

Introduction: The HighScope Infant-Toddler Curriculum

Two principles are central to the HighScope Curriculum. The first is that children construct their understanding of the world from their active involvement with people, materials, and ideas. The second principle...is that the role of adults who teach and care for children is to support children's construction of their own understanding of the world.

— Powell (1991, p. 26)

Since the 1960s, early childhood professionals around the nation have been using the HighScope Curriculum with preschool children (three- and four-year-olds) (Epstein, 2014; Hohmann, Weikart, & Epstein, 2008). Although HighScope's work with infants and toddlers (ages birth to three) also began in the 1960s, questions about how to support active learning with very young children multiplied in the 1990s. Searching for and finding answers to these questions resulted in the first edition of this book, *Tender Care and Early Learning: Supporting Infants and Toddlers in Child Care Settings* (Post & Hohmann, 2000). That book represented what we knew to date about implementing the HighScope Infant-Toddler Curriculum in child care settings.

In the decade since the publication of *Tender Care and Early Learning*, the field's knowledge about the earliest years of life has grown enormously. Discoveries in brain research, for example, empirically support what caregivers and teachers intuitively sensed about the role of early experience in later development. Systematic program evaluations have provided new insights into how the quality of care can affect young children's social-emotional growth and intellectual progress. In addition, group care for infants and toddlers has become a fact of life in today's world, in which increasing numbers of employed parents must find out-of-home care for their young children.

This second edition of *Tender Care and Early Learning* updates the theoretical and research information on infant and

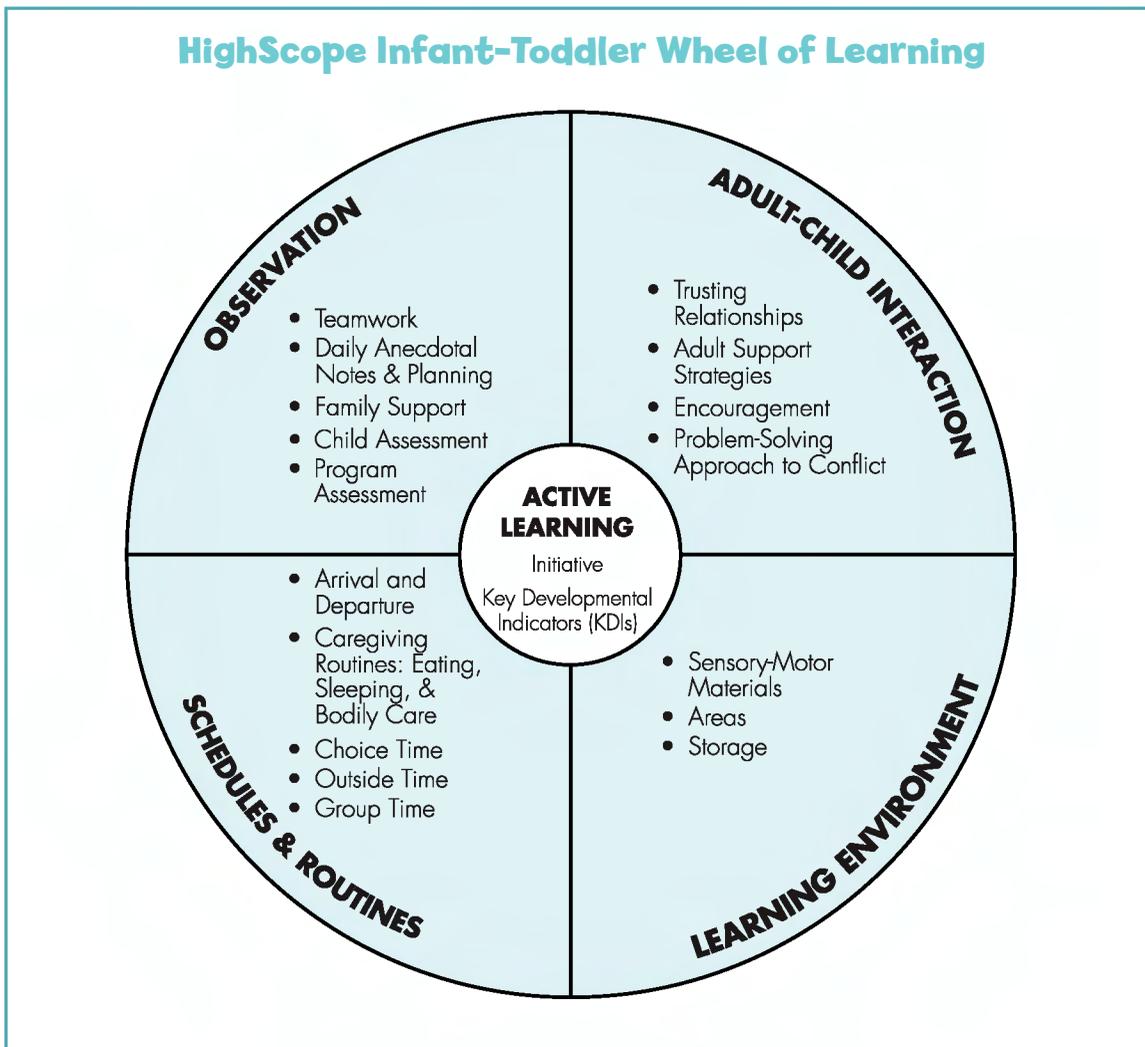
toddler development. Since the first book was written, HighScope itself has actively contributed to the ongoing transformation of the field as a whole. Our early childhood specialists now deliver a systematic and comprehensive course of training workshops for caregivers and supervisors, observe in and consult with a wide variety of program settings, and train others to use the validated child and program assessment tools we have developed. We publish print and audiovisual materials to support the implementation of high-quality programs in the United States and abroad.

