

PATCH 'Ohana Network



PATCH - Supporting Hawaii's Child Care Needs

Playing With Infants: Where Learning Begins

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Infants learn best through play. Play stimulates a baby's curiosity, creativity and intellect. Here are some simple, affordable ways for you to play with your baby.

★ **Read to your baby for 10 – 15 minutes a day.** Board books (books with thick pages) are a great read aloud tool. Let baby hold the book, turn the pages, and explore. Board books are strong enough to survive baby's drool, tugging and pulling. If your baby is not interested in sitting through a story, that's okay. You can still get your 10 – 15 minutes of "reading" time in by talking about something you see. For example, you could point to a picture and say: "This is a bunny. The bunny is brown. What else do you see?" Wait for baby to babble an answer, or point, and then comment on the picture. Reading aloud provides you with an opportunity to bond with your baby in a fun, natural, and safe way.

★ **Play with words.** Babies learn language by hearing language. They learn to speak by being spoken to. Nursery rhymes and songs are a great way to introduce infants to language. Nursery rhymes have a natural rhythm – babies enjoy being rocked or bounced gently

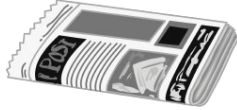


as they listen to *Hickory Dickory Dock* or *Hey Diddle Diddle*. Mother Goose Rhymes are a natural way to introduce creative/dramatic play to your child. Infants delight in having the spider (i.e. your fingers) run down the waterspout (i.e. their body) when listening to *Itsy Bitsy Spider*, or in having their toes tickled when playing *This Little Piggy*.

Finally, nursery rhymes help young children to develop early reading skills by introducing children to "word families" - words that have the same ending sounds (i.e., dock, clock, spout, out, etc.).

When you talk, sing and play with your baby, then you create a language rich environment that stimulates your child's language acquisition.

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Child & Family Service Awarded ParentLine Contract

Child & Family Service was selected to implement the ParentLine program from the Department of Health. ParentLine is a free, confidential warm-line that connects parents, caregivers and educators to an array of resources, information and support. Parent Support Groups will be held at the program office located at 91-1841 Fort Weaver Road, in Ewa Beach. Workshops will be offered in the community at various locations. Please contact the ParentLine Distribution Center at **808-681-1553** to request resource materials such as ParentLine flyers, Keiki `O Hawaii Resource Directories, Developmental Resource Packets, "A Happy Start" handouts and Teddy Bear Posts. **For more information, please call 808-440-8363.**

In Hawaii, thousands of families rely on help from Child & Family Service. Caring for the island community for over 110 years, Child & Family Service is Hawaii's oldest and most comprehensive non-profit human services organization, providing critical services to children, the elderly and families in need. Child & Family Service touches the lives of over 40,000 individuals annually.



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★ **Tummy Time: Get Down With It!**
It's important for babies to spend time on their tummies. Tummy time helps to strengthen the muscles needed to creep, crawl, and sit up. Your baby may not enjoy tummy time at first, so start off slow: 3 - 5 minutes at first. Then work up to longer times on the floor. Help your infant transition into tummy time play. Place baby on a comforter or blanket that has a pattern on it. Next, get on your tummy and make eye contact with your infant. Play with your baby, and encourage his/her muscle development by placing a favorite toy just out of reach and then encouraging your infant to stretch and grab it. Encourage his/her language development by talking about all of the colors and pictures that you see on the blanket/comforter.



Transition out of tummy time by giving loving strokes and kisses as you gently pick baby up.

Remember that tummy time is for play time only - the safest way for babies to sleep is on their backs.

These three simple activities will help you discover easy, affordable, and fun ways to play with your infant that introduce life-long learning.