

Welcome to the Infant Toddler Corner

Brought to you by the WNY Infant Toddler Resource Network

3 Great Times to Talk With a Baby

As a caregiver, it is very important to capture all of the opportunities to talk with the babies in your care. Studies show that babies who hear more language will have stronger communication and reading abilities. The idea is to talk, talk, and talk with babies to strengthen the skills they will need as they grow up.

Talk At Diapering Time

During diapering, tell babies "I need to check your diaper now" and describe what you are going to do before sweeping a baby off the floor and laying him/her down on a changing table. Take this opportunity to point out different parts of the body by saying, "Here's your nose and here's your hand." Sing songs to babies. Answer back to babies coos and babbles.

Talk At Meal Time

Bottle feeding is a great time to talk or softly sing to babies. Talk with a baby about what is happening. Ask questions and make comments like, "You're enjoying your bottle, aren't you?" or "Your bottle tastes good." When a baby pushes the bottle away ask, "Are you finished with your bottle? Is your belly full?"

When eating with toddlers, talk about the foods that are being served. Describe the color, taste or texture of the food by saying "Today we are eating orange carrots. Aren't the carrots crunchy?" Take time to ask questions and give choices to toddlers. Instead of just refilling a glass of milk, ask, "Would you like more milk or water?" Sit and eat with toddlers and hold conversations about their interests and ideas.

Talk During Everyday Activities

When you're holding or walking with babies, talk about what you are seeing. Point out a dog and explain to a baby, "That is a dog. A dog says 'woof-woof.'"

As you play on the floor with children, comment on the play activities. Describe toys and materials by saying, "Julia, you are playing with the green ball. Can you roll the ball to me?" If children are playing together, comment about what other children are doing by saying, "Look at your friend, Joey. He is building with the blocks."

When you see a toddler watching you, explain to them what you're doing. For example, when you are cleaning up you can explain, "I'm washing the table so it's clean for us to eat snack."

Remember: It is never too early to talk with babies. Let's get talking!

For more information on infant and toddler care, contact the:

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