



# Connections:

## Infant and Toddler Curriculum for Responsive Caregiving, 24-36 Months

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Connections: Infant and Toddler Curriculum for Responsive Caregiving, 24-36 Months. From 24-36 months children may seem to be experts in some areas, and still have much to learn in other areas. This dichotomy can make for a fun, exciting, and eventful year!

During this year of life children are often thirsty for new information and may seem to pick up tidbits of knowledge about an assortment of topics, especially topics they find interesting. For example, you may hear a two year old chatting about a vehicle using technical language typical of a mechanic. To foster this thirst for information, the activities in this third and final piece of the Connections curriculum are structured around very concrete ideas that lend themselves well to learning new knowledge and specific information. As you dig into these big ideas with your children, note what they find most interesting and tailor the experiences you facilitate accordingly.

During this stage, children also increase their command over language. They will likely understand far more language than they can produce, but for many toddlers,

this time is one of rapid expressive vocabulary development as well. As you dig into new topics of exploration with your children, be sure to build your own background knowledge accordingly so you can provide them with the new language and information they are so excited to have. Your continued attention to talking with your children and responding to all of their language use remains important during this time.

This year, similar to the previous two, is also one of continued rapid physical development. While a young two may still be unsteady on their feet, by three years, most children are running, climbing and balancing well.

One area where children’s development may seem less rapid is in effective strategies for sharing emotions, or communicating their desires. Twos are infamous for tantrums and challenging behavior. This is typically due to the difficulty of understanding their own emotions within the constructs of the world around them. This skill is often hard for adults, and is especially hard for the young child. At two, children are ripe with a sense of autonomy, as well as a desire to please the adults in their lives, but are still developing the physical skills to engage in

many tasks independently. Sometimes they tackle new tasks successfully. Other times they feel defeat as they discover they still need the help of an adult. Sometimes their desires coincide with the world around them, other times they experience disappointment when their own ideas do not align with the adults in their lives. Navigating this year requires much kindness and patience on the part of the caregiver. For more information on the emotional experience of a two year old, and validating their emotions, see Sections VII Child Development Background Information and VIII Appendices.

This piece of the Connections curriculum, like all pieces, is designed to support caregivers in engaging in responsive care that is grounded in child development basics. It includes child development information, strategies, and cues to support reflection as well as activity ideas to try to with children. As always, it is extremely important to get to know the families of the children you serve. Work with your families to understand their values and caregiving practices and use this knowledge as well as what you see children do each day to guide your classroom caregiving practices. Some of

the strategies and content in this document may need to be modified to better serve the families in your program. For example, Section II Responsive Caregiving references young children learning to eat with a spoon. While this may be something that applies to some families, it may not apply to all. Language and communication preferences are also important areas for connection with families. It is important to make an effort to provide resources for families in their home language, and highlight the importance of their child continuing to learn their home language in your classroom and beyond. Additionally, whenever possible, communicate with families in the method that works best for them. For example, some families may prefer written notes about their child's day, while others may prefer online communication.

While the ideas in this curriculum may inspire fun and learning, your relationships with the children in your classroom are the foundation for high quality care. As you make decisions about daily care and activities, begin by considering what you know about your children and families. Consider asking families to share what they see their children doing at home,

experiences they have together that are meaningful to them and reflect on what you see children doing and saying when they are in your care. Use this reflection to make decisions about the topics you explore with your class, as well as the individual activities you offer them each day.

## Connections: Responsive Caregiving for Infants and Toddlers

The New York City Department of Education Connections curriculum is designed to support infant and toddler educators in providing responsive care. The curriculum offers guidance for caregivers of children from 6 weeks through 3 years and is comprised of three sections: 6 weeks to 12 months, 12-24 months, and 24-36 months. Connections is grounded in research on developmental expectations as described in the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five* (ELOF), which outlines the development programs support as they engage with our youngest children. By using Connections as written, programs will ground their practice in the expectations and expertise of the ELOF. Teaching staff should refer to the ELOF when implementing Connections in order to connect their observations of each child with ELOF goals and to guide their planning as they work to meet the needs of all children in their care.

### Guiding Principles of the Early Learning Outcomes Framework:

**Each child is unique and can succeed.** Children are individuals with different rates and paths of development. Each child is uniquely influenced by their prenatal environment, temperament, physiology, and life experiences. With the appropriate support, all children can be successful learners and achieve the skills, behaviors, and knowledge described in the Framework.

**Learning occurs within the context of relationships.** Caring families, teachers, and other adults matter in a young child's life. Responsive and supportive interactions with adults are essential to children's learning.

**Families are children's first and most important caregivers, teachers, and advocates.** Families must be respected and supported as the primary influence in their child's early learning and education. Their knowledge, skills, and cultural backgrounds contribute to children's school readiness.

**Children learn best when they are emotionally and physically safe and secure.** Nurturing, responsive, and consistent care helps create safe environments where children feel secure and valued. In these settings, children are able to engage fully in learning experiences.

**Areas of development are integrated, and children learn many concepts and skills at the same time.** Any single skill, behavior, or ability may involve multiple areas of development. For example, as infants gain fine motor skills, they can manipulate objects in new ways and deepen their understanding of cause and effect. As preschoolers gain new verbal skills, they can better manage their emotions and form more complex friendships.

**Teaching must be intentional and focused on how children learn and grow.** Children are active, engaged, and eager learners. Good teaching practices build on these intrinsic strengths by providing developmentally appropriate instruction and opportunities for exploration and meaningful play.

**Every child has diverse strengths rooted in their family's culture, background, language, and beliefs.** Responsive and respectful learning environments welcome children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Effective teaching practices and learning experiences build on the unique backgrounds and prior experiences of each child.

## Early Learning Outcomes Framework Domain Organization

	CENTRAL DOMAINS				
	APPROACHES TO LEARNING	SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	COGNITION	PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
▲ INFANT/TODDLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
● PRESCHOOLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Mathematics Development	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
			Literacy	Scientific Reasoning	

Click [here](#) to access the Guiding Principles of the Head Start *Early Learning Outcomes Framework* online

## II. Responsive Caregiving

### 24 months-36 months

*I can do it!*

Every child is unique with their own needs, wants, and desires. However, there are some behaviors and characteristics typical to each stage of development, as well as responsive approaches and strategies adults can use that encourage growth and development. Use this chart to reflect on children’s behaviors and your own responses. Note that caregivers should always begin by engaging with families to learn about their routines and beliefs around sleeping, diapering, and eating. Modifications may need to be made to the *Adults Should* category in order to align classroom practices with family culture. Additionally, family culture may influence child development and impact the *Children Often* category.

	CHILDREN OFTEN	ADULTS SHOULD	CHILDREN WILL BE LEARNING
SLEEPING	Sleep about 11-14 hours per day, including a nap.	Talk to families about their sleep routines. Whenever possible, use the same routines the family uses.	To sleep well and to sleep on their own.
	Experience disruptions or shifts in their sleep patterns due to development such as increased motor, cognitive and social abilities, and an increasing drive for independence.	Stick to a regular daily schedule which includes plenty of time for the child to nap. Note children’s sleep habits and changes in sleep habits. Remain flexible to changing routines as children’s sleep needs change.	To feel safe and secure in the classroom which leads to smooth transitions to sleep. To feel known and cared for which will help them develop secure attachments.
DIAPERING		Talk to families about their diapering/toileting routines and beliefs. Whenever possible, align practices to the families’ preferences.	To develop body awareness, by listening to their body and understanding how their body feels before and after going to the bathroom.
	Begin to develop control over their bladder and bowels.  Shows increasing interest in bathroom habits of others’.	Note children’s habits when starting to consider toilet learning. Children are generally ready to use the toilet when they:	To develop a sense of discomfort when in a soiled diaper and in turn communicate that they are in need of a diaper change.  To coordinate their body to do all the components involved in toileting, which will help them use the toilet successfully.

<b>EATING</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay dry for longer periods of time.</li> <li>• Notice when they are urinating or having a bowel movement.</li> <li>• Are physically able to sit on a toilet or small potty chair, and manipulate their clothing for successful toileting (e.g. pull pants up and down).</li> <li>• Are interested in toileting behaviors.</li> <li>• Can follow simple directions.</li> </ul> <p>See Section VI. Appendices for information and resources on toilet learning.</p>	
	<b>CHILDREN OFTEN</b>	<b>ADULTS SHOULD</b>	<b>CHILDREN WILL BE LEARNING</b>
Express opinions about food and may seem to become picky eaters.	Talk to families about their feeding routines and beliefs. Whenever possible, align practices to the families' preferences.	That their feelings and opinions matter in the classroom and to develop their individual taste palette.	
	Introduce new flavors, textures, and foods that are nutrient rich since toddlers have small stomachs. Avoid foods that pose a risk for choking. Watch for allergic reactions and respond promptly if concerns arise.	To move toward a more sophisticated diet and develop preferences for healthy foods.	

Feed themselves independently, mostly still using their fingers and a spoon, but with increased dexterity and coordination will move towards using other utensils.

Drink from a cup.

Skip meals.

Let children feed themselves. Supply food that is safe for children to eat on their own, but always supervise and support mealtimes. Provide children with a combination of finger food and food that requires a utensil to decrease frustration and increase dexterity.

Provide children with access to cups when drinking water and milk. Begin providing cups without tops as children are ready.

Offer children three healthy meals and two or three healthy snacks per day but allow children to skip meals and/or snacks if they indicate this need.

To control their fine motor muscles and develop increasing dexterity and eye-hand coordination, moving towards mastery. Develop increasing autonomy in feeding and ability to use dishes and utensils at mealtime.

To master the combination of fine motor skills and mouth muscle control required to drink from an open cup.

That their feelings and opinions matter in the classroom and to listen to their bodies' hunger cues. This is essential in developing healthy eating habits.

**CHILDREN OFTEN**

**ADULTS SHOULD**

**CHILDREN WILL BE LEARNING**

PLAYING

<p>Show interest in each other, begin to interact in social situations and participate in small group activities.</p>	<p>Facilitate opportunities for children to do fun and engaging activities together, ensuring that there are enough materials and space. Use language to connect children’s ideas and thoughts to one another.</p>	<p>Pro-social skills, including how to play with others, similarities and differences between self and others, collaboration, and preferences in playmates.</p>
<p>Act impulsively and get distracted easily.</p>	<p>Provide safe, predictable and consistent responses to children’s behavior. Validate feelings and set clear and consistent age-appropriate limits.</p>	<p>To identify their emotions, and begin to internalize strategies for obtaining materials other children are using.</p>
<p>Continue to develop the strength and coordination to move and use their bodies in more complex and coordinated ways, including climbing up and down stairs, jumping off the ground, balancing on one foot, and kicking and throwing a ball.</p>	<p>Provide children with a variety of opportunities to practice using their bodies in progressively more complex ways, always using encouragement and positive reinforcement.</p>	<p>New and increasingly complex gross motor skills. Awareness about their body, what it can do and its limitations. Spatial reasoning, as they experiment with how their bodies fit in the spaces around them.</p>
<p>Use their hands and fingers to manipulate objects with increasing control and complexity</p>	<p>Provide children with a variety materials and objects that encourage children to use their fingers and hands in more complex ways, such as twisting, turning, cutting (with child safe scissors), and drawing.</p>	<p>To develop increasing control and strength in their fingers and hands. As children develop fine motor skills, they are gradually able to complete important tasks, such as, feeding oneself, buttoning and zippering, and writing.</p>
<p>Want to do things on their own.</p>	<p>Allow children to do tasks independently as interested and the environment allows. Plan for the extra time required in this “I can do it myself,” stage. Remain</p>	<p>Self-care skills, persistence, problem solving abilities, an increased sense of self-confidence, and a healthy appetite for and attitude towards learning.</p>

<p>Use 2-4 word phrases to communicate, begin to string phrases together, and move into using more complete sentences.</p>	<p>patient and provide guidance when you notice children becoming frustrated. Listen to children and talk with them as they play and explore the world. Narrate their actions as well as your own. Use both familiar and new vocabulary as children play.</p>	<p>New words and language skills such as creating increasingly longer sentences, engaging in conversations, and using language understand the why and how things work.</p>
<p>Follow 2-step directions that may be unrelated.</p>	<p>Give children 2-step directions throughout the day in a variety of contexts and settings.</p>	<p>To hold information in their brain while they complete one task in order to then complete an additional task. This supports the development of working memory.</p>
<p>Ask and understand “what,” “where,” and “why” questions.</p>	<p>Ask questions that require more than a yes-or-no answer and patiently respond to children’s “why” questions.</p>	<p>That their curiosity is valued and that there are answers to their questions.</p>
<p>Locate or label familiar objects when asked and knows own name.</p>	<p>Provide vocabulary for new objects that children discover. Provide the word(s) for things children point to. Ask children to point to familiar objects, such as, “where’s your nose?”</p>	<p>Increased vocabulary and that everything has a name.</p>
<p>Spend a lot of time in the world of pretend. This can lead to great fun, and new found fears, as 2-year-olds cannot always separate pretend from reality.</p>	<p>Engage in imaginative play with children, following their lead. Carefully observe children’s pretend play, noticing what thoughts and feelings might be showing up. Provide materials that may spark imaginative play.  Model desired behaviors, language and actions.</p>	<p>About symbols, that an object can represent something else. Symbolic play helps children develop the skills necessary to learn later skills like reading and math. Pretend play also helps children cope with or process difficult situations and begin to understand the differences between what is real and what is imagined.</p>

Imitate the actions of caring adults and other children.

Remember past experiences, favorite objects, activities and people.

Provide children choices throughout the day. Remind children of routines and everyday activities. Allow children to play with or hold preferred objects.

How the world works, self-care routines, new skills, language, cultural and social behavior, and an awareness of self vs. other.

About themselves and their preferences as well as the predictability of routines and schedules. The ability to maintain focus for longer periods of time and show increasing persistence while interacting with people or engaging in activities.

### III. Centers and Interest Areas

Play is essential to the two year old's care experience. Adequate time to engage in play is required each day. To create a structure that lends itself well for play, Connections: Responsive Caregiving for Infants and Toddlers, 24-36 months, is structured around six centers and interest areas. These centers and interest areas include Blocks/Construction, Dramatic Play, Art/Writing, Sensory/Science, Math/Manipulatives, and Library. The following pages outline materials and strategies to support play-based learning and responsive instruction in centers and interest areas. Each center begins with an overview of how children may engage with the center across the program year, language adults can use to support learning, a suggested text, materials suggestions as well as ideas to engage with communities, and connect the learning the child does at school with their home experience. Additionally each page includes a template to support planning that begins by supporting observation, provides connections to the ELOF, and encourages teaching teams to reflect on their observations as they plan. A blank copy of the planning template can be found in Section VI Templates. The materials suggested in this section do not create an exhaustive list of classroom materials. Additionally, materials related to specific studies should also be added to each center to support children's further understanding of specific content. See Section IV Activities for topic related suggestions.

Remember that while adding materials to an area inspires children's play, much of the learning that happens at this age is based on the relationships between adults and children. Sitting at their level, allowing them to explore independently to then come back to you

to share their experience and demonstrating excitement over their discoveries will help children feel safe and secure in the classroom and increase their ability to take in new information.

As children develop and their interests change, opportunities to extend their learning will arise. Consider how materials and activities can support this. For example, consider using a limited number/type of blocks at the beginning of the year and adding and/or rotating the selection as children are ready. When children express interest in specific ideas, add materials to support this play. For example, if children are very interested in taxis, add toy taxis to the center.

Open-ended questions can also extend children's play by helping them to think further. Additionally, they allow children to share details about their play, thought process, and plans, remove the need for adult assumptions, and the likelihood of adults misunderstanding of the play. Consider using open-ended questions as you play with children, but do not yet expect children to answer. As children become more familiar with this process, develop an increasingly sophisticated vocabulary, as well as the ability to plan and share thoughts they may begin to respond to open ended questions.

## Blocks/Construction

*"Children learn more from what you are, than what you teach."*

*W.E.B. Du Bois*

**IN THIS CENTER,** children will likely explore the properties of blocks. They will use their senses to gain information by holding, feeling and looking. They may choose to carry blocks around or lay them side by side. Some children may choose to stack blocks and knock them down repeatedly. Additionally, they may use blocks for other purposes, such as pretending they are cars and pushing them around on the floor. At this age, children may choose to play alone or near their peers.

### NARRATION TO SUPPORT LEARNING:

*Note, use expression and vary your inflection when reflecting on children's work in order to spark joy and wonder*

- You are \_\_\_\_\_ the blocks.
- I notice you are \_\_\_\_\_ with the blocks.
- You are using the \_\_\_\_\_ blocks.
- It looks like you are working really hard with the blocks.

