

At Home Learning Guide for Infants

(0–1 years old)

Week of March 30, 2020



This Week's Theme:

Growing Gardens

[Getting Ready for the Week: Guidelines and Materials Prep](#)

[How to Think Like a Teacher: Learning Happens Everywhere](#)

[Focus on Routines: Consistent and Predictable](#)

[Everyday Learning Experiences: What Food Comes From the Garden?](#)

[Video Field Trips and Outside Resources](#)

[Social and Emotional Resources](#)

MONDAY

- [Language and Literacy Activity: Bug Books](#)

TUESDAY

- [Cognitive Development Activity: Exploring Flowers](#)

WEDNESDAY

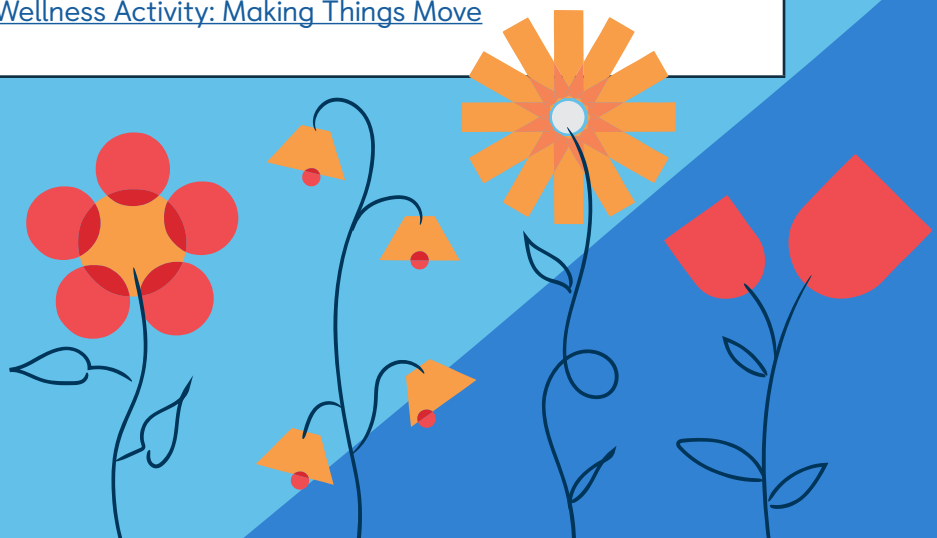
- [Executive Function Activity: Discovery Basket](#)

THURSDAY

- [Creative Expression Activity: "This is My Garden" Fingerplay](#)

FRIDAY

- [Physical Development and Wellness Activity: Making Things Move](#)





Getting Ready for the Week

During the month of April, infants in our centers get to explore gardens along with the different tools people use to help plants grow. This guide includes several experiences that will help your infant explore the idea of gardens at home. Here are a few guidelines to keep in mind as you plan for these learning activities and the week ahead.

Our infant activities are designed without any screen-based activities. We show you how to use your normal routine to learn together, by individualizing your learning plan on the daily rhythms of naps, meals, story-time, etc. Our guide also includes recommendations to schedule work around naps, and even includes activities you can do while on a call or answering email!

For this age group, our activities include:

- Opportunities to include music and songs for your baby.
- Tips for involving babies in everyday learning opportunities and turning authentic experiences into curriculum.
- Recommendations for choosing books that reinforce the theme (at-home, e-books).
- Everything is organized by Developmental Domain, so you know they're getting well rounded education.

Materials to Gather for the Week

Gather these materials Sunday evening and put them in a basket or container so they are ready to go for the week!

- Picture books, board books, and touch and feel books about insects, spiders, and plants
- Flower, real or fake
- Basket or container
- Natural items that have been cleaned of soil, such as leaves and flowers
- Small plastic garden items, such as rakes, spades, trowels, pots, and watering cans
- Rattle



How to Think Like a Teacher: Learning Happens Everywhere

Children may be out of school but learning never stops. In fact, every moment of your child's day is full of opportunities to learn. Check out these resources to help you spot- and make the most of- these "teachable moments."

How Children Learn Check out this [video](#) from Harvard's Center on the Developing Child to learn why experiences are so important to your child's development, no matter where they happen.

3 Surprising Ways that Children Learn Children learn through experiences, even the ones you might not expect. Here are three types of experiences you can pay attention to as you look for teachable moments with your child.

