

Strengthening Families with the Healing Power of Play

Opportunities in Early Intervention

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Creating Connections: Navigating Toward Success
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Play promotes healthy cognitive and social-emotional development in infants and young children and is fun for the child and caregiver! Multi-stressed families can benefit from simple play-based activities that promote attachment and healing.



In this workshop you will become acquainted with the skills to support caregiver's play with their toddlers and infants. I will provide a playful introduction to research and practice on the effectiveness of play-based interventions used with children from Sri Lanka to Indiana to Virginia!

Following the workshop the you will be able to:

- Describe the benefits of using play-based interventions with families.*
- Demonstrate 3 play-based intervention techniques.*
- List materials useful for conducting therapeutic play-based interventions.*

The workshop format includes lecture, discussion, experiential exercises, demonstrations, and practice.



Strengthening Families with the Healing Power of Play Opportunities in Early Intervention

Playing in purposeful ways with children will:

Enhance their adjustment

Decrease misbehavior

Decrease symptoms from trauma

Increase their experience of social support

(See <http://www.childtraumaacademy.com> and <http://a4pt.com>)



How Children Communicate Through Play

We can be sure that all happenings, pleasant or unpleasant, in the child's life, will have repercussion on her dolls.
-- Jean Piaget

Children's natural language is play. Play permits the child to communicate with adults nonverbally, symbolically, and in an action-oriented manner.

Communication with children is facilitated when we speak their language.

Children deserve the opportunity to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and wishes in a manner that is consistent with their developmental capacities.



Misconception: Social, emotional, and intellectual learning are separate and intellectual or cognitive learning is most important.

Science Says: Although adults talk about social, emotional, and intellectual learning as being different, studies show they are completely interconnected.

Children learn through their important relationships (social learning); they learn when they feel good and are engaged and motivated in what they are learning (emotional learning); and they learn when they are making sense of their world (intellectual learning).

One type of learning (such as learning numbers, letters or the like) is not more important than another, since for children to learn—social, emotional, and intellectual learning all go together.



"The brain is an interdisciplinary device. You can think of language, cognition and social/emotional development as being totally separate, but that is not what the baby provides evidence of.

The baby is trying to map how people work, how the world works and they're doing that as a composite. It's a multimedia event—that's what the world is and the brain maps it as a multimedia event, not separately."

*Patricia K. Kuhl, PhD Professor of Speech and Hearing Sciences, University of Washington
Co-Director, Center for Mind, Brain and Learning*

http://www.bornlearning.org/files/whatisearlylearning_.pdf

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The best way to promote early learning is to:

"Connect—relationships are the "engine of development."

This connection needs to be authentic. We need to connect with children as the people we are, as their family members or caregivers, not in a "role" of super teacher.

Relationships give a child confidence to go out and explore the world."

Ross A. Thompson, PhD

Professor of Psychology, University of California, Davis

There is no development without relationships.

Jack P. Shonkoff, MD

Dean, Heller Graduate School, Brandeis University



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Studies across different scientific fields show that young children are most likely to learn:

- When they are interested and actively engaged;
- When they are connected to the significant adults in their lives; and
- When the adult follows the child's lead, extending and elaborating what the child is working on.

http://www.bornlearning.org/files/whatisearlylearning_.pdf





*I want
to feel
safe*



**I want
to
explore**

Caregivers must support two critical dimensions of their young children's development:

Their child's need to feel safe and to explore.



In *Play* caregivers and children can be *engaged and connected* and the caregiver can practice *contingent responsiveness* AND appropriately *take the lead*.



You can create relationships with play !

Help infants and young children
feel safe and *explore*
in with relationship with their caregivers.

What are your beliefs about
healthy caregiver-child interactions?



At our best of existence, we are parts of a family, and at our highest level of achievement we work to keep the family alive.” Maya Angelou

Never fear spoiling children by making them too happy. Happiness is the atmosphere in which all good affections grow. -Thomas Bray.

Parents are often so busy with the physical rearing of children that they miss the glory of parenthood, just as the grandeur of the trees is lost when raking leaves.
-Marcelene Cox

The joys of parents are secret; and so are their griefs and fears. They cannot utter the one; nor they will not utter the other. -Francis Bacon

Parenting forces us to get to know ourselves better than we ever might have imagined we could—and in many new ways. -Fred Rogers

Every family has a story.

