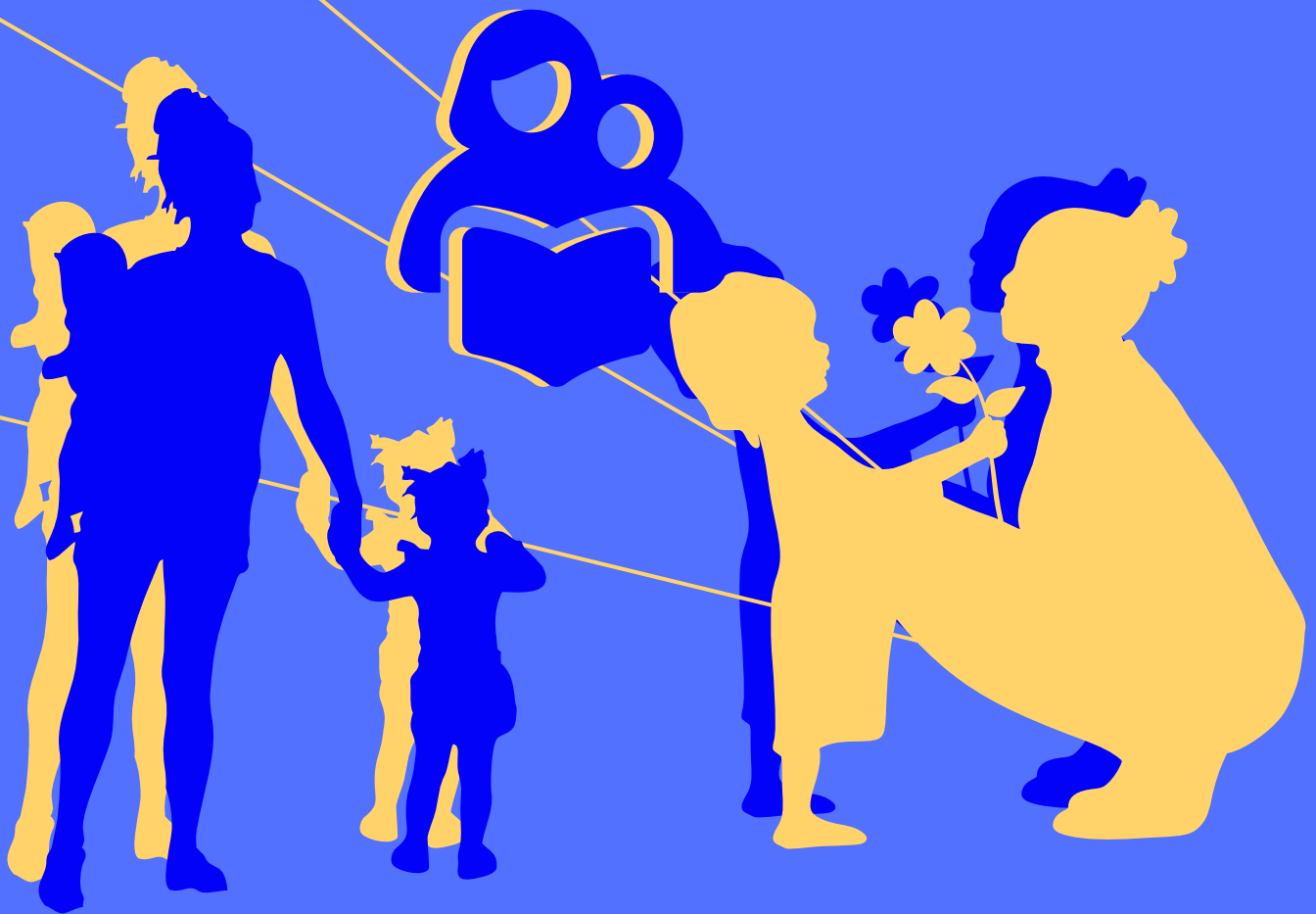




Victoria's Urban Outreach Tutoring Service



MOMMY AND ME EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT GUIDE SUPPORTING GROWTH AND ACADEMIC MILESTONES FOR YOUNG FAMILIES



For Teen Mothers

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INTRODUCTIONS



MOMMY AND ME EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT GUIDE SUPPORTING GROWTH AND ACADEMIC MILESTONES FOR YOUNG FAMILIES

Welcome to the Mommy and Me Early Childhood Development Guide! This guide is specifically designed for teen mothers to support the growth and development of their young children. Understanding how to engage in activities that promote literacy, sensory exploration, and emotional well-being is crucial for your child's success. Throughout this guide, you will find detailed explanations, fun activities, and resources to help you navigate this important journey.

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UNDERSTANDING CHILD DEVELOPMENT

AS A YOUNG ADULT

Child development is a multidimensional process that includes physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth. Recognizing the different stages of development will help you support your child's growth effectively.

Key Areas of Development:

- **Physical Development:** Skills that involve physical coordination and the use of muscles.
- **Cognitive Development:** Growth in thinking abilities, problem-solving, and knowledge acquisition.
- **Social Development:** The ability to form relationships and interact with others.
- **Emotional Development:** Understanding and managing emotions, leading to emotional intelligence.



