

Spotlight on Development

What is a lifelong learner? A **lifelong learner** is a learner that continues to develop and improve their knowledge and skills because they desire to. John Dewey said it best “*Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.*” **Positive** early experiences shape the foundation for later learning.

As Home Visitor’s discuss the “bulleted points” ask the parent to reflect back over the year in HIPPY Age 2. How (specifically) has the parent (or Home Visitor) seen growth in the child.

Key: It is important for the Home Visitor to share the progress of the child they have witnessed throughout the HIPPY for Little Learner curriculum year. All parents like to hear “positive” statements about their child.

Note: Confidentiality is a high priority – do not share information with parents about other children.

What might my child do or say?

There are many characteristics of a **lifelong learner** but a few may include;

- Curiosity – Learning starts with curiosity.
- Mistakes – Mistakes are an important tool in learning, but most of us like to avoid them. To encourage lifelong learning parents must remember that mistakes serve a purpose. Thomas Edison said, “I have not failed. I have just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.” Mistakes help us grow and Home Visitors should remind parents they are part of the tools of learning.

What can I do to help my child develop?

Home Visitors should familiarize parents with the term **teachable moment**. A **teachable moment** occurs when something of interest to a child happens and the ability to learn is possible.

Example: snow falling, a baby bird in a nest, etc.

Parents should try and “catch” these teachable moments. They occur spontaneously and may happen at any time. The key is to be paying attention and be prepared to find ways to make use of them. Teachable moments often happen when you least expect them.

Activity 1: Language and Literacy – Mother and Baby Animals

What your child will learn from this activity

Have the parent and child enjoyed the book, *Are You My Mother?* Encourage the parent to be specific on what the child did or did not like about the book.

Example: Did the child enjoy the illustrations? What was their favorite character?

What to do

1. Cut out the picture cards and **separate** the mother animals from the baby animals.

5. Does the child turn the pages independently? Explain to the parent how important it is to allow their child to turn the pages.

6-10. These questions will allow the parent to assess the child's comprehension of the story. The child may respond partially or may respond with a different answer. Remind the parent to complete, confirm, correct. **Note: We want the child to hear the correct response.**

Strategy: If a child does not respond the parent could turn to the corresponding page and reread the text and then repeat the question.

11. Spread the cards out so the child can clearly see each mother animal. Have the child identify each mother animal. Make sure the parent reinforces the correct animal name.

Example: horse not horsie, cow not moo-moo

12-13. Place the baby animal picture cards in a bag (or bowl). The child will choose a card and match the card to the mother. Make sure to reinforce the correct names (*not baby cow, baby dog, etc.*) as the child matches the cards.

cow/calf, cat/kitten, dog/puppy, hen/chick, duck/duckling, sheep/lamb

Note: We do not expect the child to use the terms calf, lamb, etc., but this is an opportunity to expose the child to new vocabulary.

Activity 2: Language and Literacy – Memory Game

What to do

2. The parent may need to ask “tell me or show me the character” on each page.

4. If needed, turn to the page with the baby bird and ask the question. The visual clue may help the child verbalize the answer.

Note: At almost age three, most children will have no problem responding.

5-6. This is an opinion question. We want the child to express **their** opinion. Home Visitors should encourage parents to allow their child time to respond.

8. You will only use three sets of mother/baby cards (total of 6 cards). The parent needs to place each card in each appropriate row (row of mothers and row of babies) and say the name of the animal as they place the card. We want the child to focus on each card as it is placed.

Ask staff how do children learn to answer questions? First the child must understand the question. Receptive language (what they understand) is critical. To help a child learn to answer questions here are a few tips;

- Provide choices – Where did we go yesterday? Did we go to the park or the store?
- Ask questions that the child can relate to or interests them.
- Model, model, model

THINK

Activity 3: Think and Explore - Who Lives Where?

What your child will learn from this activity

We have completed twenty-six weeks of curriculum and covered many developmental stages including language. Ask Home Visitors to share with the group how children “learn” language. Ask each Home Visitor to share a strategy for increasing language development?

