

Exploring

infants and toddlers

Capital District Child Care Council

a tipsheet for parents and caregivers of children ages 0 to 2

Love, Learning & Early Literacy

Even before infants are talking, they can develop a life long love of reading. Babies who are included in warm conversation develop a love for the rhythm and patterns of words. The number of words a baby hears at an early age relates strongly to speech and vocabulary later on. All children learn best when they're in the presence of a loving trusted, nurturing adult.

Here are some language experiences that can help infants and toddlers grow.....

Encourage pretend conversations: Caregivers can encourage infants to “talk” by showing interest in babies’ coos and other sounds, mirroring babies’ facial expressions and responding to babies with animated vocal sounds.

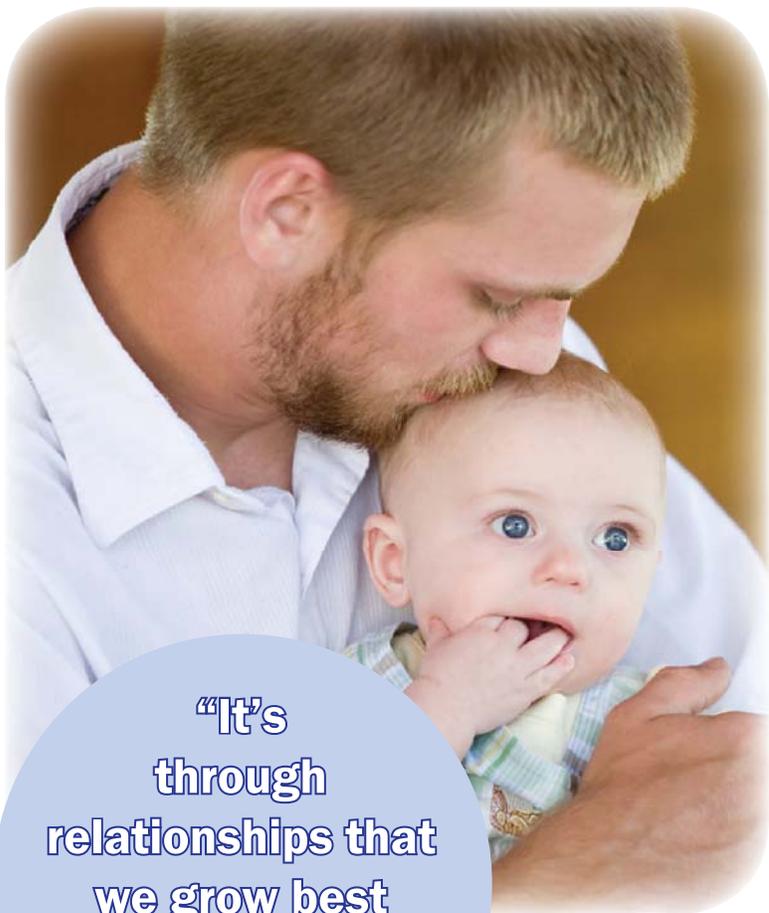
Play Word Games: Caregivers can play games like Pat-a-cake and This Little Piggy or.....
If the hen lives here (touch forehead)
And the cow lives down here (touch chin)
And I live over here (touch right cheek)
And the pig lives over there (touch left cheek)
Would you come over to see all of us?
(draw a circle all around baby’s face with finger)

Repeat baby’s first words: Celebrate by helping babies tie names to favorite faces like....”mama”, “dada”, and familiar items like..... “baba”, “ball” or “nose”.

Accentuate and sign along with descriptive words: “up”, “milk” and “more”.

Play with words and sound: Sing a diapering song that tells baby what is happening. Read the same stories over and over and over or play a dropping game by saying “oh oh!” each time baby drops a toy off of her high chair tray or knocks over a tower of blocks. Gently cup baby’s hands and clap out each syllable of her name as you sing or say it. Em/ma (2 claps) Ne/va/eh (3 claps)

**From Lullabies to Literacy: Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood/Family Communications (2005)*



“It’s
through
relationships that
we grow best
~ and learn best.”

Fred Rogers