



Parent Connections

FIRST CONNECTIONS – EARLY INTERVENTION IN ARKANSAS

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Diapering 101

Some children become very active during a diaper change. When they wiggle around or resist, it places them at danger of falling off the changing table and it makes it difficult for the adult to complete the routine. These tips might work to keep your child from wiggling all over the place so that you can get the job done!

Reduce distractions in the diapering area. A pet or others running around only makes him want to get up and join the fun.

Describe what you are doing in a fun way. You could say, “First we take off your shorts. Then I take off the wet diaper. . .” and so on. Or, if you’re feeling creative, try doing it on a song! You might sing, “This is the way we take off your diaper” (to the tune of “This is the way we wash the clothes”) or use some other bouncy tune.

Let your child help as much as possible. Ask your child to help such as “Can you hold your legs up high? Hold the diaper for Mommy?”

Use interesting distractions. Laugh and comment on these as you are diapering your child.

- You might play peek-a-boo or sing a favorite song
- Use a stuffed animal
- Use stickers - one on each of the child’s hands



Did You Know?

TV and other forms of video “screens” aren’t recommended for children under 2 years of age; instead, spend time playing together – because that’s how babies learn!

For children over 2, limit TV and “screen time” to no more than 2 hours of educational viewing per day.

Making Life Easier: Diapering

<p>1. Prepare your child for the diaper change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Use a transition warning (verbal, timer, count downs or count ups). ★ Provide choices (who, where, when). ★ Empathize with your child’s feelings. ★ Provide a transition object. ★ Use “First... Then...” statements. ★ Use step by step pictures. ★ Encourage your child to be a helper. 	<p>2. Change the diaper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Reduce distractions in the room. ★ Describe what you are doing in a fun way (e.g., sing, make up a rhyme). ★ Let your child help. ★ Use “First...Then” statements. ★ Use interesting distractions (toy, stickers, book, etc.). ★ Say “all done” to end the process. ★ Plan something your child and you will enjoy when finished.
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Celebrate your child’s successes along the way!



Dads Play an Important Role in Early Child Development

“Fathers have a powerful and positive impact upon the development and health of children.”

Infants who receive high levels of affection from their fathers (for example, babies whose fathers respond quickly to their cries and who play together) are more securely attached; that is, they can explore their environment comfortably when a parent is nearby and can readily accept comfort from their parent after a brief separation. Researchers watched dads interacting with their infants at three months and then assessed the same babies’ behavior at twelve months. They found that babies whose dads were more engaged at three months had fewer problems when assessed at twelve months.

However, research suggests that these benefits extend beyond “babyhood.” A number of studies show that children whose dads are involved in their care are more likely to be emotionally secure, be confident to explore their surroundings, and, as they grow older, have better social connections with peers. These children also are less likely to get in trouble at home, school, or in the neighborhood.

Dr. David Popenoe, a researcher on the impact of fathers and fatherhood on child development states, “Fathers have a direct impact on the well-being of their children. Fathers are far more than just 'second adults' in the home. Involved fathers bring positive

benefits to their children that no other person is as likely to bring.” And that may be true because dad’s “ways” are often very different than mom’s “ways.” Fathers spend a higher percentage of their one-on-one time with infants and toddlers playing than mothers do. These stimulating, playful interactions help very young children learn how to regulate their feelings and behavior. Rough-housing with dad, for example, can teach children how to deal with aggressive impulses and physical contact without losing control of their emotions. Because fathers often push achievement while mothers stress nurturing, dads tend to promote independence and an orientation to the outside world. As a result, children who grow up with involved fathers are more comfortable exploring the world around them and more likely to exhibit self-control and positive behavior.

Dr. Paul Ramchandani, one of the leaders of the research, said, “children whose fathers were more engaged had better outcomes.” These studies demonstrate the importance of sharing childrearing duties and allowing fathers some flexibility in parenting in a style that may be different from “mom’s ways.” In the case of separation or divorce, it’s also important to keep dads involved, for the benefit of the child.