LITERACY AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

IMPORTANCE OF EARLY LITERACY

Early literacy lays the foundation for a child's future academic success and overall cognitive development. Studies show that children who are engaged in early literacy activities are more likely to excel in reading and writing as they enter school. Literacy encompasses not only the ability to read and write but also the skills of listening and speaking. Engaging in regular reading sessions and conversations with your child enhances vocabulary, comprehension, and language fluency.

Research indicates that children who are read to regularly demonstrate increased phonemic awareness, which is crucial for reading readiness. Through storytelling and reading, children begin to understand the structure of language, the purpose of written text, and the relationship between letters and sounds. Encouraging interactive reading—where your child participates in the story—further promotes language development as they learn to express ideas and ask questions.



Activities to Promote Language Skills

1. **Daily Storytime:** Set aside a specific time each day for reading together. Choose a mix of picture books, storybooks, and informative texts to expand vocabulary and comprehension.
2. **Rhyming Games:** Use rhymes and songs to make language fun. Sing nursery rhymes and encourage your child to join in, helping them recognize sounds and patterns in words.
3. **Conversation Starters:** Ask open-ended questions during playtime or mealtime to encourage your child to express their thoughts and feelings. For example, "What is your favorite part of the day?" or "How do you think this story will end?"
4. **Labeling Objects:** Create labels for everyday objects around the house (e.g., door, table, tree) to help your child associate words with their meanings. This can be both educational and visually engaging.



PHONICS AND EARLY READING



INTRODUCTION TO PHONICS

Introduction to Phonics

Phonics is an essential method of teaching reading that involves correlating sounds with letters or groups of letters. This approach enables children to decode words, making reading an accessible skill. Understanding phonics helps children break down words into their constituent sounds, allowing them to sound out unfamiliar words.

Research has shown that systematic phonics instruction significantly improves children's reading abilities, especially in early stages. This method not only aids in the pronunciation of words but also enhances spelling skills and comprehension as children learn the patterns of language.

Fun Phonics Activities

- **Phonics Flashcards:** Create flashcards with letters and corresponding images (e.g., A for Apple). Use these cards to practice letter sounds and familiarize your child with the alphabet.
- **Sound Sorting:** Gather items from around the house or use pictures and have your child sort them by their initial sounds. For example, "Sort these objects into the 'b' sound box and the 's' sound box."
- **Phonics Songs:** Utilize online resources for phonics songs that teach sounds in an engaging and entertaining way. Singing along helps reinforce sound-letter associations.
- **Interactive Reading Apps:** Explore educational phonics apps that make learning interactive and fun. Many apps offer games that help children practice phonics through play.

SENSORY LEARNING & EXPLORATION

IMPORTANCE OF SENSORY PLAY

Sensory play is an essential component of early childhood development, allowing children to engage their senses as they explore the world. This type of play is crucial for cognitive growth, as it aids in the development of fine motor skills, language skills, and emotional regulation. Sensory experiences help children understand complex concepts through hands-on learning and exploration.

In a sensory-rich environment, children learn about textures, colors, sounds, and smells, leading to greater engagement and curiosity. Such experiences can foster creativity, problem-solving skills, and social interaction as children navigate play scenarios with peers.

Ideas for Sensory Activities

1. **Sensory Bins:** Create bins filled with different materials (rice, beans, sand, or water beads). Add cups, scoops, and small toys for exploration, allowing your child to dig, pour, and discover.
2. **Texture Hunt:** Organize a texture scavenger hunt around the house or yard. Have your child find objects with various textures, discussing their findings and experiences.
3. **Cooking Together:** Involve your child in cooking. Let them explore the textures and smells of different ingredients while discussing the process and measurements.

Nature Play: Take nature walks and collect leaves, rocks, and flowers. Encourage your child to describe the textures, colors, and shapes while discussing how these elements are part of their environment.

