Week 1 Reading Assignment

What Children and Caregivers Do During the HighScope Infant and Toddler Day

Daily Events

Arrival and Departure

Children. As infants and toddlers separate from their parents to join the child care community at the beginning of the day, they typically engage in a variety of behaviors. These may range from crying, screaming, flailing, clinging, thumb sucking, avoiding eye contact, or simply ignoring the parent or caregiver involved, to smiling, cooing, picking up an interesting plaything, watching other children with interest, waving goodbye to the parent, or joining an activity in progress. Their responses to rejoining a parent at the end of the day may vary just as widely. Furthermore, these responses may change from day to day and from one stage of development to the next, with islands of predictability in between!

Daily Events (continued)

Nonmobile (very young) infants generally respond to separations and reunions with relative ease. As they learn to creep and crawl, infants develop a sense of themselves as separate beings distinct from their parents. Realizing that parents can disappear, they fear they may not return!

Young toddlers enjoy their newfound walking ability and the freedom it allows them to explore and carry all kinds of interesting objects. While they remain concerned about losing sight of their parents, they are usually irresistibly drawn to examine whatever they can get their hands on. Older toddlers are developing the ability to hold in mind mental images of absent people and past events. They remember their parents leaving them at the center on previous mornings and anticipate that it will happen again today. At the same time, they are developing a strong sense of independence and initiative and an increasing ability to communicate with such powerful phrases as "Mommy stay!" and "No!" At the beginning of the day, their objections to a parent's departure can be loud and physical.

Adults. During arrival and departure times, it is important for caregivers to give children and parents warm welcomes and goodbyes and to support their separation and reunion processes.

Daily Events (continued)

The following strategies can help in carrying out this caregiver role:

- Carry out your greetings and goodbyes calmly to reassure the child and parent.
- Acknowledge the child's and parent's feelings about separation and reunion.
- Follow the child's signals about entering and leaving the activity of the program setting.
- Communicate openly with the child about the parent's comings and goings.
- Exchange information and child observations with the parent.

Daily Events (continued)

Choice Time

Children. Throughout choice time, infants and toddlers move about, explore materials and actions, and play near and with peers and caregivers. They do all of this at their own pace, according to their individual interests and abilities.

Nonmobile infants make their choices from an array of appealing materials caregivers place within their reach. The choices and possibilities for exploration and play are greater for mobile infants. They may sit next to and explore baskets containing commonplace treasures, crawl or creep to a shelf of books or toys and choose one to examine, carry things in their mouth or hand as they crawl. They may seek another child to sit or stand next to, watch, or play beside.

Toddlers engage in increasingly complex exploration and play. For example, they look at books and identify familiar people, animals, and objects in pictures; stack, topple, and carry blocks; maneuver toy trucks, cars, motorcycles, and animals; work with puzzles and pegboards; scribble, tear, and paint; dress up, play house, and push their baby dolls in buggies or carts; throw balls, climb, slide, and crawl into cartons and tunnels. As they grow in awareness of themselves and others, younger toddlers begin to initiate social behaviors, such as hugging and patting another child to show affection, bringing a toy or comfort item to another child, or playing a game of peeking at another child through the window in the climber. Older toddlers can address one another by name and make simple requests of peers: "Ben, me [want] car." They try out the actions of a child playing nearby.

Daily Events (continued)

Adults. During children's choice time, caregivers make themselves physically and emotionally available to observe and interact with them. At the same time, they respect children's need to explore and play at their own pace with people and materials of particular interest to them. The following strategies are all part of this role:

- Pay close attention to children as they explore and play.
- Tailor your actions and responses to follow children's leads and ideas.
- Engage in communication give-and-take with children.
- Support children's interactions with peers.
- Use a problem-solving approach to children's social conflicts.

- Offer older toddlers opportunities to plan and recall.
- Encourage toddlers to put materials away after choice time.

Daily Events (continued)

Outside Time

Children. During outside time, infants and toddlers observe, explore, and play on their own or with others at their own pace and level of interest and development. Depending on temperament, some children cautiously approach outdoor sounds, textures, sights, and sensations, while others take to outdoor play with energy and curiosity about every new creature and experience.

Nonmobile infants spend most of their outside time lying on their backs while gazing at nearby sights, wiggling, stretching, and reaching for or grasping at objects. They enjoy feeling the warmth of the sun and the movement of the air. They also move from place to place in their caregiver's arms or in a stroller. Mobile infants sit and explore objects or materials and examine growing things. They crawl across the grass, up and down steps, over small hills, and into large boxes. They pull themselves up to stand by holding on to a low bench, a picnic table, or the edge of the sandbox. With help, they swing in a swing or go for gentle wagon rides.

