



## **Oh Those Little Ones! Ideas and Thoughts About Working with Infants & Toddlers**

Shared with you by Lisa Murphy, M.Ed.

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**A few WORDS that guide my work with infants and toddlers:**

**RELATIONSHIPS**

**RESPONSIVE**

**RESPECTFUL**

**ATTACHMENT**

**PATIENCE**

**Some of the PEOPLE who have influenced my work with infants and toddlers:**

**DR. T. BERRY BRAZELTON**

**EMMI PIKLER**

**MAGDA GERBER**

**ALICE HONIG**

**FRANCES CARLSON**

**DEB CURTIS & MARGIE CARTER**

**BEV BOS**

**HEATHER SHUMAKER**

**JIM GREENMAN**

**ATTACHMENT:** the strong emotional bond between a child and a caring adult who is a part of their everyday life; ideally it is an affectionate and loving bond. Attachment bonds continue to grow and develop over time. A child can be attached to more than one person and studies show that children benefit from positive attachments to adults who are not their parents.

A child's early experiences and interactions with the main adults early in her life (her attachment figures) will profoundly affect the relationships she has as she gets older; including how she views herself. A secure attachment allows children to venture out into the world to play, grow, explore and learn. They know that someone they trust and love is looking out for them.

Additionally, children with secure attachments are able to better balance their emotions and are more likely to grow up with strong social skills. Our little ones need to know that we are going to respond to them! (still face experiments)

From a paper I wrote for my M.Ed:

*Evidence of the fact that infants require more from their caregivers than just being fed, changed, washed and clothed emerged in the 1200s when Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II wanted to see what language children developed if no one spoke to them. He instructed the caregivers to feed and bathe the infants only as necessary and to refrain from talking and caressing them. His experiment failed because all of the children died before uttering a single word (\*Carlson, 2005; \*\*Lewis, Amini & Lannon, 2001). Lewis et al (2001) reports that while tragic, he stumbled upon something important, “children couldn’t live without the clapping of the hands, the gestures, the gladness of countenance and blandishments.” Carlson (2005) states, “they couldn’t live without the petting.” In short, they couldn’t live without the warm and responsive care that leads to secure attachment.*

\*Carlson, F.M. (2005). Significance of touch in young children’s lives. *Young Children* 60(4), 79-85.

\*\*Lewis, T., Amini, F. & Lannon, R. (2000). *A general theory of love*. New York, NY: Vantage Books.

Please see also the **supplementary handout** of the book report I wrote on the book, *A general theory of love*.

### **What’s my point?**

NONE – and I mean NONE of the following ideas and suggestions mean a hill of beans if the main focus in the infant room is ANYTHING OTHER than relationships and attachment!

Here is a link to the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. TONS of great info about relationships, brains and toxic stress!! <http://developingchild.harvard.edu/>

## **Simple Activities for Your Little Ones**

### **Soooo Big!**

Ask baby: "How big is baby?"

Gently lift his arms up and say "Soooo big!"

*As she gets older she will lift her arms up on her own after you ask.*

### **Bye Bye Game**

When leaving the room say, "bye bye chair!" Wave bye to it. Say, "bye bye doggie" and wave to the dog. Start saying bye bye to a couple of items, objects or people in the room each time that you leave. It increases baby's vocabulary.

### **Banana Phone**

Pretend the banana is a phone. Say, "ring ring... banana phone!" Pretend to talk to someone on the banana phone. As baby gets older you can say "ring ring... ring ring... oh, my banana phone is ringing." Answer it, then pretend it is for baby!

### **Get Moving**

Occasionally put baby's favorite toy a little bit out of reach so she has to move to get it.

### **Echo Me Echo You**

When baby makes a sound, repeat it. Babababa then you say babababa back to baby! Then you repeat until baby loses interest. Then you can offer a new sound, like: mememe, lalalala, gogogog, gagaga, dadada, mamama, or zuzuzuzu! See if baby starts to copy you!

### **1-2-3-4-5 once I caught a fish alive**

1-2-3-4-5 once I caught a fish alive

6-7-8-9-10 then I let him go again

Why did you let him go?

Because he bit my finger so

Which finger did he bite?

This little finger on the right.

**Dancing Darlings:** Put on some music. Hold baby in your arms and dance.

### **Choo Choo to Boston**

Choo choo to Boston

Choo choo to Lynn

Careful when you get there

You don't fall in!

**What's in the sock?**

Put one of baby's rattles in a sock. Shake the rattle to make noise. Give the sock back to baby and encourage him to find the rattle in the sock.

**Got your nose!**

Pretend to "take" your child's nose with your fingers. Giggle and play together.