**SUGGESTED TEXT:** *Whose Tools Are These?* by Toni Buzzeo

### MATERIALS: UNIT BLOCKS

- Wood or plastic in a variety of shapes such as rectangles, squares, triangles and cylinders
- Hollow cardboard blocks
- Foam blocks
- Foam blocks
- Soft cloth blocks
- Homemade blocks constructed for cardboard boxes
- ABC blocks that are larger than 2 inches in diameter

### MATERIALS: ACCESSORIES

- Toy people
- Toy vehicles and trucks
- Tree blocks
- Toy animals typical to the children's environment (e.g., pets, or animals of high interest)
- Pictures of structures that are familiar to the children (e.g., program building, neighborhood landmarks, famous NYC landmarks)

<b>PLANNING</b>
<p><b>OBSERVE:</b> <i>How are children interacting with the blocks?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Observing other children</i></li> <li>• <i>Holding and exploring shapes</i></li> <li>• <i>Carrying and moving them around the center/room</i></li> <li>• <i>Laying them flat</i></li> <li>• <i>Stacking</i></li> <li>• <i>Other:</i></li> </ul> <p><i>What can I learn about children's hand-eye coordination from the way they use the blocks and materials?</i></p> <p><i>What interests or play themes are emerging as children play?</i></p> <p><i>Other observations:</i></p>
<p><b>CONNECT:</b> <i>How do my observations link to skills children are developing and align with ELOF goals?</i></p> <p><i>Goal IT-PMP 6. Child coordinates hand and eye movements to perform actions</i></p> <p><i>Goal IT-PMP 7. Child uses hands for exploration, play and daily routines.</i></p> <p><i>Goal IT-C 12. Child uses objects or symbols to represent something else.</i></p> <p><b>What other ELOF goals do these observations support?</b></p>
<p><b>INFORM PRACTICE:</b> <i>What are my next steps in response to children's skills and interests?</i></p>

**MATERIALS: RECYCLED AND NATURAL ITEMS**

- Large tubes (e.g., cardboard mailing tubes)
- Empty paper towel tubes
- Assorted sticks
- Empty tissue boxes

**EXTENSIONS**

See Section IV Activities, for specific activity ideas related to each Big Idea.

**FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUGGESTION**

Capture children's structures throughout the year by taking pictures. Periodically send the photos home. Consider individual photos or a book that demonstrates what children have done and how they have grown in block building.

## Art/Writing

*"It took me four years to paint like Raphael, but a lifetime to paint like a child."*  
*Pablo Picasso*

**IN THIS CENTER, children will likely** explore art materials in a physical way. Children may be more interested in exploring the properties of the art materials, and how they work than the end result. For example, some children may want to dump paint and put their hands in it, while other children may want to explore how the paint moves off the brush as they move their arms. Additionally, children may explore drawing by making marks on paper, without intentionality or representation. As their fine motor skills strengthen, they may move from holding the crayon or marker with a palm grasp to a tripod grasp.

### NARRATION TO SUPPORT LEARNING

*Note, use expression and vary your inflection when reflecting on children's work in order to spark joy and wonder*

- You are using \_\_\_\_\_.
- You are watching \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.
- I notice you are \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_.
- When you \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ happened.
- You are making (shape or type of line).
- It seems like you enjoy \_\_\_\_\_.

### SUGGESTED TEXT: *Little Blue and Little Yellow* by Leo Lionni

### DRAWING MATERIALS

- Large crayons, markers, pencils, and chalk
- Construction paper
- Butcher paper
- Contact paper
- Tissue paper
- Large sheets of paper
- Tin foil
- Cellophane
- Felt

### PAINTS

- Finger paint
- Tempera paints
- Stamp pads
- Watercolor paint
- Liquid watercolor paint

Note: Children have varying levels of sensitivity to sensory experiences. Do not force children to touch materials. Invite children to participate and observe their behavior carefully. Respond to the cues they give you about their readiness to participate.

<b>PLANNING</b>
<p><b>OBSERVE: What are children doing with the materials in the center?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exploring the properties of the materials</i></li> <li>• <i>Working with a purpose</i></li> <li>• <i>Engaging in representative art</i></li> <li>• <i>Engaging very briefly</i></li> <li>• <i>Engaging for a longer period of time</i></li> <li>• <i>Seeking sensory experiences</i></li> <li>• <i>Avoiding sensory experiences</i></li> <li>• <i>Other:</i></li> </ul> <p><i>What interests or play themes are emerging as children play?</i></p> <p><i>Other observations:</i></p>
<p><b>CONNECT: How do my observations link to skills children are developing and align with the ELOF goals?</b></p> <p><i>IT-ATL 7. Child persists at task</i></p> <p><i>IT-ATL 9. Child demonstrates flexibility in thinking and behavior.</i></p> <p><i>IT-PMP 8. Child adjusts reach and grasp to use tools.</i></p> <p><b>What other ELOF goals do these observations support?</b></p>
<p><b>INFORM PRACTICE: What are my next steps in response to children's skills and interests?</b></p>

### THREE-DIMENSIONAL MATERIALS

- Paper towel tubes
- Pipe cleaners
- Large wood pieces
- Large spools

### TOOLS

- Large paint brushes
- Smocks
- Stamps
- Glue sticks
- Spill-proof paint containers
- Masking, washi, or colored tape
- Drying rack or other place for artwork to dry
- Paint rollers
- Easel
- Sponges
- All purpose glue
- Child-safe scissors

### RECYCLED AND NATURAL MATERIALS

- Wood pieces
- Leaves
- Sticks
- Corrugated cardboard pieces
- Paint samples
- Sandpaper
- Popsicle sticks
- Small and medium boxes
- Flowers
- Stems
- Thin cardboard pieces
- Paper scraps
- Wallpaper samples
- Fabric scraps
- Ribbons

### EXTENSIONS

See Section IV Activities, for specific activity ideas related to each Big Idea.

### FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUGGESTION

Ask families to keep an eye out for recycled and natural materials children might be able to use in art. For example, old fabric scraps, pieces of paper, discarded jewelry may be interesting to explore in this center. Families can also look for natural materials near where they live such as flowers, leaves, or sticks and add them to the art materials in this center.

## Dramatic Play

*"Let the child be the scriptwriter, the director and the actor in his own play"*

Magda Gerber

**IN THIS CENTER, children will likely** explore by feeling and touching fabrics and other materials. They may choose to observe how other children interact with materials. Some children may play alongside their peers and use materials in a functional way such as putting on clothing. They may mimic experiences from their lives, such as cooking or taking care of babies. Children may also use this center to explore themselves and learn about who they are. Additionally, they may be exploring the early stages of perspective taking by acting out situations such as the separation process. They may choose to take on the caregiver's role and give emotions to others. For example, they may decide a baby is sad or instruct an adult to be sad because they have to go to work (Galinsky, 2010; Stern, 1973).

### NARRATION TO SUPPORT LEARNING:

*Note, use expression and vary your inflection when reflecting on children's work in order to spark joy and wonder*

- You are \_\_\_\_\_ with your baby.
- You have \_\_\_\_\_ lots of things on/in your \_\_\_\_\_.
- It looks like you are working hard to \_\_\_\_\_.
- You put the \_\_\_\_\_ on/in the \_\_\_\_\_.

**SUGGESTED TEXT:** *Julián is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love

### PROPS AND MATERIALS

- Stuffed animals
- Mirrors
- Telephones
- Pretend food of various cultures
- Brooms and dust pan and/or mop and bucket
- Kitchen utensils reflective of the classroom community (e.g., bowls, plates)
- Open-ended loose parts such as small blocks, wood rings, and pegs
- Furniture related to baby care such as cribs, highchairs, strollers, changing table, etc.
- Materials for baby care reflective of the classroom community (e.g. clothing and blankets)
- Child-sized furniture
- Puppets

### PLANNING

**OBSERVE:** *How are the children engaging in this center?*

*\*See Appendix D for Stages of Play*

- **Playing alone**
- **Observing peers**
- **Engaging in parallel play**
- **Engaging in associative play**
- **Engaging in cooperative play**
- **Using materials in a functional manner**
- **Engaging in symbolic play**
- **Other:**

*What interests or play themes are emerging as children play?*

*What emotions do the children appear to explore as they play?*

*Other observations:*

**CONNECT:** *How do my observations link to skills children are developing and align with the ELOF goals?*

*Goal IT-C 12. Child uses objects or symbols to represent something else.*

*Goal IT-C 13. Child uses pretend play to increase understanding of culture, environment, and experience.*

*Goal IT-SE 6. Child learns to express a range of emotions.*

*What other ELOF goals do these observations support?*

**INFORM PRACTICE:** *What are my next steps in response to children's skills and interests?*

## Connections: Infant and Toddler Curriculum for Responsive Caregiving, 24-36 Months

- Baby dolls representing various skin colors and ethnicities
- Pictures of children's family members at home and work
- Children's transitional items from home

### **DRESS UP**

- Costumes and costume related items that connect to children's lives such as train conductor costume, train schedule, walkie-talkie, medical jackets and equipment such as stethoscopes, blood pressure cuffs, bandages, etc.
- Various fabric scraps to inspire costume creation according to children's interests, needs, and cultures
- Various clothing related items such as dresses, dress shirts, suit coats, aprons, scarves, ties, necklaces, brief case, purses, glasses frames, sun glasses

### **FANTASY**

- Various items related to fantasy play that connect to children's lives such as animal costumes, stuffed animals, crowns, capes and fancy gowns

### **RECYCLED AND NATURAL MATERIALS**

- Empty and clean takeout containers and lids
- Empty and clean cereal/ food boxes and/or containers
- Empty and clean soap and laundry containers
- Empty egg cartons

### **EXTENSIONS**

See Section IV Activities, for specific activity ideas related to each Big Idea.

### **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUGGESTION**

As children become interested in specific topics, consider asking local business that may specialize, or supply items related to the topic to donate materials to use in dramatic play. Additionally, consider asking families to share items as applicable, or visit the classroom to play with the children in the center, if they are knowledgeable about a particular topic or interest area. Be sure to communicate to all families that bringing in materials is not required for the child to participate in the center.

## Library

*"Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep continuing needs, is good for him."*

Maya Angelou

**IN THIS CENTER, children will likely** interact with books in a physical way and focus on how books feel, and move. Others may be interested in exploring books independently to discover what is on the pages. Children are most likely to enjoy books and stories that match their interests, are active, engaging and include straightforward, yet interesting illustrations. At this age, children may prefer books with simple texts and clear rhythms. Children may also enjoy reading and rereading the same book multiple times and may demonstrate this by bringing it to an adult to read to them.

### NARRATION TO SUPPORT LEARNING:

*Note, use expression and vary your inflection when reflecting on children's work in order to spark joy and wonder*

- I notice you looking at that book.
- You are turning the pages.
- Look, there is a \_\_\_\_ on this page.
- It looks like you want me to read this book with you. Let's sit and read together.

### BOOKS

- See Section VI Texts for content-related text suggestions
- Supplement content-related titles with other books from the Master Book List that support the needs and interests of your children

### MATERIALS

- Puppets
- Stuffed animals
- Throw pillows
- Soft rug
- Magnetic surface and magnetic pieces related to books children especially enjoy and can easily retell

### EXTENSIONS

See Section IV Activities, for specific activity ideas related to each Big Idea.

PLANNING
<p><b>OBSERVE: How are children engaging with books in this center?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Independently</i></li> <li>• <i>With peers</i></li> <li>• <i>Exploring the physical properties of books</i></li> <li>• <i>Exploring the illustrations and text in books</i></li> <li>• <i>Holding the book right side up</i></li> <li>• <i>Turning pages, one at a time</i></li> <li>• <i>Sharing information about the book</i></li> <li>• <i>Reciting language from the book</i></li> <li>• <i>Other:</i></li> </ul> <p><b>What types of books and stories does the child seem to especially enjoy?</b></p> <p><b>Other observations:</b></p>
<p><b>CONNECT: How do my observations link to skills children are developing and align with the ELOF goals?</b></p> <p><i>Goal IT- SE 1. Child develops expectations of consistent, positive interactions through secure relationships with familiar adults.</i></p> <p><i>Goal IT-LC 10 Child handles books and relates them to their stories or information.</i></p> <p><i>Goal IT- LC 12. Child comprehends meaning from pictures and stories.</i></p> <p><b>What other ELOF goals do these observations support?</b></p>
<p><b>INFORM PRACTICE: What are my next steps in response to children's skills and interests?</b></p>

**FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUGGESTION**

Share children’s favorite books with their families. If children enjoy reading a particular book, or hearing a particular story at home, ask families to tell you about it, or if possible share the book with the class. The book could be placed in the classroom library, or a family member could come in and read, or share a favorite family story.

Families may also be interested in creating books about their time together away from school. For example, they may like to write a story about their weekend, or their trip to school. Staple a few pages of blank paper together to create a book. If necessary, allow families to borrow writing or drawing utensils to use to create their books. Alternatively, families could record themselves telling a favorite family story. Invite families to share their stories in the language of their choice.

## Sensory/Science

*"A young child is, indeed, a true scientist, just one big question mark. What? Why? How? I never cease to marvel at the recurring miracle of growth, to be fascinated by the mystery and wonder of brave enthusiasm."*

*Victoria Wagner*

**IN THIS CENTER,** children will likely engage in exploring the properties of the pourable materials in the table as well as materials for scooping and pouring such as cups, scoops and shovels. Some children may fill containers and dump them out repeatedly as they explore. Other children may be starting to engage in pretend play with the materials in the table by using them for cooking or using smaller toys to develop a play scenario. Some children may find the Sand and Water/Sensory table materials calming.

Exposing children to natural materials gives them the opportunity to learn about the natural environment. Children may explore the natural materials through their senses by touching, listening and looking. They may also experiment with the materials by dropping, tapping or squeezing (Hirsh, 2004).

### NARRATION SUPPORT LEARNING:

*Note, use expression and vary your inflection when reflecting on children's work in order to spark joy and wonder*

- You are \_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_.
- You \_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_ and now \_\_\_\_.
- You are exploring the \_\_\_\_.
- I see you exploring with your \_\_\_\_.

**SUGGESTED TEXT:** *Say Hello!* by Rachel Isadora

### Notes

- *Children have varying levels of sensitivity to sensory experiences. Do not force children to touch materials. Invite children to participate and observe their behavior carefully. Respond to the cues they give you about their readiness to participate.*
- *Children should have an experience with sand and water over each two-week period.*
- *Make sure there is enough sand/water for children to use purposefully.*
- *Be mindful of materials. Provide multiples of high-interest tools and toys so children are not required to share but do not supply so many toys that the table is too full and children are unable to explore by scooping, pouring and digging.*

<p><b>PLANNING</b></p> <p><b>OBSERVE:</b> <i>What are children doing with the materials in the center?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Engaging</i></li> <li>• <i>Avoiding</i></li> <li>• <i>Dumping and pouring</i></li> <li>• <i>Engaging in symbolic play</i></li> <li>• <i>Using the materials for a brief period of time</i></li> <li>• <i>Using the materials for a slightly longer period of time</i></li> <li>• <i>Other:</i></li> </ul> <p><i>How are children responding to the different sensory materials?</i></p> <p><i>Other observations:</i></p>
<p><b>CONNECT:</b> <i>How do my observations link to skills children are developing and align with the ELOF goals?</i></p> <p><i>IT-LC 3. Child communicates needs and wants non-verbally and by using language</i></p> <p><i>IT-ATL 3. Child maintains focus and sustains attention with support.</i></p> <p><i>IT-PMP 2. Child uses information in directing own actions, experiences, and interactions.</i></p> <p><b>What other ELOF goals do these observations support?</b></p>
<p><b>INFORM PRACTICE:</b> <i>What are my next steps in response to children's skills and interests?</i></p>

### **POURABLE MATERIALS**

- Sand
- Water

### **SENSORY TOOLS AND TOYS**

- Sand spinner/water wheel
- Brushes
- Child-safe bubbles
- Sand molds
- Sponges
- Toy cars of various color and/or type
- Gardening tools such as small rakes, shovels and trowels,
- Materials for creating animal habitats such as live, dry or artificial flowers and/or plants, rocks, twigs, etc.
- Various containers (e.g., buckets, recycled food containers or water bottles)
- Assorted toy animals of various sizes
- Spray bottle filled with water
- Soap, washcloths and baby dolls
- Pots, pans, cooking utensils, washcloths and/or sponges
- Clean, recycled soap pumps
- Ramps
- Ice cubes
- Funnels
- Measuring cups/pitchers

### **ADDITIONAL MATERIALS TO EXPLORE**

- Sound bottles
- Binoculars
- Color paddles
- Shatterproof mirrors
- Small bowls/containers
- Texture boxes
- Puzzles
- Flashlights
- Light table
- Magnifying glasses

### **EXTENSIONS**

See Section IV Activities, for specific activity ideas related to each Big Idea

### **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUGGESTION**

Invite families to play in the sensory table with their child at drop off or pick up.

