



# **STARTING YOUNG<sup>SM</sup>**

**SUPPORTING PARENTS FOR PEACEFUL LIFESTYLES**

**ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN FROM BIRTH TO THREE YEARS**



Peace Links

*There are two things of  
lasting value we can give  
our children - one is roots,  
the other is wings.*

—Anonymous

# **STARTING YOUNG<sup>SM</sup>**

## **Supporting Parents for Peaceful Lifestyles**

activities to promote social and emotional development  
in children from birth to three years

A project developed by:

- Peace Links
- Family Foundations Early Head Start
- Office of Child Development, University of Pittsburgh

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Project Developer

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Peace Links

*If we are to have real  
peace in the world,  
we shall have to begin with  
the children.*

—Gandhi

# **STARTING YOUNG<sup>SM</sup>**

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## sowing seeds of peace

*Where, after all, do universal human rights begin?  
In all places, close to home, so close and so small  
That they cannot be seen on any maps of the world.  
Unless these rights have meaning there,  
They have little meaning anywhere.*  
-Eleanor Roosevelt

**STARTING YOUNG<sup>SM</sup>** is dedicated to helping children become securely attached to parents and caregivers and to establishing peaceful lifestyles in their daily lives. It was developed within a partnership forged between Pennsylvania Peace Links and Family Foundations Early Head Start, a program of the University of Pittsburgh's Office of Child Development.

Children begin to understand concepts of peace and justice when they have a firm sense of trust: trust that others will keep them safe; trust that they can have an effect on their world; and trust that they will have all that they need (perhaps not all that they want, but all that they need).

**STARTING YOUNG<sup>SM</sup>** seeks to funnel those lofty ideals down to their "close, small places" - relationships between parents and young children.

The Activities in this publication are designed for caregivers including home visitors, family and child development specialists, early childhood educators, and others who work in partnership with parents. Created for infants and toddlers, the activities are built around seven social and emotional development goals that foster positive, healthy growth. They lend themselves to a relationship-based approach to working with young children and their families. The conversational tone and suggested language are intended to set the stage for an interactional style that fosters relationships with the child.

Recent neurobiological research in human development emphasizes early childhood as critical to a child's understanding of the world and the course of growth across the lifespan. We know now that the environment,

experiences, and relationships have the power to greatly impact a young child's development and learning, beginning at birth.

The **STARTING YOUNG**<sup>SM</sup> Project is committed to helping caregivers raise their children based on their families' strengths. It is also designed to encourage families to take pride and pleasure in their children.

The project grew out of concerns about interpersonal and societal aggression. The escalating effects of war, terrorism, and violence, including school violence, bullying, and intimidation, heightened our concerns. We believe that supporting parents for peaceful lifestyles early in the parent-child relationship will help to reduce stress and conflict in the first years. We further contend that it is possible to break the cycles of hostility and aggression by instilling, at an early age, the message that conflict can be resolved in peaceful ways.

We believe that, in the words of Alcoa Foundation which supported this project from the beginning, "Sometimes parents need training and support from caring community services to fulfill (their) critical responsibility," and that by "beginning with the children" we are upholding Peace Links' mission to lessen conflict and promote international understanding.

# Goodnight Moon

0–36  
mo.

*I will write peace*

*on your wings*

*and you will fly*

*all over the world.*

—Sadako Sasaki

## DEVELOPMENTAL INFORMATION

Separation is a major issue during the first three years of life. Babies need to feel secure in the constancy of their world and experiences. Then they can predict that parents return and their needs will be met. They create mental images of the experiences that they can recall in times of discomfort which helps them develop self-regulation and later impulse control. At various times during the first three years, babies will be more resistant to separations. They will cry and cling to parents. These are signs of a meaningful relationship and a baby's growing awareness of cognitive/learning categories (e.g., familiar and unfamiliar people.) Going to sleep is another kind of separation that can be difficult for some children. When young children go to sleep they are not sure the objects in their environment will continue to exist and will still be there when they wake up. For these children, out of sight is truly out of mind. Establishing a nighttime routine helps a baby to relax and enjoy going to bed. Having a routine and feeling secure about the constancy of care will help babies learn ways to calm themselves when upset. This self-regulation is the forerunner of impulse control and socialization.