Young toddlers use the clear expanses of the outdoor play area for walking, carrying, pushing, climbing, throwing, and exploring. While their movements may be awkward, outside they have lots of space for maneuvering, falling down, and picking themselves up. Older toddlers, who have become pretty steady on their feet, take advantage of the outdoor space to run, ride, climb, swing, slide, throw, dig, paint, play in water, fill and empty, collect stones, make up simple games, and grapple with problems — how to cover the picnic table with a sheet to make a house, how to get the riding toy back up the hill, what to do when two toddlers want to fill the same dump truck with walnuts.

Daily Events (continued)

Adults. Caregivers pay close attention to children's outdoor exploration and play, offer children physical and emotional support, and interact with children in enjoying all the features of the outdoor environment. The following specific strategies help them carry out this role:

- Provide loose materials for children's comfort and play.
- Provide a variety of experiences for nonmobile infants.
- Use the same support strategies used at choice time.
- Observe nature with children.
- Bring outside time to a gentle close.

Daily Events (continued)

Group Time

Children. **Caregivers do not plan group times for the youngest, nonmobile infants.** In settings with mixed-age groups, however, these very young infants, when awake, may watch the group activity of the older children from a safe vantage point. Watching allows infants to be part of the communal action, and they often will be eager to join group time once they can sit up and use both hands for exploration.

Older infants and toddlers explore and play with materials at group time as much as they do at choice time. Mobile infants enjoy very simple group experiences, such as splashing in water. During music and movement activities with older children, they are apt to watch from a distance or from the safety of a caregiver's lap. Young toddlers may drift in and out of group time, while older toddlers, with their increasing sociability and sense of self, are both likely to engage in social conflict **and** likely to sense the needs of their peers as they go about a grouptime activity.

Adults. During group time, caregivers present children with a specific set of materials or some experience that may be new or of particular interest to them. Caregivers then support the choices children make as they explore, try out their own

Daily Events (continued)

ideas, and solve problems in connection with the materials or experience presented. The following strategies contribute to carrying out this role:

- Plan ahead and provide active group experiences.
  - Introduce new materials and actions
  - Revisit favorite materials and actions
  - Plan around the key developmental indicator (KDIs) and/or Infant-Toddler Child Observation Record (COR) items
  - Provide movement and music experiences
- Gather materials and offer them to children.
- Respect children's choices and ideas about using the materials.
- Comment briefly and specifically on what children are doing.
- Interpret children's actions and communications for other children.
- Let children's actions signal when group time should end.

Caregiving Routines

Feeding and Mealtime

Children. Young infants enjoy a bottle, satisfy their hunger, and pause from time to time to gaze at something that catches their attention — the caregiver's face, another child, the movement of a curtain. In the security of their caregiver's arms, bottle-feeding infants are free to set their own pace, dividing their energies between drinking and examining the world through their eyes.

Older infants bring new physical skills to eating. They can sit unassisted, so they have greater control of their arms and hands and can easily put things in their mouths! They use mealtime for problem solving, exploring, and developing physical skills. Toddlers continue to explore food and materials during mealtime. They also tend to enjoy socializing and interacting with others as they eat.

Caregiving Routines (continued)

As caregivers become accustomed to the exploratory feeding and mealtime practices of infants and toddlers, they find, much to their relief, that most children also do actually eat their food — in adequate quantities and at a pace that meets their personal needs — and thus they receive the benefits of good nutrition. At the same time, caregivers know that fingering food and dribbling milk are normal behaviors at feeding or mealtime in an infant-toddler care setting.

Infants and toddlers do not refrain from active learning as they eat. They simply transfer their attention and actions to things edible! While they are not yet ready to practice formal table manners, they do engage in an experience that eventually leads to manners — the pleasure of eating and conversing in a warm, supportive setting.

Adults. During feeding or mealtime, caregivers provide a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere so children can eat and enjoy their food in the company of others. The following strategies help them carry out this role:

- Hold and pay close attention to the bottle-feeding infant.
- Support the older infant's interest in feeding him- or herself.
- Join toddlers at the table.
- Include older toddlers in mealtime setup and cleanup.

Caregiving Routines (continued)

Bodily Care

Children. As adults help younger children with their bodily care routines, the children will continue to explore, play, fuss, babble, talk, cling, laugh, giggle, wiggle, drop things on the floor, ask questions, grumble, put things in their mouth, cry, smile. In other words, they remain sensory-motor learners even when engaged in an activity that is largely adult-controlled. As they grow from infants to toddlers, however, children can begin to take an increasingly active role in their own care routines.

Nonmobile infants are apt to lie fairly still for the diapering and washing process. As they lie there, they are often content to simply gaze at their caregiver's face or some nearby interesting object. They may also smile, imitate simple sounds the caregiver makes, grasp her finger, or hold some easily grasped object, such as a rattle or a small wooden spoon.