Sources:

Rosenberg, Jeffrey and Wilcox, Bradford. “Importance of Fathers in the Healthy Development of Children.” Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, US Children’s Bureau. US Department of Health and Human Services. <<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/usermanuals/fatherhood/chaptertwo.cfm>>. 2006.

“Study: Loving Dads Play Significant Role in Early Child Development.” National Organization for Marriage. <<http://www.nomblog.com/26944/>>.18 Aug. 2012.



Simple Ways to Boost Your Child's Emotional and Social Development Every Day

At all ages:

- Give lots of warm physical contact and attention, this promotes a sense of security and well-being
- Be aware of his/her moods by reading their gestures, faces and sounds
- Respond when your child is upset and when your child is happy
- Read together and tell stories daily; choose books with humor so you will want to read them over and over
- Acknowledge desirable behavior often ("I like it when you play so well together" = TIME IN) NOTE: 5 to 10 "time-ins" for every time-out!
- Speak second languages if it is natural for you to do so



Young Infants:

- Talk or (sing) to your baby while holding, feeding, bathing, or playing
- Let your baby look at your face
- Respond to baby's gestures, faces and sounds
- Give babies colorful (safe) objects to look at, including books

and pictures

Older Infants:

- Copy her sounds and expressions
- Play peek-a-boo and play patty-cake
- Teach her to wave "bye-bye," shake her head "no" and "yes"
- Read books together - let baby point to characters, pat the book



Toddlers:

- Be encouraging and supportive, and set appropriate limits
- Be consistent; establishing routines for meals, naps and bedtime
- Make time to play daily
- Offer simple choices (Which book shall we read together?)
- Choose toys that encourage creativity (blocks, animals, books)
- Listen to and answer her questions
- Rhyme, sing and listen to music together – dance!
- Encourage drawing, building and creative play
- Introduce simple musical instruments (even wooden spoons and pots/pans work!)
- Create ways for your child to play with other children and to have out-of-home social experiences



How to Teach Your Child to Get Your Attention Appropriately

Brooke Brogle, Alyson Jiron, & Jill Giacomini

It is difficult to have a conversation with someone if you do not have their attention-this is true for both children and adults. The ability to successfully capture someone's attention is a fundamental social skill and provides the foundation for future success in social settings and relationships.

Children use a variety of ways to get attention and will often resort to techniques they find most effective, such as yelling or whining. For example, think about a child who wants to get Mom's attention when she is on the phone. He knows that if he continues to yell loudly, Mom will eventually pause her phone conversation and ask what is needed. If yelling and whining gets a child what he needs, he will continue to yell and whine until he learns a new way to get attention.

How can you change this pattern? Teach your child the way that you want him to get your attention (such as tapping you on the shoulder) and then reward him when that behavior occurs. When you take the time at home to build on the skills your child is learning at school, you reinforce these positive skills and create a solid social foundation for your child which will help to reduce challenging behaviors.

Behavior is meaningful and communicates a message. If a child doesn't have an appropriate way to communicate, he will often use challenging behavior (hitting, screaming, whining) to communicate his needs. If his needs get met after the challenging behavior, "it worked," so the behavior will continue because it was reinforced. When the challenging behavior no longer "works," your child will be forced to use a new behavior – but parents need to teach the appropriate behavior they'd like to see. When parents teach their child how to appropriately get attention, the child will be less likely use challenging behavior to communicate.

www.challengingbehavior.org

Try This at Home!

- ✓ Model the behavior you are teaching and do it often! If you need your child's attention, tap her on the shoulder, move to her eye level and begin your communication from there!
- ✓ Practice, practice, practice! Play with this new skill. Practice with both parents, siblings and friends. Your child can teach her grandparent or teddy bear how to tap on someone's shoulder to get their attention.
- ✓ Remind your child of your expectation. If you are on the computer and she whines or begins to cry for attention, remind her, "It looks like you need something. I will respond if you tap on my shoulder and ask me."
- ✓ Celebrate when your child displays this new skill. "Wow, you tapped me on the shoulder because you wanted some milk. I am super happy to get you some. What a great way to get my attention!"