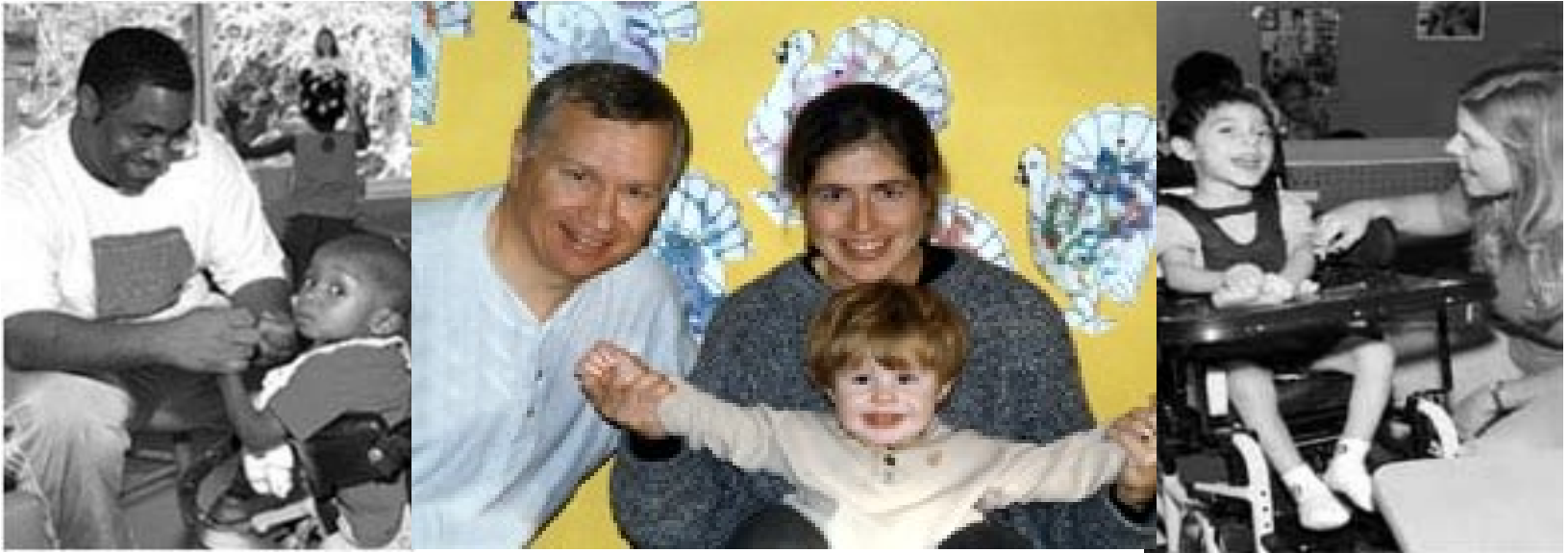
Think of a family you are working with right now and be **CURIOUS** about their story.

WONDER, presume **COMPLEXITY** and **HEALTHY STRIVING**.

What is their family legacy?

What loss and change has the family experienced and how have they demonstrated their resilience?

Consider cultural variations, influences, and traditions.





It is important to develop a framework to guide your observations and interventions:

- N>SAFETY>EXPLORATION >SAFETY> EXPLORATION>SAFETY
(Circle of Security - Attachment)
- Structure - Challenge - Engage - Nurture (Theraplay)
 - Zero to Three -
 - What would your child say? -How is s/he feeling?
 - What is s/he learning?
 - What can you do?



Create relationships with play !

PEEK-A-BOO

"Peek-a-boo! I see you. Do you see Daddy? Who else do you see?" Vary by doing this while looking in mirror.

Where's Your Pretty Nose?

Point out your facial features. "See my eyes? Do you see your eyes? Here they are!" That's how connections begin for babies.

Pat-A-Cake

Whoops! Johnny!

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You can create connections & ease transitions by making rituals for everyday activities and developmental tasks!

Goodbyes
Eating
Bathing -Brushing teeth-Toileting
Grocery shopping

THINK OVER YOUR FAMILY LIFE-SHARE A HELPFUL RITUAL





Games to Help Families take Heart and Enjoy Each Other

- Clap your hands so slowly, slooowly as you can...
- Sing a song of resolve
- Hokey Pokey
- Follow the leader
- Trace outline of object, write in or draw characteristics
- Sharing your Worries ~ Bubbles or Balloons - go around, up/down, bounce balloons; go under and come out an animal
- Growing Garden

The Fisher-Price logo is displayed in white text on a red, scalloped-edged background.