In sum, the HighScope Infant-Toddler Curriculum has reaffirmed its core principles while simultaneously refining its content as a result of this engagement. We have learned a great deal by reflecting on our interactions with home visitors and with the many practitioners who are effectively nurturing and educating infants and toddlers in centers and family child care homes. (See the Appendix for a historical overview of HighScope and its work with infants and toddlers.)

This book captures the lessons learned by researchers and practitioners everywhere and from HighScope's direct involvement in the growing and vital field of infant and toddler programs.

Principles Guiding the HighScope Infant-Toddler Curriculum

The HighScope infant-toddler wheel of learning (p. 3) graphically represents the major ideas that guide the HighScope



Infant-Toddler Curriculum: active learning for children; warm, supportive adult-child interaction; a welcoming, child-oriented learning environment; schedules and routines that flow with the children; daily child observation that guides caregivers' interactions with children, caregivers' teamwork, caregiver-parent partnerships, and program planning; and ongoing and valid assessment of children and programs to ensure that program goals to support early

learning and deliver high-quality services are being met.

Active learning

Infants and toddlers are active learners from birth. Through their ongoing relationships with people and their explorations of the materials in their immediate world, they figure out how to move at will; how to hold and act on objects; and how to communicate and interact with parents,



In HighScope infant-toddler programs, active learning flows from children's trusting relationships with adults. Tender care and support for early learning are provided by adult teamwork, an engaging environment, and child-centered schedules and routines.

family members, peers, and caregivers. As active learners, infants and toddlers watch, reach for, and grasp people and materials that particularly attract their attention. They choose objects and people to play with and explore, initiate actions that particularly interest them, and respond to various events in their environment. Through their own unique combination of gestures, facial expressions, noises, and (eventually) words, they communicate their feelings and ideas. Throughout their explorations, they rely on parents and caregivers to attend to, support, and build on their actions, choices, and ways of communicating.

When surrounded by adults — parents, other family members, teachers — who understand the very young child’s need to explore and thus build understanding, infants and toddlers develop a sense of trust in themselves and others that enables them to become curious, autonomous learners. They *initiate* their own “voyages of discovery” off the blanket and into the next room, driven by the desire to see what interesting people and things might lie around the corner. Even the most adventurous active learners, however, return from time to time to “home base,” that trusting and trusted adult, to assure themselves that comfort and safety are well within their reach.

The *key developmental indicators (KDIs)* represent what infants and toddlers discover in their daily learning adventures. Individual **approaches to learning** begin to emerge as they encounter and

solve problems in play (*Maybe I can reach that rattle if I roll over onto my stomach*). Children’s **social and emotional development** proceeds as they gain a sense of self (a realization that they are separate from others) and form relationships (*This is my mom; Sara is my friend*). In the area of **physical development and health**, young children move their bodies for sheer pleasure and also to serve their purposes (*I can crawl to that other baby*). Initiating and responding to verbal interactions and exploring picture books are early signs of emerging abilities in **communication, language, and literacy**.

Cognitive development involves exploration to discover how the world works. For example, children signal their understanding of the concept “more” (with words, gestures, or sign language), discover similarities and differences between objects (*These roll away; those do not*), and observe cause and effect (*When I poke the bubble, it bursts*).

In the **creative arts**, children work with building and collage materials, begin to engage in pretend play, and sway to different types of music.