- 1. Challenging behavior:** Some of the things that frustrate us the most are actually children exploring the world around them. Think about it: Flinging peas across the table with a spoon? That's science! Literally climbing up the walls? That's physical development! Does that mean you should initiate a food fight at lunch or turn your living room into a jungle gym? Probably not. But you can re-frame the way you look at these behaviors to see them not as random acts meant to drive you crazy, but instead as learning in action. Once you see the underlying skill that your child is working on with their behavior, you can look for creative- and appropriate- opportunities for them to learn it.
- 2. Trying things that are "too hard":** We all get frustrated when faced with a really difficult task, and children are no exception. But doing something that's incredibly easy poses a different problem: Boredom. What's the sweet spot? Things your child can do, with your help. Don't be afraid to challenge your child's abilities. Instead, pay attention to what they can already do with ease and what's still too hard for them to do on their own. Then, when you have time, work with them to practice the skills that will help them accomplish the task by themselves. These kinds of experiences build connections in your child's brain and strengthen their connection with you- a powerful combination when it comes to learning!
- 3. Quiet Moments:** All experiences are teachable moments, even those without big body movements or materials like toys and art supplies. Slowing down, taking a few deep breaths, and paying attention to how their body feels can help your child learn to focus, self-regulate, and be aware of their own feelings. Check out our daily Social and Emotional Resources to learn how you can incorporate mindfulness into your child's everyday life.

At Home Learning Guide - Infants

Week of March 30, 2020



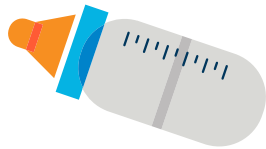
Interactive Learning Activity - What Are They Learning?

Children learn from every experience, even the most routine ones. Check out the examples below of everyday activities. Think about what children might be learning, and how you can find other ways for them to practice those skills. Then fill in the missing examples for your child.

What are they doing?

What skills are they learning?

How can I find ways to help them practice?



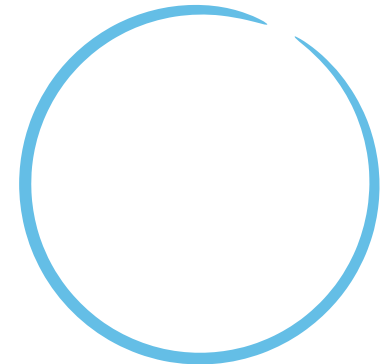
Meal Time



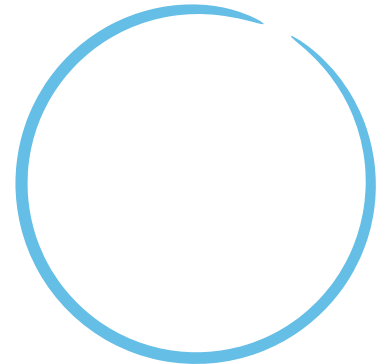
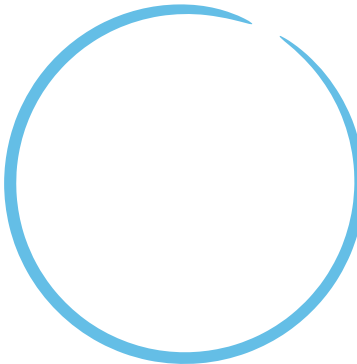
Encouraging them to pick up, hold, and move things like rattles or markers
Practicing pointing to parts of their face



Getting Dressed



Going to Sleep



Try It! This week, spend 1 minute watching your child during a time where it seems like nothing much is going on. Take a closer look- what are they really doing? How can you find even more ways to practice the skill they're working on?

At Home Learning Guide - Infants

Week of March 30, 2020



Daily Routines

From our tiny babies to our big kids, consistent, predictable routines will help everyone, including grownups, find some stability and sense of order in such unpredictable times. Here's a simple sample schedule you can modify in the way that feels right for your family and an example of an engaging routine in-line with what your child would be doing in their center!

When it comes to infant schedules, babies call the shots! It matters less what time things happen, and more the sequence that events take place in. When babies know that play time is followed by lunch and lunch time is followed by nap, they can trust in the predictability of their day and feel confident their needs will be met. You can use this sample schedule to give you a general idea of how a day working from home with an infant might be structured and modify it to meet the needs of your unique family.

Routine to focus on: Consistent and Predictable

Rather than focusing on one routine this week, focus instead on creating a daily routine that feels consistent and familiar to your baby. It will help you both get through the long days at home!