**GOAL** The child will develop a sense of body self and self-regulation.

**AGE** Birth to 36 months

**PURPOSE** To provide the opportunity to talk about separations. This activity will give an opening to talk with parents about rituals associated with bedtime and other types of separations. It can also develop competence around literacy.

## STORY THEME

Bedtime rituals, Separations

## STORY SYNOPSIS

At the end of the day the child is put to bed in a room full of meaningful objects. The child says "Good night" to these familiar things.

## DISCUSSING THE STORY

Encourage the mother to read the story to her baby at bedtime. There is a board book available and the story is short. The story can be read to infants, or the mother and baby can look at the pictures together and name the objects. When objects are similar to those the baby might have, the mother should acknowledge that, using baby's name (e.g., "Jason has a ball just like that one.") The mother should read the story on several consecutive days, referring to the last time the story was read. Engage the mother in a discussion of the importance of reading the story. Ask her to share meaningful stories from her childhood and discuss why the story is appealing. Encourage the mother to tell as well as read stories to the baby. Literacy development is supported by reading a story and then conducting story-related activities. Encourage the mother to do one or more of the following when it is appropriate to the age of the child.

## STORY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

**Photos** Take a picture of the mother reading the book to her baby. Have her write or dictate her feelings about her baby and/or the activity.

**I Like You** Have the mother record something positive about her baby's characteristics, such as, "I like the way your nose wrinkles when you yawn." Suggest that the mother write her comments between home-visits, maybe one every day, or every other day, as time permits. These could be read to the baby and saved for him to read when he is able.

**Bedtime routine** Help the mother select 2 to 3 activities that are routinely done before bedtime. Help her identify a transition object or a meaningful toy for her baby to hold at bedtime. This could also be done for separations. Suggest that there be a quiet time just before the child goes to bed, so he can have a chance to calm down. Rough and tumble play (jumping on the bed) should be discouraged.

**Good-bye routine** Help the mother settle on a routine to help her child with separations. Ask, "How will you say goodbye?" Make suggestions, like one hug, one kiss. The toddler could give the parent a push out the door. Routines will vary with the age of the child.

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**Reunion routine** Establish a meaningful greeting like a name, hug, or verbalization, when reuniting after a brief separation.

**Memory book** Take pictures of the baby with his mother. Let her write her perspective on what the photo shows and what her baby's perspective might be.

**Literacy Connection** Label objects for the baby. Walk around the room with the baby, pointing and labeling objects similar to those found in the story book.

**Parent-child issues** Parents sometimes resist their babies' clinging, especially when they become toddlers. Bedtime struggles can also be an issue. Parents should not be afraid to set firm limits. Limits can be set in peaceful ways, especially once parents have established a routine and offer to engage in a quiet activity with the child.

Encourage the mother to put her child to bed when she does not feel so tired and stressed that she is likely to lose patience quickly.

# Memory Book

0-36  
mo.

*We are  
tomorrow's past.*  
- May Webb

## DEVELOPMENTAL INFORMATION

During the first three years children are working on establishing a solid sense of self. This development occurs in relationship to meaningful adults, most notably the parents. As children grow and behave they are sensitive to the reaction of parents as affirmation of their abilities and "goodness". They are also dependent on the parents for care and nurture. Until they have a sense of competence, children tend to resist separation from their parents and are stressed when they are away from them for long periods of time.

One of the reasons that separation is difficult at this age is that a child's memory is not fully developed. Younger children, under 18-20 months, have difficulty keeping an image of a parent in mind and calling up that image in times of stress. Older children can use this memory as reassurance of their parents' continued availability even when they are not around. When children move from place to place too frequently, or when they move to a new group or a new house, the mental adjustments needed to recreate their world in their mind can cause stress. Children can be relieved of some of this stress by having pictures or mementos of their previous situation.