Active learning is the axle on which the HighScope wheel of learning turns. In active learning settings, adults support children’s initiatives and desire to explore with all their senses. They understand that children’s self-motivated explorations, supported by knowledgeable caregivers, lead to meaningful learning experiences in all the content areas that are key to healthy human growth and development.



Developing trusting relationships with adults is critical for young children at child care settings.

Adult-child interaction

Infants and toddlers are explorers. To gather the strength and courage they need to go forth each day, they rely on the support of their parents and teachers. Their interactions with trusted adults at home and away from home provide the emotional fuel infants and toddlers need to puzzle out the mysteries of the social and physical world.

Because *trusting relationships* are so important, programs strive to ensure that each infant or toddler in a child care center or home has the same primary caregiver or teacher throughout enrollment, whether that be for six months or three years. (See

“Caregivers and Teachers” on p. 7 for a discussion of the terms used in this book.) In settings with multiple caregivers, each one is the “primary” for only a small group of children, and the staff form a stable team that provides long-term continuity of care for children and families.

Caregivers strive to form positive, reciprocal relationships with children — relationships in which *encouragement* is the key. They cuddle, hold, play, and talk with children in a warm, unhurried, give-and-take manner. They establish a psychologically safe environment, where children’s initiatives are regarded as purposeful rather than naughty or bothersome for adults.

Guided by practical theories of child development, teachers and caregivers attempt to see things from the child’s point of view, encourage rather than thwart children’s efforts and communications, take cues from children rather than impose their own ideas, and assume a *problem-solving approach* to children’s interpersonal conflicts rather than punish children or solve their problems for them.

Very young children are just formulating a sense of themselves and an understanding of what the rest of the world is all about. As they are doing so, interactions with parents, teachers, and other significant adults influence the life-long conclusions children draw from their experiences. For example, if parents’ and caregivers’ interactions are supportive, this shapes children’s perceptions of themselves as capable, trusted, and trustworthy human

beings. If teachers share their excitement in discovery, children see their environment as an interesting place in which learning is inherently rewarding. Therefore, positive, consistent, ongoing *adult support* is critical in satisfying a child's need to actively explore and construct a personal understanding of the world.

Learning environment

Providing an active learning environment for infants and toddlers encourages their need to look, listen, wiggle, roll, crawl, climb, rock, bounce, rest, eat, make noise, grasp or mouth or drop things, and be messy from time to time. In a HighScope

infant-toddler program, the physical space is safe, flexible, and child oriented to provide comfort and variety and to accommodate children's changing developmental needs and interests. It includes a wide variety of *sensory-motor materials* infants and toddlers can reach, explore, and play with in their own way at their own pace. The *storage* of these materials is consistent, personalized, and accessible so that infants and toddlers can reach or get to the materials they see and want to explore. The space and materials are organized into play and care *areas* that serve the needs of infants and toddlers. The diapering area, for example, may be located next

Caregivers and Teachers

The terms *caregiver* and *teacher* are used interchangeably throughout this book to emphasize two very important roles played by the adults who work with very young children. The primary role of adults who spend time with infants and toddlers is that of caregiver. It is essential that adults establish strong and secure relationships through the everyday caregiving routines and interactions they provide. However, all those who care for infants and toddlers inevitably educate them as well.

For example, effective caregivers converse with both nonverbal and verbal infants and toddlers, thereby laying the foundation for early language and literacy development. As they rock and sing to very young children, adults support their physical development and expose them to the arts. When adults ask children if they want "more" juice or "another" block or sheet of paper,

they are providing early mathematical experiences in concepts about quantity. In all these ways, effective teachers engage children in the joys of mastering a wide variety of knowledge and skills. However, they always do so within the context of a warm and supportive environment in which they provide young children with nurturing care and trusting relationships.

Early learning is thus comprehensive and integrated. When we care for very young children, we inspire and encourage them to learn. When we teach very young children, we show that we care about their overall well-being. Caregiving and teaching cannot be separated. Infants and toddlers depend on us to provide and be consistent in carrying out both these roles.

to a window that looks out onto a flower box or a bird feeder. The toddler block area includes a good supply of small and large blocks for satisfying stacking and balancing experiences. The learning environment, in short, is secure and inviting. Within its boundaries, infants and toddlers are free to move about, explore materials, exercise creativity, and solve problems.

Schedules and routines

In an active learning infant-toddler setting, schedules (the daily sequence of events such as *choice time*, *lunch*, *outside time*) and routines (caregiving interactions during *eating*, *sleeping*, and *bodily care*) are anchored, for each child, around a primary caregiver. Having this caregiver as a “home base” provides the very young child with a sense of security while away from home. Following children’s cues and initiatives, caregivers, in partnership with parents, establish center schedules and routines that are consistent in order and interaction style so children can anticipate what happens next, yet flexible enough to accommodate children’s individual rhythms and temperaments.