## Math/Manipulatives

*"For infants and toddlers learning and living are the same thing. If they feel secure, treasured loved, their own energy and curiosity will bring them new understanding and new skills."*

Amy Laura Dombro

**IN THIS CENTER, children will likely** explore mathematical concepts in a variety of ways. Children may explore shapes and how they fit together, mathematical concepts such as bigger/smaller or more/less, and some children may count either by naming number words or using one-to-one correspondence for a small amount of objects. Additionally, children are developing their sense of independence and may enjoy exploring fine motor activities such as stringing beads and practicing with snaps, zippers and Velcro. Children’s memory skills are improving and they may be able to participate in simple games that require two or three step directions (Bronson, 1995).

### NARRATION TO SUPPORT LEARNING:

*Note, use expression and vary your inflection when reflecting on children’s work in order to spark joy and wonder*

- You are working hard to \_\_\_\_\_.
- You are holding a \_\_\_\_\_.
- You put the \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_.
- I notice there are 3 \_\_\_\_\_. 1,2,3.

**SUGGESTED TEXT:** *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes* by Helen Oxenbury

### COUNTING

- Objects to count such as counting bears, other animals, cars, or trucks
- Peg boards and pegs
- Lids
- Pom poms
- Coasters
- Ping pong balls

### MEASURING AND COMPARING QUANTITY

- Strings of various lengths
- Rulers
- Buttons
- Large stringing beads and string
- Twigs and sticks of various sizes
- Connecting cubes
- Tape measure
- Small blocks

<b>PLANNING</b>
<p><b>OBSERVE:</b> <i>How are children interacting with the materials?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Counting</i></li> <li>• <i>Sorting</i></li> <li>• <i>Engaging in imaginative play</i></li> <li>• <i>Exploring shapes</i></li> <li>• <i>Exploring measurement</i></li> <li>• <i>Exploring letters and numbers</i></li> <li>• <i>Assembling puzzles through trial and error</i></li> <li>• <i>Assembling puzzles with intention</i></li> <li>• <i>Other:</i></li> </ul> <p><i>What does the child understand about small numbers and shapes? How does the child use the fine motor materials?</i></p> <p><i>Other observations:</i></p>
<p><b>CONNECT:</b> <i>How do my observations link to skills children are developing and align with ELOF goals?</i></p> <p><i>IT-C 8. Child develops a sense of number and quantity.</i></p> <p><i>IT-C 10. Child uses matching and sorting of objects or people to understand similar and different</i></p> <p><i>IT-PMP 6. Child coordinates hand and eye movements to perform actions</i></p> <p><b>What other ELOF goals do these observations support?</b></p>
<p><b>INFORM PRACTICE:</b> <i>What are my next steps in response to children’s skills and interests?</i></p>

### RECOGNIZING SHAPES

- Shape sorter and shapes
- Shape puzzles
- Shape blocks

### WRITTEN NUMBER AND LETTER

- Plastic numbers and letters
- Letter puzzles
- Number puzzles

### SMALL BUILDING TOYS AND MANIPULATIVES

- Stacking cups/boxes
- Gears
- Table top blocks
- Pop-up toys
- Lock boards
- Blocks and cubes that can stack to various heights
- Interlocking blocks
- Pop beads
- Stacking rings
- Textured balls
- Snaps and zippers

### PUZZLES

- Peg puzzles
- Floor puzzles
- Simple interlocking puzzles

### RECYCLED AND NATURAL MATERIALS

- Wooden rings
- Sticks
- Leaves
- Spools
- Stones

### EXTENSIONS

See Section IV Activities, for specific activity ideas related to each Big Idea

### FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUGGESTION

Encourage families to create collections of loose parts and found objects (e.g. rocks, acorns, bottle tops, etc.) the children find interesting. They can determine a place to store the objects and explore them together. To explore, they may enjoy looking closely at the objects and discussing what they see, sorting them, counting them together, or using them to create stories together.

## IV. Scope and Sequence

Connections is built around the belief that instruction should align to children’s interests. As a support, 13 Big Ideas (see Section V Big Ideas) have been built out in detail and include activity ideas for each center, large group, and text suggestions. Teaching teams should reflect on their knowledge of how children learn, as well as what they see children doing, what they hear them saying, and what families share about their children’s interests and experiences to determine which Big Ideas to explore.

### How do children learn?

Children learn from concrete to more abstract, and from personal outward. Strong instruction starts by focusing on very concrete, tangible content that is close to children’s daily experiences, and aligned to their interests. As they move through the course of a program year, children may be increasingly able to learn about topics that are more abstract.

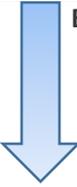
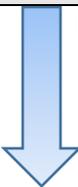
Potential Topics to Explore		
This is a possible outline of the program year. Modifications should be made according to the classroom community, however consider opening the year with <i>Hello and Goodbye</i> to support the separation process.		
Beginning of the Program Year	Middle of the Program Year	End of the Program Year
Hello and Goodbye All About Me Family and Caregivers Classroom Community	5 Senses Neighborhood Community Community Helpers Transportation Animals Insects	Light Colors Moving

### Children’s Needs and Interests

Review the Big Ideas. Consider the children in your class and reflect on what you see them doing, hear them saying, and what families have shared about their children’s interests and experiences. Look for alignment between the children’s interests and the Big Ideas. Additionally, consider:

What Children Need	How to Support Children’s Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To see their interests reflected in the classroom materials and activities.</li> <li>Have opportunities to explore emotions and experiences through play.</li> <li>To have opportunities to learn about themselves and the world around them through play.</li> <li>Opportunities to make choices and try things on their own.</li> <li>See their learning and accomplishments reflected in the classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose topic areas that are relevant to the children.</li> <li>Provide materials that spark wonder.</li> <li>Remove materials that seem uninteresting to the children, replace them with new materials that enhance the learning about a Big Idea</li> <li>Offer opportunities for children to try activities that are aligned to their interests and development.</li> </ul>

Use the following template to record the first Big Idea to Explore. When children’s interests start to shift and their play no longer aligns to the Big Idea, begin planning to implement a new Big Idea. **Add each Big Idea to the template as you move through the course of the program year.**

<p><b>Beginning of Program Year</b></p> <p>Beginning of the year topics should help children acclimate to the classroom, learn about the space around them, support them in understanding that their family has a place in the program and that they will return. Topics should be very concrete and relevant to children's day-to-day lives.</p>
<p> <b>Big Ideas to Explore:</b></p>
<p><b>Middle of the Program Year</b></p> <p>Middle of the year topics should help children dig deeper into content areas they find interesting. They should still be quite concrete and related to children’s day-to-day lives, although they may start to move away from studying the children themselves and their families and move into topics related to things children see in the larger world around them (e.g. animals).</p>
<p> <b>Big Ideas to Explore:</b></p>
<p><b>End of the Program Year</b></p> <p>End of the year topics should still help children dig deeper into content areas they find interesting. These interests, however may be more abstract or complex.</p>
<p> <b>Big Ideas to Explore:</b></p>

## V. Big Ideas

At two, children are often eager to learn new information about the world around them. They are excited about their ability to understand and use new language in relation to the world around them, especially things they like. For example, they may be excited to learn about the roots, stems, and petals on a flower or the wings, abdomen, and antennae of an insect. The big ideas in this section are intended to provide opportunities for children to have concrete experiences with topics that may be a part of their day to day New York City lives, or that young children often find interesting. Successful implementation of these big ideas will depend on selecting ideas that most closely relate to children's interests and the support children receive from an attentive caregiver as they explore materials. While the materials selected for centers are extremely important, learning is made richer through the interactions adults and children have during center time. When teaching teams interact with children in centers they can model language through initiating, joining, and extending conversations, using self and parallel talk and, as children are ready, asking open-ended questions that deepen engagement as well as critical thinking and problem solving skills.

Before selecting a topic area to explore, carefully observe the children in your class. Note the parts of the classroom and the materials the children particularly enjoy. Listen to their language and watch how they communicate. What are they sharing that indicates their interests? Consider children's interests in relation to the topics in this section. Select ideas that align to children's interest(s) and may inspire them.

There are 13 big ideas included in this section. ***They are not designed to be implemented in a particular order and should be selected based on children's development and interests.*** Use of all the big ideas is not required. Implement each big idea for as long as children are interested. Within each topic, some activities may seem better for your children than others. Implement the activities that you think will work well for your children based on your observations and knowledge of each student. Add additional activities as appropriate. Each topic area should be explored for as long as children are interested. When interest starts to fade or shift, move on to another topic that feels more relevant.

Use the Weekly Planning Template in Section IV Templates to guide implementation of the big ideas and activities in this section. An additional copy of this planning template can be found on the DECE info hub ([link](#)). This template can be modified according to the needs of each program and/or classroom.

Reflective practice is essential to high quality, responsive care and instruction. As children engage in activities, note what they say and do. Align these observations to the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework ([ELOF](#)). Reflect on your observations and use them to guide further decisions about care and activity implementation. Use the Connections Documentation Template in Section IV Templates to support your observations and reflection. An additional copy of this planning template can be found on the DECE info hub ([link](#)).

## All About Me

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
<p>Add mirror blocks to the block area and invite children to look at themselves in the blocks as they are building. Invite children to talk about what they are seeing in the mirror. Pose open-ended questions such as “I wonder what you are noticing when you see yourself?” or, “I wonder what you see when you look in the blocks?” Accept all answers children give or if they choose not to answer.</p>	<p>Ask children what they like to eat. Invite them into the dramatic play center to eat their favorite meal. Ask other children if they would like to try their friend’s favorite meal, too.</p>	<p>Place mirrors on a table or at the easel and provide markers for drawing. Invite children to look at themselves in the mirrors as they are drawing.</p>	<p>Create an <b>All About Me</b> book for the library. Have families and caregivers give you information about the child such as who is in their family and what they like to do. Families could also make these books at home and bring into the classroom to share.</p>
	<p>Hang each child’s picture in the dramatic play center. Invite children to find the picture of themselves. Invite them to look in the mirror and at their picture. Invite them to talk to about what they notice when they look at the two images of themselves.</p>	<p>Supply paper and crayons or markers and invite children to draw a picture. While children are drawing, narrate what they are doing such as making big circles on the paper or using many colors. Hang each drawing up in the classroom with the child’s picture.</p>	
<p>Invite children to make their favorite place. Consider asking families and caregivers what children enjoy the most. If they need help developing an idea, give them choices from what you have learned from families and caregivers.</p>	<p>Invite children to look at themselves in a mirror and make funny faces. Demonstrate excitement for each face a child makes. Encourage children to show their peers their face, if both children are interested. Invite them to use these faces as they play in the center</p>	<p>Using contact paper with the sticky side facing out, supply pictures of all the children in the classroom and invite them to make a collage. When completed, hang the collage at the children’s eye level and invite them to go back to it as desired. When children explore the collage, talk with them about what they notice.</p>	<p>Add books related to <i>All About Me</i> such as:  <b><i>I Like Myself</i></b> by Karen Beaumont  <b><i>I Love My Hair</i></b> by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley  <b><i>Happy in Your Skin</i></b> by Fran Manushkin  <b><i>Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes</i></b> by Helen Oxenbury</p>
<p>Supply each child with a block with their picture on it and invite them to make a structure for their picture block to play in</p>	<p>Observe what each child really enjoys in the dramatic play center. Each day adjust the materials to align with children’s interests (e.g. bracelets, cooking materials, costumes). If necessary, trade materials with another classroom or ask families to share materials (be sure families understand that sharing materials is not required and that all children will be able to participate in this activity regardless of their contribution). Highlight the materials you have added and invite children to play with them.</p>		

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
Place mirrors in and around the sensory table and fill the table with water. Invite children to find themselves in the mirror.	Create simple 2-4 piece puzzles using each child's picture.	Create a safe place for children to climb and jump and invite children to play. Provide positive reinforcement for each child's efforts.	Sing <i>Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes</i> (see Section IX Appendices). Invite children to do the movements with you.
Make goop or play dough and place out cooking utensils. Invite children to share a special event they celebrate with their families or caregivers and make a meal for the celebration.	Trace each child's body and invite them to decorate however, they choose. Hang them up around the classroom. Considering adding pictures of the children near the cutout, so children can remember which one is theirs.	Hide the children's pictures in the gross motor area or the playground and invite children to find their picture.	Bring a basket of instruments to the large group area and invite children to pick out their favorite instrument for music time. Ensure that there are enough instruments for all children.
Add letters to a pourable material in the sensory table and supply scoops and buckets for children to explore. As children discover the letters, note what they have found. If children find the letters of their own names be sure to point this out.	Invite children to look in the mirror and notice what is on their body. Model language such as longer/shorter, big/little and more/less as children look at themselves.	If available, add riding toys to the outdoor/gross motor space. Invite the children to ride to their favorite places. Celebrate all attempts children make at moving the toys and any answer they give to the prompt.	Create a song board or offer song choices by using cards with pictures cues where each child can choose the song they want to sing. Ensure to have the name of the song written out along with the picture to help children's understanding of the written word (e.g. a picture of lamb for <i>Mary Had a Little Lamb</i> )
Add the pictures of children to a pourable material. Give the children scoops and buckets and invite them to find pictures of themselves.	Invite families to send in pictures of the child as a baby or use pictures from earlier in the year. Create a peek-a-boo board with a current picture of the child on the outside and the younger picture on the inside. Remind each child how much they have grown and all the things they can do.	In a place that is safe, invite children to run fast, if they are interested. Talk to them about how fast they can run and how it feels to be proud of the way they can move their bodies.	Sing <i>If You Are Happy and You Know It</i> (see Section IX Appendices). Consider extending the song by adding a variety of emotions. Invite children to sing and act them out.

