Session Two

What Is Child Development?

In this session parents learn the basics about human development. Participating in the session activities helps them understand that development begins before birth, continues throughout life, and always involves change of one kind or another. Beginning with an overview in which parents discover the parallels between their own development as parents and the growth and development of their children, they go on to examine pictures of infants, toddlers, preschoolers and young school-age children engaging in various behaviors: using their arms and legs, communicating, sleeping, playing games, and others. They conclude by finding examples of their own children’s developmental milestones among the pictures. This session emphasizes that providing a warm, caring, responsive, and stable relationship is essential to healthy child development.

Goals

The goals of this session are to:

- Learn about development and recognize that it continues throughout life.
- See parenting as another example of development.
- Understand how important parents are to their children’s healthy development.
- Demonstrate how development makes a difference in the way children play.

Background Reading

Individuals develop from the time they are conceived in their mothers’ wombs and for as long as they live. Development in all areas—physical, mental, social, emotional—is very evident throughout childhood. For example, children grow and develop physically. Physical change is especially obvious in infancy and
the toddler years when parents can see their children change dramatically in size and, at the same time, observe them developing new psychomotor skills month by month. Social and emotional development starts in infancy with the baby’s developing relationships with parents and continues as toddlers and preschoolers develop relationships with other adults and with children. However, mental growth and development are especially rapid in the early years of life, making a child’s experiences in early childhood extremely important.

Children’s brain development is most critical in their first five years, but their mental skills and abilities continue to develop throughout their lives as they learn and adapt to changing situations and relationships. The process of adapting—making the changes necessary in the face of new situations—is the key to healthy human development. At every age children and adults are challenged to adapt, and/or change, their understanding of the world and their behavior when they learn new things, enter a new developmental stage, or experience a life-changing event—becoming parents, for example.

For most people, change is an uncomfortable experience. It can cause feelings of fear, uncertainty, anger, and frustration. However, once adjusted to a new situation or having learned a necessary new skill, people’s fears eventually subside and they feel satisfied, proud, and competent. Children need the support of parents and other trusted adults to help them weather the sometimes-stormy changes in their lives.

We can safely say that all experts in child development agree that children need close, dependable, long-lasting relationships with their parents, ideally both mother and father in a healthy marriage. At the very least, all children need one or two caregivers who love them, play with them, talk to them and encourage them to explore the world.

1 This session requires each parent to receive a copy of the booklet *Picturing Development*.
2. The information in this section is adapted from, Chapter 5; of BMA, INC, *21st Century Exploring Parenting*, which was developed for the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. Administration on Children, Youth and Families Head Start Bureau, April 2002.
3 Additional background information on basic terms and concepts in child development is contained in Appendix One.
GROUP DISCUSSION

What is Development

In this discussion participants will learn the basics of human development, recognize that development continues throughout life, and that the changes people experience when they become parents are an example of adult development.

Begin by asking parents what they think the word *development* means. Mention that the word is used in many different situations, for example, development program, housing development, development of computer technology, development of motor skills.

Ask parents for to define the word *development*. Use cues that help participants come up with words like *change*, *improvement*, *maturity*, *advancement*, and *expansion*.

Using what parents have said, create a definition of development. Offer the following definition:

*Development is defined as an increase in complexity or a change from simple to more complex and detailed. It is an orderly process, along a continuous path, in which children acquire increasing skills for moving, thinking, talking, understanding and interacting with the people and things in the world around them. When we are talking about development in children, we are talking about the changes that children experience as they grow older, bigger, stronger, and more mature.*

Review and discuss the following basic facts about child development:

- Development occurs from the time we are conceived and continues throughout life.
- Development is influenced by both internal and external factors—our body’s physiological systems as well as the people and things around us.
- Development changes us both in form (our physical size and appearance) and function (what we are capable of doing physically, mentally, socially, emotionally).
- As development occurs, we adapt—we change our behavior as our circumstances change. (For example, as a baby grows and develops, she learns to
crawl, then stand, walk, run, and skip. These changes allow the developing child to move about in the world in ways that are increasingly complex.)

- Changes that come with development can be uncomfortable and frustrating, but they are also rewarding. (Babies struggle to crawl, then stand alone, and then walk. They experience frustration until they develop the skill, then they experience excitement at their achievement.)

- The sequence or pattern of change is basically the same for all children—the timing of development varies from child to child, with a wide range of normal variation in children’s rate and quality of development.

