Positive Care of Infants and Toddlers: A Cornerstone for addressing the Achievement Gap

Carol A. Leitschuh, PhD
Affiliate Faculty
Center on Early Education and Development
Center on Neurobehavioral Development
Leitschu Consulting
leitschu@umn.edu
1. When delay is development is apparent, intervene now.  Shankoff 2000
Mommy: This is fun!
Brains
Brain Architecture: neurons

- Early experiences establishes the quality *foundation* for all of the development
Play is the medium by which young children learn. Piaget 1953.
2. Find early reading’s place in infancy and toddlerhood:
Onset of crawl = explosion of cognitive skill, Campos et al, 2000
Brains and Locomotion

- Child learns:
  - themself,
  - important people,
  - environment

Adolph et al, 2000
Babies’ Intelligence

• Organized in experiences in the physical world.
• Rich and full.
• Driven to explore
• Move, act
• Be playful
3. Intervene knowing child, environment, activity is UNIQUE.
BEST PRACTICE:
Infants’ Physical Play

– Interact with caregivers in daily physical activity: Actively Engaged Adult
  – dedicated to exploration of environment
    • day is active
    • not restricted for long periods of time
    • activity promotes movement skills

• (call 800-321-0789, www.aahperd.org/naspe)
BEST PRACTICE

Toddlers: structured play

20 minutes TOTAL

– equipment child-size (boxes),
– body awareness games (bath, eating),
– chase games (morning),
– in/out, under/over
Toddlers: Unstructured

- at least 60 minutes daily...
- be alongside adults
- Walk, run, stand, stoop, crawl, grasp, toys, sandboxes,
- toys/boxes: push, pull;
- safely: balance, climb up/jump down
nothing is isolated

Developing social, emotional, physical and cognitive skill is *highly inter-related*.
### Transition in Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prone</th>
<th>Supine</th>
<th>Sidelic</th>
<th>Sit</th>
<th>Pull to Knee</th>
<th>Kneel</th>
<th>Pull to Stand</th>
<th>Stand</th>
<th>Stoop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Locomotion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoot</th>
<th>Crawl</th>
<th>Crawl Over</th>
<th>Cruise</th>
<th>Cruise</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Run</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belly</td>
<td>3 pt</td>
<td>Up/down stairs/ramp</td>
<td>Flat</td>
<td>Up/down stairs/ramp</td>
<td>Flat</td>
<td>Up/down stairs/ramp</td>
<td>Up/down stairs/ramp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 pt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OK...mommy is helping...walk..
Push to **buy things** for children’s play
sit
stand