## Animals

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
Add animals to the block center and invite children to build homes for them. Consider adding pictures of where animals live.	Create a pet store in the dramatic play area. Use a box or large piece of cardboard to create a storefront. Supply animals that are found in pet stores as well as food, and/or care products. Consider adding additional items such as pretend money and cash registers. Supply animal costumes such as animal ears or fabric with animal or reptile prints. Invite children to dress up like animals of their choice and pretend to be that animal.	Provide boxes, paint, markers, sticks, leaves and other materials for decoration. Invite children to make homes for the animals and reptiles of their choice. Consider having pictures of animal homes for children to view.	Add books related to <i>Animals</i> such as: <b><i>Potty Animals: What to Know When You've Got to Go!</i></b> by Hope Vestergaard <b><i>Octopus's Garden</i></b> by Ringo Starr <b><i>There is a Bear in My Chair</i></b> by Ross Collins <b><i>Harriet Gets Carried Away?</i></b> by Jessie Sima
Supply bears and tell children it is time for the bears to go to sleep for the winter. Invite them to help you build a cave so the bears can go to sleep.		Place animals and reptiles on a large piece of paper on a tabletop or on the floor. Supply paint in spill proof cups and brushes. Invite children to paint the animals.	
Provide vehicles that the animals and reptiles can ride in. Tell the children the animals need to go somewhere and need their help. Invite them to build roads so the animals can get to where they need to go.	Tell children it is nighttime and the animals want to go to sleep. Invite children to help put the animals to sleep.	Cover the easel or a tabletop with paper, or place paper on the floor. Provide glue in spill-proof cups, brushes, and cut out pictures of animals. Invite children to make a collage.	
Supply animals that can climb or fly such as monkeys, birds or snakes. Invite the children to build tall structures so the animals can climb or fly to the top of the structure.	Place common pets in the dramatic play center such as dogs, cats, rabbits or birds. Ask families if they have pets at home and, if possible, add any pets they mention. Talk to the children about how some families have pets and how to take care of them. Invite children to help take care of the pets by petting them, feeding them and/or creating places they can sleep.	Place pictures of animals that live in similar habitats, such as rabbits, foxes and birds, behind contact paper with the sticky side facing out. Provide natural materials such as grass, flowers and sticks and invite children to stick the materials on the contact paper to create the habitat for animals	

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
<p>Fill the sensory table with sand. Supply animals that live in the desert such as birds, snakes and hyenas. Invite the children to play. Consider adding pictures of the animals in their natural habitats.</p>	<p>Create sorting/matching games with pictures of adult and baby animals and reptiles. Invite children to sort or match the pictures. Accept any way the children choose to explore, sort, or match the pictures.</p>	<p>Bring a group of animals that live in similar habitats, such as sharks, whales and fish or bear, raccoons and owls to the outdoors/gross motor space. Invite children to play in that habitat.</p>	<p>Bring a basket of animals to the music area and sing <i>Old McDonald Had a Farm</i> (see Section IX Appendices). Invite children to choose from the basket and sing about the animal they chose.</p>
<p>Fill the sensory table with leaves, sticks, tree greens, and animals that live in the forest such bears, squirrels, snakes, and birds. As children are playing talk to them about the habitat they created why these animals might like to live here.</p>	<p>Supply tree blocks and animals. Invite children to build with the blocks and help the animals climb the trees.</p>	<p>On the playground or gross motor area, invite children to walk like a bear by bending over and walking with feet and hands on the ground. If interested, invite children to walk like other animals as well.</p>	<p>Bring out animal or reptile puppets and display them one at a time. Invite children to move and make the sounds of the puppet displayed.</p>
<p>Fill the sensory table with water. Add natural materials like leaves and sticks, frogs, ducks and snakes. Invite the children to play. Tell the children that this is a pond and these animals can be found in ponds, lakes and rivers.</p>	<p>Place a box on the table with natural materials such as hay, sticks, leaves, large pebbles, and farm animals. Tell the children these animals live on a farm and this is their barn. Invite children to explore how the animals live on the farm and use the barn.</p>	<p>Bring animals to the gross motor area or the playground and hide them. Invite children to find them. When they have found all the animals, repeat as long as children are interested.</p>	<p>Sing <i>Mary Had a Little Lamb</i> (see Section IX Appendices). Consider changing the words to include other animals.</p>
<p>Fill the sensory table with water. Add mild soap to make bubbles and animals. Supply cups and washcloths and invite children to give the animals a bath.</p>	<p>Dim the lights. Use flashlights, a projector or a lamp, shine light on a wall and invite children to make animals shadows.</p>	<p>Bring small blankets to the gross motor area or playground. Invite children to pretend they are turtles by crawling around with a blanket on their backs or hiding under the “shell” like turtles.</p>	<p>Invite children to bring stuffed or pretend animals with them to the music area. Tell the children the animals are very tired and need to go to sleep. Invite them to sing lullabies to them.</p>

## Classroom Community

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
Add pictures of the children and teaching team to the block area. As children play with the blocks, talk about who is on the block and how they are part of your classroom community.	Tell children you are going to prepare a picnic for the class. Invite them to join you and plan for what is needed. Consider encouraging children to ask other children what they might want.	Provide pictures of different areas of the classroom and give children markers or crayons for them to draw on.	Create a book called <b><i>Our Classroom Community</i></b> add all the pictures of the children and teaching staff.
Supply pretend tools such as a hammer, wrench and measuring tape. Tell the children you need to fix some things for the classroom and invite them to help you. Consider “fixing” actual toys, or pretending blocks are toys that need to be repaired. As the children are playing, talk to them about how communities help each other and that they are helping their classroom community by fixing the items.	Tell children you are going to clean in the dramatic play center. Let them know this is a way to help their classroom community. Invite them to help you. Supply cleaning materials such as brooms, dustpans, spray bottles and rags. If children do not want to pretend to clean, allow them to play as desired.	Cover the easel with paper. Provide paints and pictures of the children. Invite them to use wet paint to attach the pictures to the easel. Provide other decorative materials, as well. Tell children they are helping to create a piece of artwork for the classroom community to enjoy.	
Tell children you would like to build a big ramp so they have a place to roll things down. Invite them to help you. Allow children to add as they wish and let the play go in a different direction if children choose. While they are playing, discuss with them that they are helping their classroom community by building something that the other children in the class can use and enjoy.	Provide doctor supplies and tell the children that you will be giving check-ups. Consider modeling the role of doctor once or twice then allowing the children to take on this role. Remind children that keeping each other healthy and safe is another way to take care of your classroom community. Allow children to use the materials how they choose.	Place pictures of the classroom behind contact paper with the sticky side out. Supply pictures of the children so that they can stick them on the paper and decide where they want the pictures to go in their classroom.	Add books related to Classroom Community to the library. Consider books such as: <b><i>A Friend for Henry</i></b> by Jenn Bailey <b><i>Just for Me</i></b> by Jennifer Hansen Rolli <b><i>Lola Goes to School</i></b> by Anna McQuinn <b><i>Can I Play, Too?</i></b> by Mo Willems
When it is time to clean up, remind children how they are helping the classroom community by putting items away where they belong. The clean space makes it safer and easier for everyone to have fun.	Invite children to play with you in dramatic play. Ask them what they want to play. Tell them that sometimes playing what other people want is a way to build a strong classroom community. If the children are unsure of what they want to do, provide them with choices based on their interests.	Place a large piece of paper on the floor. Invite children to make hand and feet prints using inkpads. Hang up the picture and talk to the children that helped to make classroom community mural. If children are hesitant to place their hands or feet in the ink, offer to trace them or allow them to make prints with something else they prefer.	

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
<p>Fill the sensory table with water. Add baby dolls and add mild soap to create bubbles. Provide cups and washcloths and invite children to wash the babies. Talk to them how they are helping to take care of the babies in their classroom community by keeping them clean.</p>	<p>Using an empty container such as a wipes container or any container that has a slot on the top, supply pictures of the children taking care of each other or the classroom, or building friendships. Invite them to slide the pictures in slot and empty them when they are done. Highlight how the children are supporting their classroom community in each picture.</p>	<p>Bring out a parachute and invite to work together as a community to make the parachute move up and down.</p>	<p>Sing <i>Here We Are Together</i> (see Section IX Appendices) with all the children's names.</p>
<p>Place mirrors in the bottom of the sensory table so children can see themselves and their peers as they play. Remind them that everyone they see is a member of their classroom community.</p>	<p>Create simple 2-4 piece puzzles of pictures of the children interacting in the classroom and throughout their school day.</p>	<p>If possible, take a walk as a whole class and talk about how the class is doing something together as a community.</p>	<p>Supply bells and invite each child to move their bodies how they choose to the bells. If children do not want to participate, allow them to participate how they choose to. Talk to the children about how learning about what people like to do makes us a community.</p>
<p>Add pictures of the children interacting in the classroom to a pourable material in the sensory table. As children are playing, talk about what is happening in the pictures and how the children are interacting with their classroom community in the pictures.</p>	<p>Create a peek-a-boo board. Place pictures of the different areas of the room on the outside and pictures of the children playing in each area on the inside. Include pictures of all of the children.</p>	<p>Bring lots of balls outside or to a gross motor area. Dump them out and invite children to work together to put them back in the bin or bag. When they are done, invite them to do it again. Repeat as children are interested.</p>	<p>Sing <i>This Whole Class</i> (see Section IX Appendices).</p>
<p>Invite children to make slime, goop or playdough with you. As you are making it, talk about how you are they are helping their classroom community by making something everyone can use and enjoy.</p>	<p>Use a class picture to create a class puzzle. Cut the picture into a few pieces and invite the children to put it back together.</p>	<p>Create 2 or 3 balance beams that are low to the ground and close together. Invite children to walk on them at the same time. If children are interested, encourage them to invite peers to go on with them by modeling language they can use (e.g. Do you want to walk with me?)</p>	<p>Invite children to hold hands and sing <i>Ring-Around-the-Roses</i> (see Section IX Appendices). Remind that they need to work as a community to sing the song. If children do not want to participate, allow them to observe, or sit in the middle of the circle.</p>
	<p>Create a sheet that includes a picture of each child in the class. Place the page in this center and allow children to use it to count, explore one-to-one correspondence, or in other ways as desired.</p>		

## Color Exploration

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
Place translucent blocks as well as wood blocks on the light table. Invite children to play with the different types of blocks. Highlight how two types of blocks look different.	Invite children to do laundry with you and pretend to wash colorful scarves. When it is time to dry the laundry, drape the scarves around the dramatic play center. Point out the colors that are around the center.	Create a collage by hanging contact paper at the easel with the sticky side facing out. Supply scraps such as colored paper, fabric, ribbon, and/or cardboard. While children are creating, talk to them about the colors they are using. When the collage is finished, hang it at children’s eye level so they can continue the color exploration.	Add books related to colors such as: <b>Mouse Paint</b> by Ellen Stoll Walsh <b>Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See</b> by Eric Carle <b>The Little Red Stroller</b> by Joshua Furst <b>Little Blue and Little Yellow</b> by Leo Lionni
Cover wooden blocks with construction paper or colored masking tape. Invite children make colorful structures with the blocks. While children are playing, talk about the different colors they are using.	Replace the baby blankets with colorful scarves and invite children to help you put the babies to sleep. Children may want to consider which color to give to each baby.	Supply real or pretend flowers and markers. Invite children to change the color of the flower by drawing on them.	
Supply color paddles and invite children to change the color of their structure by looking through their paddle. Invite children talk about what they notice.	Tell children you are going to make a fruit salad in the dramatic play center. Use toy fruit, or another material such as paper pieces or colored play dough as fruit. Invite children to discuss the colors, their color preferences and how the colors look together in the bowl.	Place a large sheet of paper on the floor. Supply finger-paint of various colors. Invite children to paint with their hands. As they explore the materials narrate how they are moving their hands, and the colors they are using (or creating).	
Add an assortment of colorful large pom-poms, feathers or other material(s) to the block area that children can add to their structures.	Add colorful cups, bowls and plates to the center and invite children to use them as they play.	Fill spill-proof paint cups with non-toxic shaving cream. Add liquid watercolor and mix. Supply black paper on either a table, the easel, or the floor. Invite children to paint with the shaving cream. If non-toxic shaving cream is unavailable, consider using pastel paint colors. These can be created by adding white to other colors.	
	Add clothing, or pieces of fabric in an assortment of colors to the dress-up materials in the center.		

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
<p>Supply squirt bottles filled with colored water. Fill the sensory table with water and invite children to squirt the colored water in the table. Talk with the children about the colors as they explore.</p>	<p>Place translucent colored cups on the light table. Invite children to explore.</p>	<p>Supply color paddles outside or in the gross motor area. Invite children to notice the difference in colors as they look through the paddles.</p>	<p>Play music and invite children to dance with colored scarves.</p>
<p>Make playdough of a variety of colors, supply sticks, molds and other play dough tools that capture the children's interests. As children are playing, narrate the colors they are using and how the colors change when mixed together.</p>	<p>Bring in a large box that children can fit inside. If that is not possible, provide medium boxes that they can see inside of. Provide flashlights covered with colored cellophane and invite children to explore the colors the flashlights make.</p>	<p>Add a large sheet of white paper to the playground or large gross motor area. Supply spill proof paint cups and brushes. Invite children to splatter the paint onto the paper and notice the colors that appear.</p>	<p>Create different color shapes on the floor by using painter's or colored masking tape. Invite children to jump from shape to shape. Highlights the colors as children jump.</p>
<p>Make translucent goop using clear glue. If clear glue is unavailable, use white glue to make it opaque. Place the goop on the light table with tools such as tongue depressors or sticks and invite children to explore.</p>	<p>Provide some natural materials such as leaves of different colors. Invite children to sort the leaves by color.</p>	<p>Provide balls of different colors. Invite children to sort the balls by color.</p>	<p>Read <b><i>Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?</i></b> by Eric Carle. Highlight the colors in the book. Invite children to find the colors in the classroom.</p>
<p>Make goop and place in sensory trays. Add a few drops of liquid watercolor and do not mix. Supply tools such as sticks or spoons, so children can mix and blend the colors together. Talk to the children about how the colors change as they are mixed together.</p>	<p>If available, supply shape sorters that have colorful shapes. While the children are interacting with the shape sorter, narrate the color and shape they are using. If shape sorters are unavailable, consider making simple 2-4 piece puzzles out of paper of a single color. Cut puzzle pieces into shapes such as triangles, rectangles and squares. Talk to the children about the colors and shapes.</p>	<p>On a walk to the playground or to the gross motor area, talk about all the colors that can be seen along the way.</p>	<p>Tape a layer of colored cellophane over the light on a flashlight. Provide children with flashlights then play music and invite children to dance and explore.</p>

## Community Helpers

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
Provide emergency vehicles or place pictures of emergency vehicles on blocks. Invite children to explore the vehicles and discuss how they are helpful.	Provide bags and paper for children to carry. Invite children to help you deliver mail and deliver it around the classroom.	Invite children to paint a box blue. Tell them that they are helping to create mailbox that the class will be able to use.	<p>Create a book about community helpers.</p> <p>Add books related to <i>Community Helpers</i> such as:</p> <p><b><i>Police Officers on Patrol</i></b> by Kersten Hamilton</p> <p><b><i>Whose Tools?</i></b> by Toni Buzzeo</p> <p><b><i>Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!</i></b> by Mo Willems</p> <p><b><i>Hangry</i></b> by Drew Brockington</p>
Place construction hats and tools in the block area. Invite children to pretend they are construction workers and build.	Provide medical supplies. Tell the children the baby dolls need to get a checkup at the doctor and that doctors help us stay healthy. Invite the children to help give the baby dolls checkups.	Supply paper, envelopes, crayons and markers. Invite children to mail letters in the mailbox they created.	
Post pictures of a hospital, firehouse, post office, police station or other community buildings block area. If possible, add pictures that are relevant to the classroom community.	Create a storefront and ask the children what they would like to sell. If children need help, consider community stores such as a hardware store, bakery or grocery store.	Supply cardboard tubes, sticks, flat pieces of cardboard along with other items for decoration. Invite children to create a building with the items. Accept any way the child chooses to create.	
Place pictures of taxis, busses and subways on blocks. Supply people and create roads using painter's tape, Invite children to play.	Create a bus in the dramatic play area by using a large box or piece of cardboard. Invite children to explore.	Place black and white pictures of community helpers' vehicles and/or buildings on a table. Supply markers or crayons and invite children to color.	

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
<p>Fill the sensory table with a pourable material. Supply scoops, tools and construction hats. Talk to the children about how construction workers need to do a lot of digging before they can build and invite them to do the same. If available, provide construction vehicles, too.</p>	<p>Supply an assortment of emergency vehicles and invite children to explore.</p>	<p>Create a space where children can climb. Share that firefighters climb big things to keep people safe. Invite them to be pretend to be firefighters and climb up to rescue a person or animal.</p>	<p>Move around the room pretending to be different types of vehicles that community workers use. If the vehicles make noise, make noises as you move. Sing <i>Hurry, Hurry, Drive That Fire Truck</i> (see Section IX Appendices). Invite children to do the hand motions with the song.</p>
<p>Create a snowstorm in the sensory table by using non-toxic shaving cream or cotton balls. Put the emergency vehicles in the table and invite children to help the emergency vehicle get through the snow. Discuss that the people who drive these vehicles help to keep our community safe by driving around the city no matter the weather.</p>	<p>Supply community worker puzzles. If none are available, consider making them by printing pictures that can be cut into 2-4 piece puzzles.</p>	<p>If possible, take a walk outside and see how many community helpers you can see along the way. If not possible, invite children to wear community helper costumes to the gross motor area or playground.</p>	<p>Sing <i>Wheels on the Bus</i> (see Section IX Appendices). Invite children to sing along and do the motions.</p>
<p>Fill the sensory table water and supply boats and people. Talk to the children that some community helpers such as police use boats to keep people safe.</p>	<p>Supply interlocking blocks and small emergency vehicles. Invite children to build places where they emergency vehicles can go or create structures they can knock down with the vehicles.</p>	<p>Take tubes and fire hats with you to the playground or the gross motor area. Invite children to be firefighters and tell the children and they need to help put out fires.</p>	<p>Invite children to wear hats or costumes of community helper and pretend to be that community helper during music.</p>
<p>Fill the sensory table with a pourable material and make a farm scene. Supply animals, medical supplies, and people. Talk to the children that a special doctor called a veterinarian helps to keep animals healthy and safe. Invite them to take care of the animals on the farm.</p>	<p>Supply large nuts and bolts along with pretend tools. Invite children to explore the tools and other materials. Consider adding playdough or another material that will hold the nuts and bolts.</p>	<p>Invite children to pretend they are bus, subway or taxi drivers as you are walking to the playground or gross motor area. Tell them they are going to help everyone get to where they need to go, just like the real community helpers.</p>	<p>Pretend to be a class train. Play music and move around the room as a train.</p>

## Family and Caregivers

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
Place pictures of children’s family members and/or the places they live, in the block center. These pictures might inspire children as they build.	Ask families to share their evening routine. If possible, ask them to share their routine in list format. Hang the lists in dramatic play. Invite children to act out the family routines.	Supply black and white pictures of animal families and provide markers or crayons so the children draw on them.	Create a classroom book of all of the children’s families or caregivers.
Place pictures of animal families and provide toy animals. Invite children to create homes for the animals and their families.	Hang pictures of the children’s families in the dramatic play center. Ask the children if they would like to make their family something to eat.	Supply boxes, paint, fabric and other materials for decorating. Also, supply toy people and animals and invite children to make homes for the people and animals. Accept whatever children create.	
Invite children to use the blocks to make homes or places for their favorite toys to live.	Tell children you are going to have to go to work (or a similar activity that their caregiver does when they are aware from the child). Invite them to join you and notice how they play out the separation process.	Place pictures of children’s families on the easel. Cover the pictures with tissue paper. Provide water in spill proof cups and brushes. Invite children paint with water on the tissue paper. Note the changes that occur.	Add books related to Families and Caregivers such as: <b><i>The Family Book</i></b> by Todd Parr <b><i>Henry Wants More</i></b> by Linda Ashman <b><i>The New Small Person</i></b> by Lauren Child <b><i>Julián is a Mermaid</i></b> by Jessica Love
Add common pets to the block area, such as dogs, cats and birds. Invite children to build homes where the pets can live. Add toy people and invite children to use the people to create families, and then create structures for the families.	Ask parents about the child’s bedtime routine. Tell children you are going to put the dolls to bed and invite them to help you or if they prefer, they can pretend to go to sleep. Mimic the child’s bedtime the best you can.	Make a family collage using pictures of the children’s family. Cover the easel with paper and provide paint and brushes and invite children to use the paint to adhere the pictures to the easel.	