**Tulle Netting and Foil**

If you have access to tulle netting, you can have some of it for baby to touch. It is a good sensory experience for baby. So are big balls of foil.

**Baby Doll Washing**

Put washable baby dolls in baby's bath or in a small tub of water for washing.

**Guess which hand (hide a small toy)**

Put a small toy in your hand. Pretend to have your baby pick/guess which hand you put it in.

**Hide a small toy under a blanket, sheet or scarf**

Play with your baby as you find it together.

**Tongue Tracking**

Hold your baby facing you. Once you have your attention, stick out your tongue. Smile and coo at him with your tongue out. Watch how baby starts to copy you!

**Silly sounds and faces**

Hold your baby on your lap facing you. Make some funny shapes and sounds with your mouth: fish lips, stick out your tongue, open your mouth and eyes wide and say baby's name, blow gentle raspberries... your baby will giggle and copy you too!

**I love somebody... yes I do!**

*With your baby on your lap, clap and sing the following:*

I love somebody yes I do  
I love somebody yes I do  
I love somebody yes I do  
I love somebody and I LOVE YOU!

### **Pillow Obstacle Course**

Put pillows and couch cushions on the floor for baby to creep, crawl, roll and climb over and around.

### **Patty Cake**

Patty cake

Patty cake

Baker's man

Bake me a cake as fast as you can

Roll it and roll it

And mark it with a B

Put it on the oven for baby and me!

*(sock 'em in the nose)*

### **Where is it?**

As baby gets older you can ask, "Where's your nose?" and "Where are your toes?" Be patient though and wait for baby to respond!

### **This is the Way the Ladies Ride**

*Hold your baby on your lap, facing you. (Or you can do "Mama Mountain" pose once she is old enough!) Now, gently bounce her up and down and sing...*

This is the way the ladies ride

The ladies ride

The ladies ride

This is the way the ladies ride

Early in the morning Annndd...

This is the way the gentlemen ride

The gentlemen ride

The gentlemen ride

This is the way the gentlemen ride

Early in the morning Annnddd...

This is the way the cowboys ride

The cowboys ride

The cowboys ride

This is the way the cowboys ride

Early in the morning!

### **This Little Piggie**

This little piggie went to market, this little piggie stayed home

This little piggie had roast beef, and this little baby had none

And this little baby cried wee wee wee all the way home!!

### **Whoops Johnny Johnny**

*Move your finger up down and over the fingers on your other hand and say...*

Whoops Johnny Johnny Johnny  
Whoops Johnny Johnny Johnny  
Whoops Johnny Johnny Johnny  
Whoops!

*Say it fast, slow, loud and quiet. Watch how your baby will start to mimic your actions.*

### **Willabee Wallabee Woo**

Willabee Wallabee Woo  
An elephant sat on you  
A willable wallabee **Wesa**  
An elephant sat on **Lisa!**

Willabee wallabee wommy  
An elephant sat on mommy  
Willable wallabee waddy  
An elephant sat on daddy!

### **Gimme 5**

Gimme 5  
On the side  
Cut the pickle  
Get a tickle!

### **Peek-a-Boo**

Use a scarf and play peek-a-boo!

### **Paint Crawl**

Let your little one make crawling prints. Have a “wash bucket” nearby for easy clean up.

### **Tissue Paper and Paper Bags**

Have bits of colored tissue paper available for your little one to take in and out of either the BIG grocery sized brown paper bags, or the SMALER lunch sized ones!

### **Pictures Under Contact Paper**

Place pictures of the children, their families, and other familiar objects/items on the floor in your playroom. Cover the pictures with Contact paper!

**Ooblick:** Equal parts of water and corn starch

### **Move That Door!**

If you have low cupboards, consider taking the doors off for the children to crawl INTO the cupboards. Fill the cupboards with soft toys, blankets, pillows, pictures, etc. etc.

### **Edible Finger Paint**

Baby can make a “picture” with karo syrup (corn syrup) and food coloring. If she eats it is will not hurt her. You can also “paint” with applesauce and pudding and colored ice cubes.

### **Cooked Spaghetti**

Cook spaghetti. Color it with food coloring. After it cools, let baby squish it at the high chair.

### **Colored Ice Cubes**

Freeze colored water in ice cube trays. Pop out a few colored cubes for baby to play with at the high chair. You don't need to color them! Baby will play with regular ones!

### **Shaker Bottles**

Put some of the following in clean, recycled water bottles and hot-glue the lid back on before letting baby roll, shake and explore them!

