

Early Head Start
Professional Development Day
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Playful Learning for Infants, Toddlers, & Twos

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Hi, I'm Leslie

- Director of Education and Development
- Life long Early Childhood Educator
- From Philadelphia
- Fun Facts



Leslie Eslinger



Wellness
Warm Up



Learning Goals

- Understand what features make a good IT toy
- Describe strategies for a successful play experience
- Name 4 benefits of play



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Play Time



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What makes a
great
infant/toddler
toy?



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Why do we play?

- To stimulate our senses
- To learn new things
- To strengthen muscles
- To explore
- To develop curiosity
- To learn to focus
- To have fun
- To problem solve
- To feel joyful
- To accomplish a task



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Say Cheese!



Find something to smile about!

Strategies to Make the Most of Play!

Connect with the children as they play

- Get close to the child, get to their level, face them, make eye-contact

Be warm, encouraging, and have fun!

- Smile often
- Laughter is contagious
- Give specific encouragement as children play
- Use children's names as they play

Talk before touch

Before moving a child, giving them a toy, switching toys, etc, tell them what you are going to do before doing it.

Observe and respond

Watch for children's attention, interest, frustration, etc with a toy and respond according to their cues

Serve and return

Mirror children's facial expressions, sounds, words, and actions



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Say the behavior you want to see

Communicate clear expectations for playing safely – “The cups are for stacking. You can get a ball to throw.” Tell children what they CAN do with the toys instead of what they can’t do.

Make connections

Use “I notice” and “I wonder” statements to describe the children’s play

- Ask open-ended questions, like “Why did you choose...” “What will happen if...” “How could you...” “What did you want to happen when you...”
- Limit close-ended cognitive questions like “What color/shape/number/animal is this?”

Give just enough help

As children play with toys, offer just enough help so they don’t give up, but don’t do all the playing for them



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Facilitate Exploration: Learn about the World



Video Source: Teachstone “Facilitated Exploration of a Shaker” – Infant CLASS Dimension – Facilitated Exploration

Let's Explore Together

- What's in your classroom?
- How to facilitate learning
- Feedback
- Language Modeling



Play can be
laugh-out-
loud fun or
intense
concentration!



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Look, Touch, Learn Tummy Time Books (Birth +)



These freestanding books
have been specially designed for
Tummy Time!

The Benefits of Tummy Time...

Neck

- Strengthens neck muscles
- Improves head control

Back

- Strengthens core muscles
- Promotes skeletal alignment

Legs and Hips

- Strengthens and stretches muscles for crawling

Head

- Prevents plagiocephaly (flat head)

Brain

- Sensory processing skills
- Cognitive development
- Motor planning skills

Tummy

- Strengthens core muscles
- Can help constipation, gas, and reflux

Eyes

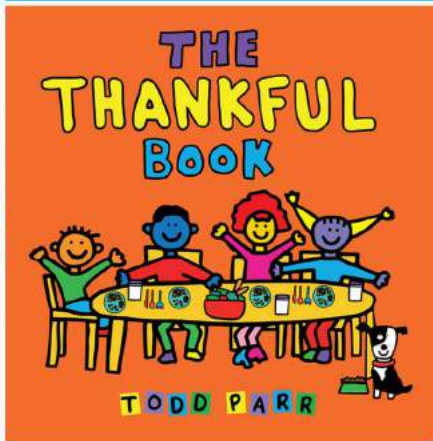
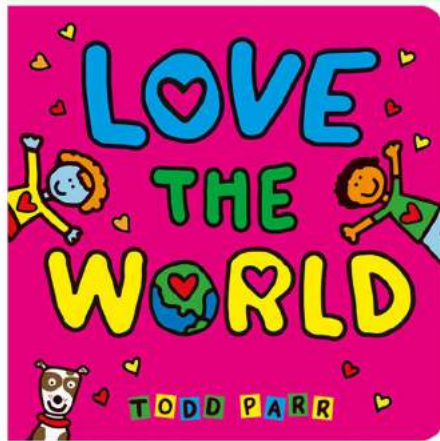
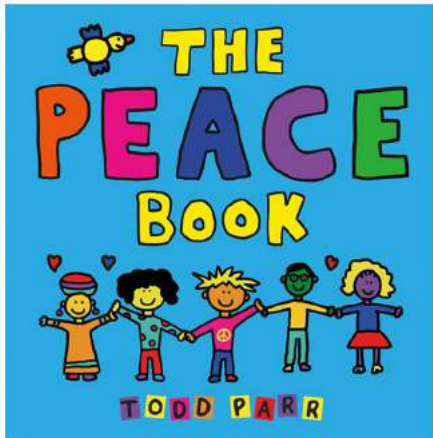
- Visual motor skills and depth perception
- Eye hand coordination skills