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
<p>Fill the sensory table with pourable materials then add natural materials such as leaves, sticks or large pebbles. Also, add large and small animals so children can make animal families, if they would like.</p>	<p>Create a peek-a-boo board using pictures of the children’s family. Add a picture of the child on the outside and their family underneath.</p>	<p>Invite children to bring baby dolls with them on a walk to the gross motor area or playground.</p>	<p>Sing <i>1 Little Duck</i> (see Section IX Appendices). If you have pretend ducks available, consider using them a visual for children. Change the word from Mama to meet the needs of the classroom (e.g. daddy, grandparent, name of caregiver).</p>
<p>Supply natural materials such as sticks and leaves, plastic eggs or play dough and pretend birds. Invite children to make nest homes for the birds. Accept anything that the children create with the materials. (Consider introducing the book <i>Owl Babies</i> by Martin Waddell prior to this activity or placing the book at the table where children will be playing).</p>	<p>Supply spools, tree blocks or tabletop blocks with animals. Invite children to make homes for the animals and their families.</p>	<p>Talk with the children about the many ways families get around the city. Invite children to pretend they are driving, taking a train, riding a bus, or move how their family prefers to travel together.</p>	<p>Sing <i>Down By The Bay</i> (see Appendices). Change the words “my mother will say” to meet the needs of your classroom (e.g. daddy, grandparent, name of caregiver).</p>
<p>Supply dishes, utensils, baby bottles and cooking materials as well as playdough and baby dolls. Place the babies at the table and invite children to feed the babies.</p>	<p>Provide pictures of families with varying numbers of family members as well as open-ended materials. Invite children to explore the images and materials.</p>	<p>Bring pretend food to the playground or gross motor area. Invite children to create food cart or restaurant and sell food that families can buy and serve for dinner.</p>	<p>Invite children to bring a baby dolls or stuffed animals with them to the rug and sing lullabies. Invite families to share lullabies they sing at home.</p>
<p>Add pictures of the children’s family to a pourable material in the sensory table. Supply scoops and cups or buckets so they can find and hide their family.</p>	<p>Supply toy people and a dollhouse or a box that children can use as house. Invite them to play family with the materials.</p>		

## Hello and Goodbye

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
Place pictures of the children and/or their families on blocks and invite children to find themselves and other familiar people. When they find a picture, they can say <i>hello</i> and then say <i>goodbye</i> when they put it back.	Tell children you have to go to work (or incorporate a separation process that is familiar to the children of the classroom) and need to say <i>goodbye</i> . Invite them to prepare to go to work, too. Leave for work and then return from work and say <i>hello</i> .	Place coffee filter on the easel and provide squirt bottles with colored water. Invite children squirt the water. As the colors appear, say <i>hello colors</i> .	Create a book with children's pictures. Add flaps to hide their pictures on the page.
Invite children to build with you. Invite children to add doors to their structures. Use <i>hello</i> and <i>goodbye</i> as children create.	Give the children fabric or scarves. Invite them to use the scarves to greet themselves <i>hello</i> and <i>goodbye</i> as they look in the mirror.	Place pictures behind pieces of tissue paper. Provide water in spill proof cups with paintbrushes. Invite children to find the pictures behind the tissue paper. When the pictures are revealed say <i>hello</i> .	
Incorporate mirror blocks and invite children to find themselves in the mirrors. Say <i>hello</i> when the child finds themselves in the mirror.	Invite children to go on a trip with you. Ask them to help pack all the things you need for the trip. When it is time to go on the trip, tell them it is time to say <i>goodbye</i> to the classroom. When you return to the classroom, invite them to say <i>hello</i> to the classroom.	Provide chalkboards and erasers. Invite children draw and erase the chalk. Narrate their play by saying <i>hello</i> and <i>goodbye</i> as they erase and create marks.	Add books related to <i>Hello and Goodbye</i> such as: <b><i>Runaway Bunny</i></b> by Margaret Wise Brown <b><i>Say Hello!</i></b> by Rachel Isadora <b><i>Llama, Llama Misses Mama</i></b> by Anna Dewdney <b><i>Dreamers</i></b> by Yuyi Morales
Build a road or train tracks with tunnels for cars, trains, people, etc. to pass through. As the vehicles pass through say <i>hello</i> and <i>goodbye</i> .	Place a box in the classroom that is big enough for children to fit in and they can close themselves inside. Invite them to explore saying <i>hello</i> and <i>goodbye</i> by going in and out of the box.	Place out dry erase boards and invite children to draw and erase the marks they make.	

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
<p>Print pictures of the children from the classroom and place them in the pourable materials in the sensory table. Provide scoopers and buckets and invite children to find and hide the pictures. As they find and hide pictures say <i>hello</i> and <i>goodbye</i>.</p>	<p>Place mirrors on the easel with flaps covering them. Invite children to lift the flaps and find themselves in the mirror. When the children see themselves say <i>hello</i>. When they close the flap say <i>goodbye</i>.</p>	<p>Invite children to play hide-and-go-seek. Ensure that you know where children are and can see them at all times, but the children feel hidden (e.g. hiding behind a tree). Give the children a few seconds to hide and then find them. Repeat as long as the children are interested.</p>	<p>Sing a hello song with the children at music time. Ensure to say hello to all the children in the classroom.</p>
<p>Supply waterwheels and cups. As children are playing, say <i>goodbye</i> as they pour out the water.</p>	<p>Place pictures on the bottom of a peg puzzle and invite children to discover what is underneath. When the picture is revealed say <i>hello</i>, when the child replaces the puzzle piece, say <i>goodbye</i>.</p>	<p>Bring animals to the gross motor area or the playground along with the parachute. Place the animals underneath and tell the children they are hiding. Lift up the parachute and say <i>hello animals</i>. Invite children to run underneath and get the animals. Repeat as long as the children are interested.</p>	<p>Sing <i>Where Is Thumbkin?</i> (see Section IX Appendices) Invite children to say <i>hello</i> and <i>goodbye</i> as the children appear and reappear.</p>
<p>Provide two sensory bins with pictures of the children’s families or something that represents their interests at the bottom. Place 2 different types of soft sensory materials such as sand provide brushes and invite children to find the hidden pictures on the bottom of the bin. As the pictures appear and disappear, say <i>hello</i> and <i>goodbye</i>.</p>	<p>Provide objects that pop-up and say <i>hello</i> when it pops up and <i>goodbye</i> when it goes back down.</p>	<p>On a walk to the playground or gross motor area, say hello to all the people you see along the way.</p>	<p>Provide scarves. Invite children to play peek-a-boo with each other by covering and uncovering their faces.</p>
<p>Secure tubes to the sensory table, provide items that will fit through the tube and invite children to drop the items down the tube. As they drop them say <i>goodbye [item name]</i> and when they reappear, say <i>hello [item name]</i>.</p>	<p>Provide boxes with lids of various sizes (e.g. rectangular and square jewelry boxes) place items inside that children can discover. As they open and close the boxes narrate their play by saying <i>hello</i> and <i>goodbye</i>.</p>	<p>Bring chalk and water to the playground. Invite children to draw with chalk and make it disappear with the water. Narrate their play by saying <i>hello</i> and <i>goodbye</i> as the chalk appears and disappears.</p>	<p>Bring puppets to help sing songs. Have a new puppet appear and say <i>hello</i> each time a new song is introduced.</p>

## Insects

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
Place tree blocks and pretend insects in the block area. Invite children to build trees the insects can climb and live in.	Invite children to read <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i> by Eric Carle with you. Then invite them into the dramatic play area to become caterpillars who become butterflies. If children are interested, help them create a chrysalis by wrapping them in a blanket and tell them when they open the blanket they will become butterflies. If wings are available, invite the children to wear them. If not, invite them to flap their arms like wings. <i>*Note: In this book, the author uses the word cocoon instead of chrysalis. Most caterpillars do not build cocoons.</i>	Supply Styrofoam cups, pipe cleaners, paints or markers. Invite children to make spiders. Consider supplying a picture of a spider in the art area.	Add books related to <i>Insects</i> such as: <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i> by Eric Carle <i>In the Tall, Tall Grass</i> by Denise Fleming <i>The Napping House</i> by Audrey Wood <i>Are You My Mother?</i> by PD Eastman
Provide animals and insects in the block area. Talk to the children about how animals and insects often live in the same environment. Invite them to build areas where the animals and insects can be together.	Tell children you are going to go on a picnic and would like to take all the food the caterpillar eats in <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i> by Eric Carle. Invite them to help you pack the food for the picnic.	Hang flying insects from the easel and supply paint in spill proof cups and brushes. Invite children to paint the insects while they fly.	
Provide insects and transportation vehicles. Tell the children they insects need to help the insects get to where they need to go. Invite them to make roads for the vehicles to ride on and help collect the insects in the vehicles. Consider adding scoops or nets for scooping up the insects.	Add wings and antennas (antennas can be made by using pipe cleaners) to the dramatic play area and invite children to pretend they are insects.	Place a large sheet of paper on the floor or on a tabletop. Supply inkpads and invite children to stamp with toy insects.	
Place pretend insects in the block center. Talk to the children that often insects like to hide. Invite children to build structures where the insects can hide.	Place pretend insects in the dramatic play center for children to explore. If they need help with ideas, invite them to cook for the insects, give them checkups or put them to sleep.	Cover a table with paper and provide liquid watercolors, as well as pieces of yarn to represent worms and caterpillars. Invite children dip the worms and caterpillars in the paint and paint on the paper by wiggling them across or above the paper.	

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
<p>Provide pictures of nests that some insects live in such as an anthill or beehive. Supply natural materials such as sticks, leaves, flowers and sand. Also, supply playdough and invite children to make nests for the insects.</p>	<p>Place a picture of a spider on a table behind contact paper with the sticky side facing up. Place pictures of insects on the paper such as ants, flies and crickets. Invite children to take the insects out the spider's web by peeling them off the contact paper. If children are interested, consider having them sort the insects by placing all the same types together. When they have completed, invite them to place the insects back on the web and repeat.</p>	<p>In the gross motor area or large group area, invite children to fly like bugs. Supply wings if available, or invite them to flap their wings using their arms.</p>	<p>Sing <i>Little Miss Muffet</i> (see Section IX Appendices) and replace Miss Muffet with the children's names. Consider using a spider on a string while you sing.</p>
<p>If available, add coconut fibers or a safe, non-toxic dirt to the sensory table. Place toy insects inside and supply spoons and sticks. Invite children to explore the insects in the dirt or mud.</p>	<p>Provide pictures of insect bodies with Velcro dots where the legs should be. Also, provide the insect legs and invite children to put the legs on. Provide insects that have different number of legs. Invite children to count the number of legs each insect has. Accept all ways the child displays counting.</p>	<p>Invite children to pretend they are grasshoppers and hop around the gross motor or playground like a grasshopper.</p>	<p>Tell the children you are going to sing <i>The Itsy Bitsy Spider Little Miss Muffet</i> two times. The first time you are going to sing it about an itsy bitsy spider and, then the second time you are going to sing about a great big spider. When singing about the small spider use a high-pitched, squeaky voice, then use a low, deep voice to sing about the big spider.</p>
<p>Supply toy insects and magnifying glasses. Invite children to explore the insects. Consider adding pictures of real insects that children can also look at using the magnifying glasses.</p>	<p>Create a web by crisscrossing yarn and securing it to the table. Place a few pipe cleaners in between the yarn and supply additional pipe cleaners. Invite children to weave the pipe cleaners through the web.</p>	<p>On a walk to the playground or gross motor area, invite children to sing <i>The Ants Go Marching</i> and march like the ants in the song.</p>	<p>Place pretend insects around the large group area. Give children bags and tell them they will be bug collectors. Play fast and slow-paced music. Invite them to collect the insects to the music. Consider giving them magnifying glasses, too.</p>
<p>Fill the sensory table with leaves, sticks, pebbles and other natural materials. Supply insects, rakes, scoops and buckets. Invite children to find the insects in the natural materials.</p>	<p>Cut pieces of brown yarn and place under natural materials such as leaves, sticks, and flowers. Tell children the pieces of yarn are worms and invite children to find them. As they find the worms, invite the children to count them.</p>	<p>Bring insects to the playground or large group area. Place the insects where children will need to stretch or climb or reach them. Invite children to use their bodies to collect insects. Repeat, as children are interested.</p>	<p>Invite the children to march around the large group area while sing <i>The Ants Go Marching</i> (see Section IX Appendices).</p>

## Light

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
Provide translucent blocks and place them on the light table. Talk to the children about how the blocks look as the light shines through. Invite them to take the blocks on and off to notice the difference. Consider adding some wood blocks, too, so children can explore how the two different blocks look different on the light table.	Invite children to help you put babies to bed. Invite them to think about ways they can change the light so it will be darker and the babies can sleep better.	Place small string lights behind contact paper at the easel. Supply pieces of tissue paper and dark colored construction paper such as black, red or dark green. Invite children to notice how one paper blocks the light while one paper lets the light shine through.	Create book about how vehicles use lights to keep people safe.
Invite children to build with mirror blocks. Supply flashlight and invite children to shine them on their structures and note how the light reflects off the materials.	Place pictures of animals that are nocturnal around the dramatic play center. Let children know that these animals stay awake at night. Invite them to take a nighttime walk with you to look at the animals. Supply flashlights so they can see all the animals on the walk.	Cover a table with black paper and supply black paint, brushes, rollers, and various shiny items to represent stars such as glitter or pieces of tin foil. Invite children to create a starry sky.	
Invite children to build structures. Consider adding flashlights to the center so they can shine them on their buildings.	Provide a lamp in the dramatic play area that children can turn on and off safely.	Cover the light table with white paper and provide markers or crayons for the children to draw with.	Add books related to <i>Light</i> such as: <b><i>Another</i></b> by Christian Robinson <b><i>Waiting is Not Easy</i></b> by Mo Willems <b><i>Goodnight Moon</i></b> by Margaret Wise Brown <b><i>A Song</i></b> by James Christopher Carroll
Invite children to build roads with tunnels. Invite them to look through the tunnel and note differences between light and dark.	Invite children to pretend it is nighttime and go to sleep. If possible, turn the lights out for sleeping and on for waking. Repeat, as children are interested.	Place small string lights behind bubble wrap at the easel. Supply dot markers and invite children to dot the bubble wrap with the dot markers. Point out new colors and how the light reflects through them.	

