

“The first five years have so much to do with how the next 80 turn out. ”
Bill Gates Sr.

Spotlight on Development

Curiosity equals learning. It is important to remind home visitors **each** child will express their curiosity in different ways. Have home visitors think about one of their Age 2 children. How would the child respond if the parent shows the child a frog?

- The child might barely be able to contain themselves. They want to touch and hold the frog.
- Another child might respond with “yucky” and no way would they touch the frog, but they may ask what frogs think about – or if frogs have friends.

The first child is interested in studying what she sees on the outside, while the other child is curious about the inside invisible world of connections. Both children are showing eagerness and curiosity in learning, but in two different ways.

What might my child say or do?

Remind parents the curiosity style of a child exploring can be dangerous. The child has had few experiences but has become a “pro” by watching us for years. Think about all the things the child may have seen us do; pour liquids, fix something (electrical) with a screw driver (metal object), climb on a ladder, push buttons on a computer, etc. The challenge for a parent is to provide a safe, supervised and supportive environment that allows the child to explore safely.

What can I do to help my child develop?

Some children may be reluctant to explore. Their anxiety over the new (unknown) can delay the learning. Help your child by reassuring and comforting them. Allow them to share in discoveries with you – “safe to learn”.

Activity 1: Language and Literacy – *Families*

What your child will learn from this activity

Human families and animal families are different, but also similar in many ways when it comes to caring for their young. We both go on walks, share food, cuddle, and give many hugs and kisses. This book uses real photographs and explores these similar characteristics.

What to do

A **book walk** allows the child to have an interactive experience with the book. It is important to allow the child to hold the book, turn the pages, point to pictures, etc. Parents may have to guide the child throughout the process. Remind parents to ask questions or have the child point to something on the page.

Example: “Point to the baby smiling,” or “What are they eating?”

Have Home Visitors ask specific questions on how the child is progressing. Compare the first book walk – *Goodnight Moon* to our last book walk – *I Like It When*.

Activity 2: Language and Literacy – Families

What to do

1. The book is about people and it is about animals, but collectively the book is about families.

4. Helping children learn to recognize the difference in facial expressions in books, is a beginning to a child understanding and recognizing emotions.

7. Remind parents to use the “complete, confirm, correct” technique as they answer.

Example: The child responds with “funny”; parent confirms, “Funny – They are laughing at jokes.”

9. This activity helps the child connect facial expressions to the happy emotions that they themselves may feel.

10. Practice each motion before singing the song.

14. On the last verse where all three motions are done together, slow the song down to allow the child to mimic all three motions, if needed.

THINK

- Ask the parent how they listen to songs with their child? Radio, YouTube, CD’s, etc.
- Plan a “Fun Night” and incorporate singing, dancing, games, and reading into the event.

Activity 3: Think and Explore – Food, Sweet/Crunchy

What your child will learn from this activity

This activity will allow the child to use their sense of taste to identify and describe different foods. This is a wonderful opportunity to guide the parent to model healthy eating habits. Parents are responsible for deciding what to serve, when to serve it, modeling healthy eating habits and creating a family mealtime environment.

You will need

This activity introduces (healthy) salty and sweet snacks. If the HIPPY budget allows, the site may choose to provide a simple bag of salty and sweet items. This bag could include **pre-packaged** mini bags of healthy snacks:

- Salty snacks – pretzels and crackers
- Sweet snacks – Small applesauce and raisin box

Note: If sites choose to make available food items for the family to use for this activity, make sure the food items are pre-packaged.

What to do

1. Notice the plates and sweet/salty foods are set out prior to beginning the activity. You only need three items of **each** food on **each** plate.
2. Creativity is key to this activity. The parent will be modeling and leading the pretend play.
- 3-4. Washing hands is part of the activity and promotes healthy habits.
7. Identify the 2 sweet (ex. raisins and applesauce)
8. Identify the 2 salty food (ex. pretzels and crackers) chosen for the activity.
- 10-14. Complete, confirm, correct – Many children will not be able to verbalize the full answer. If needed - ask the question with choices; “Did you like the crackers or raisins best? Or have the child show you the answer; Show me how many sweet snacks we tasted (Parent counts aloud as the child points to the plate.)

Activity 4: Think and Explore: Food, Snack Party

What to do

1. Notice **six** plates and sweet/salty foods are set out prior to beginning the activity. You only need a few items (3 to 4) of each food on each plate. (Small plates work best or even a napkin

for each food and 2 plates for the “tea party.” The plate/napkin is to distinguish each food in a set.

2. Creativity is key to this activity. The parent will model and lead the pretend play.
5. Washing hands is part of the activity and promotes healthy habits.
8. Identify each food (2 sweet and 2 salty) chosen for the activity.
9. Reinforce the food by taste. If the child responds, “I want raisins.” Complete, confirm, correct – “Raisins – a sweet snack”.
11. Repeat until all 4 (sweet and salty) foods have been reviewed.

THINK

To allow the parent to become familiar with the **THINK** activities, home visitors should have the parents describe the items used for role play. Raisins are squishy, crackers are crunchy, etc.

Activity 5: Motor – Fun Movements

What your child will learn from this activity

In addition to learning position words, the child will be following several two to three step directions. Discuss with home visitors:

What is needed for a child to follow instructions?

- **Hearing**
- **Receptive language:** Comprehension of language
- **Attention and concentration:** The ability to hold that concentration long enough to perform a task.
- **Working memory:** The ability to briefly keep and use information involved in language and to update this information as change occurs.
- **1 – 2 years of age:** Can follow simple 1 step instructions (e.g. “Give the block to me”).
- **2 – 3 years of age:** Can follow 2-part commands (e.g. “Go to your room and get your shoes”).
- **3 – 4 years of age:** Can follow 3-part instructions (e.g. “Point to the chair, plate and fork”).

How can help my child learn to following instructions?

- **Eye contact:** Make sure the child is looking at you when you give the direction.
- **Single instructions:** Give your child only one instruction at a time.
Example: “Hold the toy gently in your arms.”
- **Break verbal instructions into parts:** “Go and get your toy.” When the child has followed that instruction, say “Now walk across the room to the chair.”

- **Repeat:** Get your child to repeat the instruction to ensure that they have understood what they need to do (e.g. “Hold the toy gently in your arms. What do I want you to do?”).
- **Visual aids and clues:** Model the instruction with them.

What to do:

2-11. If a child has trouble following the instructions, break the instruction down into simple steps.

13. Make sure the towel or blanket is child size.

Consider all the skills being covered in this activity as the child lifts the blanket up and down:

- strengthening core muscles and muscles in arms and shoulders
- fine motor as they grasp the ends of the towel/blanket.
- One to one correspondence as they count
- Following directions
- Language (vocabulary) – corners, lift, high

HIPPY integrates multiple learning domains into an activity.

THINK

Reinforce this activity throughout the week by encouraging the parent to include into their daily routine.

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.

What did your child like (or not like) about the book *Families*?

Loved the REAL pictures!

What food does your child like to eat for a snack?

Goldfish crackers and apples

What new food has your child tried lately?

He refuses to try new foods. I was encouraged by Home Visitor to offer multiple times. I did not realize it might take many exposures before he would try a new food

What was your experience with pretending to visit with your child and talking to them?

Confused at first, but then enjoyed it.