The schedules and routines are repetitive enough to enable children to explore, practice, and gain confidence in their developing skills, yet they allow children to move smoothly, at their own pace, from one interesting experience to another. Caregivers plan flexible, child-centered *group times*. They also work with parents to make *arrival* and *departure* leisurely and comforting. Children make choices

about materials and actions throughout the day, and adults support and encourage children’s initiatives during each time period and routine interaction. Altogether, caregivers design schedules and routines around children’s needs and interests to give children a sense of control and belonging.

Observation

Child observation is an essential component of the HighScope Infant-Toddler Curriculum, since knowledge of individual children shapes not only the interactions caregivers have with children and parents but also the learning environment and the schedules and routines at the center. To observe and learn as much as possible from children, adults in infant-toddler centers rely on *teamwork*. Caregivers work as partners with parents to provide continuity of care between home and center.

Primary caregivers work together in teams for mutual support throughout the day; together, they provide *family support*; make decisions about space, materials, schedules, routines, and daily responsibilities; and discuss and plan around their daily observations of children. As they work “on the floor” with children, they collect *daily anecdotal notes*. At *daily team-planning time*, they discuss their observations of what individual children did and said that day, and they use these observations to guide their own behavior in supporting children the next day. They also exchange child observations with parents, both to celebrate children’s

actions and development and to nurture a partnership with families, so children can be supported consistently at home and at the center.

The ongoing assessment of children and programs helps caregivers meet their goals for early learning through the delivery of high-quality services. Not only do *child assessment* and *program assessment* allow caregivers to determine what is happening with the children and families they serve, they also let them take stock of how well the program is operating and what steps they can take to improve caregiving practices and overall program management.

Caregivers and teachers often know instinctively when children are progressing and when they need extra support. Likewise, they may have an inner sense of their own and their colleagues' strengths and areas in need of improvement. However, systematic assessment helps to confirm and elaborate their impressions. Sometimes it even offers surprises and inspires caregivers and teachers to think in new ways about the development of individual children, the dynamics of the group, relationships with parents and coworkers, and their own professional advancement.

To permit the systematic assessment of children's progress and program implementation, respectively, HighScope has developed and validated two instruments: COR Advantage (the latest version of HighScope's Child Observation Record) and the Infant-Toddler Program Quality Assessment (PQA). Using these tools will

help programs create an active learning environment in which young children and their caregivers can learn and flourish.

These guiding principles — active learning, supportive adult-child interaction, a child-oriented learning environment, schedules and routines that flow with the children, daily child observation to guide teamwork among staff and parents, and ongoing child and program assessment — keep the HighScope infant-toddler wheel of learning turning. They also serve as a framework for this book, which elaborates on each of these six principles so caregivers in infant-toddler child care settings can put into practice the HighScope Infant-Toddler Curriculum.

Research-Based Curriculum

All HighScope infant-toddler curriculum materials and services are grounded in a profound respect for practitioners and parents and the primacy of their bond with the children in their care. These adults play a vital role as teachers in the broadest sense of that term. The curriculum and training model further reflect the constructivist theories pioneered by psychologist Jean Piaget (1952), the importance of scaffolding derived from the work of Lev Vygotsky (1934/1986), and the results of current cognitive-developmental research (e.g., Goswami, 2002; National Research Council, 2000; Smith, 2002).

Emerging findings about early brain development also support the active learning approach that is central to the



Providing infants with sensory experiences helps optimize the brain circuits that develop at that time.

curriculum's theory and practice (e.g., National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2004, 2007; Rushton, 2001; Shore, 2003; Zero to Three and the Ounce of Prevention Fund, 2000).

For example, *Starting Smart: How Early Experiences Affect Brain Development* (Zero to Three and the Ounce of Prevention Fund, 2000) describes how the trillions of neural connections babies are born with are selectively strengthened or pruned away in the early months and years of life. This process allows the developing child to keep and enhance the pathways that serve a useful purpose while eliminating those that are unnecessary or redundant. Because the brain becomes less “plastic” or changeable over time, it is important for the environment to provide infants and toddlers with key early experiences before critical “windows of opportunity” close. Language development offers a good illustration of this principle. The number and variety of words that children hear by the time they reach age three is a significant predictor of later literacy development (Hart & Risley, 1999).