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
<p>Fill the sensory table with water. Place a light underneath, so the water is illuminated. Invite children to notice how the light reflects in the water.</p>	<p>Use flashlights, a projector or a lamp and invite children to make shadow puppets with their hands.</p>	<p>Invite to notice the different lights on the way to the playground or gross motor area.</p>	<p>Invite children to sing with you at the rug. Dim the lights and supply flashlights. Invite children to dance fast and slow paced music. Invite them to move their lights to the pace of the music.</p>
<p>Make goop. Add a few drops of food coloring; continue to add drops of food coloring until the goop becomes a dark shade of the selected color. As you add the color talk about how the color is changing from light to dark.</p>	<p>Ask families to share some of the things their children do when it is light outside and things they do when it is dark. Use their responses to create a sorting game using pictures of things children often do when it is light out and things they often do when it is dark. Accept all attempts at sorting.</p>	<p>Bring out the parachute and invite children to sit under it. Invite them to notice how the light changes when the parachute goes up and down.</p>	<p>Dim the lights and use a projector or lamp to create shadows. Invite children to move their bodies through the light and see their shadows on the wall, ground or sheet.</p>
<p>Supply mirrors and colored blocks. Invite to notice how the light and color are reflected in the mirrors.</p>	<p>Supply a large box that children can go into and out of as well as flashlights. Invite them to explore how the light looks inside and outside of the box.</p>	<p>On the playground or gross motor area, invite children to notice light and dark areas. Talk to them why some areas are lighter than others.</p>	<p>Sing <i>You Are My Sunshine</i> (see Section IX Appendices). Invite children to make circles above their heads using their arms to pretend to be the sun.</p>
<p>Supply leaves and peapods to the light table. Invite children to explore the different ways the light comes through</p>	<p>Cut shapes from a piece of cardboard that children can hold. Invite them to hold the cardboard in front of a flashlight, or lamp and notice how the light shines through the shapes.</p>	<p>Invite children to find and play with shadows on the playground or gross motor area. Talk to them about the shadows come from the light.</p>	<p>Sing <i>Mr. Sun, Sun Mr. Golden Sun</i> (see Section IX Appendices). Invite children to look outside the window and notice how the sun gives us light during the day. If no windows are available, provide pictures of the sun.</p>

## Moving

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
<p>Invite children to build ramps with blocks. Add balls to the block area and invite children to roll them down the ramps.</p>	<p>Create a stage and invite children to move their bodies by putting on a dance performance. Consider introducing the book <i>Color Dance</i> by Ana Jonas and supplying colored scarves for the children to use.</p>	<p>Place a piece of paper in a tray and small amount of paint. Supply a ball or round object. Have the children hold and move the tray so the ball moves the paint around.</p>	<p>Add books related to <i>Moving</i> such as:  <b><i>Snowy Day</i></b> by Ezra Jack Keats  <b><i>Head to Toe</i></b> by Eric Carle  <b><i>How Do You Dance?</i></b> by Thyra Heder  <b><i>My Heart Fills With Happiness</i></b> by Monique Gray Smith</p>
<p>Invite children to build a structure with wood blocks and structures with cardboard or foam blocks. Invite children to push the blocks over and notice which blocks are easier to move. Invite children to build a small, simple structure and invite children to try to move it without tipping it over. If it does tip over, invite them to rebuild it and try again.</p>	<p>Supply animal costumes such as fabric with animal prints and animal ears. Invite children to pretend to be, and move like animals.</p>	<p>Supply paper, markers or crayons. Invite children to color or draw and discuss the marks they are making by moving their arms.</p>	
<p>Invite children to build high structures. Add natural materials to the block area such as leaves, sticks or pinecones. Invite children to drop the items off the top of the structure and see how they move as they fall.</p>	<p>Supply pretend birds or butterflies. Discuss how birds and butterflies use wings to help them move. Invite children to move like birds or butterflies by flapping their arms up and down like wings. Invite children to play birds or butterflies in dramatic play.</p>	<p>On a tabletop, place small puddles of paint. Invite children to move the paint by blowing on it.</p>	
	<p>Invite children to move the babies. Invite them to think about the best way to move the babies (e.g. strollers, car seats, carriers, etc.)</p>	<p>Supply inkpads and rollers. Invite children to roll the roller on the inkpad and move the roller across the table to see what marks it makes. Also consider using other items that roll such as small vehicles.</p>	

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
<p>Fill the sensory table with water and provide waterwheels. Invite children to make the wheels move by pouring the water.</p>	<p>Hang ribbons from the easel and invite children to practice cutting. Invite them to watch the ribbon fall after they cut it.</p>	<p>Bring bubbles to the playground or the gross motor area. Blow bubbles, note how they move and invite children to move their bodies to catch and pop the bubbles.</p>	<p>Hold up pictures of animals and invite children to move their bodies like the animal. Consider using a book that has animals in it such as <i>Polar Bear, Polar Bear What Do You Hear</i> by Eric Carle</p>
<p>Fill the sensory table with a pourable material. Provide sifters and cups with holes in the bottom. Invite children to see how the sand moves through the tools.</p>	<p>Supply a box with hole on top and opening on the side. Invite them to drop objects through the hole into the box and look through the hole to see the objects move.</p>	<p>In the gross motor area or on the playground, provide balls. Invite children to bounce the balls and notice how they move.</p>	<p>Invite children to sing <i>Open, Shut Them</i> (see Section IX Appendices) and move their hands to the words of the song.</p>
<p>Invite children to look in the mirror and move their bodies. Invite them to watch the different ways their bodies can move.</p>	<p>Supply items that are different weights such as feathers and small vehicles. Invite children to drop them at the same time and see if they move at different speeds.</p>	<p>Provide low balance beams and invite children to move their bodies across them.</p>	<p>Sing <i>London Bridge is Falling Down</i> (see Section IX Appendices). Invite children to fall down as noted in the song.</p>
<p>Introduce the book <i>The Snowy Day</i> by Ezra Jack Keats. Make goop and supply sticks. Invite children to move the sticks through the snow like Peter.</p>	<p>Supply gears. Invite children to explore how the pieces fit together and connect to move.</p>	<p>Create visuals that represent go and stop such as red and green sign. Let the children know that you will be playing a game where you will go and stop. Tell them when you lift the green sign that means go and they should move their body. When you lift the red sign, say it means stop and they should stop moving. Children will need some time to understand and comprehend the rules of the game. If they do not stop moving when requested, allow them to continue to move their bodies.</p>	<p>Supply wrist bells and invite children to move their bodies to make the bells ring.</p>

## Neighborhood Community

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
Supply familiar street signs that a child might find in their home or school neighborhood. If you do not have pretend signs consider making them by using pictures and placing them on blocks. Invite children to use the signs as they build.	Tell children you need some supplies from a neighborhood location (e.g., groceries from the market). Invite them to go shopping with you. Supply bags or carts they can use to carry the things they want to get at the store. Choose a store that is relevant to children (e.g. pizza shop, clothing store, hardware store).	Place tape roads on a large piece of paper and place on the floor. Supply pictures of school and home neighborhood landmarks such as subway stations, street signs, buildings and stores with glue in spill proof cups and paintbrushes. Invite children to add the pictures around the roads on the paper.	Create a book about the school neighborhood. Include pictures that children will recognize such as subway stations, bus depots, local stores, entrance to the school, etc.
Tell the children you are going to make a road like the ones you see outside the school. Invite them to help you consider what you might need to add. Pose the question, “I wonder what we’ll need to make our road?” Encourage children to build according to their responses.	Create a storefront by using a box or large piece of cardboard. Ask the children what to sell. If necessary, show them pictures of stores that are in the school neighborhood.	Recycle bags, cups, newspapers and other items that can be found around the school or home neighborhood that have logos that are recognizable to the children. Consider asking parents to contribute items or share ideas about what might be recognizable to their child. Secure them to the easel and supply paint in spill proof cups and brushes. Invite children to paint the items.	Invite families to create books of their neighborhoods. Consider offering to have them send in photos for the teaching team to create the books.
Place pictures of familiar neighborhood places on blocks (e.g. buildings, stores, houses, apartment buildings, etc.). Invite children to build with them and talk about how these are places in their school community.	Tell the children you are going to make food to sell to the neighbors. Invite them to help you do the cooking.	Supply a mailbox, paper, envelopes, crayons or markers. Invite children to take a walk through the school to discover where they can mail their letters.	Add books related to <i>Neighborhood Community</i> such as: <b><i>Tap Tap Boom Boom</i></b> by Elizabeth Bluemle <b><i>Daniel’s Good Day</i></b> by Micha Archer <b><i>My Neighborhood</i></b> by Maddie Frost
Invite children to build new buildings that can go in the neighborhood. Consider adding construction hats and pretend tools.	Supply raincoats, boots, and umbrellas. Tell the children that it is raining and you need to go outside and get things from the neighborhood. Invite children to take a neighborhood walk through the rain. As you pretend to walk through the neighborhood, discuss the things you are seeing.	Supply pictures of various types of signs that are recognizable to the children as well as paper, crayons, and markers and invite children to make neighborhood signs.	There <b><i>My Two Moms and Me</i></b> by Renata Galindo

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
<p>Collect natural (safe) items from around the school neighborhood. Consider asking families to contribute (safe) items they find near their home. Place them on the light table. If possible, hang pictures of where they were found and talk to the children about the items and where they came from.</p>	<p>Using pictures of street signs and streetlights that are familiar to the children create easy 2-4 piece puzzles they can manipulate. Consider also doing this familiar buildings, stores, and landmarks.</p>	<p>If possible, take a walk through the neighborhood and talk about what you notice. Consider taking pictures to hang in the classroom.</p>	<p>Sing <i>Wheels on the Bus</i> (see Appendices). Consider changing the words so the bus is stopping in familiar neighborhood locations.</p>
<p>Fill the sensory table with enough water to cover the bottom. Supply cars, trucks and other vehicles and cups or scoops for scooping. Tell children it is raining in the neighborhood, but the cars still need to get to where they are going. Invite them to play with the cars in the water.</p>	<p>Create roads on tabletop using masking tape. Supply interlocking blocks and invite children to create buildings for the neighborhood.</p>	<p>Choose a building, store or landmark that is recognizable to the children. On the way to the playground or gross motor area, invite children to pretend you are walking to one of these places.</p>	<p>Tell the children you need help mailing some letters and need to find a mailbox in the neighborhood. Sing a <i>Tisket a Tasket</i> (see Section IX Appendices) and walk around the large group area pretending to look for a mailbox.</p>
<p>In a pourable material, place pictures of school or home neighborhood sites that children will recognize. Provide scoops and buckets for them to collect their pictures. Invite children to find the pictures. When they have collected them all invite them to hide them and find them again.</p>	<p>Place neighborhood pictures on a tabletop behind contact paper with the sticky side facing out. Supply pictures of the children and invite them to take a trip through the neighborhood by taking pictures on and off.</p>	<p>Supply balls and tell children you are going to go the neighborhood park and play basketball. Invite them to join you. Hold hula-hoops or use your arms to make a circle to use as baskets. Make sure the hoops are low enough for children to be successful.</p>	<p>Supply vehicles in the large group area. Tell children there is a lot of traffic in the neighborhood and invite them to move the vehicles. Ensure children are safe as they move their vehicles around.</p>
<p>Add non-toxic shaving cream and people to the sensory table. Invite children to move people through the neighborhood and snow.</p>	<p>Supply pictures of different street/road signs that are recognizable to the children. Invite them to sort them by shape or color. Accept all ways the children interact with the pictures.</p>	<p>Supply riding toys and invite children to take a ride through the neighborhood.</p>	<p>Create roads in the large group area by using painters tape or masking tape. Ensure the roads are wide enough for children to safely walk around. Invite children to take a walk with you around the neighborhood. If desired, prepare two signs, a round green sign that says <i>go</i> and red octagon sign that says <i>stop</i>. Invite the children to go when you hold up the green sign and stop when you hold up the red.</p>

## Senses

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
Cover some blocks with papers/materials of various textures (e.g., sand paper, wrapping paper, bubble wrap). Invite children to build with them and notice how the different textures feel.	Supply fabrics of different textures such as burlap, velvet and silk. Invite children to use these to dress up and notice how the different textures feel on their body.	Supply finger-paints. Invite children to explore the paint with their hands. If they are sensitive to the paint, provide tools they can use.	Create a classroom book with pictures of the children using their senses in the classroom. In the book describe what the child is doing and which body part and sense they are using.
Invite children to build structures and take pictures. Print the pictures and send them home for the parents to see.	Tell the children you are going to do some cooking. Exaggerate smelling and tasting the food. Invite the children to cook with you. Invite them to smell and taste the food that they make. Point out that they use their nose to smell and their mouths to taste.	Supply inkpads and invite children to make handprints. Invite them to notice how the ink feels on when their hand is on the pad the pad and how it feels on the paper.	
Invite children to build a structure and knock it over. Invite them to listen to the sound it makes when it crashes. Consider using both heavy and light blocks and compare.	Pretend that you are getting ready to go to the beach. Place sunglasses in the dramatic play area and invite children to notice how they see differently when the sunglasses are on.	Cover the easel, a table, or place a large piece of paper on the floor. Supply paint and watercolors and invite children to use their eyes to look at the paint as they work and note what they see.	Add books related to <i>Senses</i> such as: <b><i>Polar Bear, Polar Bear What Do You Hear?</i></b> by Eric Carle <b><i>Yum, Yum, Yum, Dim Sum</i></b> by Amy Wilson Sanger <b><i>Green is a Chile Pepper: a Book of Colors</i></b> by Roseanne Greenfield Thong <b><i>I Got Rhythm</i></b> by Connie Schofield-Morrison
Add scented materials such as pinecones and pine branches to the block area. Invite to build and add scent to their building by adding these	Add both stuffed and plastic animals to the dramatic play center. Invite the children to play with the animals. As they are touching them, invite to notice how they feel.	Provide an assortment of textured surfaces the children can draw on such as sandpaper, corrugated cardboard and tinfoil. Invite children to explore how the different surfaces feel when they draw on them.	

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
Supply two sensory bins. Add sensory materials that are dry to one bin and materials that are wet to the other. Invite children to explore how each material feels.	Provide containers empty spice containers that still smell like the spice. Invite children to open the containers and smell.	Pretend the playground or gross motor is a place to buy ice cream (or a treat known to the children). Invite children to pretend to taste the delicious treat.	Supply an assortment of instruments. Invite children to use their ears to hear how the bells make different sounds.
Cover the bottom of the sensory table with tinfoil and add water. Supply boats and invite children to notice how they see the reflection of the boats.	Place Velcro on tabletop blocks and the top of a table. Invite children to build. Invite them to touch the Velcro and note how it feels.	Safely create soft and hard surfaces for children to jump on such as mats and the floor. Invite children to jump and notice how it feels when they touch the ground.	Invite children to clap their hands hard and soft. Encourage them to notice how the different claps sound and feel.
Fill a bin with kinetic sand. Invite children to explore how the sand feels and looks.	Place plastic eggs out with variety of items inside of them that make a noise when they shake. Invite children to shake them and listen to the sound. Then they can open them and see what is inside.	Bring bubbles to the playground or gross motor area. Invite children to pop the bubbles and notice how their hands feel afterwards.	Play fast and slow-paced music. Invite children to notice how the music makes their body feel and invite them to move their bodies.
Add a variety of flowers and invite children to smell the flowers.	Provide two baskets with hard and soft materials. Invite children to feel the items and sort them according to how they feel. Accept any way the children choose to sort.	Create a marching band! Invite children to select instruments and play them as they march. Encourage them to note the sounds they hear.	Place contact paper with the sticky side up in one area and bubble wrap in another area on the floor. If children are interested, invite them to take off their shoes and notice the difference on how they feel on their feet. If children do not want to take their shoes off they can participate with their shoes on.

## Transportation

BLOCKS/CONSTRUCTION	DRAMATIC PLAY	ART/WRITING	LIBRARY
Place pictures of vehicles that the children are familiar with on blocks. Invite them to build roads or garages for the vehicles.	Tell children you are going on a trip and invite them to come with you. Ask how you should go on your trip. If they need help, give them choices such as car, plane, train or bus. Play out their scenarios with them.	Place a large piece of paper on a tabletop or on the floor. Place small areas of paint and supply vehicles children can run through the paint and make tracks.	Add books related to <i>Transportation</i> such as: <b><i>Little Blue Truck</i></b> by Alice Schertle <b><i>Subway</i></b> by Anastasia Suen <b><i>Goodnight, Goodnight Construction Site</i></b> by Sherri Duskey Rinker <b><i>Freight Train</i></b> by Donald Crews
Use painter’s tape or masking tape to create roads. Supply vehicles and invite children to build buildings near the roads and drive the vehicles through the city.	Pretend to be a bus driver and offer to take children where they need to go. Supply metro cards and remind them to pack whatever they need for the bus ride.	Tape markers to the back of small vehicles and invite children to draw.	
Supply trains to the block area. Invite children to build a train station and train tracks using the blocks.	Create a ticket booth by using a large box or large piece of cardboard. Draw or print a symbol that represents transportation that children will recognize such as subway symbol or bus number. Invite children to sell and buy tickets and take trips to where they want to go.	Supply paint and vehicles and invite children to paint the vehicles. Be sure to use washable paint.	
Place transportation related symbols in the block area that children will recognize such as subway symbols, bus numbers or license plates. Invite children to use blocks to create vehicles and add the symbols.	Bring in a large box and invite children to ride in the vehicle. Allow the box to be any vehicle children choose.	Supply medium and small boxes, spools, tape, markers or other decorating supplies. Invite children to make their own vehicles. Consider supplying pictures or book of vehicles for children to reference as they work. Accept anything the child chooses to create.	