CONTINUED

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**GOAL** The child will develop trust through secure attachments and meaningful relationships.

**AGE** Birth to 36 months

**PURPOSE** To help parents and children mark special events in their lives, focusing on relationships as well as events around them.

This activity is particularly good when children are changing caregivers, moving from one place to another, or in some other way experiencing changes in their lives, including growing up and learning new skills. It helps the young child deal with separations and changes by providing a memory aid.

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**ACTIVITY** Work with the mother to make a memory book. For the cover punch holes in construction paper, poster board or pieces of cardboard cut roughly in paper size (8.5 x 11 inches). More construction paper can be used for the inside pages. The child can decorate the cover and the mother can write her child's name and Memory Book on the cover. On inside pages different events can be listed, such as moving, first day care experience, first time at church, etc. Periodically the Home Visitor can take pictures of the child or have the mother take pictures, if she has a camera. The pictures can highlight the child in his current house or bedroom, playing with toys, in child care, or relating to staff. These can then be pasted in the book or stored in a box.

---

**MORE ACTIVITIES** The child can draw pictures of his experiences on some of the pages and the mother can label the photos and drawings for her. An older child could provide his own labels and comments about the photos and art work. He might be able to dictate stories about the experiences for his mother to write in the book. If the event involves a physical move and change of residence, add pictures of the new location. The child might also want to take small mementos, such as a few pretty stones from his yard or grounds. Add information about the child at the time: his height, weight, favorite foods, for example.

Read the Memory Book to the child from time to time. Even babies will benefit from hearing about these special events.

Create a book about "Moving Day" if the family moves. Use simple stick figures to symbolize the process in pictures. This allows for individualization of the story about moving so that family members can draw or write about significant details.

Label the book "My Home," and include photos or drawings of the exterior of the house, street signs, and other interesting sights on the street. If possible, include photos of different rooms in the house.

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**ENDING THE ACTIVITY** End the activity by assuring the child of the stability of the current living arrangement, the day care setting, or regarding the hopes for the family. Say something about enjoying the activity and tell the child what is going to happen next.



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**SUGGESTED BOOKS**

Daddy and I	Eloise Greenfield (Writers and Readers, 1981)
Say Goodnight	Helen Oxenbury (Simon & Schuster, 1991)
Good Night, Baby	Clara Vulliamy (Candlewick Press, 1996)
Good Night Lily	Martha Alexander (Candlewick Press, 1993)
On My Own	Miela Ford (Greenwillow, 1999)
Mama, Mama	Jean Marzollo (Harper Collins Child Books, 1999)
Goodnight Moon	Margaret Wise Brown (Harper Collins Child Books, 1977)
Bye-Bye, Babies!	Angela Shelf Medearis (Candlewick Press, 1995)
Maybe My Baby	Irene O'Book (Harper Collins Child Books, 1998)
Me Too	Susan Winter (DK Publications, Inc., 1993)
On the Day I was Born	Debbi Chocolate (Scholastic, Inc., 1995)
ABC, I Like Me	Nancy Carlson (Puffin Books, 1999)

**DEVELOPMENTAL INFORMATION  
CONTINUED**

Young children also love to compare themselves to when they were younger. They love to hear stories about when they were born and were babies, and how they have grown and learned so much in their first few years.

**DEVELOPMENTAL TEACHING**

Share the above information with the mother. Encourage her to think about her own early memories of changes and separations, especially moves from one house to another, or from one group to another. Discuss what she did to help her remember former places and people with whom she had strong ties. Discuss photographs or other pictorial reminders, transition objects, mementos or souvenirs. Focus on how these objects helped the mother maintain a feeling of connectedness. Then focus on her child and discuss how she can help lessen her child's stress using some of these same strategies.

Discuss the importance of memories and a historical past. Ask her to share her feelings about growing up, of fond memories of her childhood and her pride in learning new skills.

*Memories of our lives, of our works and  
our deeds will continue in others.*

- Rosa Parks

# Conversations - Beginning the Dialogue

0-36  
mo.