- Many things affect children’s growth and development. Home, extended family, programs and services, community, society and culture. More important, each child, with a unique blend of biology and experience, influences his or her own development. Children are active participants in life—eager to explore and matter to their world. They love learning new abilities and skills.

Ask parents to think of specific examples of change or development in their own children. List those on a piece of chart paper titled “Child Development.” You may also want to group them on separate sheets of chart paper by age: infant, toddlers, 3–5 years and 5–7 years. Use these examples to introduce the concept of domains or areas of development. Identify and point out examples of social, emotional, language, motor, and thinking skills.

Ask parents to think of specific examples in their own lives as parents when they experienced some kind of change or development that caused them to learn new things and adapt their behavior as parents. List these examples on a piece of chart paper titled “Parent Development.” To help parents get started, you may want to give them an example from your own life. Make sure to give parents credit for their own growth and change as parents.

Distribute the Handout “Child Development: Highlights.”
A C T I V I T Y

Picturing Development

The purpose of this activity is to:

• Provide a source of information about child development.
• Become familiar with the normal sequence of development in young children.
• Recognize that children develop at different rates.
• Demonstrate how development makes a difference in the way children play.
• Identify ways parents can help young children move from one developmental stage to another.

1. Distribute the booklet *Picturing Development*. Explain that the booklet uses words and pictures to show the pattern of development in various areas. Point out that children demonstrating skills are pictured in four lines across the page. Each line represents an age group.
   
   First line: infants
   
   Second line: toddlers
   
   Third line: preschool children
   
   Bottom line: young school-age children.

2. Point out that this booklet illustrates the typical sequential patterns of development in various areas. In some cases the pattern is one that almost every child follows exactly; in other areas the pattern is still sequential but is more likely to vary from child to child.

3. Remind parents that physical growth, emotional growth, and opportunities to develop a skill all influence a child’s development. Several factors can help determine when a child demonstrates a certain behavior. For example, one child may be well-coordinated and eager to learn to ride a tricycle but is afraid. Another might be well-coordinated and eager to learn but does not own a tricycle. A third might have a tricycle and be eager to learn to ride it, but does not yet have the necessary strength or coordination.
4. Give participants time to review the whole booklet.
   • Ask parents to turn to page one “Control of Body.”
   • Ask parents to find the picture that shows the way their child behaves now.
   • Ask two or three parents to indicate where on that page their child is in his or her large motor development.
   • Read each corresponding caption aloud if the parent does not.

5. Have parents turn to page 2, “Control of Arms and Legs.” Repeat the process:
   • Ask for two or three different parents to share with the group where their children are in their small motor development.
   • Again read each corresponding caption, if necessary.
   • Continue for as long as parents appear eager and interested in the materials.

ACTIVITY

Game: Playing—Ages and Stages

Explain that you want the group to take a little break from all of this great discussion and do something active. They will now have a chance to apply what they have been learning. In this activity they will demonstrate the way children might play with different objects at the four different developmental stages. Give the following directions:

• I need four volunteers (Note: If you have a large group, you can use eight volunteers). Give each a color-coded card with one of the four stages written on it: infant, toddler, preschool, and school age. (If you have eight volunteers, two people will model playing like a child in each of the four stages.)
Your task is to go over to the objects, in this first case, some pots and pans, and play with them in the manner that child in your stage of development would. Observers in the group will try to guess your stage of development.

Once everyone understands the instructions, ask the person with the yellow card to go over and begin playing with the pots and pans; ask group members to call out their guesses as soon as they think they know the stage. When the stage has been identified, ask someone to explain the play behaviors that children typically demonstrate at that stage.

Continue the process by calling over the persons with the blue cards, the pink cards, and finally the green cards.

This should all happen very quickly. Continue the activity by asking for four to eight new volunteers. Give them their color-coded cards and have them take turns, this time playing with a set of blocks. Again, send the volunteers over two at a time, based on the color of their cards, and have observers call out their guesses.

ACTIVITY

Small Group Work: Encouraging Development

In this activity, have parents work in small groups to identify ways to encourage their children’s development. Ask them to form five small groups—pairs, triads, or groups of four, depending on the number of people in your group—so they can look at some specific areas of development. Explain what each small group will do.

Each group will be assigned two pages of development in the booklet. They will look over their two pages in greater detail and talk briefly about what they see. After a few minutes, they will make one or two general conclusions about
development on each of their pages and share those with the larger group of parents.

