop. Mix cornstarch and water together. Let toddlers play with it in a bin, bowl or tray with cups and spoons. Make the goop thick or thin.
- Toddlers like to draw with short, fat, unwrapped crayons. Give them paper bags (you can tear them open to make large sheets of brown paper) or large pieces of heavy paper to draw on. To help them draw, tape the paper down so it does not move.

## CREATIVE ACTIVITIES WITH INFANTS & TODDLERS

Infants and toddlers take pleasure in art & craft activities. Creative activities promote cognitive development and improve motor skills. Very young children focus more on exploring with different materials rather than on creating final products. Art experiences for toddlers and infants should be safe, simple, and sensory. All supplies should be non-toxic, in case of accidental ingestion. And most of all creative with infants and toddlers should be fun and include you as an interactive and reflective element to the experience!

### FINGER PAINTING

Infants & toddlers may not have the motor skills to manipulate a brush, but they are able to use their hands to push paint around. The earliest "finger painting" probably involves baby food, jelly and pudding. Babies can paint on high chairs, table tops and paper. This can get really messy, but can be a fun learning experience for babies and toddlers. Being able to create and play with paint can help a child's small and large muscle development and eye-hand coordination. When toddlers are past the stage of putting everything in their mouths, they can move from edible finger paint to non-toxic paint on waxy paper.

### DRAWING

Using markers helps little hands develop coordination. Giving babies and toddlers markers, chalk or crayons is always a good way to stimulate their senses and imagination. Use large pieces of paper to insure they have lots of room to make marks. Model drawing for the infants and toddlers and use different colours to help stimulate their curiosity. Large markers and crayons will be easiest for these little ones to hold. In warmer weather, take the baby or toddler outside, sit down on a concrete surface, and allow them to draw with chalk on the concrete.

### PLAYDOUGH

Playdough promotes sensory exploration and increases muscle strength in young hands. You can buy a familiar brand of the non-toxic modeling compound in a variety of colours, but you also can make it yourself. Small children tend to put things in their mouth, so making sure your playdough is safe for possible consumption is essential. An edible recipe from the Playdough Recipe website solves this problem. It includes 3 teaspoons of cream of tartar, 1 cup of flour, 1 cup of water, 1 package of unsweetened flavoured drink mix, 1 tablespoon cooking oil and 1/2 cup of salt. Mix the dry ingredients in a saucepan, then add water and oil. Stir over medium heat until the mixture begins to form a dough consistency. Remove from the heat and allow to cool. The flavoured drink mix gives the playdough its colour.

### THINGS TO REMEMBER

When monitored closely, crafts with infants & toddlers can be educational and fun. Safety should be of the utmost concern when doing creative with infants or toddlers. Be sure all materials used in crafts are nontoxic. Monitor infants & toddlers closely so that they do not put anything in their mouths that should not be swallowed. Use washable markers when infants & toddlers are drawing. Infants & toddlers using crayons should be closely monitored. Crayons could break and children could swallow them and choke. When using edible products in your creative be sure you have checked for allergies before beginning. Most of all have fun and allow the babies to experiment!

*Nadia Zazzarino, RECE  
Resource Consultant  
Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital*





## TIME TO GET READY!

Getting ready for outdoor play gets more complicated as the weather becomes colder. This activity is meant to be a helpful way to assist children in putting on all the gear necessary for a Canadian winter. It can be presented as a “challenge” to see how fast children can get ready with minimal staff support. At first children may require a lot of support in order to follow through however this should lessen over time.

### Materials

Body outline  
Pictures of task to be completed  
Folder  
Velcro



While these expectations are being followed through with, each child should be given a lot of positive praise e.g. hugs, thumbs up, high fives, kind words, a sticker, a stamp, etc. Prompts and redirection can also be given to keep the children on task and focused.

Whoever is assisting in the cubby area should do the following:

- ✓ Place the folder/outline in a visible and easy to reach place for when it is time to start getting ready.



- ✓ Take off the cards and give one at a time to the children in the expected order of task completion. Prior to handing a card out children should be shown the picture and told what to do. For example: Show the picture, give the card and state “\_\_\_\_\_, go and put your snow pants on”. When the task has been completed, he or she can stick it to the folder and then the next card should be given. This process should be done until the task is completed.
- ✓ Children should be praised upon each task completion and when they have been able to finish the entire task they should be praised again for a job well done and given a “good job card” to add to the folder.
- ✓ In the beginning it may take a few prompts and redirection to get into a routine, however with consistency and follow through improvements should be seen.
- ✓ Over time when the children are able to follow through with each expectation, it could be made more challenging by using a timer, or having the child complete two or more tasks at a time.