## DEVELOPMENTAL INFORMATION

Most babies are born with all that they need to be responsive to the environment. It is up to the adults to make sure babies are stimulated so that they want to interact with the people and objects they encounter. Talking with babies is one important way to let them know the world is filled with caring persons and interesting objects. Talking with babies and young children also provides a good model for language development and encourages children to talk back in turn. Babies should be talked to most of the time when they are awake and alert. They should not be forced to respond, but can be encouraged by being talked to in varied voice tones, being sung to, or being shown interesting objects.

## DEVELOPMENTAL TEACHING

Share the above information with the mother. Review the stages of language development. Some adults feel silly talking to a baby who isn't yet verbal. Explain that language experiences relate to later success in learning to read and write. Remind them that a baby has to have the words or tools of language, and they also have to experience the uses of language. Adults model these for infants by talking with them. Language is also a social activity, and it makes the baby feel that there are people around who care.

- GOAL** The child will develop the ability to be a responsive partner and engage in pro-social behavior.
- AGE** Birth to 36 months
- PURPOSE** For babies and young children to develop a sense of self as communicators and as partners in dialogue.
- 

**ACTIVITY** Encourage the mother to talk to her baby when they are together and he is awake. Meaningful conversations occur when the mother describes what she is doing with her baby, like changing his diaper, feeding or dressing him.

Encourage her to discuss what she sees the baby doing and what he seems to be feeling. For example, "You're kicking your arms and legs so much. You must be very excited (or happy)." The mother can also describe what they are both doing, such as, "You are really watching mommy. I'm cooking your lunch (or doing the wash)." She can describe what the baby is hearing or seeing by saying, "Oh, you heard that noise. That is the man coming to pick up the garbage." She can also take the baby to the source of the sound, or closer to the object being examined.

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**MORE ACTIVITIES** As her baby grows older, the mother can describe his attempts to make sounds, saying for example, "You're moving your mouth, I think you're trying to say something." When her baby does make sounds, she should respond and act as though his sounds were intended to mean something. She might say, "You're trying to tell me you're hungry (or wet)." "Your sounds tell me you're starting to talk to me." "You're happy.... you're watching that toy."

When the baby's gestures, sounds or beginning words do communicate an intent, the mother should respond to it. When her baby points to a cookie she might say, "You want a cookie. Just a minute and I'll get you one. Here it is. Can you say cookie?" Don't expect a response right away, but responding in this way anticipates that the baby will eventually respond.

For variety, the mother can sing some of her conversations.

It is helpful to take photographs. When the baby is older, the mother can talk with him about the event depicted in the photo and his relation to it. For example, "Here is a picture of you when you started to crawl. We were all so excited."

---

**ENDING THE ACTIVITY** Be alert so that the baby is not over-stimulated or over-tired. Let him know how pleased you are at his response and how much fun the game was. Remind him of what happens next.

# “difficult situations” in parenting

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# War, Terrorism, Violence



**SITUATION** This country has recently engaged in a war in a Middle Eastern country. There is a lot about the war in the news, and Ms. Williams is worried that her thirty-month-old son might be affected. Ms. Williams feels fairly calm about the situation, and no one she knows is directly affected by the war. She has been reading about how children might be affected. She has not read anything about children under three years of age, so she assumes that her son might not realize what is going on. She has not changed any schedules and allows the child to watch the news on TV while she prepares dinner.

---

**WHAT TO TELL THE PARENT** Here are tips for parents who might be concerned about the effects of war and violence on young children:

**Monitor TV viewing and conversations.** Parents should be aware of what they are saying around a young child. Children take in and understand more than adults realize. Hushed tones can also create curiosity and anxiety in a young child.

**Take care that newspapers and magazines that carry disturbing pictures are not placed where the child can see them.**

**Don't assume that children don't know what happened.** A child is very aware of many things, even when we don't realize it. Even if he doesn't know the particulars, he will know that something is going on.

**Don't assume that it will be over once and for all or that his interest will be limited.** A child continues to work on issues, assimilate events and process them. He might revisit these issues at different developmental stages.