Hands and Arms

- Strengthens shoulders for reaching and fine motor skills
- Develops hand arches for fine motor skills

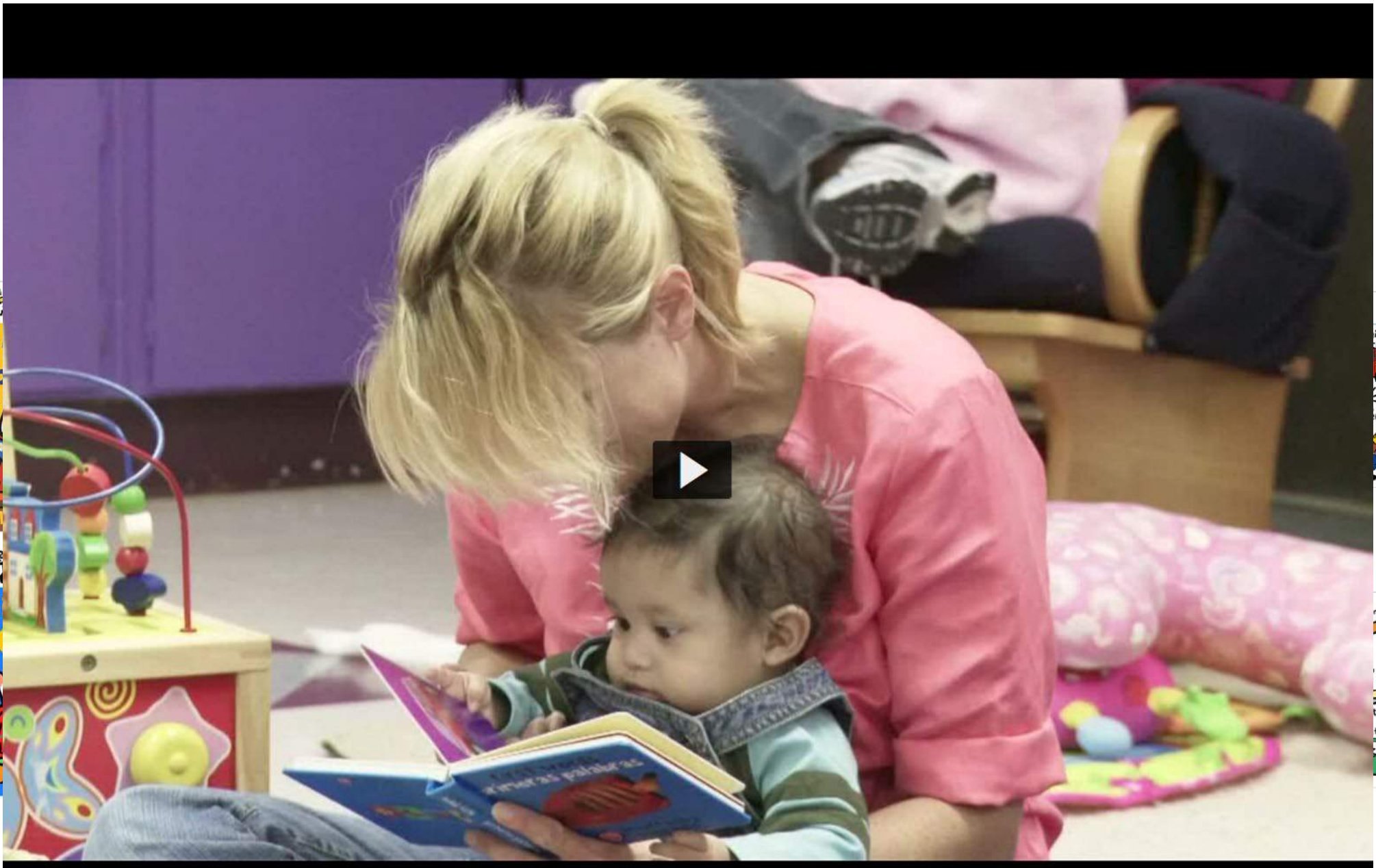


Kindness & Caring Board Book Set (Birth +)



