

THE PARENTING EDUCATION PROGRAM

INFANT DEVELOPMENT AND CARE

The first two years of life, called infancy, involves rapid growth and dramatic changes. By the end of the first year, a baby will weigh about three times what it did at birth. Infants develop physically, emotionally, socially and mentally. Physical development includes not only their physical growth but also their sensory abilities and motor functions. Sensory abilities include sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. Motor functions include hand-eye coordination, sitting, reaching, standing, crawling, and walking. Infants also begin to develop emotionally. They are capable of feeling and expressing emotions such as happiness, sadness, and anger. Social development for babies involves their attachment to others and their ability to get their needs met through their behavior. Babies also develop mentally as they learn that objects exist and are separate from themselves.

Infants can see and respond to movement, color, brightness, distance, contrast, and shapes. Infants are sensitive to sounds and can also distinguish loudness and pitch. Babies often smile at the sound of a human voice, particularly that of their parents. Babies are also sensitive to different smells and tastes. Breast fed babies learn to recognize the smell of their own mother's milk. Research has shown that babies are capable of processing and responding to a much larger variety of sights, sounds, smells and tastes than previously believed.

Although young infants have very limited control of their muscles, they do have reflexes. These reflexes are involuntary movements such as sucking, grasping, coughing, and rooting. Rooting is turning the head in the direction of the cheek that is stroked. As motor skill develops, babies begin to have voluntary control of these reflexes.

Development of these voluntary muscle responses is enhanced when the baby is in a stimulating environment and motivated to respond voluntarily. Colorful toys or objects that move and make sounds, catch the attention of the infant. As the infant watches, grasps for, and handles these objects, they develop more voluntary motor control. Toys and human interaction provide opportunities and encouragement for babies to expand their development. As motor skills develop, the infant learns to roll over at about 3 months and to sit with support at 3 - 4 months. By six months, babies can stand while holding on to something and walk with help by around 9 months. At about one year babies are usually able to stand and walk alone. These time frames are approximate and can vary depending on the infant. Physical growth, maturing bones, muscles and nervous system, and practice are important for the infant's development. Good nutrition and stimulating surroundings are important for the physical development of infants.

Just as good nutrition is an important part of prenatal care, babies continue to need good nutrition. Many pediatricians (children's doctors) recommend use of vitamins to supplement baby's food intake. Generally young infants get their food needs from breast milk or formula. Breast milk has many advantages over formula. Babies generally do not have allergic reactions or difficulty digesting breast milk. It is convenient, inexpensive, always kept at the correct temperature, and supplies the baby with additional antibodies to protect against illness and disease. However, formula is a good substitute for baby if the mother does not choose to, or is not able to nurse the baby. Pediatricians can assist parents with decisions about formulas and when to start feeding babies solid foods and which foods are recommended. Our advanced medical science also makes it possible for babies to be protected from many dreaded diseases and illnesses through immunization. As parents, one of our most important jobs is to protect and provide for the safety of our children. Infants have their own special safety needs. Hundreds of infants and children die or are seriously injured each year through

household accidents. It is very important to baby-proof the home before the baby arrives.

It is also important to be aware of new hazards that develop as baby grows and learns to walk, climb and open doors and cabinets.

One of the most common dangers to young babies is that of accidental drowning OR choking. Infants can drown in a very small amount of water. They are often incapable of holding their heads up or turning over in a bath tub to prevent themselves from drowning. Infants should never be left alone while bathing, not even to answer the phone or the door. Babies and toddlers who can walk can easily drown in a pail of water or in the toilet. Their large heads can become stuck or unbalance them so that they cannot get out if they fall in. Babies can choke on small objects, or food and even their bottles. Babies should never be left with bottles propped up to feed them. They may begin to choke or spit up and can choke to death if not supervised and assisted.

Choking can also occur if excessive bedding, strings, ribbons, plastic bags, drapery cords, and the like, are left near an infant. All baby equipment should be checked to insure that it meets with safety guidelines and is in good operating condition. It is generally considered unsafe for infants to sleep in beds with adults. They may be accidentally crushed, pushed off of the bed, smothered, or tangled in bedding.