**Find out what information the child has before you offer any.** Give the child opportunities to talk about things. Regular reviews of what he has been watching on TV and what he thinks about it will give the child opportunities to bring up issues once he has become skilled with language.

**Give information on a need-to-know basis.** As the child asks questions give him straightforward, simple and concrete answers. Don't go onto involved explanations. If the child doesn't have enough language to ask questions, you might wonder aloud for him, keeping it short and simple.

**Be aware of your own feelings.** You can show emotion but don't lose control or act helpless. If you are showing anger, make sure the child knows it is not directed at him. Say, "I just get angry when I think of them hurting, or trying to hurt, people. But I'm not angry at you." Point out that in spite of anger, you are going on with routines and actions of everyday living. Let your child see your compassion and empathy for those who have been hurt.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL INFORMATION**

Generally, children will take cues from parents and their activities of daily living. Children might not show any signs of the effect of the war if their schedules remain consistent and the parents are calm and are not directly involved with the conflict. In this country, children would probably show no adverse effects if their basic needs are being met. It is essential that they not be bombarded by sights and sounds from TV coverage of war and terror attacks. Flashing lights, loud noises, and rapid speech can startle or over-stimulate children and produce anxiety.

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**Assure the child you are in control, even if it is at a very concrete and immediate level.** The child might be concerned about his parent going into unsafe places, on planes or to work in tall buildings. Say, “Daddy/Mommy wouldn’t go on the plane in the building if s/he didn’t think it was safe.”

**Point out helpers and caring attitudes (compassion).** Talk about people who help: police, firefighters, medical professionals, and government officials, reinforcing the helping roles of those persons.

**Find ways for the child to help victims or others in need.** If appropriate, the child can save money or toys. Helping at home, preparing food, helping a neighbor or friend can also be useful.

**Reassure the child that he is safe and other caregivers are too.** Tell the child that you are keeping him safe and that other family members and caregivers are taking measures to be safe.

**When a family is called to military service, there will be inevitable anxiety.** Acknowledge the worry while assuring the child that you will keep him safe.

#### **DEVELOPMENTAL TEACHING**

If parents can keep themselves in control, keep environmental changes to a minimum, stick with routines, keep calm, and offer verbal explanations for changes that do occur, the child might show little or no response to the war or other traumatic event. Changes in the environment, particularly the nurturing environment and caregivers affect children more than war. One exception would be family members being called to military service. When children are separated from significant caregivers, special efforts must be made to minimize disruption of caregiving.

Ms. Williams should not use TV as a distraction without monitoring the contents. Keeping her son near as she prepares dinner, giving him a toy or talking to him may work better. If she must use TV, a calm, age-appropriate video

**Be open and tolerant of his need to communicate.** Use story time, bath time and bed time as occasions to share things. Children will generally share concerns. Don’t ignore or make light of his feelings. Feelings won’t go away just because a child is not allowed to talk about them.

**Remember that not all communication is verbal.** Consider play, art, reading, or telling stories as means of expression and communication. Use these media to understand a child’s concerns and to offer outlets.

# Raising Empathetic Children

**SITUATION** Sara Adams, a bright and active two-and-a-half-year-old falls down and scrapes her knee. Her shrill cry brings her mother running to her side. She says, in a subdued and wounded voice, “Oh, you hurt your knee.” She rubs the area, lifts the knee to her lips, then says, “I’ll get you a band-aid.” The mother gets and applies the band-aid. She says, “Mom takes care of her little girl.” Sara runs off to get her blankie.

## DEVELOPMENTAL INFORMATION

In this complex situation, Sara is showing behavior related to several different developmental issues. She shows identification with the mother, the beginning of fantasy play, sympathy for others, and beginning glimmers of empathy.

Empathy is defined as an “understanding so intimate that the feelings, thoughts, and motives of one are readily comprehended by another.” (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language). It’s the ability to take the perspective of, and feel with, the other.

That’s an over-simplified statement for a rather complex concept. On his website, Dr. Lawrence Kutner ([www.drkutner.com](http://www.drkutner.com)) adds that empathy is the ability to understand “what you would feel like if you were in another’s situation.