Early environments and experiences have an exceptionally strong influence on the architecture and functioning of the brain. Different brain circuits mature at different points in development. Newborns need “basic sensory, social, and emotional experiences...for optimizing the architecture of low-level circuits” (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2007, p. 4). The critical period for the low-level circuits responsible for sight and hearing, for example, ends early. By contrast, “more sophisticated kinds of experiences are critical for shaping higher-level circuits,” including the circuits that process communication signals (such

as language and the emotions in facial expressions), and end much later in development (p. 4).

Because both the timing and content of early experiences are important, those responsible for the care and education of very young children should neither underestimate nor overestimate what their brains are capable of processing. In keeping with the latest knowledge derived from theory, research, and practice, the content of the HighScope Infant-Toddler Curriculum is therefore organized around six areas that frame the timely and appropriate experiences that promote learning in all domains of development. These six content areas are **approaches to learning; social and emotional development; physical development and health; communication, language, and literacy; cognitive development; and creative arts.**

The KDIs in each content area reflect the physical, cognitive, affective, and social changes that occur during these early and critical years of human growth. (See Chapter 1 for a list of the KDIs in each of the content areas.)

How This Book Is Organized

This second edition of *Tender Care and Early Learning* starts in the middle of the infant-toddler wheel of learning, with active learning. The remaining chapters in this book then turn to each of the outer sections of the wheel and the overarching role of assessment:

Chapter 1, “Active Learning and Key Developmental Indicators,” describes how infants and toddlers learn through action and social relationships and introduces the KDIs as a way of seeing, understanding, supporting, and building on the broad range of things they learn about.

Chapter 2, “The Caregiving Team and Their Partnership With Parents,” focuses on the elements of effective caregiving teams and caregiver-parent partnerships and describes strategies for working together to support infants’ and toddlers’ growth and development.

Chapter 3, “Supportive Adult-Child Interactions,” discusses the role of the primary caregiver, continuity of care, and specific adult-child interaction strategies teachers and caregivers can use to nurture and support active learners.

Chapter 4, “Arranging and Equipping the Learning Environment,” provides general guidelines for organizing active learning environments and specific strategies for selecting materials and arranging spaces to support the exploration and play of infants and toddlers.

Chapter 5, “Establishing Schedules and Routines,” defines child-centered schedules and caregiving routines and discusses specific caregiver roles during each part of the day.

Chapter 6, “Child and Program Assessment,” describes validated assessment tools for monitoring children’s developmental progress and establishing and maintaining high-quality infant and toddler programs.

What's an Infant? What's a Toddler?

The terms *young infants*, *older infants*, *young toddlers*, and *older toddlers*, without exact ages specified, will be used throughout this book. In general, we focus on children's actions and behaviors rather than on their ages, because we realize that human development occurs sequentially but at highly individual rates (e.g., babies usually learn to roll over before they learn to sit by themselves, but some begin to sit unaided at 6 months, whereas others do so at 10 or 11 months).

In our shorthand for children at various developmental stages, "young infants" means babies who are not yet sitting by themselves (they may range in age from birth to 9 or 10 months); "older infants" can sit unaided and are learning to creep, crawl, pull themselves up to stand, and cruise upright from place to place by holding on to props (they may range in age from 5 months to 18 months); "young toddlers" can toddle and walk unaided, with both hands free for exploration; "older toddlers" are more sure on their feet, more skilled with their hands, and more adept at verbal communication ("toddlers," as a group, range in age from 12 months to 3 years, with "younger toddlers" generally ranging from 12 to 24 months, and "older toddlers" ranging from 24 to 36 months).





This second edition of *Tender Care and Early Learning* draws together HighScope's experiences with infants, toddlers, and parents over the past 30 years and the current experience of HighScope trainers and caregivers as they provide an active learning environment for infants and toddlers in a range of program settings, from small to large and from serving mixed-age groups (infants and toddlers together) to serving groups separated by age (e.g., young infants together, older infants together, young toddlers together, older toddlers together). See "What's an Infant? What's a Toddler?" on page 12.

In this book, we present strategies for out-of-home care that promote a

tender approach to early learning. It is an approach that focuses on children's strengths; builds healthy relationships between parent and child, caregiver and child, center and family, and children themselves; and supports the growth and development of very young children, their families, and their caregivers.

Tender Care and Early Learning strives to embed the practical experience in a framework based on current theory and research in infant and toddler development. It is our hope that this blend of field-based and academic knowledge proves both friendly and useful to caregivers and teachers who provide day-to-day care and education to very young children and their families in diverse home- and center-based settings.

Appendix: History of the HighScope Infant-Toddler Approach

HighScope has a long history of curriculum development, training, and research in the area of infant-toddler development, beginning with parent education programs and community support for families.