Developmental
Expectations &
Simple play activities.

Three types of play

What is it?

What does it do?

What else can I do with it?

Type of Assistance your child needs

Go to the sidebar › Parenting Advice › For Special Needs Kids
<http://www.fisher-price.com/us/special%5Fneeds/>



Think ,again, about a family you are working with. Inquire about their family by asking about routines.

“Tell me about a typical day for your family. What are the most pleasurable everyday times?”

“What else do you enjoy doing together?”

“When do you find yourself smiling about something that your child did? Tell me about those times.”

“What are your child’s strengths? Who else sees that in them?”



“What is a challenge for you, right now?”

“What seems to be a problem at this time?”

“What is it that most folks just do not understand about you and your family?”

“What is the most important thing we should talk about today?”

Listen for and comment on resilience, strengths and competencies.

*Discover and comment on other people and organizations -
Find out who and what helps their family.*

“Who else knows that this is your family’s biggest strength?”

“Whom do you count on for help with this?”

Remember to

WONDER, presume COMPLEXITY and

note HEALTHY STRIVING.

Consider cultural variations, influences, and traditions.



SONGS and STORIES

- Songs
- Puppet shows- positive coping, correct ideas
- Drama and plays about how they are safe and getting stronger



Totebag Playroom

Crayons/paper

Scissors

Popsicle sticks

Pipe cleaners

Clay/Playdoh

Telephone

Emergency vehicles/airplane

Medical kit

Dart gun/Knife

Aggressive puppets

Cardboard box house

Baby bottle

Baby doll

Dollhouse furniture

Dollhouse

Doll family

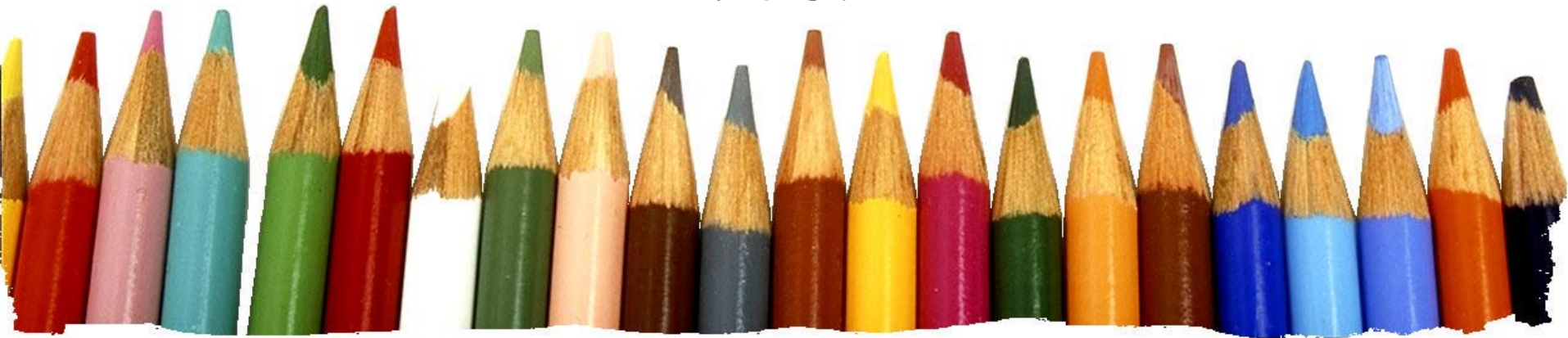
Cups and dishes

Bendable Gumby

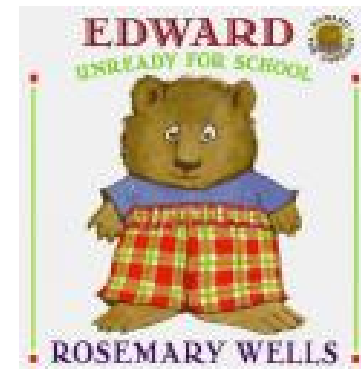
Toy soldiers

Band-aids

YOU!



A Good Book Can Help...



Collect two or three books on a topic, add a toy or puppet and lend to the caregivers to use. Include a pamphlet or handout on the topic for the caregiver.



Resources

Pathways to Prevention: A comprehensive guide for supporting infant and toddler mental health.