TIME	BABY	CAREGIVER
8:00–9:00 a.m.	Morning routine: diaper, breakfast, get dressed	Engage with baby through morning routine; steal a few minutes to check emails and calendar over breakfast.
9:00–10:00 a.m.	Play time	Play time! Look for activities that will be easy to do if you have to take a call – don't worry, we've provided suggestions!
10:00 a.m.–noon	Nap time	Nap time for baby! It may be tempting to join them, but this is also your moment to get some work done uninterrupted!
Noon–1:00 p.m.	Lunch time	Keep baby close by while you prepare lunch, talking to them about what you're doing and what you notice them doing. Whether your baby is breast feeding, bottle feeding, or enjoying table food, mealtimes are a great time to connect
1:00–2:00 p.m.	Play time	Play time! Look for activities that will be easy to do if you have to take a call – don't worry, we've provided suggestions!

At Home Learning Guide - Infants

Week of March 30, 2020



TIME	BABY	CAREGIVER
2:00-4:00 p.m.	Nap time	Nap time for baby! It may be tempting to join them, but this is also your moment to get some work done uninterrupted!
4:00-5:00 p.m.	Snack and Play	One more snack, a bit more play and you and baby have just about made it through the day!

Everyday Learning Experiences: What Food Comes From the Garden?

This week as you and your baby explore plants and gardens, you'll notice opportunities to build connections between the stories, songs, and activities in our curriculum and everyday experiences. One easy connection to help your baby make is pointing out when the foods you are eating came from a garden. In making these connections, you introduce your baby to new vocabulary and concepts, and help them begin to understand that the carrots in their bowl came out of the ground, just like the carrots in their story!

Outside Resources

Literacy begins at birth! Spend these days at home curled up with your baby and a good book!

Resource: [Is it too early to begin reading to my six-month-old?](#)

Social and Emotional Resources

Learning Routines

Opportunities to teach social and emotional skills are intertwined in everything that we do. Relationships and repetition are key ingredients for learning any skill. Routines give children a sense of security and helps them learn self-control, positive behaviors, and social skills.

TRY THIS: Create a consistent handwashing routine. Teach your child appropriate times to wash and how to wash the tops and bottoms of their hands. Practice washing hands while singing to the tune of their favorite songs or chants. Be sure it lasts 20 seconds or more. Ex. We will, we will, wash you. Repeat 3x.

Reading Behavior Cues

Spending more time at home than usual may lead to new behavior issues or intensify current concerns. Since behavior is a form of communication, it's important to observe your children closely to understand the meaning behind their big feelings. Reading behavior cues is the key to understanding your child's behavior.

TRY THIS: Identify what happens right before your child's behavior issue to find out what triggered the emotional response. Think about things such as time of day, temperature, boredom, yawning, and hunger.

At Home Learning Guide - Infants

Week of March 30, 2020



Exploration Space

Setting up an engaging and safe space for independent exploration and movement is not only helpful in building confidence in your child but offers you an opportunity to engage in online meetings, prepare meals, complete other tasks on your to-do list or take a much-needed break.

TRY THIS: Fill a bin with a few toys and soft objects in an open space for free movement. This bin can be filled with a new set of toys to play with each day to create excitement around playtime.

Development of Play

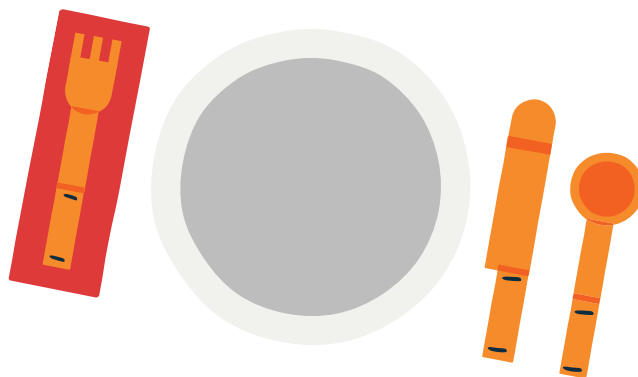
Play nurtures your child's development and offers them the opportunity to test their ideas and learn new skills. Learn more about the power of play [here](#).

TRY THIS: Schedule a daily family play date. This can be for any length of time. Let your child take the lead and watch as they use their imagination while you play along. Knowing that there is time dedicated to play as a family can be helpful with limiting interruptions when you're busy.