Small groups can use the following questions as a guide when reviewing their pages:

➤ How are the toddlers on line two different from the infants on line one?
➤ What does a toddler need to develop these new skills and abilities?
➤ What do preschoolers need from adults to develop those skills?
➤ How are the primary school children on line four different from the preschoolers?
➤ What do these children need from adults in their lives as they develop these skills?

Give groups about five minutes to look at their pages and decide what conclusions they want to share. When they reassemble, ask for a group to volunteer to share one or two conclusions about the areas of development they studied.

As each small group makes its points, help to clarify any misunderstandings and reinforce correct conclusions. Draw the discussion to a close by thanking the participants for their hard work and sharing ideas with each other. Point out that *Picturing Development* contains only the highlights of development and its information is incomplete. By observing their children carefully, parents can provide more detailed information about each child’s abilities than the booklet can.

Conclude the discussion by asking the following questions for parent to think about during the week:

➤ What is one area of development that you are most interested in observing in your own children?
➤ What is one thing you will do as a parent to help support that area of development in your child?
TAKE HOME ACTIVITY

Distribute the Parent Handout: “Enhancing Your Child’s Development.” Ask parents to do at least two of the suggested follow-up activities during the week. Ask them to be prepared to present their ideas at the next group meeting.
Appendix One
Additional Background Information

CHILD DEVELOPMENT: BASIC TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Growth and development are complementary processes. Although they are often used interchangeably, they do not mean the same thing. **Growth** refers to specific physical changes and increases in size. For example, additional numbers of cells, as well as the enlargement of existing cells, account for the changes observed in height, weight, head circumference, length of arms and legs, and body shape. These changes in size can be reliably measured. The process of growth continues throughout life as the body repairs and replaces cells. Rapid periods of growth occur in infancy and adolescence. By contrast, growth slows during the preschool years.

**Development** is defined as an increase in complexity or a change from simple to more complex and detailed. It is an orderly process, along a continuous path, in which a child acquires more refined knowledge, behaviors, and skills. Although the sequence or pattern of change is basically the same for all children, the rate of development may vary from child to child. A child’s rate and quality of development are related to the physiological maturity of the nervous, muscular, and skeletal systems. Your child’s unique heredity and environmental factors also influence the rate and quality of development. Together these factors account for the tremendous variation in children’s development. Some terms used to describe the process of growth and/or development include:

**Typical.** Typical growth and development implies that the acquisition of certain skills and behaviors occurs according to a predictable rate and sequence. The range of normal is broad. The range of skills and the age at which children acquire these skills varies tremendously. “Typical” includes mild variations and simple irregularities (e.g., a 12-month-old who learns to walk without having crawled). Normal growth implies that a child is growing, changing, and acquiring the wide range of skills characteristic of children of similar age within the same culture. Normal or typical development also implies:

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• An integrated process by which children change in an orderly way in size, neurological structure, and behavioral complexity.

• A cumulative or building-block process where each new aspect of growth and development builds on earlier changes. Thus, each accomplishment is necessary to the next level of skills.

• A continuous process of give-and-take or reciprocal exchanges between the child and the people and objects within the environment. Each changes the other in a variety of ways.

Developmental Domains
The concept of the whole child is based on the accepted principle that all areas of human growth and development are interrelated. Only for the purpose of studying one area or another in greater depth have categories been created. In reality, however, all areas of growth and development are intimately related and mutually supportive. No aspect of development develops independently, and each skill, whether simple or complex, reflects a blending of other skills.

Six major developmental areas have been identified: physical, motor, perceptual, cognitive, language, and emotional-social. These six areas help focus attention on certain components of a child’s normal development and are used to describe a child’s progress along the developmental continuum. An understanding of each area of development creates a profile or “word picture” useful for assessing both the immediate and ongoing status of children’s skills and behaviors. Children’s individual achievements may vary across areas; a child may walk early and talk late. Development in each of these areas is dependent on appropriate stimulation and opportunities to learn.

Physical growth is a major task of early infancy and childhood. Physical growth is a highly individualized process responsible for changes in body shape and proportions as well as overall body size. Growth is intricately related to progress in other developmental areas. The state of a child’s physical development is an indicator of general health and well-being. Whether a child achieves his or her potential in each of the other developmental areas is strongly influence by the child’s physical development.

Motor development is a child’s ability to move and control various body parts. Refinements in motor development depend on maturation of the brain, input from the sensory system, increased weight and number of muscle fibers, a healthy nervous system and opportunities to
practice these emerging skills. Motor ability during very early infancy is reflexive and disappears as the child develops voluntary control.

