

VIRGINIA
INFANT & TODDLER SPECIALIST
N E T W O R K

“Achieving Excellence in Early Care”
www.va-itsnetwork.org



Creating Routines for Infants and Toddlers

Creating routines for infants and toddlers while at child care is essential for their overall development and well-being. A consistent and structured routine provides a sense of security, helps them feel more comfortable in their environment, and promotes healthy habits and learning opportunities. Here are some of the best ways to establish a routine for infants and toddlers at child care:

1. Set a Regular Schedule: Establishing a regular schedule helps infants and toddlers anticipate what comes next, providing them with a sense of predictability. Consistency is vital, so try to maintain the same daily schedule as much as possible. This includes consistent times for feeding, napping, playtime, and other activities.

2. Create a Comfortable Environment: Infants and toddlers thrive in safe, nurturing, and stimulating environments. Ensure the child care facility is clean, well-organized, and has age-appropriate toys, books, and materials. Designate specific areas for different activities such as sleeping, eating, playing, and diaper changing.

3. Follow Individualized Routines: While having a general routine for all infants and toddlers at child care is essential, it's equally important to recognize and accommodate each unique and individual need and preference. Some infants may require more frequent naps or feedings than others. Caregivers can tailor the routine to meet their specific needs by observing each child's cues and patterns.

4. Incorporate Transition Times: Transitioning between activities can be challenging for infants and toddlers. To ease this process, incorporate transition times into the daily routine. For example, before moving from playtime to naptime, engage in calming activities such as reading a story or singing a lullaby. This helps signal to the child that it's time to transition to the next activity.

5. Provide Nutritious Meals and Snacks: A well-balanced diet is crucial for the growth and development of infants and toddlers. Ensure that the child care provides nutritious meals and snacks that meet their dietary needs. Follow any specific dietary restrictions or preferences communicated by parents.

6. Encourage Active Play and Learning: Infants and toddlers learn through play, so it's essential to incorporate both structured and unstructured playtime into the daily routine. Provide age-appropriate toys, sensory materials, and opportunities for exploration. Engage in physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development activities.

7. Communicate with Parents: Regular communication with parents is vital in establishing a consistent child care routine for infants and toddlers. Please share information about their child's daily activities, including feeding times, nap times, and any notable milestones or concerns. This helps parents reinforce the routine at home and promotes a collaborative approach to child care.

8. Be Flexible: While routines are important, it's also essential to be flexible and adaptable to each child's needs. Infants and toddlers may have days when they deviate from the routine due to illness, teething, or other factors. Being responsive to their needs while maintaining a general structure will help create a nurturing environment.

By implementing these strategies, child care providers can establish a consistent and supportive routine that promotes the well-being and development of infants and toddlers.

References:

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) www.aap.org

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
www.naeyc.org



Early Childhood Mental Health Virginia (ECMHVA) is a statewide effort that aims to create, implement, and sustain an extensive and coordinated early childhood system of care for early childhood mental health, supporting children from birth to age six, as well as their families, caregivers, and providers. The Early Childhood Mental Health initiative works in collaboration with early childhood agencies and representation around the Commonwealth to identify opportunities to expand access to resources and services. Click [here](#) to learn more or sign up.

Upcoming Professional Development Opportunity

Save the Date!



Routines, Engaging interactions, Safe environments and Trusting relationships are all essential to ensure quality rest for babies and tots. These exciting professional institutes will focus on strategies caregivers and program leaders can use in creating peaceful moments for Virginia's infants and toddlers.

February 24 - Winchester
March 9 - Farmville
March 23 - Fredericksburg
April 20 - Williamsburg
May 4 - Roanoke

[Registration Coming Soon!](#)



Enhancing Emergent Literacy for Infants and Toddlers

1-2-3 READ! early literacy training is an interactive, practical training designed for teachers, caregivers, and directors who work with infants and toddlers, birth to 36 months, in a group setting.

January 20th - Charlottesville January 20th & 27th - Roanoke

Registration fee waived for VQB5 participants
Non-VQB5 participant is \$25.00
(Includes all training and materials)

The training is from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm.

Click [here](#) to register online now!

2024
vaaeyc
Annual Conference

March 14-16
Roanoke, VA



Celebrating Early Childhood Education Stars of Today and Tomorrow

This conference is your opportunity to join a group of educators who are dedicated to making a profound difference in the lives of our youngest learners. You'll leave with fresh ideas, a renewed sense of purpose, and a network of colleagues who share your passion.

Click [here](#) to register online now!

Did you know...?

The Virginia Infant & Toddler Specialist Network offers a variety of technical assistance services to infant and toddler child care providers in child care centers and family day homes to help support high-quality care. With the support of technical assistance together, we can:



- Strengthen and enhance your infant and toddler program
- Start or expand your infant and toddler program*
- Offer or enhance a breastfeeding area in your program*
- Integrate inclusion practices into your infant and toddler environments*
- Learn about best practices for the care and teaching of the infants and toddlers in your program

- Assist in planning and arranging environments, implementing curriculum, accessing resources, managing children's behaviors, and more

*Materials, resources, and incentives may be available to your program as part of the services provided

We are here to answer questions or assist in any way we can to help each program meet their unique needs. For questions or more information, please contact [Janet Yang](#), Technical Assistance Coordinator, at 757-378-3167.



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