

Spotlight on Development

Empathy is a social emotional skill and is strengthened by practice and modeling.

How does the developmental stage characteristic of egocentrism affect empathy in the Age 2 child? The Age 2 child in the egocentric stage of development views the world from their perspective. In regards to empathy, the child will show comfort from their perspective. It is important for Home Visitors to understand how a skill and the developmental age of a child correlate.

Example: A child might empathize with their father and try to comfort him by offering a favorite toy or stuffed animal, reasoning that what helps the child feel better will also comfort Dad.

What might my child do or say?

After reading and discussing the information ask Parents to share a specific example of how their child has shown empathy. Make sure to review specific guided questions during staff development to help encourage guided discussion.

Remember: Social emotional skills are like other developmental skills. These skills are developed and not all children **develop** at the same pace.

Have Home Visitors think of a child and compare the child's developmental skill areas. Is the child weaker in motor? Why? Possibly lack of exposure or opportunities to develop muscle control. Now consider a child social emotional development. Discuss factors that help develop these skills.

What can I do to help my child develop?

KEY: Children learn to be **empathetic** by being treated with **empathy**.

Remind parents to model and think aloud. Many toddlers don't fully understand what feeling words mean. A child may say "sorry", but it doesn't necessarily help the toddler learn empathy. We need to teach children to focus on specific feelings and learn to make the connection between **their action** and the **effect of their action**.

Example: "Lea, look at Graham—he's very sad. He's crying. Graham is rubbing his knee. Let's see if he is okay."

Activity 1: Language and Literacy – Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes

What your child will learn from this activity

Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes - Home Visitors should encourage the parents to be specific about what they liked or did not like about the story. This information allows them to assess parent individual likes and dislikes in reference to literature.

Possible Examples:

Example: We liked Oink, Moo, Meow. Why? My child enjoyed the real pictures of animals.

Example: We liked Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes because it was about babies and we have a new baby in our home.

What to do

6. **Suffered** – a child friendly definition might be – something bad - not pleasant.

7. Accept the answer the child gives – complete, confirm, correct as needed.

Example: A child may say “This baby is feeling bad - sick.”

8. Many people may not have a hot water bottle. Parents can explain what a hot water bottle is by using the picture in the book to show the child. Parents may have a hot/cold gel pack that could be used to show how it can be warm or cold and used to soothe.

11. Which baby in the crib is sick? How do you know? Allow the child to see the baby’s “red/runny” nose and determine how the friend could help that baby.

15. This activity covers counting visually, auditorily, and tactilely (touch). The sense of touch is the strongest. The parent will point (or touch) the child’s toes as they count. Remind the parent to start on the left and count toes on each foot (left to right). Why left to right? This allows the child to track visually similar to reading.

Also, “wiggling” (rather than just a simple touch) a child’s toes/fingers creates a feedback loop from the body (toes) to the brain. “one touch = 1, two touches = 2, etc.

During staff training: Try touching and counting and then try wiggling each finger as you count. Which way did you receive more input from? The feedback loop has more sensory input.

16. This counting has the child and parent touching/wiggling their toes.

Note: The child may only repeat the last line in the rhyme at first, but this is a great start. Parents could leave out the last word and allow their child to answer. This allows the child to take part in the rhyme.

17. The child will hear the rhyme and completes the action. The child is physically touching their toes (making the connection).

Activity 2: Language and Literacy – Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes

You will need

You will need a baby or stuffed animal and other items which could be used when someone is feeling sick. Home Visitors should talk about what props are available in the home and how they can be used in the dramatic play in **7-9**.

Note: What props will the Home Visitor take into the home? Small doll, cloth, bottle, lotion bottle, etc.

What to do

2 - 3. The child should begin to understand the term “book walk.” Have parents describe some of the things they are noticing in their child’s book walk. What is their child demonstrating?

- Turning pages left to right.
- Holding the book correctly.
- Pointing out and talking about the pictures
- Reading the title (sort of)

9. Dramatic play using a baby (or stuffed animal) as a prop allows the child to have a deeper understanding about the “sick” baby in the book. It also allows the child to begin thinking how a friend feels if they are sick and what they might do to help their friend feel better. Talk to parents about what props they might use to complete this portion of the activity.

Remind parents they may have to guide their child in pretend play.

Example: “Your baby’s nose is running. What should we do?”

As the parent observes the child in pretend play they may choose to add a few additional props to enhance the play. Brainstorm with parents’ appropriate props they may have in the home.