**Cognitive development** involves the expansion of a child’s intellect or mental abilities. Cognitive development is an ongoing process of interactions between the child and people, objects, or events in the environment. Cognition involves recognition, processing, and organizing information and then using the information appropriately. The cognitive process includes such mental activities as discovering, interpreting, sorting, classifying, and remembering information. In older preschool children, cognition refers to skills for evaluating ideas, making judgments, solving problems, understanding rules and concepts, thinking ahead, and visualizing possibilities or consequences.

**Perceptual development** refers to the increasingly complex use of information received through the senses: sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste, and body position. Perception is concerned with how any one or combinations of the senses are used—learning to select specific aspects of the environment on which to focus, which details are important, and which differences should be noted. The basics of the perceptual system are in place at birth. Through experience, learning, and maturation, it develops into a smoothly coordinated operation for processing complex information and making fine discriminations. Perception is difficult to isolate from cognition. Thus, they are often considered together and referred to as **cognitive-perceptual development**.

**Language development.** Language can be defined as a system of symbols, spoken, written and gestural. It is a system that allows humans to communicate with one another. Normal language development is sequential. It depends on maturation as well as learning opportunities. The first year of life is called the prelinguistic or prelanguage phase when the child is dependent on body movements and sounds such as crying and laughing to convey needs and feelings. This stage is followed by the linguistic phase in which speech becomes the major communication tool. Words and grammatical rules are acquired as children gain skills to convey their thoughts and ideas through language. Most children understand many concepts and relationships long before they have the words to describe them. This is known as **receptive language**. Receptive language is a skill that precedes **expressive language**—the ability to use words to describe and explain. Speech and language development are influenced by the child’s general cognitive,
social, perceptual, and neuromuscular development. Language development is also dependent on the quality and quantity of language heard.

**Emotional and social development** is a broad area that encompasses how children feel about themselves and their relationships with others. It refers to children’s behaviors and responses to play and work activities, attachments to parents and caregivers, and relationships with family members and friends. Learning gender roles, independence, morality, trust, and accepting rules are also basic aspects of emotional and social development.

**Emotional development**, sometimes referred to as **personal development**, is a crucial part of children’s early development. Emotions develop as children respond to life experiences with a full range of feelings. An undifferentiated state of emotions during infancy evolves into a more refined set of feelings in early childhood. Some of the emotional skills learned in the early years are: the ability to accept and express feelings as well as understand others’ feelings, the capacity to deal with change, to be able to exercise judgment, and to know and enjoy a sense of control and influence. It also includes the set of skills involved in learning self-care tasks.

Early in life children also become aware of their **social nature**. **Social development**, or socialization, begins under the guidance of parents and family members. When children enter group settings, they are further exposed to behaviors, social roles, and attitudes that foster culturally appropriate social responses. Children learn many social skills in early years. They learn to enjoy and trust adults other than their parents. In their relationships with others, children learn ways to cooperate, disagree, share, communicate, and assert themselves. Children also learn how to be a member of a group—to take part in group activities, to adapt to group expectations, and to respect the rights and feelings of others. The young child also learns how to express feelings in culturally appropriate ways.

The following terms are often used in characterizing or describing a child’s development:

**Developmental milestones.** Milestones refer to the major changes or accomplishments in physical, cognitive, language, and social and emotional development. They evolve according to an orderly sequence of steps and appear within a fairly predictable age range. For example, almost every child begins to smile socially between 4 and 10 weeks and first words usually appear around 12 months.
Sequence of development. A sequence or pattern of development refers to the predictable steps along the maturation path. The normal sequence of steps in each area of development indicates that a child is moving forward along the developmental continuum. For example, in language development, a child progresses from babbling to being able to produce syllables. The sequence, rather than the age at which skills appear, is the critical factor in evaluating a child’s progress.

Age-level expectations or norms. Age-level expectations represent the average or typical age at which developmental skills are acquired by the majority of children in a given culture. The average age is called the norm. A child’s development can be described as at, above, or below the norm. Important to remember, however, is that age-level norms define a range, not an exact point in time, when certain skills will be achieved. Age-levels for a given skill must always be understood as approximate midpoints over time (e.g., walking appears from 8 to 20 months with the midpoint at 14 months).

