



# The Foundations for Success Infant/Toddler Model Curriculum Outline

**Relationships are the foundation of the world in which a child exists.** What children experience in these relationships shapes their overall development. The Foundations for Success Infant/Toddler Model focuses on four foundational areas necessary for supporting infant and toddler development. The primary focus of this model is Relationships, which is further enhanced by the foundations of Senses & Perception, Movement, and Language.

## Relationship Foundation

### Why is infant mental health important?

The first years of life provide the basis for children's mental health and social-emotional development.

### How is infant mental health nurtured by relationships?

Loving, nurturing relationships enhances emotional development and mental health. When infants and toddlers are treated with kindness and encouragement, they develop a sense of safety and emotional security. A nurturing, caring relationship provides a "secure base" from which children can begin exploring the world. The more they explore and try new things, the more success they experience.

Kind, nurturing relationships also teach children how to treat others. Good relationships help children feel valued.



## Senses and Perception Foundation

It is through our senses that we receive information for our internal environment (ourselves) and the external environment (others and the world). How we filter, modify, distort, accept, reject, and use that information is part of the act of perceiving.

### Examples of Promoting Sensory Learning

Talk to children about experiences throughout the day, about what they see, hear, smell, taste, feel, and touch.

- \* Play music during the day; dance, and sing with children.
- Use quiet and soft music to calm infants and toddlers and rhythmic music to get them excited about moving
- Talking, reading, singing and humming will vary and enrich





## Movement Foundation

Movement and dance activities such as crawling, creeping, rolling, turning, walking, skipping, reading, and swinging are essential for a baby's brain development.

- **Stronger Babies** – Babies who spend time playing on their tummies become stronger in their neck and arms at an earlier age. Neck strength is needed for head control to progress to eating solid foods.
- **Crawling, Scooting, Hand Use** – By spending time on their tummies, babes learn to move from side to side, which helps them to reach and crawl. It also helps develop and refine their sense of touch.
- **Balance and Coordination** – Tummy time helps develop balance and coordination, which are the foundations for all motor skills.

## Language Foundation

Children learn new words through conversations and experiences with adults and children their own age. Words are also learned by listening to stories, songs, finger plays, and rhymes.

### Examples that Promote Language:

- When reading, point to pictures in the book and label the picture. Ask older toddlers to point to the picture when you name it.
- When children use one or two words to communicate, respond by expanding on the language used by the child.
- Reread stories to children multiple times so that they become familiar with the story and can predict what is next.