SENSORY/SCIENCE	MATH/MANIPULATIVES	OUTDOORS/GROSS MOTOR	LARGE GROUP
<p>Fill the sensory table with water and mild soap to make bubbles. Supply vehicles, brushes, clothes and cups. Tell children the vehicles are dirty and invite them to clean them.</p>	<p>Supply pictures of various types of transportation vehicles. Provide interlocking blocks and invite children to build vehicles.</p>	<p>Invite children to be any vehicle they want on a walk outside, to the playground or gross motor area.</p>	<p>Sing <i>Wheels on the Bus</i> (see Section IX Appendices). Using picture cards, give each child the opportunity to choose what will be sung about next (e.g. wipers, windows, babies)</p>
<p>Fill the sensory table with water and supply boats. Consider also adding other materials such as cups and scoops so children can dump and pour.</p>	<p>Supply table blocks and small vehicles. Invite children to use the blocks to make structures, and then drive the vehicles around the structures or to knock them down.</p>	<p>On the playground or the gross motor area supply vehicles the children can use.</p>	<p>Supply a book or picture cards or assorted vehicles; invite children to move their bodies like the vehicle on the card or a vehicle of their choice.</p>
<p>Make goop and place small vehicles inside the tray or bin. Invite children to move the vehicles through the goop.</p>	<p>Supply vehicles with truck beds that can carry items as well as pebbles, spools or objects that can fit in the back. Invite the children to fill the back of them with the objects and count them as they take them in and out of the truck bed.</p>	<p>Supply vehicles with storage compartments or areas to carry balls. Invite children to move the balls around in the vehicles.</p>	<p>Create a large rectangle on the floor using painter's or masking tape. Give children tubes and invite them on firetruck. Tell them you are going to drive around the city and put out fires and there tubes are the fire hoses. Consider singing <i>Hurry, Hurry Drive that Fire Truck</i> (see Section IX Appendices).</p>
<p>Use a pourable dry material such as sand. Place pictures of transportation vehicles with scoop and cups. Invite children to find the pictures.</p>	<p>Supply a picture of bus, train or plane and toy people. Invite children to put the people on the vehicle. Note if/how the children count, and their use of math language such as full, empty, many, and little.</p>	<p>If a slide is available, invite children to push toy vehicles down the slide. If a slide is not available, create ramps and invite children to push vehicles down the ramps.</p>	<p>Place crumpled up pieces of paper around the large group area. Invite children to be garbage or recycling trucks and help collect the garbage. Consider giving them bags to use for collecting.</p>

## VI. Templates

Connections: Infant and Toddler Curriculum for Responsive Caregiving, 24-36 Months Weekly Planning Template					
Date:		When planning, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What have children been playing with and or/talking about?</li> <li>• How have children been using the classroom materials?</li> <li>• What activities have children seemed most interested in lately?</li> <li>• What developmental skills do children seem to be practicing?</li> <li>• What materials can I provide and activities can I facilitate that align to children’s interests and developmental needs?</li> </ul>			
Big Idea:					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Greeting Routine					
Large Group Experience					
Music	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>
Free Choice Activities					
Blocks	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>
Dramatic Play	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>
Art	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>
Sensory/Science	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>
Math/Manipulatives	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>

Library	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>
Large Group Experience					
Texts and Stories	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>
Outdoors/Gross Motor					
Outdoors/Gross Motor	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>	<i>ELOF:</i>
Individual Modifications					

## Documentation Template

<b>Connections Documentation Template</b>	Picture (optional)
Child:	
Date:	
Where:	
ELOF Standard(s):	
Observation Notes:	

## VII. DAILY COMMUNICATION

Use this form to communicate with families. Invite them to complete the top portion in the morning. Add notes about the child throughout the day and send the form home with the family when they leave. Whenever possible, use families' home language when communicating. Additionally, some families may prefer online communication.

Name:
Date:

Notes From Family:	
<input type="checkbox"/> I ate this morning. I had: <input type="checkbox"/> I have not eaten yet.	Special information for today:
Last night I slept <input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> OK <input type="checkbox"/> Not well. I woke up this morning at _____.	<input type="checkbox"/> I napped this morning from ____ to ____. <input type="checkbox"/> I have not napped this morning.

Notes To Family:						
SLEEP		DIAPERS/TOILETING		EAT		GENERAL NOTES Information, things I need, etc.
Today I napped...		Today I...		Today I ate...		
From	To	Today I...	At	Amount/Type	At	
Nap notes:						
FEEL		PLAY				
Overall, I seemed to feel...		Today I...				

## VIII. CHILD DEVELOPMENT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Connecting With My Feelings

*Will you let me try? Will you help me practice?*

All early learning is dependent on having the support of a responsive caregiver that will help children make sense of their physical and emotional experiences. At age two, children are figuring out who they are as individuals and are exploring their ability to have control over their world. They feel confident in their capacity to navigate the environment and want others to view them as competent as well. While they feel confident, they may still need more practice navigating the world around them. Providing support and opportunities to practice these skills while still allowing the toddler to exercise their emerging sense of autonomy is an important task for caregivers of two year olds.

Another area where two years olds need opportunities to try and practice new skills is in using words to share their thoughts and feelings. They may have thoughts or ideas they want to share, but struggle to find the right words to express their feelings. Feeling frustrated and misunderstood can be upsetting and may lead to outbursts or tantrums. Caregivers can help toddlers work through their frustration by allowing them to express themselves, even when they are upset, providing comfort, and language to help make sense of their feelings.

#### **Start by letting your toddler know that you understand what she is feeling and saying.**

All people want to be understood- even toddlers. When a toddler is upset, it may seem easiest to step in with a solution, but before offering a solution to a toddler, make sure to share why you think they are upset. While toddlers may not understand the details of the language you are using, they will likely understand the affect. It is important to remain calm, but strategically match their affect as well. Matching affect means using facial expressions, tone of voice, and gestures that align to the emotional energy the toddler is communicating. Additionally, it is also helpful for them to hear their feelings labeled in short phrases. Sometimes it may take a few repetitions before the toddler realizes their message has been heard.

Toddler: *Stomps and yells:* Outside! Outside! Outside!

Caregiver: (Calmly) It sounds like you're **mad** (match child's affect). (Calmly) You want to go outside.

Toddler: (*Much calmer*) Yeah, outside.

After feeling heard, toddlers are typically more receptive to hearing a solution from someone else. They often respond best to a solution when they feel like they have a voice in the process. One way to let toddlers practice voicing their opinions is by offering choices.

Caregiver: We have to put shoes on before we can go outside. Would you like to wear your blue shoes or red shoes?

Toddler: Red

Once a toddler calms down after feeling upset, it can be helpful to provide a short summary of the skills they used to recover. This will help them learn to use these skills again in the future. Demonstrating empathy by reflecting back a child's emotions is the first step in teaching them how label and eventually regulate their emotions.

Caregiver: Your body is calm now and you're ready to go outside. You took a deep breath to calm down. Let's go outside!

## IX. Appendices

### Appendix A: Tips for Transitions

Transitions occur when children join a classroom as well as throughout the day. When children first join a new classroom, some families may be bringing their child to school for the first time. While transitions may be easy for some children, others may experience challenges.

#### Transition Tips for Teaching Staff:

- Allow children express their feelings and acknowledge them. Reflect on how children seem to be feeling and suggest language to identify their emotions.
- Encourage families to bring in a family photo to display in the classroom. Place the photo where the child can access it as desired.
- Create a welcome bulletin board with pictures of classroom staff, children, and their families.
- Use a visual schedule to let children know what will happen next.
- Read books with the children about going to school and making friends.
- Practice transitions that will take place during the day.
- Plan for transitions.
- Sing transition songs.
- Practice transition routines and set clear expectations. For example, “When you hear the bell ring, it is time to put away the toys.”
- Connect with families to share classroom songs so they can sing them together.
- Be patient as children learn new routines!

#### Transition Tips for Families:

- Talk with your child about going to school.
- Comfort him/her with a reminder that you (or \_\_\_\_\_) will be back at pick-up.
- Visit the program and/or classroom before the year starts.
- Share your schedule with your child.
- Bring in a family photo to display in the classroom.
- Read books about going to school before the transition and as needed during the transition period.
- Ask your child about their day. Use the Daily Communication Sheet to start conversations.
- Connect with the teaching staff to become familiar with classroom songs and sing these songs at home.
- Say goodbye every day. It can be tempting to leave when your child is engaged, but establishing a quick goodbye routine such as a hug and/or a kiss will help your child know what to expect and become more comfortable in the classroom.

## Appendix B: Validating Children’s Emotions

When children are upset, it can be hard to know how to respond. While a quick, “You’re okay!” and a smile may be reassuring, it doesn’t give them a chance to learn and practice important self-regulation skills. Much of children’s work in early childhood is learning about emotions- what causes them, how they feel, and how to appropriately respond. Taking the time to use naturally occurring expressions of emotions as learning opportunities is an important tool for teachers of young children.

<p><b>Strategies to use during separation:</b></p> <p><b>If children are missing their loved ones you might say:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your (loved one) will come back. I will keep you safe and help you until [loved one] comes back.</li> <li>Do you want to look at the schedule with me so that you know when you are going to see (loved one) again?</li> <li>Do you want to make something to give to (loved one) when you see them again?</li> <li>I know you are missing your (loved one), here is what we can do...</li> <li>Do you want to look at your family pictures with me?</li> <li>Let’s get your (transitional object).</li> </ul> <p><b>If children are missing their loved ones you might:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize their feelings.</li> <li>Try to engage them in play.</li> <li>Invite the child to sit close to you.</li> <li>Play quietly together.</li> <li>Show them where they can find their family photos, notes from home and/or transitional objects.</li> <li>Offer to read a book together.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategies to use when children get hurt:</b></p> <p><b>If children are feeling hurt you might say:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ouch! That looked like it really hurt.</li> <li>I bet that hurt! It will probably hurt for a little while and then it will start to feel better.</li> <li>I’m sorry that happened. I wonder what we can do to make it better.</li> <li>I’m sorry that happened. Do you want to do (choice) or (choice) to help you feel better?</li> <li>I think that you feel (emotion) because (cause).</li> </ul> <p><b>If children are feeling hurt you might:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize their feelings and address what hurts in an appropriate way.</li> <li>Explore if they want to be close to you and/or if they need a hug.</li> <li>Give them something they can hug or squeeze.</li> <li>Sit with them until they feel better (maybe invite another peer, too!)</li> <li>Get their family picture, letter from home or transitional object.</li> <li>Help them reengage in play.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategies to help children identify and manage big emotions:</b></p> <p><b>If children are displaying big emotions you might say:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sometimes we might feel (emotion) when (cause) happens.</li> <li>It looks like you feel (emotion). Do you feel (emotion)?</li> <li>I’m sorry you’re feeling (emotion). Let’s see what we can do to make it better.</li> <li>I will help you if you need help with something.</li> </ul> <p><b>If child are displaying big emotions you might:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try to engage them in a different activity.</li> <li>Sing a calming song to help sooth them.</li> <li>Bring them to a quiet area of the room.</li> <li>Give them something to squeeze or push.</li> <li>Read a book together.</li> <li>Give them a job to do with or without you.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feelings and emotions children might experience:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Angry</li> <li>Brave</li> <li>Calm</li> <li>Comfortable</li> <li>Confused</li> <li>Confident</li> <li>Disappointed</li> <li>Disgusted</li> <li>Embarrassed</li> <li>Excited</li> <li>Exhausted</li> <li>Frustrated</li> <li>Happy</li> <li>Hungry</li> <li>Joyful</li> <li>Lonely</li> <li>Nervous</li> <li>Overwhelmed</li> <li>Patient</li> <li>Proud</li> <li>Sad</li> <li>Scared</li> <li>Shy</li> <li>Surprised</li> <li>Thirsty</li> <li>Tired</li> <li>Uncomfortable</li> <li>Worried</li> </ul>

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## Appendix C: Toilet Learning

Teaching toddlers to use the bathroom is an important and intimate skill. As teaching staff, it is important to respect the privacy of children, while also encouraging their self-esteem and independence. Working together, families, teaching staff, and program leaders support toddlers in learning to use the toilet. The following guidance supports and encourages toilet learning in a safe and appropriate manner and includes visual aids, sample vocabulary words and routines.

### When preparing to work with a child who is ready for toilet training consider the following:

- Keep training directions simple.
- Establish a consistent routine.
- Practice dressing and undressing when not using the bathroom. For example, during play using dolls.
- Identify vocabulary words with families to provide continuity at home and at school.
- Celebrate accomplishments, even if an accident happens.
- Narrate actions to convey messages and meaning that encourage and affirm progress through this toileting process (i.e. “First, you pull down your pants and then, you sit down on the toilet.” Or “You pulled up your pants when you finished using the bathroom”).
- Empower children through this process by promoting success at each step, being patient, and positive about the process.

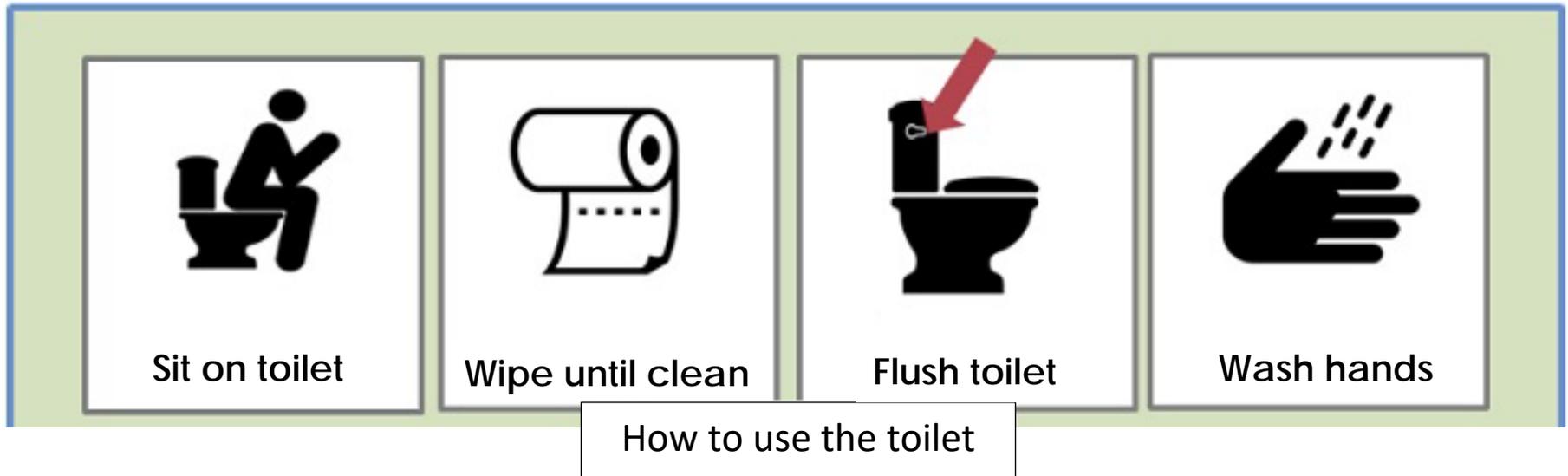
### Strategies for toileting young children:

- Read books about toilet training.
- Visit the bathroom and introduce it the same way you would introduce classroom materials.
- Name the items involved with toileting and discuss their use. For example, “I sit on the toilet when I have to \_\_\_\_\_”.
- Model flushing the toilet and narrate actions as you or the child do them.
- Allow children who are beginning to use the toilet to practice flushing the toilet.
- Provide a verbal warning such as “1, 2, 3, flush” for children who are fearful of flushing the toilet.
- Establish a bathroom schedule.
- Regularly ask children who are training if they need to use the bathroom.
- Use visuals and verbal directions to prompt students as needed.
- Practice wiping using a doll and wipes or cloth.