Caregiving Routines (continued)

Enjoying their newfound mobility, older infants tend to move around a lot during their bodily care routines. They may roll back and forth, kick their legs, or put their toes in their mouth. They may reach for and try to grasp their caregiver's hair, glasses, or shirt — or any appealing thing within reach. Given a clean washcloth or a clean diaper to hold, an older infant may drop it over his or her own face, then pull it away, initiating a game of peek-a-boo.

By the time they can walk, young toddlers often actively resist the idea of lying still on their back for any length of time, especially just for a diaper change! Climbing up and down the steps of the changing table seems to make up for some of this temporary constraint. To have **some** control over their own diapering-washing-dressing process, young toddlers need to take as much action on their own behalf as possible — using their own washcloth or towel and picking out which diaper, diaper cover, or clean clothing to wear. They enjoy communicating in a give and- take manner and playing hiding games.

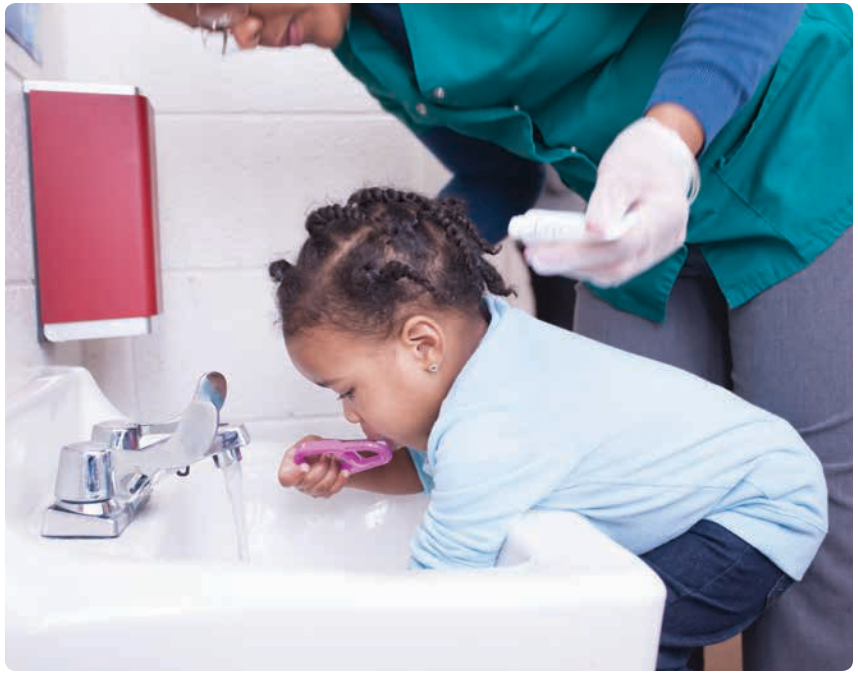
Older toddlers are quite involved in their own bodily care routines and often refuse help:

"Me do it!" They can take off their own diapers, shoes, socks, pants, and shirt; wash their own hands and face by themselves at the sink; and fetch their own clean clothes and diapers. Toward the end of their second year, many older toddlers take an interest in sitting on the potty or toilet and passing the time there with an interesting picture book or magazine.

Caregiving Routines (continued)

Adults. While going through the routines of children's bodily care, caregivers try to share control with children as much as possible by following child cues and finding ways for the infant or toddler to take an active part in the task at hand. Being mindful of the following specific strategies is helpful in carrying out this role:

- Fit bodily care around the child's exploration and play.
- Focus on the child at hand during the bodily care routine.
- Give the child choices about parts of the routine.
- Encourage the child to do things for her- or himself.



Caregiving Routines (continued)

Naptime

Children. For the most part, children in an infant-toddler program fall asleep at naptime.

And if they do not sleep, they rest. Most infants take from two to three sleeping naps a day, whereas for older toddlers, one nap after lunch generally is enough. While most toddlers take either a long or a short sleeping nap, some get the rest they need by lying awake on their cots for some or all of their naptime, looking at books or busying themselves quietly with some chosen plaything.

Adults. Caregivers respect and accommodate each child's need to sleep or rest when tired and to wake up on his or her own when rested. They use these specific strategies in doing so:

- Schedule naptime around each child's individual needs.
- Help children settle down to nap.
- Provide quiet alternatives for nonsleepers.
- Provide for children's various styles of waking up.

Source: Adapted from Post, J., Hohmann, M., & Epstein, A. S. (2011). *Tender care and early learning: Supporting infants and toddlers in child care settings* (2nd ed.). Ypsilanti, MI: HighScope Press, Chapter 5, pp. 280–391.