HighScope's First Infant-Toddler Projects

Members of the HighScope infant division, acting under the direction of Dolores Lambie and David Weikart, began their work in parent-infant education with the 1968–1971 **Ypsilanti-Carnegie Infant Education Project** (Epstein & Weikart, 1979; Lambie et al., 1974). Funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York, this project trained professional staff to work as home visitors with mothers of infants between 3 months and 11 months old. The home visitor would meet with a mother and her infant in their home once each week for 16 weeks to play infant-centered games and to discuss child development. The parent-visitor discussions focused specifically on what the infant was doing and communicating during and between visits. Research findings from this project revealed that mothers who participated in the home visits showed more verbal interaction with their infants than did mothers in the project's randomly assigned contrast and control groups; the mothers' increased verbal interaction, in turn, facilitated their children's cognitive development (Lambie et al., 1974).

Following the Infant Education Project, Carnegie funded the **HighScope Infant**

Videotaping Project (1971–1973), which resulted in 270 hours of video footage of home visitors, parents, and infants engaging in informal interactions. HighScope staff used this footage to produce videotapes on home visitor training, child development, and strategies for supporting early learning. These videotapes, and the processes they documented, became the basis for HighScope's entry into the early phases of training and dissemination in the parent-infant arena.

By 1974, HighScope staff had developed the core of what was called the Parent-to-Parent Model (Reschly, 1979). Between 1975 and 1978, with funds from Lilly Endowment Incorporated and the National Institute for Mental Health, they implemented the **Parent-to-Parent Home Visit Project**. Four women who had participated as parents in one of the earlier home visit projects became home visitors themselves. This shift from using professionals to using paraprofessionals as the vehicle for service delivery reflected a then-current trend in the family-service sector. Researchers and practitioners had begun to recognize that members of the community, with some training and with supervision by trained professionals, could establish rapport with families and effectively share child development information with parents. The evolution of four program recipients into program providers enabled the process that began with the Infant Education Project to grow within the community, creating a framework for community service by and for the parents. The

four parents who had become paraprofessionals were peers, not outside experts, sharing child development information with parents. By focusing on how to best support children's development, both the peer home visitors and the parents grew in their understanding of how children learn. (For more information, see Epstein & Evans [1979]).

HighScope's fourth project relating to parents and infants, the **Adolescent Parents and Infants Project**, began in 1977 with funding from the Administration for Children, Youth and Families (now called the Administration for Children and Families) in the US Department of Health and Human Services. Research staff interviewed 98 teenager mothers from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds twice — once during pregnancy and once six months after giving birth. They also videotaped these young parents interacting with their infants. The project's goals were to find out how much teenagers know (and need to know) about infant development, what their expectations and attitudes are toward becoming parents, what support systems inside and outside their family they have, and how these factors affect their interactions with their babies (Epstein, 1980a).

The research documented that adolescent parents' expectations for their infants' development were "too little, too late" and emphasized the need for programs to help young parents become better observers and supporters of their babies' growth. Moreover, family and community support was vital to allow the young mother

to continue her own development so that she, in turn, could facilitate the development of her child. For further details on the research results, see Epstein (1980b).

HighScope's Parent-to-Parent and Parent-Infant Projects

The fifth and largest initiative, the **Parent-to-Parent Dissemination Project** (HighScope, n.d.), was supported by a grant from the Bernard van Leer Foundation and ran from 1978 to 1984. Members of HighScope's family programs division, working under the direction of Judith Evans, trained people in seven diverse communities across the United States to set up their own local parent-to-parent programs. By 1981 three communities had each developed a Regional Parent-to-Parent Training and Dissemination Center. Staff at these centers provided parent-to-parent training for their regions, helped other communities start parent-to-parent programs, and acted as community resources for other programs serving families and infants. "This is the first time in my life I've ever been treated like a person and not like a case," a parent receiving home visits reported (p. 30).

HighScope conducted a case-study follow-up of participants in the Parent-to-Parent Dissemination Project at four of the project sites from 1997–1999. The original project and the results of this qualitative follow-up were published in *Supporting Families With Young Children: The HighScope Parent-to-Parent Dissemination*

Parent-to-Parent Dissemination Project

HighScope conducted the Parent-to-Parent Dissemination Project in two phases. In the first phase (1978–1984), staff looked at whether the model program, which had been successfully implemented locally, could be effectively disseminated to seven other diverse communities. Evaluators found that the model program could indeed be transferred to other communities with the same level of success as the model program (Epstein et al., 2002).