Regression. Progress along the developmental continuum is rarely smooth. Rather, development is often uneven and irregular and occurs in a series of starts and stops. Spurts of rapid development are often followed by periods of disorganization or regression. The child then seems to reorganize followed by periods of calmness and consolidation. During periods of stress or change, children often regress to earlier forms of behavior. This is a normal characteristic of early development.

Individual Differences
What accounts for the wide range of developmental differences between children? Biological and genetic factors contribute to some of the differences in the rate, timing, and quality of developmental change. A number of other factors also contribute to making each child unique and different from any other:

Temperament is defined as the way in which a child responds to normal life events. Infants and young children differ in their level of activity, alertness, irritability, soothability, and restlessness. These ways of responding seem to affect the way that family and other caregivers respond to the child. This, in turn, reinforces the child’s self-perception.

Gender Roles. In the early years of development, children learn gender roles that are considered appropriate within their culture. Each child develops a set of behaviors, attitudes, and
responsibilities that are defined as acceptable male or female behaviors. Each child learns and acts out these gender roles according to everyday experiences and opportunities.

**Environmental Influences.** Beginning at conception, the environment—family, home, community, and society—shape and influence a child's development. The following list gives some of these environmental influences:

- Income level and the availability of food and shelter.
- Health and nutrition of the mother as well as the availability of pre- and postnatal care for mother and child.
- Parents’ education level, particularly the degree and quality of maternal education.
- Parents’ understanding of obligations and responsibilities in caring for their children.
- Patterns of communication and child-rearing practices.
- Family structure.
Highlights

Child Development

• We all develop from the time we are conceived in our mother’s womb until the time we die.
• Every age challenges us to learn new things.
• Learning often requires us to change in some way. For many people, change is uncomfortable and can cause feelings of fear, uncertainty, anger, and frustration.
• The process of adapting—making the changes necessary in the face of new situations—is the key to healthy human development.
• When you adjust to a new situation or learn a new skill, you often feel satisfied, proud, and competent.
• Development changes our physical form and our ability to function physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally.
• Children tend to follow a typical sequence of steps as they develop new skills, abilities, and relationships throughout their childhood. However, tremendous variations are normal in the way and pace that individual children develop.
• Children become attached to their special caregivers. If this relationship is interrupted or never develops, the negative effects can be severe and long lasting.
• For children, play is business or work.
• Children’s play changes as they grow and mature.
• Your interaction and communication with your children can encourage their progress through the stages of development.
Enhancing Your Child’s Development

1. Observe Your Child Closely and Create a Record of His or Her Development
   - Look through your *Picturing Development* booklet and circle the skills and abilities that your child has developed in each area.
   - In *Picturing Development* put a star beside some of the behaviors that you think your child is about ready to perform.

2. Support Your Child’s Development
   - Try some of the suggestions you heard in this session.
   - Watch for opportunities to encourage and reward your child for trying out a new skills or behavior.

3. Share Information About Development with a Friend or Family Member Who Has a Child Close in Age to Your Own
   - The next time you are with someone who has a child about your child’s age, point out some of the developmental stages you have observed.
PICTURING DEVELOPMENT

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau

PARENT HANDOUT 2-3 Picturing Development
Introduction

No two babies are alike, yet each baby follows a general pattern of development. Each baby learns new skills and abilities in just about the same order that other babies do.

Children tend to learn skills that their families and culture think are important. They learn skills when they have opportunities to practice. Adults continually sharing experiences with children is essential.

This booklet shows patterns which most children follow in developing control of body, control of arms and legs, self-awareness, communicating, eating, sleeping, toilet training, dressing, play, and relating to other children.

The pattern is not exactly the same with each child but the examples will give you an idea of the steps children take while growing.

Children pictured in this booklet range in age from birth to about six years. In each area of development the pictures are arranged in four rows matching these four age groups: infants, toddlers, preschool children and primary school children. Children generally develop faster in some areas than others. No two children are exactly alike. Use this information as a guide and discuss with others if you have questions.