<http://www.headstartinfo.org/pdf/Pathwaysto.pdf>

The Magic of Everyday Moments SEE <http://www.zerotothree.org/magic/>

University of Maine: Growing Ideas

(This is the source for materials below)

<http://www.ccids.umaine.edu/ec/growingideas/>

**Friends and Feelings: Social-emotional Development in Young Children
(Social-emotional)**

Related Books:

Fostering Children's Social Competence by Lilian G. Katz, & Diane E. McClellan.

Related Articles and Web Sites:

Social and Emotional Development

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning



Building Belonging: Providing Guidance for Social Skill Development (Guidance)

Related Books:

Guidance of young children by Marian Marion.

The Power of Guidance: Teaching Social-Emotional Skills in Early Childhood Classrooms by Gartrell, D. (2004).

Related Articles and Web Sites:

Love & Learn: Positive Guidance for Young Children

Behavior Communicates

Related Articles and Web Sites:

Practical Ideas for Addressing Challenging Behavior

Center for Evidence-Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behavior



WHACK! SLAM! BANG! (Aggression)

Related Books:

So this is normal too? by Deborah Hewitt.

Related Articles and Web Sites:

Childhood Aggression: Where Does it Come From? How Can it be Managed?
Helping the Often-Angry Child

OUCH! That hurts!- Biting (Biting)

Related Books:

Teeth are not for Biting by Elizabeth Verdick and Marieka Heinlen.

No Biting by Karen Katz.

No Biting: Policy and Practice for Toddler Programs by Gretchen Kinnell.

Related Articles and Web Sites:

Playing Detective about Biting

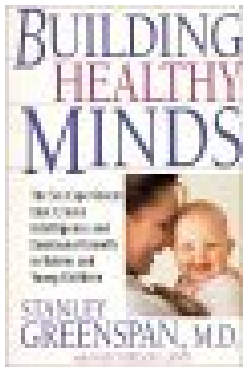
Biters: Why They Do It and What to Do About It



Good Books for you...

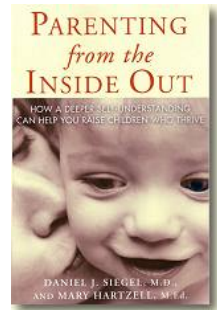


From Neurons to Neighborhoods :
The Science of Early Childhood Development
<http://www4.nationalacademies.org/onpi/webextra.nsf/web/investing?OpenDocument>



Building Healthy Minds: The Six Experiences
That Create Intelligence and Emotional Growth
in Babies and Young Children by Stanley
Greenspan

Parenting from the Inside Out by
D. Siegel and M. Hartzell.



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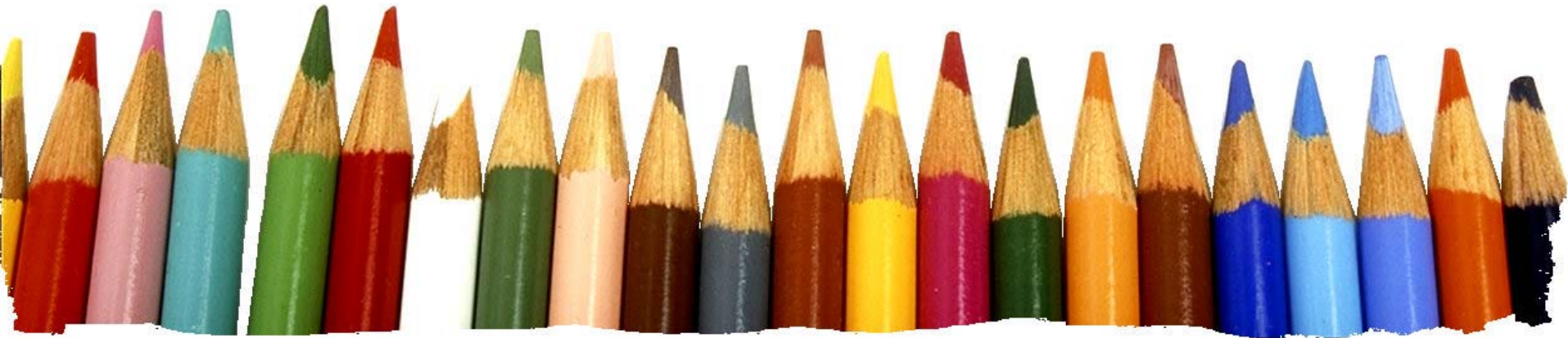
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The Self-Esteem Shop <http://selfesteemshop.com>
Write to Dee Dee at info@selfesteemshop.com



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What are you going to try?

Who is going to help you?

When will you contact each other?

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