In the second phase (1997–1999), staff conducted follow-up interviews with agencies and participants in four of these communities

to obtain information that would be of interest to program planners and policymakers, including what services in a parent-to-parent program should be delivered, how they should be delivered, who should deliver them, and how programs should be funded (Epstein et al., 2002). Evaluators found that services work best if they are coordinated in a central location and delivered by professionals and paraprofessionals working in partnership, promote parent involvement, and have stable and sustainable funding.

Project (Epstein, Montie, & Weikart, 2002). The initiative revealed important lessons about the factors that allow for successful program dissemination, including both the content of the curriculum and the system for funding and delivering services. (See “Parent-to-Parent Dissemination Project” above for a summary of the findings.)

A sixth parent-infant project occurred during the 1980s, when HighScope received funding to evaluate the Ford Foundation’s multisite **Child Survival/Fair Start Project**. This project worked with low-income parents and their infants in diverse agency settings and communities around the United States (Larner, Halpern, & Harkavy, 1992). In addition to funding HighScope’s evaluation of its project, the Ford Foundation provided funding that enabled HighScope to consolidate the lessons learned in the Parent-to-Parent

Dissemination Project and Child Survival/Fair Start. This subsequent multisite analysis resulted in publication of *A Guide to Developing Community-Based Family Support Programs* (Epstein, Larner, & Halpern, 1995), which contains guidelines for all the steps of designing, implementing, and evaluating comprehensive child development programs for families with very young children. As Epstein and her colleagues pointed out in this guide, partnerships with parents are vital: “The sustained personal relationship that develops between the family worker and the family is the key to achieving the objectives of home visiting programs” (p. 76).

The collective experiences of working with infants, parents, and community support agencies and the knowledge of child development gained through these several parent-infant projects also culminated

in three HighScope curriculum-focused publications: *Supporting the Changing Family: A Guide to the Parent-to-Parent Model* (Reschly, 1979); *Good Beginnings: Parenting in the Early Years* (Evans & Ilfeld, 1982b); and *Activities for Parent-Child Interaction, Supplement to Good Beginnings* (Evans & Ilfeld, 1982a). The principles of child development and adult support described in these publications in turn have influenced both editions of *Tender Care and Early Learning*. However, as the curriculum shifted from helping parents at home with their own children to supporting practitioners in settings serving groups of children, the implementation of these principles changed accordingly.

HighScope's Infant-Toddler Curriculum Today

Since the initial publication of *Tender Care and Early Learning* in 2000, the HighScope Infant-Toddler Curriculum has continued to evolve in its content, dissemination through onsite and online training, print and audiovisual support materials, and assessment tools. The KDIs¹ — the “content” that infants and toddlers learn through active exploration of their environment — have been refined and updated based on the latest child development theory and research. HighScope staff members disseminate a comprehensive series of workshops on infant-toddler development and the caregiving strategies that support it, based on the principles

and educational practices described in this book. Implementation is further supported through a variety of publications and DVDs on topics related to infants and toddlers.

To further support the implementation and effectiveness of child care settings, HighScope has developed and validated two assessment tools, one for children and one for programs. COR Advantage (Epstein et al., 2014b) uses caregivers' systematic and objective anecdotal notes to quantitatively assess young children's progress and plan for their ongoing development. The Infant-Toddler PQA (Hohmann, Lockhart, & Montie, 2013; Epstein et al., 2013) uses observational and interview data to rate the quality of curriculum implementation and program management. Together, these assessment tools help staff monitor and plan for children's growth and create high-quality, developmentally based services.

HighScope's Focus on Child Care Settings

Throughout the 1980s, as HighScope evaluated multisite parent-infant program initiatives implemented by other agencies, funding for its own parent-to-parent dissemination activity virtually disappeared. Later on, between 1989 and 1992, the Transactional Intervention Program, under the direction of Amy Powell, merged with HighScope to become the **HighScope Program for Infants and Toddlers With Special Needs**, a three-year national

¹KDIs were formerly called key experiences.

outreach training project funded by the US Education Department's Handicapped Children's Early Education Program. The purpose of this project was to help early childhood programs implement "a family-focused intervention model for special needs infants and toddlers and their families" through training and technical assistance (Powell, 1990, p. 12). The project was based on findings that children with special needs "are more actively engaged and achieve higher levels of language and cognitive functioning when their parents engage in a responsive, non-directive style of interaction — a style we call child-oriented" (p. 13). (For a summary of HighScope's infant-toddler work, see "A History of HighScope Infant-Toddler Activities" on p. 415.)