Remember be encouraging, stay positive, and be patient!

Nicole Livingstone  
Intensive Resource Support Worker  
Aisling Discoveries Child & Family Centre

## WEBSITES

Infant & Toddler  
Development Resources

[www.ndds.ca](http://www.ndds.ca)

[www.nncc.org/Series/  
good.time.infant.html](http://www.nncc.org/Series/good.time.infant.html)

[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

[www.caringforkids.cps.ca](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca)

[baby.lovetoknow.com/wiki/  
Main\\_Page](http://baby.lovetoknow.com/wiki/Main_Page)



*The KIT Newsletter Committee  
members include:*

Nicole Livingstone  
Intensive Resource Support Worker  
Aisling Discoveries Child & Family  
Centre

Shondel Shaw,  
Special Needs Consultant  
Boys & Girls Club of East Scarborough

Denise Palermo,  
Special Needs Resource Consultant  
The Etobicoke Children's Centre

Ruth Montgomery,  
Resource Consultant  
Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation  
Hospital, Community Outreach Service

Faye Dundas,  
Early Childhood Consultant  
Humber Child Care Consultation Services

Lori Defarias,  
Home Child Care Consultant  
City of Toronto Children's Services

Lisa Iozza,  
Resource Educator  
City of Toronto Children's Services

Janet Scott,  
Resource Consultant  
Toronto Foundation for Student Success

## INFANT AND TODDLER RESOURCES

With technology expanding so quickly, the internet is a great tool to access resources and share interactive experiences with infants and toddlers.

### Online Games & Apps for Infants & Toddlers

[www.fisher-price.com](http://www.fisher-price.com)

[www.starfall.com](http://www.starfall.com)

[www.babyfirsttv.com/games](http://www.babyfirsttv.com/games)

[www.positive-parenting-ally.com/self-esteem-activities.html](http://www.positive-parenting-ally.com/self-esteem-activities.html)

[www.babygamer.com/online\\_games/free/toddler/toddler\\_iphone\\_ipod\\_apps.htm](http://www.babygamer.com/online_games/free/toddler/toddler_iphone_ipod_apps.htm)



### From the iTunes App Store

The Wheels on the Bus ~ by Kids Games Club

Baby Touch & Hear Listen Sounds of Animals & Tools ~ by Open  
Solutions

Toddler's Games: Animal Match ~ by Jeremy Jacques

Kids Song Collection ~ by Kids Games Club

Peekaboo Wild (or Barn) ~ by Night & Day Studios, Inc.

eliasZOO ~ by Elias Smile

Old MacDonald or Itsy Bitsy Spider ~ by Duck Duck Moose

### Using Visual Communication

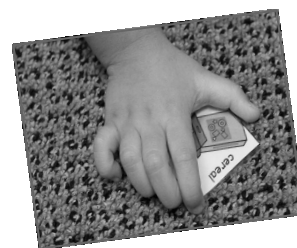
[www.childrenwithspecialneeds.com](http://www.childrenwithspecialneeds.com)

[www.connectability.ca](http://www.connectability.ca)

[www.do2learn.com](http://www.do2learn.com)

[www.symbolworld.org](http://www.symbolworld.org)

[www.mayer-johnson.com/downloads/trials/](http://www.mayer-johnson.com/downloads/trials/)



### General Resources for Infants & Toddlers

[www.gryphonhouse.com/activities/index.asp?CatID=3](http://www.gryphonhouse.com/activities/index.asp?CatID=3)

[www.hubbardscupboard.org/infants\\_toddlers.html](http://www.hubbardscupboard.org/infants_toddlers.html)

[www.pinterest.com/search/?q=infants+and+toddlers](http://www.pinterest.com/search/?q=infants+and+toddlers)

[www.childcarelearning.on.ca](http://www.childcarelearning.on.ca)

[www.scribd.com/doc/15899674/Infant-and-Toddlers-Spaces-Design-for-a-Quality-Classroom](http://www.scribd.com/doc/15899674/Infant-and-Toddlers-Spaces-Design-for-a-Quality-Classroom)

[www.ehow.com/info\\_7904958\\_toddler-play-area-ideas.html](http://www.ehow.com/info_7904958_toddler-play-area-ideas.html)

[www.highscope.org/Content.asp?ContentId=62](http://www.highscope.org/Content.asp?ContentId=62)

[www.centerforparentingeducation.org](http://www.centerforparentingeducation.org)

[www.beststart.org/resources/rep\\_health/index.html](http://www.beststart.org/resources/rep_health/index.html)



*Sheri Robb & Denise Palermo, Special Needs Resource Consultants  
The Etobicoke Children's Centre*