- Beans
- Colored water
- Colored water and cooking oil
- Curling ribbon
- Glitter
- Rice
- Sequins
- Soapy water

### **Cooked Playdough**

3 cups flour, 1 ½ cup salt, 3 cups water, 6 TBS oil, 6 tsp cream of tartar. Mix, cook on low heat until it forms a ball. Remove from heat, knead. Allow to cool before you play with it.

### **Cereal Stacking**

Roll a small ball of dough. Stick a piece of raw spaghetti in the dough. Encourage the children to stack the cereal onto the spaghetti!

### **Whip It Up!**

Grate 5 bars of Ivory Soap. Add water. Use egg beaters to whip it up for a creamy soapy sensory exploration!

### **Masking tape masking tape masking tape...**

### **Laundry baskets for pushing and pulling and tossing socks into!**

## **HOW TO MAKE FLUBBER:**

Mix 2 cups water and 1 cup glue in a big bowl. Add a squirt of food coloring and then stir it up. In a separate small bowl mix together 2 c. water and 4 TBS Borax. After it's completely dissolved, pour the Water/Borax mixture slowly and a little at a time into the Glue/Water mixture. Pour a little, mix it a little, pour a little, mix a little. Mix with your hands or a sturdy wooden spoon. As you mix, it will become a flubber ball! *NOTE: You might NOT need to use all of this Borax and water solution!!!!*

## **Resources and References**

*Your Child At Play: Birth to One Year*, by Marilyn Segal, Newmarket Press, 1985

*The Encyclopedia of Infant and Toddler Activities for Children Birth to age 3*, edited by Kathy Charner, Maureen Murphy and Charlie Clark, Gryphon House, 2006

*More Infant and Toddler Experiences*, by Fran Hast and Ann Hollyfield, Redleaf Press, 2001

*Games to Play With Babies*, by Jackie Silberg, Gryphon House, 2001

*Active Play! Fun Physical Activities for Young Children*, by Diane Craft, Ph.D.,  
[diane.craft@cortland.edu](mailto:diane.craft@cortland.edu) 2008

*Circle Time Activities for Young Children* by Deya Brashears and Sharron Werlin Krull, Gryphon House, 1981.

*Secure Relationships*, by Alice Sterling Honig, NAEYC Publication, 2002

*Essential Touch: Meeting the Needs of Young Children*, by Frances Carlson, NAEYC Publication, 2006.



## **A few specific activities that are set up today:**

1. Balls for rolling
2. Blocks (AND OTHER THINGS) for building and stacking
3. Books to read
4. Bubble wrap for jumping, walking and crawling on
5. Bubbles to blow, catch and chase
6. Contact paper to walk and crawl on
7. Feathers/feather dusters (clean & new) for tickling baby
8. Flashlights to watch, track and follow
9. Ice cubes to touch
10. Keys to jingle jangle
11. Laundry baskets for pushing and pulling
12. Masking tape for peeling
13. Masking tape lines for crawling
14. Nesting cups and blocks for stacking
15. Newspaper for tearing
16. Paper towel tubes to blow through, talk through, roll things through
17. Parachutes
18. Pie tins for banging
19. Ping Pong balls for dropping into coffee cans or plastic cups
20. Pom poms to hold, throw, drop or stick (to contact paper)
21. Pots and pans for banging
22. Rainmakers: bottles with holes poked in them for playing with in the bath tub
23. Ring stack games for hand-eye coordination
24. Scarves for tossing, catching, gentle tug o'war and peek a boo
25. Sock balls for throwing or tossing into laundry baskets
26. Straw blowing on babies and at each other
27. Tennis balls and muffin tins for matching and grasping
28. Tupperware for playing, sorting, stacking and putting things in and out
29. Washing baby dolls
30. Wooden spoons for hitting pots, pans and pie tins



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**Ms Ooey’s Musings and Mayhems Blog:** <http://msooey.tumblr.com/>  
*This is the best way for you to get the articles I have shared with you FOR YOUR #BINDER*

**Carpet Blog:** <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/thecarpetblog>  
*I take pics of all the crazy carpets I see in hotels! It’s a total brainless way for me to decompress.*

**Spicy Slides Blog:** <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/spicyslides>  
*I take pics of spicy slides and other old metal playground equipment I come across while travelling.*

**YouTube Channel:** OoeyGooleyLady  
*Video clips, soundbites, favorite stories: great for when you need a BOOSTER shot of inspiration!*

**eBooks:** All of Lisa’s books are now available on your favorite eBook platforms. Questions? Call REDLEAF PRESS (800) 423-8309

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## Collaborations with Jeff Johnson/Explorations Early Learning

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