Possible answers:

- Read, read, read
- Respond and listen to your child
- Joint attention – be present and focused on the child
- Model, expand and expose children to new vocabulary

Training Note: It is important Home Visitors encourage parents to read with their child daily and establish this positive habit early in their child’s life. Children learn to love the sound of language before they even notice the printed words on a page. Reading books **aloud** to children encourages their imagination and increases their understanding of the world. It helps them develop language and listening skills.

This chart is an example of the impact of reading for just 20 minutes a day.

What to do

1. What if the child does not answer? Give the child a choice. Do we live in a nest or in a house? “Complete, confirm, correct”

Note: Activity Sheet 2 (pages 12 through 14) are used for this activity

2- 4. Review each animal and where they live with parents. We want to use this activity to introduce and reinforce vocabulary.

Bird/nest, cow/barn, dog/doghouse, hen/coop or hen house, frog/pond, lion/grassland, horse/stable or barn, pig/pigpen.

6. **Animal homes** picture cards are placed at child’s height around the room. The child will choose an animal and use a flashlight to “spotlight” the **animal home** in the room and bring to the parent. Why the flashlight? The flashlight allows the child to be more engaged in the activity. When a child is more interactive they are more engaged.

Activity 4: Think and Explore – Making a Bird’s Nest

You will need

Sites may choose to provide small bags of pretzel sticks and 2 cupcake wrappers for the activity.

What to do

4. Parents may want to pre-gather a few of the supplies and place in an area (child level) that will allow the child to access (gather) and place on the table where the activity will be completed.

Bird Nest Snack

- 2 cupcake wrappers
- 5 thin pretzel sticks
- 2 Slices of bread
- Peanut butter & Jelly
- Plastic knife
- Oval cookie cutter

(Possible solutions)

- two small round bowls
- Crumbled crackers
- Tortilla round
- Any filling
- Should have
- a cup turned upside down (round is fine)

The parent is **modeling** each step in the recipe and **creating their bird nest snack**. There will be two snacks made – one by the parent and one by the child. It is important to allow the child to have time to try and complete each step and help only if needed.

Training Note: Ask Home Visitors to identify the skills used in this activity.

Example of skills embedded in this activity include; fine motor, following directions, vocabulary, math concept, social emotional, etc. It is important to know “the why” and “the what” we are accomplishing as the child works through the activity.

THINK

Home Visitors should encourage these simple recipes and ask the parent to share other snacks their child helps prepare. Review with Home Visitors and share this website "[Cooking with Kids](#)". If your HIPPY site has a Web page, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram feed provide the link for parents

Activity 5: Motor – Snipping and Gluing

What your child will learn from this activity

Ask Home Visitors for feedback on the cutting activity from last week. Were the children successful? What problems did the parents encounter?

What to do

1. Reviewing last week's lesson. Encourage the parent to practice "the shark" and "open/shut" throughout the week.
2. Child friendly definition of collage is *different things on paper to make a picture*.
4. Using a cotton swab allows the child to keep their finger "glue free" and practice pincer grasp while applying a small amount of glue. The glue is placed on the snipped paper and then applied to cardboard.

Note: Kindergarten teachers teach a child to place glue on an object and then place on the paper. It helps reduce "glue blobs."

5. Talking/focusing attention to creating the collage is important. Home Visitor should roleplay talking about the steps and materials the child is using to create the collage.

Note: is important to remind the parents to keep the scissors a safe place and to encourage the child to cut only under supervision.

THINK

Repeat the activities throughout the week. Reinforcing and repetition is skill building. Encourage the parent to practice "the shark" and "open/shut" throughout the week.

Family Feedback

This feedback will be reviewed when the lesson is picked up and 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 during staff development. Have each Home Visitor write an answer to each question on a separate piece of paper. Have each one share their answers with the group.

What are some of the ways you have created a learning environment in your home?

Was there an activity this week that your child had problems with?

What surprised you, good or bad, about your child's ability to finish the activities this week?