

Welcome to Group Care!



THE NATIONAL CENTER ON
Health

Head Start and other programs that serve infants and toddlers provide your child a safe environment to learn. We believe you are your child's first teacher. Parents, grandparents, and other caregivers are viewed as partners. We promise to...

- Value individual culture, beliefs, and traditions in raising children
- Listen to your concerns and share ideas on healthy child development
- Support and encourage you through your child's enrollment
- Provide you with daily reports on how your child is doing
- Contact you in case of an emergency, so remember to update your child's emergency contact list if numbers change

Nutrition

We encourage family meals whenever possible. Eating together on a regular basis will have a positive effect on you and your child.

- Everyone sits together during meals to promote social, emotional, and motor development
- She will be encouraged to feed herself
- Healthy foods are given for meals and snacks evenly throughout the day
- She is allowed to decide what and how much to eat
- She may need 10 to 15 exposures of a new food before she decides if she likes it
- We do not use food as a reward or punishment

Healthy Teeth

Tooth decay can develop when your child snacks frequently, does not have her teeth brushed twice each day, and/or is not exposed to fluoride in her drinking water or toothpaste.



- To prevent decay, we will help her to brush her teeth at least once during the day
- We provide healthy meals and regularly scheduled snacks that are low in sugar
- We give her fluoridated water when she is thirsty
- We help you find a dental home for your child, if needed
- We offer education and support so you can care for her teeth at home
- At home, you can use a smear of fluoride toothpaste twice a day when helping to brush your child's teeth

Physical Development

Your baby is becoming more mobile. Most children are now cruising and will be walking without support by 14 months of age. Being able to move from place to place gives your child a sense of power and control—her first real taste of physical independence.

- We have a safe space for her to start cruising, pulling up to standing, and trying to walk
- She is improving her ability to grasp objects with her thumb and forefinger

School readiness begins with health!

- Let us know if you have questions about making your home safe for your 12-month-old, mobile child

Establishing Routines

Every family needs a routine. Routines help keep life from becoming too chaotic. Your child benefits when routines are regular, predictable, and consistent.

- She needs a nap during the day as part of her daily schedule
- Having a routine when you drop her off and pick her up will make this transition go more smoothly
- Let us know if you need help establishing routines at home

Relationships

Separation anxiety and fear of strangers are common at this age. You may notice your baby is clingier around new people or when you leave. Respect your child's fears; ask strangers to approach slowly.

- Your child will most likely play by herself or alongside other children
- At this age, it is hard for children to take turns playing with toys

Guidance

Your child needs to know she can depend on adults to set limits. This is so your child can learn self-control. This also keeps your child safe. Providing a safe place for your child to explore lessens time spent making and enforcing rules.

- We keep rules short, simple, and enforced consistently. We encourage you do that too
- We will redirect her to positive behavior when she misbehaves

Learning through Play

Your child uses play to learn about people and things around her. At this age, she may show specific preferences for certain people and toys.

- She will watch other children to see how they play with toys
- She will imitate older children and their caregivers
- We will not allow her to watch TV, videos, or DVDs while in our care
- At home, you can set aside time every day to play with your child instead of watching TV

Language and Literacy

Language progresses from “mama” and “dada” to include sounds that imitate adult speech. Your child understands more and is making her wants known.

- We name objects and people and encourage her to “use her words”
- She may start to sing, mimicking songs and music
- She will use gestures to help you understand words she cannot say well
- We reinforce words she uses to help her language grow
- She may like to hold books, trying to grab or taste them or turn several pages at once
- When reading to your child, let her turn the pages

Questions to Ask Your Baby's Pediatrician

“Do you have any concerns about my child's weight or height?”

“What foods should/shouldn't my child be eating?”

“How can I help my child learn?”

“What should I be doing to take care of my baby's teeth?”