Contents

Control of Body........1

Control of Arms and Legs......2

Self-Awareness........3

Communicating........4

Eating.....................5

Sleeping....................6

Toilet Training........7

Dressing.....................8

Play.........................9

Relating to Other Children..................10
CONTROL OF BODY

Holds head up

Rolls over

Sits alone

Creeps on all fours

Stands

Walks

Creeps up steps

Runs easily
CONTROL OF ARMS & LEGS

Hands form fists: arms and legs move all around

Bats at object with fist

Reaches and grabs object with open hand

Lets go of an object on purpose

Puts one block on top of another

Throws ball

Scribbles with crayon

Kicks ball
Makes tower of blocks

Uses arms and legs without using whole body

Learns to hold and use scissors

Builds complicated buildings with blocks

Cuts along lines

Can catch and bounce a ball

Copies letters

PARENT HANDOUT 2-3  Picturing Development
SELF-AWARENESS

Makes faces and parent copies her

Looks at and plays with hands and toes

Cries when parent leaves

Responds to own name

Knows self in mirror

Knows parts of own body

Knows and says, "mine!"

Says "I," "me," or own name
Pretends to be somebody else

Notices how others respond to her

Thinks and talks about own feelings

Shows pride in work

I'm a girl, have black hair, run fast, like pizza!

Describes self by own looks, likes and abilities

Thinks about self in the future

Manages emotions better

Understands others' feelings

PARENT HANDOUT 2-3  Picturing Development
COMMUNICATING

Begins to focus on faces and makes sounds

Smiles and babbles back and forth with adults

Uses gestures to get attention or ask for something

Says first words

Understands simple questions and directions

Uses words and gestures together

Understands words before he can say them

Uses words to tell what he needs
Learns words quickly and says two or three together.

Uses complete sentences.

Takes turns speaking.

Connects two or more ideas in a sentence.

Connects speaking to writing.

Names and writes the letters of the alphabet.

Connects sounds to letters and letters to words.

Begins to read and write.
EATING

Hungry every few hours—can suck milk

Eats three meals a day plus snacks

Enjoys handling foods

Handles spoon and dish

Holds cup with both hands

Feeds self part of meal

Uses spoon and cup but spills some food

Feeds self without help
Wants to help get meal ready
Likes to serve self
Likes plain food
Talks during meals

Makes food choices
Often asks for more than she can eat
Kicks, wiggles, moves around at table
Still spills some food from fork and spoon
SLEEPING

Wakes only for meals

Stays awake for longer periods

Sleeps all night

Two naps a day

One nap a day

May have trouble going to sleep alone

Might rest or play during nap time
I'M NOT SLEEPY!

Doesn't like naps, but needs rest

Tries to put off going to bed

Dreams or nightmares wake child up

Might need to get up at night to go to toilet

Is tired at night and begins to cooperate in getting ready for bed

Helps get ready for bed

Has fewer nightmares

PARENT HANDOUT 2-3  Picturing Development
TOILET TRAINING

- Urinates every few hours
- Usually has bowel movements after meals
- Stops activity when having a bowel movement
- Notices wet pants
- Looks at, points to, or touches waste product
- Has bowel movement in toilet with help
- Knows ahead of time to go to toilet; sometimes tells adult
- May be interested in using toilet, but may have accidents or refuse to go
Gets used to regular toilet times
Can decide to go to bathroom by self - needs help undressing and wiping
May want privacy and no help
Is dependable about going to toilet on own even at night
Might not want to use school bathroom, might have an accident
DRESSING

Pays no attention to dressing

Wiggles and kicks when being dressed

Can move arms and legs to help adults dress her

Can find armholes and put arms through as adult helps

Can put on and take off hat, mittens, socks

Can almost dress self, may confuse back and front

Can unbutton buttons she can see

Can dress and undress with adult help
Can tell front from back of shirt, pants, and socks

Can put shoes on but not tie them

Can dress and undress without adult nearby

Pays attention to clothes but doesn't take care of them

Can tie shoe laces, but it's hard work
PLAY

Plays with hands
Shows interest in toys
Finds toys hidden under cloth
Enjoys game of "putting in and taking out"

Carries or hugs doll
Acts out things she has done
Acts out things she has seen others do
Pretends that toys are real
Joins singing or games with older children and copies them

Invents make-believe monsters, animals and friends

Acts out things which happened in the past

Makes up simple rules in group play

Enjoys singing games

Begins to play games with rules

Creates simple stories and acts them out

More aware of what friends do
RELATING TO OTHER CHILDREN

Loves and trusts parents

Shows great interest in other babies

Smiles and babbles with other babies

Imitates other babies and toddlers

Takes turns and plays longer

Seeks playmate with similar interests

Plays best with one child he knows well

Begins making and choosing friends
Plays "pretend" with others

Plays easily with two or more children

May disagree with others sometimes

Needs adult to help when problems happen

Understands how others feel

Gives help without being asked

Talks more, and cooperates more

Wants to have friends