

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.” *Helen Keller*

Spotlight on Development

Review this information with home visitors:

8–15 months: At this age, the attention span is no longer than a minute for a single action type of activity, for instance playing with a toy. Any new activity or event distracts the child.

16–19 months: Impatience is one of the main characteristics of this age. However, any organized, more complex activity will keep your infant focused for more than 2-3 minutes. This age may not be able to tolerate verbal or visual distraction.

20–24 months: This is the age where the child will easily be distracted by outside sounds and activities. An activity may keep them focused for up to 6 minutes.

25–36 months: Your child can generally pay attention to a toy or other activity for 5-8 minutes. During this time, they can also pay attention to an adult speaking to them.

3–4 years: Attention span increases to up to 10 minutes on a singular type of activity.

Remember: These are averages – each child is unique.

What might my child say or do?

How do you expect this information to be delivered by the home visitor? As a coordinator, what do you expect to see on a home visit observation? Be clear and let home visitors know what you expect.

Possible delivery methods that engage the parent may include:

- Joint reading (parent and home visitor alternate reading bullets) **and** guided discussion is included to obtain and assess parent knowledge.
- Parent reads silently and home visitor reads (paraphrases) and uses guided discussion to obtain and assess parent knowledge.
- Home visitor reads (paraphrase) and use guided discussion

What can I do to help my child develop?

Ask home visitors what helps hold **their** attention? Allow your staff to discuss as a group. It is important to remember: **To get a child's attention, parents must also give attention.** If we are scattered, it is hard for us to focus on the child. Another tip, being in **close physical proximity** while giving clear and concise instructions helps a child better focus on what is being said. Don't make

requests from across the room. Try standing in front of your child, make eye contact, be at eye level or touch their shoulder.

Note: Minimize distractions – noise, cell phones, etc., but also realize there are other distractions: Is the child tired? Are they hungry? **All** of these can be a distraction. Remind parents to “be present.”

Activity 1: Language and Literacy – Brown Bear

What your child will learn from these activities

Some research shows that toddlers who had heard just the **same** story three times were much better at recalling and remembering new words than those who had listened to three **different** stories. After hearing “Brown Bear, Brown Bear” read many times, the age 2 child may remember it well enough to add the ending “What do you see?” This helps the child become active in the story reading.

What to do

4-5. The child is just repeating the phrase as the parent points to the words.

7. Home visitors should have toys/stuffed animals to role play the activity. Remember to focus on the **color and the animals**. Using the animals below the script would be:

Yellow, yellow duck what do you see?
I see a grey cat looking at me.
Grey cat, grey cat what do you see?
I see a green dinosaur looking at me?
Green dinosaur, green dinosaur what do you see?
I see a brown horse looking at me?



Activity 2: Language and Literacy – Brown Bear

What to do:

3. We want the child to answer – **the color and the animal** on the page. Role play with home visitors for a child that may not answer or answer partially. Complete, confirm, correct technique would be used.

Note: A nonverbal child can point to the “red bird” as the parent confirms “red bird.”

4. This is a good place for a “brain break” if needed. Some children’s attention span may need a break before completing the sequence game. We want to stop the activity **before** we lose the child’s attention. Discuss with home visitors how to explain to parents the places in an activity that could be “paused” and allow the child to have a brain break.

5-8. If needed, reduce the number of cards and add to the row as the child understands the concept.

10. Using the cards, we reread the story. Allow the child to touch or pick up the card if needed.

THINK

It is important to use these **THINK** activities to reinforce the concepts in the child’s day to day life. Have parents give their examples “first/next.” Having the parent give specific examples allows the home visitor to assess for understanding and the parent is more likely to complete the activity.

Activity 3: Think and Explore – Sink of Float

What your child will learn from this activity:

The child may not understand the reason items sink or float (buoyancy), but this hands-on activity will allow them to see items sink or float. Remind Home Visitors/Parents, sink and float may be new vocabulary words and this activity will give them practice using the new words.

You will need

A variety of items that will sink or float. Have the parent choose five items from the suggested list that will sink and five items that will float.

What to do

2. The tub of water needs to be easy for the child to access and to see the items floating.
3. Be specific on how the activity will be roleplayed in the home. Suggested props for the roleplay in the home: a clear plastic cup and bottle of water, 2 or 3 items of **each** that float or sink. The props need
4. The child may not respond to every instruction and question, but parents will reinforce and guide.
Example:
 1. Choose an item and child names.
 2. Ask the question “will it float or sink.” (the child may not be aware of the terms and for the first few items may be unable to answer or understand the question.
 3. Allow the child to place item in water.
 4. After testing, place item on the appropriate plate (sink/float)

The child will benefit by reinforcing and revisiting this activity throughout the week. The child will gain more understanding by repetition.

7. Reinforcing our previous lesson of cleaning up.

8 and 9. If the child does not say the items, have them point to each item and the parent will say the name.

THINK

Repeating the activity again will allow the child to practice language.

Activity 4: Motor – Clap, Pat and Stomp

What your child will learn from these activities

Define rhythm – the repetition of a beat or sound in a regular or predictable pattern. In the activity below we will clap, pat and stomp words. This kinesthetic activity will help the child be active as they say words increasing language and listening.

What to do

2. Make sure you pause between each word. **Table** (clap) **window** (clap) **book** (clap).

Note: We are clapping words, not syllables.

4. The activity will role play like this (clapping the group of words and then pause):

Now, do what I do and say what I say.

Brown bear

Brown bear – clap, clap

Red bird

Red bird – clap, clap

5 - 7. Patting words.

8 - 9. Stomping words.

10. When the child takes the lead, it allows the parent to check for understanding.

Activity 5: Motor – Move Like Story Characters

What to do

The child may need the parent to model (with the child) how to move like the animal to the mark and then back to the parent. You may have to help parents understand how to move like the animals. The examples at the end of the activity are an excellent way to review with parents.

7. Don't forget to review the 3 main steps.

1. *The color of the animal*
2. *The sound of the animal*
3. *Movement of the animal*

THINK

Be specific and clear on how the **THINK** activities are to be delivered to parents. Do you want home visitors to role play one activity? And the other two discussed?

Family Feedback

This feedback will be reviewed when the lesson is picked up but should be reviewed each week to help parents know what to look for as they complete the activities throughout the week. It is important to have the home visitors review the questions at the end of delivery.

How is your child doing when you ask them to join in while you are reading?

Does the child read/say the words or point? Does the child sit while the parent reads? Turn the pages? Let parents know what you are looking for.

What other things have you done to practice clapping and patting?

Remind parents several ideas are included in the **THINK** activities.

What concerns or comments do you have about this week's activities?

This is a pilot and we need parents help on what works and what doesn't work. Encourage the parent to actively help HIPY develop this new curriculum by offering their feedback.