Developing empathy is not something we were born with, it’s not an innate feeling. It’s something we learn.”

Learning about empathy can start in infancy. It develops out of the care and nurturing that infants receive from their caregivers, especially the care given in times of distress to comfort the baby. When the quality of care is satisfactory to infants, they enter into strong relationships with the provider and, gradually, over time in the preschool years, they want to be like the caregiver. That process of identification is one of the critical elements in the development of empathy.

Later that day, Sara and her mother visit a neighbor who has a three-year old, Shele. During their mother-baby play the two girls fight over Sara’s Raggedy Ann doll. When the three-year-old prevails, Sara hits her, and Shele cries. Mrs. Adams goes to Sara and says, “The hitting hurts Shele, and you shouldn’t hurt others. You can take turns with the doll. That’s called sharing.”

The next day, Shele and Sara play together again. As Shele runs to retrieve a ball, she falls. She cries and Sara runs over to where Shele sits on the ground. When Mrs. Adams comes out, Sara runs toward the house. Mrs. Adams asks Sara where she is going. Sara says, “Get a band-aid.” Mrs. Adams replies, “She doesn’t need one. It’s just a little bump. But it is kind of you to think of that.” Sara, who had been looking somewhat stressed, handed her ‘blankie’ to Shele. Mrs. Adams said, “Another kind gesture. I’m so proud of you.”

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**DEVELOPMENTAL INFORMATION CONTINUED** Another critical element in the development of empathy is that of sympathy. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines sympathy as “a relationship between people or things in which whatever affects one correspondingly affects the other”. Kutner gives a pre-empathy example that approaches sympathy when he describes a baby crying in the newborn nursery. The other babies, upon hearing the cry, begin their own cries. They cry in response to the discomfort they feel at the crying. Later in their development they remember the feeling and even though they, themselves, are free of distress, they engage in sympathy cries. Empathy adds the dimension of **feeling** and **knowing** what would bring comfort for the other infants. Kutner explains toddlers’ pre-empathic behavior as they offer a transition object or toy to the crying infant: these are objects that brought comfort to them when they were hurting. Now they connect the feeling of distress with attempts to comfort another person.

A final element, to be discussed here, is that of fantasy. The ability to fantasize gives the preschooler and older children and adults the ability to really put themselves in the other’s position, yet distance themselves from merging or fusing with that person. They use mechanisms similar to those used in distinguishing between real and pretend. Preschoolers, then, can begin to offer true comfort, not just that which makes themselves feel better, but that which they can imagine would make another feel better.

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**WHAT THE PARENT CAN DO** Sara's mother supports her daughter's development very well. First of all, she gives good care in these ways:

**She immediately responds to needs, the hurt knee, and the conflict with Shele.** When children worry about getting their needs met, they are less likely to develop concerns for the needs of others.

**She is gentle in her approach to Sara.** Research has shown (Cotton, 2004, [www.nwrel.org](http://www.nwrel.org) ) that children with non-punitive and non-authoritarian mothers are more empathic.

**She states expectations clearly.** Clear expectations aid in the development of boundaries, and empathic persons have to know personal boundaries, I and not-I in self-development. They have to be able to fantasize and take on the perspective of the other without losing their grounding in reality. If boundaries aren't clear, there might be a tendency to over-identify with the other person.

**She identifies Sara as a caring person.** She communicates a belief that Sara could be that kind of person, and labels the behavior that makes it so.

Cotton gives these other suggestions for ways adults can facilitate empathic behavior in young children:

**Model the behavior you want to see.** Remember identification is a powerful force for learning.

**Give reasons for why children should behave in an empathic manner.** These explanations should be timely, given when the child has hurt, or otherwise caused distress, to another child. The explanation should include ways to make restitution without always having children apologize. They can help fix what they broke, for example.

**Talk about feelings with children.** Too often adults sluff off children's feelings as "no big deal", or "you'll be all right". While that might be true in the future, the hurts are real at the moment. Children should know they have a right to their feelings and their points of view. Too many cliches and rules diminish them. And remember the strength of modeling.

