

Infant and Toddler Newsletter-Summer 24

Sensory Experiences for Infant's and Toddlers

Sensory activities play a very important role in brain development and learning. Every day infant and toddlers should be offered opportunities for rich sensory experiences in a variety of ways. According to Murphy and Moon in Zero to Three Journal, "sensory experiences tell us who we are and where we are. The accumulation of images seen and heard, tasted, touched and smelled build a complex image of his surroundings in a little child's mind."

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/babies-and-their-senses/>

We are all to familiar with the fact that infants & toddlers explore the world by putting things in their mouths. Let's look at other ways we can enrich their experiences.

Tactile Experiences

- **Texture boards:** Creating texture boards with various fabrics like silk, wool and cotton allows infants to explore different tactile sensations.
- **Sensory bags:** Filling zip-lock bags with colored gel, beads or sand, offers a mess-free tactile experience that stimulates their fingers.
- **Play with edible materials:** Introducing safe edible materials like cooked pasta or soft fruits enables them to explore textures through touch and taste.
- **Go outside:** Taking babies outside to let them feel parts of nature such as trees or flowers gives them a sense of new textures, both rough and soft.

Auditory Explorations

- **Music and rhythm:** Playing gentle, soothing music or introducing musical instruments like shakers, drums and xylophones can encourage rhythmic exploration.
- **Storytelling and rhymes:** Engage infants with storytelling, nursery rhymes and soft-spoken words fosters language development and listening skills.
- **Nature sounds:** Allow infants to experience natural sounds like birds chirping or raindrops falling to create a calming and stimulating environment.

For more great ideas go to: <https://www.procaresoftware.com/blog/sensory-activities-for-infants-in-daycare/>

Infant and Toddler Summer Training Opportunities:

Tuesday July 16 6-9pm Salisbury

Wonderful Ones

Tuesday August 27 6:-9 pm (Virtual)

Bottoms Up! Tummy Time Fun

Saturday September 21 9-12 Noon (Wye Mills—ESHEC)

Hands-On Art for Twos



Eastern Shore Child
Care Resource Center

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Let's Look at the Regs



Regulations are not just rules. They are a guide to help us keep children safe.

.03 Activity Materials, Equipment, and Furnishings.

A. For indoor and outdoor activities, an operator shall provide to each group of children in care a sufficient quantity and variety of activity materials, equipment, and furnishings according to the numbers, ages, and developmental needs of the children.

B. Activity materials and equipment shall be:

(1) Provided for:

- (a) Vigorous play;
- (b) Creative and dramatic play;
- (c) Socialization;
- (d) Manipulation, including construction materials;
- (e) Exploration of art, music, language arts, and science; and
- (f) Individual pursuits;

(2) Appropriate to each child's individual development of cognitive, social, emotional, and fine and gross motor skills;

(3) Easily accessible to each child for whose use they are intended; and

(4) In good repair, clean, nontoxic, and free from hazards including lead paint.

C. In reviewing materials and equipment in before-school and after-school programs, the office shall take into consideration that the child has attended an instructional program during regular school hours.

D. Furnishings used by a child shall be scaled in proportion to the child's size.

E. The operator shall provide multipurpose tables and chairs for children who are 2 years old or older.

Rosalie Merryweather

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Play Materials for Infants

Choosing materials and toys to enrich an Infant and room can be a challenge. Materials should be developmentally appropriate and safe for these young learners. The National Association for Young Children (NAEYC) gives us guidance on selecting materials for Infants.

Good toys for young infants:

Things they can reach for, hold, suck on, shake, make noise with—rattles, large rings, squeeze toys, teething toys, soft dolls, textured balls, and vinyl and board books

Things to listen to—books with nursery rhymes and poems, and recordings of lullabies and simple songs

Things to look at—pictures of faces hung so baby can see them and unbreakable mirrors

Good toys for older infants:

Things to play pretend with—baby dolls, puppets, plastic and wood vehicles with wheels, and water toys

Things to drop and take out—plastic bowls, large beads, balls, and nesting toys

Things to build with—large soft blocks and wooden cubes

Things to use their large muscles with—large balls, push and pull toys, and low, soft things to crawl over

For additional ideas for toddlers go to: <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/play/toys>

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