Due to their delicate digestive and immune systems it is important that formulas and foods be designed for consumption by infants and are free from harmful germs. Babies should not be given adult foods or beverages until they have adapted to them gradually. Babies should not be given medications intended for adults or children, or be given alcohol. Infant seats provide for the safety of children riding in automobiles. Children and infants who are seat belted are less likely to be injured in case of an accident or by simply falling while the car is stopping or moving. It is also less distracting for the driver when infants and children are secured.

Parents need to also consider protecting their children from kidnapping by closely supervising their children and checking the background of baby-sitters and care givers.

Safety latches designed to prevent infants from opening cabinets and doors can protect them from harmful household chemicals, cleaners, bug sprays, appliances, sharp objects and other harmful objects.

As infants grow and begin to have access to new things, it is important to reevaluate the abilities of young children and their safety in the home. Electrical sockets and cords can be very dangerous for little hands and exploring mouths. Children can easily be burned by heaters, irons, oven doors and cooking utensils.

Even healthy infants can suddenly become sick. They should be carefully monitored when sick since their condition can suddenly change and they may need medical attention quickly. Since infants can quickly disappear and get into things, it is important that they be closely supervised at all times by someone capable. Young children are not ready for the responsibility, or capable of making good decisions and closely observing infants, and should not be left in charge of them. Infants and young children feel more secure when they know they are supervised by a responsible caring person.

As human beings we are social beings, needing to have relationships and interactions with other human beings. Infants also need other human beings not only to provide for their physical needs, but also for their social needs. Socially, infants need to develop positive emotional bonds or attachments with other people. They become attached to those who express warmth and affection and take care of them. There are four stages of attachment for infants. From birth to age 3 months, infants use their sucking, grasping, smiling, gazing, cuddling and following with the eyes to maintain closeness or their attachment with those who take care of them. From 3 to 6 months they smile more and show more excitement with familiar persons. They also appear upset when a familiar person leaves. In the third stage, age 7 months through toddler stage, babies attempt to get closer to, or stay in contact with objects or persons they are attached to.

During the fourth stage, toddler stage and later, children behave and influence the behavior of others in order to be close. They ask to be read to, cuddled, and taken along in order to maintain closeness.

At about age 6 months, infants also show signs of their attachment through stranger anxiety. Stranger anxiety is the baby's discomfort or tension when around unfamiliar adults. They may express this by refusing to be held, clinging to their parents, looking away from a stranger, and pulling away from a stranger's touch. At around 9 months, babies develop separation anxiety. They begin to express anger or despair at being separated from their parents or care-giver. They may express this by trying to find or maintain physical contact with the parent or they may protest or pull away and withdraw from the parent. These are all normal reactions of the infant. It is important that infants not be punished for these behaviors, but gently reassured that they are cared for, safe and provided for as much as possible. A more predictable and stable relationship with parents and care-givers produces a more secure, adjusted baby and toddler.

Infants also learn to get their needs met through their behaviors. They cry in order to get someone to feed, change, hold and comfort them. This includes the need for physical contact and to be held. These are all important survival needs of the infant. If the parents respond to the infant in consistent and loving ways, the infant will feel more successful at getting their needs met. The infant then experiences their world as being more safe, and secure and they can develop trust which enhances their social and emotional development.

The new born infant's emotions tend to be connected to the internal state of the baby. The baby's physical comfort or discomfort seems to be source of their emotions. As the baby begins to develop more awareness of their environment and events around them, their emotions become tied to things outside of themselves. They smile at familiar faces and begin to respond to the emotions of others around them. Babies begin to develop a sense of themselves and their worth

from their parents. They need to be held and see a reflection of themselves in their parents eyes as being approved of and loved. Babies also learn how express their emotions from those around them. Emotions are an important feature of being human. Emotions allow us to know something about ourselves or our situations and respond. It is important for parents to learn and model appropriate ways of expressing their emotions.

One of the interesting phases in the mental development of infants is called object permanence. It means that infants develop the concept that an object continues to exist even if the baby cannot see or touch it. Prior to about 9 months old, an infant will not pursue an object that is taken from them or which drops from their hand out of view. The idea of "out of sight, out of mind" seems very real for an infant.