### Encourage children to communicate the needs to go to the bathroom using a simple word or signal.

- Consider the child’s perspective when providing guidance and support. For example, what does the child like or dislike about the process? Use this information to create plans to meet each child’s needs.
- Make it FUN!

### Sample Toileting Visual



Appendix D: Stages of Play

Stage of Play	Description
<b>Unoccupied</b>	The child is not playing, just observing
<b>Solitary</b>	The child plays along and is uninterested in what others are doing (common under 3 years of age)
<b>Onlooker</b>	The child watches others but does not engage (common in 2-3 years of age)
<b>Parallel</b>	The child plays separately but close to others and often mimics actions of others (common in 2.5-4 years of age)
<b>Associative</b>	The child is interested in playing with others and interacts with others during play but is not organized (common in 3-4 years of age)
<b>Cooperative</b>	The child is interested in playing with others and cooperates in organized activities (common in 4.5-6+ years of age)

## Appendix E: Teacher Made Light Table

### Version One

#### Materials:

Clear storage box with top

White tissue paper

Clear tape

String of small lights

#### Directions:

Tape the white tissue paper to the bottom side of the top of a clear storage box.

Place the string of small lights inside the box. Allow the end of the lights to hang out of the box in order to plug in the lights.

Invite children to place materials on top of the box to explore and play.



### Version Two

#### Materials:

Plastic drawer with a translucent white top

4-6 battery powered lights (depending on the size of the drawers)

#### Directions:

Turn on the lights.

Place the lights inside the drawer and close.

Invite children to place materials on top of the box to explore and play.



## Appendix F: Master Book List

### Approaches to Learning

***A Line Can Be*** by Laura Ljungkvist: As single line forms many big ideas that demonstrate opposites.

***A Song*** by James Christopher Carroll: A girl follows a song she hears. Along the way, she meets new friends and receives an unexpected gift.

***Another*** by Christian Robinson: This wordless book takes a young girl and her cat on an adventure to new places.

***The Birthday Box*** by Leslie Patricelli: What's better than getting a brand-new toy as a birthday gift? Playing with the box it came in!

***Can I Play, Too?*** by Mo Willems: Gerald and Piggy want to include Snake in a game of catch, but Snake has no arms. What can they do?

***Dreamers*** by Yuri Morales: Follow a mother and her child as they move to a new country and the things we learn along the way.

***I Can Do It*** by Trish Holland: Holly is getting older and now she can do so many things on her own.

***Jabari Jumps*** by Gaia Cornwall: Jabari has been waiting for his chance to jump off the high dive board at the pool. Today is the day!

***Harriet Gets Carried Away*** by Jessie Sima: Harriet has quite the adventure when she goes out with her two dads.

***Henry Wants More*** by Linda Ashman: Henry can't get enough while he is playing, but that can be exhausting for some other people – even Henry.

***I Can Do It Too!*** by Karen Baicker: A child watches what the adults do and decides, she can do it, too!

***Lola Goes to School*** by Anna McQuinn: Lola has a lot of prepare for her first day of school.

***Nope Never Not for Me*** by Samantha Cotterill: Trying new things can be hard, but sometimes we find out somethings about ourselves when we do.

***Not a box*** by Antoinette Portis: A box isn't just a box. It can be so many things.

***Octopus's Garden*** by Ringo Starr: Travel under the sea to meet Octopus and all his friends.

***There is a Bear in My Chair*** by Ross Collins: How will the little mouse get the big bear out of his chair?

### Social and Emotional Development

***A Friend for Henry*** by Jenn Bailey: Sometimes finding a friend who likes to do the same things as you can be tricky, but don't give up.

***A Big Mooncake for Little Star*** by Grace Lin: Little Star isn't supposed to eat the mooncake Mama puts in the sky, but sometimes waiting is too hard.

***Are You My Mother?*** by PD Eastman: Will the little bird ever find who his mother is?

***The Big Kid Bed*** by Leslie Patricelli: Goodbye, crib. Hello, bed! Baby is happy to move on to the next phase of sleep furniture.

***Daniel's Good Day*** by Micha Archer: Daniel travels through the city to see what helps others have a good day.

***The Family Book*** by Todd Parr: Celebrate families and their differences.

***The Feelings Book*** by Todd Parr: People can have many different feelings.

***Hangry*** by Drew Brockington: The city comes together to feed the monster who is hungry and angry – he is hangry!

***Happy in Your Skin*** by Fran Manushkin: A celebration of skin - all the shades, sizes and all it does for our body!

***I Like Myself*** by Karen Beaumont: A child likes themselves no matter what. Just because they are who they are.

***I Love My Hair*** by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley: A girl discovers even though she may not always love getting her hair brushed, she loves everything else about her hair.

***Julián is a Mermaid*** by Jessica Love: Julian and Abuelita spot some mermaids on the subway. Julian is inspired and wants to be a mermaid, too.

***Just For Me*** by Jennifer Hansen Roll: Ruby wants everything for herself, but also wants to play with her best friend. What can she do?

***Llama Llama Misses Mama*** by Anna Dewdney: On the first day of school, Llama Llama misses mama but also learns how fun school can be.

***Mama Do You Love Me*** by Barbra M. Johnson: A child discovers how much love a mother has.

***My New Mom and Me*** by Renata Galindo: A story of the ups and downs of becoming a new family.

***The New Small Person*** by Lauren Child: It can be hard to play the way you want with a baby but things have their way of working themselves out.

***My Two Moms and Me*** by Michael Joosten: A day in a life of busy kids and their moms.

**Owl Babies** by Martin Waddell: When will Mother return?

**Peter's Chair** by Ezra Jack Keats: It's hard for Peter when his little sister is getting his old things. However, he realizes what he can do as the big brother.

**Please, Baby, Please** by Tonya Lewis Lee and Spike Lee: A behind the scenes look at the chills, spills and thrills of bringing up baby.

**Runaway Bunny** by Margret Wise Brown: A bunny tests a mother's love, but mother will always find bunny – no matter where it goes.

**Waiting is Not Easy** by Mo Willems: Piggy has a surprise for Gerald, but he is going to have to wait for it. And wait. And Wait some more...

**We Sang You Home** by Richard Van Camp: All about the wonderful things a child brings to a family.

## Language and Literacy

**Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?** by Bill Martin Jr: A green frog, purple cat, blue horse and yellow duck parade across the pages of this book.

**Green is a Chile Pepper: A Book of Colors** by Roseanne Greenfield Thong: A cheerful color-concept book that presents a slice of Latino culture through food and fun.

**Goodnight Moon** by Margaret Wise Brown: It's time for the bunny to go to bed and say goodnight to all the things in the room.

**Going on Bear Hunt** by Helen Oxenbury: Bear hunts can be tricky business with lots of different terrain to get through.

**Hush, Baby, Hush! Lullabies from Around the World** by Kathy Henderson: Gathered from all over the world, these beautiful, simple songs give a flavor of different parts of the world as well as showing that soothing a baby to sleep is the same the world over.

**Hush, Little Baby** by Brian Pinkney: The classic song comes to life in this book.

**Moo, Baa, La, La, La** by Sandra Boynton: It's a barnyard and vocal adventure!

**The Napping House** by Audrey Woods: It's naptime with an unexpected ending.

**Polar Bear, Polar Bear What Do You Hear?** by Bill Martin Jr: Lion, hippo, flamingo and the many sounds of animals.

**Say Hello!** by Rachel Isadora: In a big city there can be lots of ways to say hello.

**Tap, Tap, Boom, Boom** by Elizabeth Bluemle: Take a trip through the city on a rainy day and hear the sounds.

**What a Wonderful World** by Bob Thiele: The classic song translated into a bright, imaginative book about the wonderful and diverse world we live in.

## Cognition

**Hungry Caterpillar** by Eric Carle: Children begin to learn about the life cycle of a butterfly by following along with a caterpillar.

**Little Blue and Little Yellow** by Leo Lionni: Little Blue and Little Yellow love each other. They are so close they become a new color.

**Mouse Paint** by Ellen Stoll Walsh: The mice explore paint and mixing colors before they need to hide from the cat.

**Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes** by Helen Oxenbury: What could be a better way to count than on little baby fingers and toes.

## Perceptual, Motor and Physical

**Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!** by Mo Willems: When a bus driver takes a break, a very unlikely volunteer springs up to take his place.

**Freight Train** by Donald Crews: *Red caboose at the back, orange tank car, green cattle car, purple boxcar, black tender and a black steam engine . . . freight train.*

**Goodnight, Goodnight Construction Site** by Sherri Duskey Rinker: The construction vehicles have worked hard all day and now it is time to turn off their engines and rest.

**Head to Toe** by Eric Carle: Turn your head like penguin, bend your neck like a giraffe, and raise your shoulder like buffalo. You can do it!

**How Do You Dance?** by Thyra Heder: There are so many ways someone can dance. Do you bunch, bop or scrunch?

**I Got the Rhythm** by Connie Schofield-Morrison: She's got rhythm and uses all her senses to experience it.

**Little Blue Truck** by Alice Schertle: Little blue truck keeps moving, even with all the animals it encounters along the way.

**The Little Red Stroller** by Joshua Furst: A diverse book on how one stroller can come right when a family needs it.

**My Heart Fills with Happiness** by Monique Gray Smith: You can use your senses to feel happiness.

**Potty** by Leslie Patricelli: Should I try my new potty?

***Potty Animals: What to Know When You've Got to Go!*** by Hope Vestergaard: Toilet basics for toddlers.

***Snowy Day*** by Ezra Jack Keats: Peter has a day in the snow and makes many discoveries.

***Subway*** by Anastasia Suen: Hop on the subway with a child and mother.

***Time to Pee*** by Mo Willems: Potty training is tricky business. Sometimes it is good to have reminders of what to do you feel that feeling.

***Yum, Yum, Yum Dim Sum*** by Amy Wilson Sanger: So much goes into Dim Sum, but the best part is the taste!

### **Other**

***My Neighborhood*** by Maddie Frost There: Many people live in a neighborhood and they do many different things.

***My Mama is a Mechanic*** by Doug Cenko: Mama can be so many things. A Mechanic is only the beginning.

***The Grandma/Grandpa Book*** by Todd Parr: Grandmas/Grandpas can be very special.

***Police Officer on Patrol*** by Kersten Hamilton: Policer officers do many things to keep us safe. See some of the ways in this book.

***Whose Tools are These?*** by Toni Buzzeo: Which tools belong to which community helper?

## Appendix G: Songs

The following songs are referenced in Section IV Activities. Modify this list as necessary to include additional songs and best meet the needs of the classroom community.

### Wheels On The Bus

The wheels on the bus go round and round,  
round and round, round and round.

The wheels on the bus go round and round

All over town.

*Repeat with other bus parts such as wipers/swipe,  
doors/open and shut, horn/honk*

### Hurry, Hurry Drive the Fire Truck

Hurry, hurry drive the fire truck!

Hurry, hurry drive the fire truck!

Hurry, hurry drive the fire truck!

Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding!

*Repeat with climb the ladder and spray the hose*

### London Bridge is Falling Down

London Bridge is falling down,

Falling down, falling down.

London Bridge is falling down,

My fair lady.

### Open Shut Them

Open shut them, open shut them

Give a little clap, clap, clap.

Open shut them, open shut them.

Place them in your lap, lap, lap.

Creep them, crawl them, creep them, crawl them,

Right up to your chin, chin, chin,

Open wide...

Your little mouth...

But do not let them in!

*(Motions done with hands)*

### Mr. Sun

Oh Mr. Sun, Sun, Mr. Golden Sun

Please shine down on me.

Oh Mr. Sun, Sun, Mr. Golden Sun,

Hiding behind the tree.

These little children are asking you,

To please come out so we can play with you.

Oh Mr. Sun, Sun, Mr. Golden Sun.

Please shine down on me.

### You Are My Sunshine

You are my sunshine

My golden sunshine.

You make me happy

When skies are grey.

You'll never know dear,

How much I love you.

Please, don't take my sunshine away.

### Little Miss Muffet

Little Miss Muffet

Sat on her tuffet,

Eating her curds and whey.

When along came a spider,

Who sat down beside her

And frightened Miss Muffet away.

*(Replace Miss Muffet with children's first and last name)*

### The Itsy Bitsy Spider

The itsy bitsy spider went up the waterspout.

Down came the rain and washed the spider out.

Out came the sun and dried up all the rain

And the itsy bitsy spider went up the spout again.

### The Ants Go Marching

The ants go marching one by one

Hoorah, hoorah.

The ants go marching one by one

Hoorah, hoorah.

The ants go marching one by one

The little one stopped to suck its thumb.

And they all went marching down

In the ground to get out of the rain.

*Repeat with other numbers (in numerical order) substituting “thumb” with a word that rhymes with each number*

### A-Tisket A-Tasket

A-Tisket A-Tasket

A green and yellow basket

I send a letter to my mommy

On the way I dropped it.

I dropped it, I dropped it

Yes, on the way I dropped it.

[Child’s name] picked it up

And put it in their pocket.

*(Repeat with all children and change mommy to include other family members)*

### One Little Duck

One little duck went out one day.

Over the hills and far away.

When mama duck said “quack, quack, quack”

One little duck came waddling back

*Repeat with other numbers, in numerical order. Substitute “mama” with other family members according to the class community.*

### Here We Are Together

Here we are together, together, together,

Oh here we are together, all sitting on the rug.

With (name), and (name), and (name) and (name)

Here we are together, all sitting on the rug.

*To the tune of The More We Get Together*

### This Whole Class

This whole class, they had one

They played knick, knack on their thumbs.

With a knick, knack, paddy whack

Give a dog a bone.

This whole class went rolling home

*Repeat with other numbers (in numerical order) substituting “thumbs” with a word that rhymes with each number*

### Ring Around The Rosie

Ring around the rosie,

Pocket full of posies,

Ashes! Ashes!

We all fall down.

*(Note, for cultural variations on this song visit [Wikipedia](#)).*

### Head, Shoulder, Knees and Toes

Head, shoulder knees and toes

Knees and toes.

Head, shoulder, knees and toes.

Eyes and ears and mouth and nose.

Head, shoulder, knees and toes.

### Old MacDonald Had a Farm

Old Macdonald had a farm.

E, I, E, I, O.

And on that farm they had a (animal)

E, I, E, I, O.

With a (animal noise) here

And (animal noise) there.

Here a (animal noise)

There a (animal noise)

Old Macdonald had a farm.

E, I, E, I, O.

## Connections: Infant and Toddler Curriculum for Responsive Caregiving, 24-36 Months

### Head, Shoulder, Knees and Toes

Head, shoulder knees and toes

Knees and toes.

Head, shoulder, knees and toes.

Eyes and ears and mouth and nose.

Head, shoulder, knees and toes.

### Where is Thumbkin?

Where is Thumbkin? Where is Thumbkin?

Here I am. Here I am.

Hello, it's nice to see you! Hello, it's nice to see!

### If You're Happy and You Know It

If you're happy and you know it

You can smile.

If you're happy and you know it

You can smile.

If you're happy and you know it

And you really want to show it,

If you're happy and you know it

You can smile.

*(Repeat with other emotions such as sad/cry,  
angry/stomp your feet, tired/yawn)*

## Appendix H: Recipes

### Goop 1

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon psyllium husks (fiber)

1 cup water

4-6 drops of liquid water or food coloring (omit for transparent goop)

Directions:

Combine ingredients in sauce pan.

Heat on low to medium heat.

Stir to reach desired consistency

### Goop 2

Ingredients:

2 cups white or clear glue

8 – 12 tablespoon saline solution

4 teaspoon baking soda

Add watercolor or food coloring  
(For transparent omit color)

Directions:

Combine glue, food coloring and baking soda.

Slowly combine saline solution one tablespoon at a time and mix.

Stop when desired texture is achieved.

### Playdough

Ingredients:

2 cups flour

1 cup salt

1 tablespoon oil

1 cup cold water

2 drops of liquid food coloring or watercolors

Directions:

Combine flour and salt.

Add water, food coloring and oil.

Knead well.

Add more flour if necessary.

### Slime

Ingredients:

1 part water

1.5 -2 parts cornstarch

Directions:

Add water to a bin or sensory table.

Add small amounts of cornstarch until the consistency feels solid when poked or scooped and liquid when lifted.

If too much liquid, add cornstarch.

If too dry, add small amounts of liquid.

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