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M



https://teachstone.instructure.com/courses/443/pages/encouraging-a-young-infant-to-explore-a-book?module_item_id=24733

What do you See? Bilingual Board Book Set (12 mos +)



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Support Engagement and Development



Teachstone Video linked to picture: “Expanding Infants’ Experiences While Exploring Blocks” – Infant CLASS Dimension – Facilitated Exploration

Puffaboo Elephant (3 mos +)



<https://www.shopbecker.com/playful-learning>

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Plugzy Shape Sorting (10 mos +)



<https://www.shopbecker.com/playful-learning>

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Fill 'n Spill Soft Taco (6 mos +)



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Pineapple Soft Stacker (6 mos +)



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Parallel Talk & Communicating



Linked Video: “Parallel Talk While Playing With a Box and Balls” – Toddler CLASS Dimension – Language Modeling

Small World Woodland Animals (2 yrs +)



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Snap 'n Learn Squirrels (18 mos +)



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Play Preferences



The child's role in directing the play

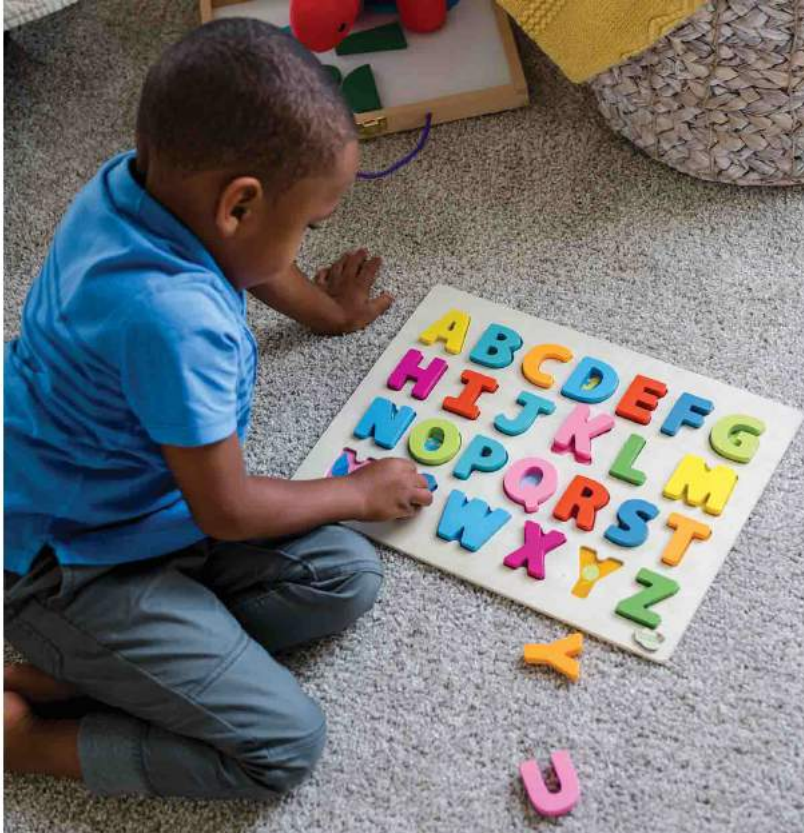


Puzzles with Purpose



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Wooden Alphabet Puzzle (2 yrs +)



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Active Involvement



Teachstone Video: “Encouraging an Infant to Explore a Toy” – Infant CLASS Dimension – Facilitated Exploration

Ecoline Recycling Truck (12 mos +)



“Infants as young as 10 months showed obvious preferences in the types of play experiences... resulting in enhanced levels of play.”

- Schneider, 2009

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Eco Midi Dump Truck (12 mos +)



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Super Soft Flower Floor Pillows (12 mos +)



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Eco Dining Set (12 mos +)



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Babydoll Carrier (10 mos +)



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The Wrap

- At your table, find one partner to work with
- Choose a material to explore
- One person will be the “teacher” and the other will be the “infant” or “toddler”
- The “teacher” will facilitate the “infant/toddler” exploration of the toy using the play strategies discussed

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Resources

- <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/playful-learning-environments-infants-toddlers>
- <https://teachstone.com/resources/>
- The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers and Twos
- NAEYC, Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Focus on Infants and Toddlers

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Thank YOU for playing
with me today.



Joyfully yours,
Leslie