Although growing and developing rapidly, the infant is still totally dependent upon its parents or care-givers. Obviously, a baby would starve to death without the care of parents and care-givers. Babies also require much other care in order to be healthy and thrive. Taking care of the other physical needs of changing diapers, bathing, and clothing, burping, and holding, requires a lot of time and energy from parents and other care givers. Taking care of infants is also very emotionally draining. During the first few months after birth, both parents may be exhausted from the lack of sleep and irregularity of their schedules due to the needs of their baby. This can be a very difficult and stressful time for mother, father, and other family members. As the parents attempt to adjust to the demands of caring for their infant, their own individual and couple needs may be neglected, adding to their stress. In order to adjust to the role of parenting an infant, mutual support and negotiation about the child-rearing duties are important. This can also set the foundation for the way mother and father learn to relate to each other and support each other as parents throughout their parenthood. Parenting is a unique experience involving tremendous emotional investment and responsibility. When both parents actively participate in caring for

their children, the work can be decreased while the joys are increased. The child can benefit from the richness of developing close, caring and nurturing relationships with both mother and father.

Throughout their lives, children learn different things from each parent. As infants, the interactions between baby and each parent also differs and provides the infant with a different experience. Mothers tend to hold infants facing towards them so that they can gaze into the eyes of their baby. Their interactions tend to be focused between mother and child. Fathers generally hold infants and young children facing outward. This provides the child with a view of the world from the fathers level. Father's interactions with babies tend to be more playful and active. Children also learn about being a girl or a boy from the parent of the same sex. There are aspects of femininity that a girl needs to learn from another female, preferably mother. Likewise, a boy needs a man, preferably a father to teach them how to be masculine. Boys and girls begin to develop their ideas of how to have relationships with the opposite sex from their own interactions with their opposite sex parent.

The roles of parents, and especially fathers, has changed drastically since the Industrial Revolution. Men suddenly had to leave home to go to work rather than working from their homes, farms, or ranches. Since then fathers have participated less and less in the rearing of their children. Many today consider the role of the father to be that of a provider. It is important to ask provider of what? The concept of provider for many has come to mean providing financially. Today, more and more men are coming to realize that this is not enough for their children or themselves. A concept called "Father Hunger" was identified by Dr. Frank Pittman. Many boys and grown men are searching for the protection, nurturing, and modeling they did not receive from their fathers. Boys also need their father's guidance to teach them how to be men and to initiate and recognize them as men. Girls and women also suffer from "Father Hunger" needing the active involvement and guidance of their fathers in their lives. Motherhood can be one of the most fulfilling roles in

a woman's life and a true expression of her femininity. According to Dr. Pittman, "Becoming, 'Father the Nurturer', rather than just, 'Father the Provider', enables a man to fully feel and express his humanity and his masculinity. Fathering is the most masculine thing a man can do."

STUDY QUESTIONS - STUDY GUIDE THREE

INFANT DEVELOPMENT AND CARE

1. Physical development of infants includes not only their physical growth but also:
 - a) mental abilities
 - b) sensory abilities and thoughts
 - c) sensory abilities and motor functions
 - d) motor functions
2. Social development for babies involves their attachment to others and:
 - a) their ability to get their needs met through their behavior
 - b) their mental abilities to function with adults
 - c) their development of manners
 - d) babies do not have social development
3. Infants can see and _____ to movement, color, brightness, distance, contrast, and shapes.
 - a) think about
 - b) relate to
 - c) respond to
 - d) none of these answers
4. Although babies have very limited control of their muscles, they do have _____:
 - a) reflexes
 - b) intuition
 - c) instinct
 - d) desires
5. Which is not a reflex babies have?
 - a) rooting
 - b) coughing
 - c) sucking
 - d) gazing

