



Constructively Meeting 10 Challenges of Working With Infants, Toddlers, and Twos

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Guiding Principles

- Development begins in the prenatal period and extends throughout life.
- Nurturing and responsive relationships provide the foundation for healthy growth and development.
- Development occurs through a complex interaction between genetic factors and environmental experiences.
- Optimal growth is achieved when good health and nutrition are combined with nurturing and responsive caregiving.
- Genetic factors and environmental deficiencies can cause developmental delays.
- Development occurs across multiple domains.
- Development in one domain influences development in other domains.
- Development proceeds through a predictable sequence of milestones.
- Cultural context influences every aspect of development.
- Children's individual differences and temperament influence development and learning.
- Children's learning occurs throughout the day through everyday experiences and routines.
- Children's learning can be enhanced by families and early childhood teachers.
- All children can benefit and learn from sharing experiences with other children.
- There is a strong, direct connection between the early years and later success in school and life.

10 Challenges of Working with Infants, Toddlers, and Twos

Safe environment

Safety is more than just the physical environment. What constitutes a “safe environment?”

Communication

Communication is more than just talking. How do you communicate with infants and toddlers?

Emotional development

Social and emotional skills provide a basis for all learning. Why are relationships important? What can parents and teachers do to help even the very young begin to learn self-control and how to resolve conflicts?

Empathy

Empathy is about compassion and recognizing an “other.” What happens if empathy is not encouraged and developed?

Tantrums

Tantrums happen. What triggers a tantrum?

Biting

Biting is used for exploring, learning, and communicating. What factors in an environment foster biting?

Cognitive Stimulation

Providing the proper and enough cognitive stimulation is critical for early learning. What constitutes effective and valuable stimulation for an infant?

Baby Cues

Babies send us numerous cues. How should we respond to specific cues?

Calming a crying baby

Babies are going to cry. What are some techniques and ideas to help calm an upset and crying baby?

Language development

Babies begin to learn language before they are born. What can we do to promote optimal language development?

S E A L

Stimulus (any sensory provocation)



Emotion (positive or negative)



Attention (positive emotions drive executive functions—negative emotions drive survival)



Learning (the response to the attentional variant)

(adapted from Robert Sylwester's *A Biological Brain in a Cultural Classroom*)