At the same time, the demand for training in the HighScope preschool approach for three- to five-year-olds accelerated, resulting in a network of HighScope-certified trainers working in early childhood settings across the nation. Over time, many of these preschool trainers assumed positions that required them to train and support staff working in settings that served infants and toddlers. Some of these trainers, on their own, adapted the HighScope active learning, constructivist approach to the infant-toddler programs they were working with. By the early 1990s, there was a clear need for HighScope to provide new infant-toddler materials directed toward center-based programs and family child care homes. In 1993, therefore, Jacalyn

Post and Mary Hohmann, the authors of the first edition of *Tender Care and Early Learning*, initiated a project to (1) gather the most accurate, up-to-date information about supporting infants and toddlers in HighScope-based programs and other active learning settings and (2) relate these findings to the earlier HighScope work represented in *Supporting the Changing Family* (Reschly, 1979) and *Good Beginnings* (Evans & Ilfeld, 1982b).

Altogether, caregivers and directors from 21 infant-toddler programs across the country completed surveys about their current practices and collected anecdotes and child observations for this book. These programs ranged from small (6 children) to large (10 rooms of 12 children each) and from serving mixed-age groups (infants and toddlers together) to serving groups separated by age (e.g., young infants together, older infants together, young toddlers together, older toddlers together). They included center-based programs, family child care homes, and a college-based drop-in child care center. In some programs, parents attended with their children for all or part of each session. Collectively, these programs served the needs of families from a wide spectrum of income levels.

Eight of the 21 programs were visited by one of the books' authors; the remaining 13 programs submitted their survey information in writing and through telephone conversations. Staff at all 21 sites answered questions about their program routines, interactions, adult teamwork, and

A History of HighScope Infant-Toddler Activities

1968–1971	Ypsilanti-Carnegie Infant Education Project: Home Teaching With Mother and Infants	1982–1989	Evaluation of the Ford Foundation's Child Survival/Fair Start Project
1971–1973	HighScope Infant Videotaping Project	1989–1992	HighScope Program for Infants and Toddlers With Special Needs funded by the US Department of Education
1974	Publication of <i>Home Teaching With Mothers and Infants</i> , by D. I. Lambie, J. T. Bond, and D. P. Weikart	1995	Publication of <i>A Guide to Developing Community-Based Family Support Programs</i> , by A. S. Epstein, M. Larner, and R. Halpern
1975–1978	Parent-to-Parent Home Visit Project	1997–1999	Case-study follow-up of the Parent-to-Parent Dissemination Project
1979	Publication of <i>Supporting the Changing Family: A Guide to the Parent-to-Parent Model</i> , by B. Reschly	2000	Publication of <i>Tender Care and Early Learning: Supporting Infants and Toddlers in Child Care Settings</i> , by J. Post and M. Hohmann
1979	Publication of <i>The Ypsilanti-Carnegie Infant Education Project: Longitudinal Follow-Up</i> , by A. S. Epstein and D. P. Weikart	2002	Publication of <i>Supporting Families With Young Children: The HighScope Parent-to-Parent Dissemination Project</i> by A. S. Epstein, J. Montie, and D. P. Weikart
1977–1980	Adolescent Parents and Infants Project funded by the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services	2002	Publication of the <i>Child Observation Record for Infants and Toddlers</i>
1978–1984	Bernard van Leer Parent-to-Parent Dissemination Project	2011	Publication of the <i>Infant-Toddler Program Quality Assessment Form A, Beta Version</i>
1982	Publication of <i>Good Beginnings: Parenting in the Early Years</i> and its supplement, <i>Activities for Parent-Child Interaction</i> , by J. Evans and E. Ilfeld	2011	Publication of <i>Tender Care and Early Learning, Second Edition</i> , by J. Post, M. Hohmann, and A. S. Epstein
n.d.	Publication of <i>Community Self-Help: The Parent-to-Parent Program</i>		

child observation. In addition, staff at each site received a working list of the curriculum content² for infants and toddlers (see “HighScope Infant-Toddler Key Developmental Indicators” on p. 33) along with anecdote-collection sheets and guidelines for collecting anecdotes through child observation. (For a discussion of observation-based anecdotes in team planning and in child assessment, see Chapters 2 and 6, respectively.) The idea was to collect data about infants and toddlers that could be used to validate the curriculum’s content and observational procedures.

Staff at each site collected observations of their children over four to six

months and submitted them to HighScope program developers and researchers. The results were gratifying. The ability of site staff to reliably observe and objectively document the activities of infants and toddlers was confirmed. Moreover, their anecdotes showed that very young children, with appropriate adult support, engaged in the kinds of activities captured in the curriculum’s content. Many of these child observations and adult-child interactions are included in this book, along with new anecdotes contributed by the infant and toddler programs we have worked with since then.

²Curriculum content was called “key experiences” at that time but has since been renamed KDIs.