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is simply taking a moment to slow down and notice what your mind is doing and how your body feels. By noticing these things children can begin to create space between strong emotions and their actions.

TRY THIS: Have a mindful snack and encourage your child to chew slowly while they describe the color, smell, texture, and taste of the food. If you are feeding your child, take a moment to describe the food to them.



At Home Learning Guide – Infants

Week of March 30, 2020



Monday, March 30, 2020

Language and Literacy Activity: Bug Books

Length of activity: 5–10 minutes

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: High

What you need: Picture books, board books, and touch and feel books about insects, spiders, and plants.

What you do: Sit with your child on your lap. Share the cover and title of the book with your child, then begin reading the book. As you read, pause to talk about the illustrations. Encourage your child to touch the pictures of bugs and plants or help hold the book while you read.

What your child is learning: In addition to learning new words as you read the book, your child is also working on their hand-eye coordination when pointing to pictures and on their ulnar grasp (closing fingers against the palm) while helping to hold the book.

If your child is ready: Invite your child to hold the book and point to the illustrations on the pages. Talk with your child about the different illustrations they point to.

Tuesday, March 31, 2020

Cognitive Development Activity: Exploring Flowers

Length of activity: 5 minutes

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: High

What you need: Flower, real or fake

What you do: Sit with your child facing you, either seated or laying on the floor. Gently swing the flower in front of or above your child's face. Observe how they react and comment on what they are doing. "I see you reaching for the flower. Would you like to touch the flower? How does the flower feel? The flower feels soft."

What your child is learning: Your infant is using their senses to explore the flower and observe what is happening in the environment around them. They are beginning to coordinate body movements and work on hand eye coordination when reaching for the flower.

If your child is ready: Place the flower out of view (behind your back or under a towel) and then bring it back into view in a game of peek-a-boo.



Wednesday, April 1, 2020

Executive Function Activity: Discovery Basket

Length of activity: 5–10 minutes

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: High

What you need:

- ❑ Basket or container
- ❑ Natural items that have been cleaned of soil, such as leaves and flowers
- ❑ Small plastic garden items, such as rakes, spades, trowels, pots, and watering cans

What you do: Place the items in the basket. Sit with your child and remove one item at a time to explore with your child. Make observations about the item, such as size, shape, color, texture, and scent. Invite your child to use their senses of sight, sound, smell, and touch to explore the objects.

What your child is learning: Through this activity, your child is learning to focus their attention for a short amount of time, use their senses to explore different objects, and develop a sense of curiosity.

If your child is ready: Sit your child near the basket and encourage them to remove items of interest to explore. Make observations about the items your child is interested in.

Thursday, April 2, 2020

Creative Expression Activity: “This is My Garden” Fingerplay

Length of activity: 3–5 minutes

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: High

What you need: N/A

What you do: Familiarize yourself with the words and movements to the fingerplay “This Is My Garden.” Sit with your child facing you, either seated or laying on the floor, and perform the fingerplay for your child. Observe your child’s response and repeat the fingerplay if they show interest.

At Home Learning Guide – Infants

Week of March 30, 2020



“This Is My Garden”

This is my garden. (show one hand palm up)

I'll rake it with care. (use fingers of other hand to “rake”)

I'll take some seeds

And plant them there. (pretend to drop seeds)

The Sun will shine bright, (make a small circle with thumb and forefingers)

Then the rain will fall. (let fingers fall like falling rain)

My garden will bloom

And grow tall, tall, tall. (raise arms in the air)

What your child is learning: While observing your creative movement through the fingerplay, your child is focusing their attention, building their receptive vocabulary by listening and observing, and they may even begin to express themselves by responding to the movements you are making.

If your child is ready: Invite your child to move their hands and mimic the movements you are performing.

Friday, April 3, 2020

Physical Development and Wellness Activity: Making Things Move

Length of activity: 5–10 minutes

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: High

What you need: Rattle

What you do: Sit with your child on the floor. Slowly move the rattle in your child's line of sight, allowing them to follow it with their eyes. Shake the rattle and observe how your child responds to the sound. Then hand the rattle to your child and encourage them to shake it.

What your child is learning: Your child is learning how to coordinate body movements when grabbing and shaking the rattle. They are also exploring problem solving and cause and effect when they try a variety of movements to accomplish the goal of shaking the rattle themselves.

If your child is ready: Place several small toys in front of your child for them to explore. Place a small bucket or container next to the toys. After your child explores a toy, encourage them to put the toy in the bucket or container.