Examples: A tissue, a medicine spoon or dropper, lotion, a blanket to stay warm

Note: Review with Home Visitors skills involved in the dramatic play activity (sick baby). Review **Page 2 – “These activities will help your child with”**

It is important to “teach” social skills like wiping their nose and what to do with the tissue and washing our hands. This activity also allows the parent to incorporate and reinforce graded movement words like gentle, pat, etc.

THINK

In Week 19, the Tip focused on recognition and praise and the importance of focusing on positive behavior more than negative behavior. Pointing out the positive “kindness” is more important than pointing out the “negative.” Remind parents we want to praise the behavior we **want to see** in the child.

Activity 3: Think and Explore: Everyday Objects

What your child will learn from this activity

Children have a larger **receptive** (what they understand) vocabulary than **expressive** (what they use/speak) vocabulary. The Age 2 child may be able to point to a spoon, cup, bowl, etc. but may not be able to express the name of the object (correctly).

This activity will help children correctly pronounce an object. They may pronounce spoon “poon”, but the parent should complete, confirm, correct “spoon.” The child needs to hear the word pronounced correctly. In addition, some children have “childhood names” for some objects. Example: Lights – blink, blink - It is important for the child to hear the correct vocabulary.

You will need

Make sure Home Visitors have items needed to roleplay the activity in the home.

Note: Small doll/tea sets with plates, bowls, forks, etc. save space in the Home Visitors prop bag.

What to do

1. The child has to use language to verbally answer the question.
2. The child will connect the item and its purpose.
- 4-6. The parent is assessing for understanding.
7. The child is using their hands to “find” the item. The child will feel and “see” with their hands. After taking the item out their eyes confirm what their hands thought they felt. They make the connection of being able to see with their hands and understand what they are holding by responding (using language) with the item they have found and what the item is used for.

Note: A pillow case makes a bag that is large enough to put the items in.

- 8-12. The child will identify an item they wear (hat, jacket, pajamas) and **when** they would wear the item.

Note: We cannot assume the child can verbalize the item and the purpose. Remind parents to **confirm, complete, correct**. We want to encourage full answers.

Activity 4: Think and Explore: Everyday Objects

What to do

1. Home Visitors should make sure the parent understands to hide the items around the room at child level and **over** obvious. The child should be able to visually scan the room, find the item, and then shine the flashlight on the item. Using the same objects used in **Activity 3** will reinforce and build on previous knowledge.

A child uses visual scanning every day. Examples: find a picture on a page, looking around the room and finding their sock, etc.

THINK

Encourage parents to use correct and specific vocabulary and use these new words throughout the week. So often, children say a word and as adults we think it is “cute” and begin to reinforce it. Example: A child likes to “swing” and pronounces it “winging”. Another child correctly identified a broom but used the term “brooming” for “sweeping.” Made perfect sense to the child – a mop is mopping.

Activity 5: Motor – Dancing With Scarves

What your child will learn from this activity

After roleplaying the activity, have Home Visitors identify where the following skills are located in the activity - Gross Motor, Social Emotional and Spatial Awareness

What to do

1. Coordinators should guide Home Visitors towards appropriate music choices for roleplay in the home. Have each Home Visitor share an appropriate fast and slow music choice. Possible suggestions: **Slow:** Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star and **Fast:** Baby Shark. If possible, introduce classical music (instrumental) into the **Dancing With Scarves** activity.

2 - 10. It is important for the parent to model movement and give specific praise for their child's movements.

Example: I like the way you held your arms up high.

Note: Music is played for 1 to 2 minutes. The child is learning to move her body to the rhythm (beat) of the music.

15. During roleplay in the home, Home Visitor should guide the parents in the item which will be used to complete the scarf movement activity. (A possible substitution – a hand towel or kitchen towel.)

When the parent holds one end and the child holds the other end of the towel, their movements will be imitated (motor imitation). Encourage the parent to pull (back and forth), raise hands above the shoulders, move hands left and then right, etc.

16. The scarf (towel) when moved during the dance creates “wind”. The wind is fun and alerting to a child.

THINK

Encourage parents to allow their child to listen to a variety of music. Music allows a child, at the early age, build the ability to focus.

Share this link during staff development. The link counts down the top 10 iconic pieces of classical movements.

[Top 10 Classical Pieces](#)

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. After all have completed, have each one share their answers with the group.

What did your child enjoy the most about the story Ten Little and Ten Little Toes?

What type of music does your child enjoy?

What was the hardest activity for you and/or your child this week/ Why?

What time of the day is the best HIPPY time for you? Why?