6. Watching, grasping for and handling objects helps a baby to develop:
- a) reflexes
 - b) voluntary motor control
 - c) involuntary motor control
 - d) rooting abilities
7. Toys and _____ provide opportunities and encouragement for babies to expand their development.
- a) motor control
 - b) reflexes
 - c) human interaction
 - d) coughing
8. For the physical development of infants, good nutrition and _____ are important.
- a) stimulating surroundings
 - b) motor skills
 - c) voluntary movements
 - d) loud noises
9. Which is not true about breast milk for babies?
- a) it is inexpensive
 - b) it supplies baby with additional antibodies
 - c) many babies are allergic to breast milk
 - d) it is naturally stored at the correct temperature
10. As parents, one of our most important jobs is to protect and provide for the _____ of our children.
- a) fun
 - b) happiness
 - c) safety
 - d) wants
11. One of the most common dangers to young babies is?
- a) accidental drowning or choking
 - b) sudden death
 - c) electric shock
 - d) eating toxic foods
12. For their safety, propping a baby's bottle during feeding:
- a) is ok and it is safe to leave them alone
 - b) is only safe with very young infants
 - c) a baby should never be left with a propped bottle
 - d) it is ok if the bottle is propped by a pillow
13. Besides the safety of the child or infant, which is another reason for seat belts on children and infants?
- a) it helps parents force their control on them
 - b) it causes them to go to sleep

- c) it is less distracting for the driver
 - d) children and infants like to be seat belted down
14. Which is a good way to prevent infants from opening cabinet doors and protect them from harmful objects?
- a) slap their hands if they try to open cabinets
 - b) prop furniture against the cabinet doors
 - c) nail cabinet doors shut
 - d) install safety latches on cabinet doors
15. Young children are not ready for the responsibility, nor capable of making good decisions and:
- a) should not be left in charge of younger children
 - b) need to be left alone to learn to be capable
 - c) need to practice by being left alone
 - d) should be left in charge on a daily basis
16. Infants and young children feel more _____ when they know they are supervised by a responsible caring person.
- a) anxious
 - b) happy
 - c) secure
 - d) capable
17. Human beings are social beings and need to have _____ with other human beings.
- a) comfort and help
 - b) relationships and interactions
 - c) nothing to do with
 - d) supervision
18. Infants do not need to develop emotional bonds or attachments with other people.
- a) true
 - b) false
19. There are how many stages of attachment for infants.
- a) one
 - b) two
 - c) four
 - d) ten
20. What is stranger anxiety?
- a) when strangers are afraid of babies
 - b) baby's discomfort and tension around strange adults
 - c) when babies want to be around strange adults
 - d) baby's discomfort and tension with other children

21. What is separation anxiety?
- a) baby's anger or despair at being separated from parents or care givers
 - b) parents are afraid of being separated from babies
 - c) baby's fear of the dark
 - d) baby's discomfort and tension around strangers
22. Stranger anxiety and separation anxiety are _____ reactions of infants at different times.
- a) extreme
 - b) dangerous
 - c) normal
 - d) desirable
23. Babies have a _____ for physical contact and to be held.
- a) selfish want
 - b) need
 - c) spoiled desire
 - d) fear
24. It is important that the infants needs be responded to:
- a) always by parents
 - b) only after they have cried a long time
 - c) in consistent and loving ways
 - d) erratically and quickly
25. When an infant experiences their world as being safe and secure, they can develop:
- a) trust
 - b) faster
 - c) feelings
 - d) social skills
26. Babies need to be held and see a reflection of themselves in their parents eyes as being _____:
- a) small and helpless
 - b) corrected
 - c) being approved of and loved
 - d) being taught and respected
27. In order to adjust to the role of parenting an infant, mutual support and _____ are important.
- a) stress
 - b) love
 - c) negotiation
 - d) requests
28. Parenting is a unique experience involving tremendous:

- a) sacrifice and joy
 - b) emotional investment and responsibility
 - c) caring and dedication
 - d) control and hardship
29. Many boys and grown men are searching for the protection, nurturing and modeling they did not receive from their fathers and this is referred to as _____?
- a) absent father
 - b) providing
 - c) father hunger
 - d) developmental delay
30. _____ is the most masculine thing a man can do.
- a) working
 - b) being successful
 - c) having a child
 - d) fathering