SUPPORTING EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

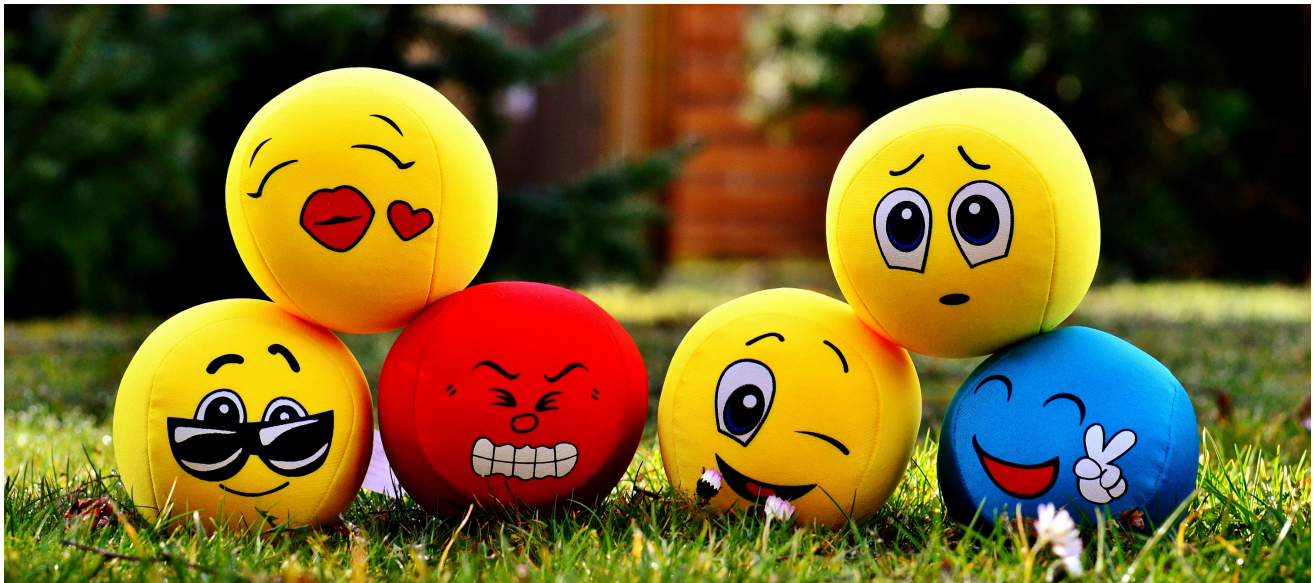


NURTURING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's emotions and the emotions of others. Nurturing this skill from a young age helps children develop empathy, resilience, and strong interpersonal skills. Kids with high emotional intelligence are better at communicating their feelings and navigating social situations. As a parent, modeling emotional awareness and using moments of daily life to discuss emotions can significantly influence your child's emotional development. Encouraging your child to express their feelings openly, without judgment, fosters a supportive and understanding environment.

Activities for Social Skills

1. **Emotion Cards:** Create cards that depict different emotions. Use these to discuss feelings, asking your child how they would feel in different scenarios or how others might feel.
2. **Role-Playing:** Engage in role-playing scenarios where your child can practice social interactions, such as making friends or solving conflicts. This helps them learn to navigate complex situations.
3. **Group Playdates:** Encourage social interaction with peers through playdates. Supervising group activities allows you to observe and guide your child's social behavior and interactions.
4. **Story Discussion:** After reading a story, discuss the characters' emotions and motivations. This encourages empathy and understanding of different perspectives.



Physical Development Milestones

GROSS AND FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Physical development is critical in the early years as children grow and learn. Gross motor skills involve large muscle groups and coordination, enabling activities like walking, running, and jumping. Fine motor skills involve smaller movements and coordination, crucial for tasks like drawing, writing, and manipulating small objects.

Supporting both gross and fine motor skills through various activities prepares your child for future academic tasks as well as daily life skills. Children develop at different rates, but providing a range of opportunities encourages overall growth.

Activities to Encourage Movement

1. **Obstacle Course:** Set up a simple obstacle course in your backyard or living room using cushions, boxes, and other safe objects. This encourages climbing, crawling, and balancing.
2. **Ball Games:** Play catch with a soft ball to improve hand-eye coordination. Encourage different types of throws and catches to develop skills.
3. **Art Projects:** Provide art supplies for drawing, coloring, and cutting to support fine motor development. Activities like finger painting allow for creative expression while working on hand skills.
4. **Dance and Movement Activities:** Engage in activities that involve music and movement like dance parties, which promote both gross motor skills and rhythmic coordination.

Academic Milestones

OVERVIEW OF KEY MILESTONES BY AGE

Understanding key developmental milestones helps parents support their child effectively. Here are some important milestones to consider:

- Ages 0-1:
 - Responds to names, makes eye contact, coos and babbles.
 - Enjoys exploring toys with hands and mouth.
- Ages 2-3:
 - Uses simple phrases, follows two-step directions, begins to recognize some letters.
 - Engages in parallel play and starts to imitate adults.
- Ages 4-5:
 - Understands basic story structure, knows some letters and sounds, and begins to count.
 - Develops friendships, shows interest in cooperative play.

Tools to Track Development

Use developmental checklists and milestone trackers to monitor your child's growth. Regular check-ins with health care providers can also provide valuable insights and ensure your child is on track. Discuss any concerns you may have with your pediatrician, who can offer additional resources and guidance

Resources for Teen Mothers

SUPPORT NETWORKS AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Connecting with other teen mothers can provide valuable support. Look for local support groups or parenting classes specifically geared toward teen parents. Many community organizations offer resources tailored to young mothers.

Educational Resources

Seek out libraries, community centers, and online platforms offering parenting information and educational materials. Websites like Zero to Three and PBS Parents provide excellent resources for child development



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EARLY ACADEMIC BONDS ARE VITAL



Conclusion

Supporting your child's development is a rewarding journey. Utilize the activities and resources in this guide to foster a nurturing environment for growth and learning. Engaging with your child not only aids in their development but also strengthens the bond you share as a mother and child.



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