**DEVELOPMENTAL TEACHING**

In this situation Sara is showing typical two-year-old behavior. She acts first (taking the toy), based on her own ego-centric view of events, guided by her feelings. She also shows appropriate behavior in her possessiveness of her doll. In children's developing sense of self, they tend to define self by what they have. If made to give up possessions too soon, especially those important and meaningful to them, they feel as though they are giving up part of themselves. Of course adults want to encourage pro-social behavior such as sharing. They can give reminders of the expectation, eventual sharing, without forcing the issue.

# STARTING YOUNG<sup>sm</sup>

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“The strength of the Activities in **STARTING YOUNG**<sup>sm</sup> is the simplicity of the age appropriate activities to be used in working with parents to make secure attachments to their children and establish peaceful lifestyles in their daily lives. Emphasizing strong parent-child attachments and speaking to the strengths of the family, the work is a very positive and easy-to-use guide to assist parents in fostering positive and healthy growth and development. Emotionally secure infants and toddlers are the key to the beginning of a peaceful world.”

**Judy Robertson**

Prevention Manager, Mercy Behavioral Health and Chairperson, Communities in Action for Peace,  
Community Empowerment Subcommittee

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“Secure attachment is the foundation for adult health and happiness. **STARTING YOUNG**<sup>sm</sup> allows parents, home visitors and children to develop critical skills that will protect them from negative behaviors. Children need to feel connected to their family and their community or they will never be able to resist the temptation of addiction and self-destructive behaviors. Learning how to express feelings in an appropriate manner as a child will prevent self-medicating drug and alcohol abuse in the future!”

**Amy Fowkes-Cairns**

Prevention Specialist / Therapist, Mercy Behavioral Health

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“As a nurse, editor, and first-time “older” mom, I’ve read widely about infant development and attachment. **STARTING YOUNG**<sup>sm</sup> presents critically important concepts through activities that are easy and fun to read, teach and use. This book should be included in every new family’s “going-home-from-the-hospital” bag.”

**Kathryn Desmond, RN, BSN**

Parent, Nurse, Editor

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“Our nurses have found that parents really enjoy the activities because they are easy to do. They especially like the singing and dancing activities.”

**Shirley Heim, RN, MSN**

Public Health Nursing Supervisor, Allegheny County Health Department, Pennsylvania

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“**STARTING YOUNG**<sup>sm</sup> properly emphasizes the caregivers’ earliest relationships with infants. Premature emphasis on literacy can be hurtful, but **STARTING YOUNG**<sup>sm</sup> encourages reading to promote seven core developmental goals that form the foundation for sound cognition, emotional development, social empathy and reciprocity. Service providers, parents and children will love **STARTING YOUNG**<sup>sm</sup>.”

**Gerard Costa, Ph.D.**

Director, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey – New Jersey Medical School Youth Consulting Services Institute for Infant and Preschool Mental Health

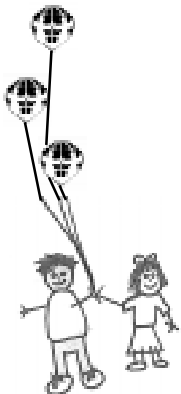
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“**STARTING YOUNG**<sup>sm</sup> is a great resource for families and the people who work with them. It’s full of practical everyday ways to establish trust, build the relationship between parents and children, and help children grow towards being peacemakers.”

**Hedda B. Sharapan**

Director of Early Childhood Initiatives at Family Communications, Inc.  
Producers of *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood*

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“**STARTING YOUNG**<sup>SM</sup> is an excellent resource for anyone working with parents helping to promote healthier relationships within families. A major strength of this publication is the clear integration between the seven developmental tasks for 0-3 years old and the creative activities which parents can use to promote the child’s cognitive, social and emotional growth. The book is interesting, clearly written, and well organized, describing activities which should be enjoyable to both children and parents.

**Mary M. Carrasco, MD, MPH**

Director, A Child’s Place at Mercy