

# Demystifying Developmental Moments

## Remember our “why” for including Developmental Moments

They support the Protective Factors of Family Wellness by:

1. (Promoting) Social and Emotional Competence
2. (Increasing ) Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Parents benefit by:

- Strengthening attachment and bonding
- Times to move away from the act of just day-to-day caretaking and into enjoying and being *with* each other.
- Focusing on baby as they are right at this moment
- Increasing communication and responsiveness
- Building enjoyment of parenting and a repertoire of fun!

Babies benefit by:

- Brain development
- Practicing gross and fine motor skills
- Enhanced sensory awareness
- Building emotional regulation
- Having fun!

## TIPS AND TRICKS

### Increase parent engagement

Developmental Movements aren't just a little break in the action...they ARE the action!

- At your first meeting when you explain the flow of your sessions, take some time to explain the concept of Developmental Moments: what they are, why we use them in session and how to use them at home.
- Tell parents they can expect a Developmental Moment time each week right after the break--and that you want them to join right in.
- Use your sense of humor and say that you don't want to be the only goofy one in the room! Appeal for some sympathy!

### Remember the 4 I's

- INTRODUCE—give a quick tip about what baby will gain
- INVITE—Parents need an invitation to join in. Give instruction about how to adapt an activity to fit a sleeping or fussy baby. This will ease their discomfort...and help them feel involved. Give the option to pass.  
Baby needs a gentle warning if things are going to change, if they are going to be picked up or laid down.

- INVOLVE—Model the activity using a baby doll or stuffy. Or ask to borrow one of the babies!
- INSPIRE—briefly describe how or when parents can include this activity at home during their days. (maybe sometimes ask the group for their ideas of how it might fit at their house)

## Planning

DMs fall into a continuum of highly planned activities with props at the ready... to spontaneous moments that draw from your own back pocket or memory...and in between. We encourage you to fill your pocket with both kinds!

- The DM may only take 5 minutes, but a little planning can make it easier to pull off! In fact, overplanning might ease some angst. You'll be ready for anything and can avoid feeling awkward or rushed. Just because it is on your list, it is ok if they don't all get used).
- Plan adaptations of each activity for the contingencies of baby moods—sleeping, awake, fussy.
- Repetition is important—parents need to learn the words, babies need the consistency.
- Develop a routine—adults and children like to know what to expect. For example, starting each week with a song/story could become their clue that break time is over and it's time to come together again.
- Include 2 or 3 things...keep it slow and not rushed.
- Keep the time short and sweet—model the parenting mantra: end on an “up.” Encourage parents to read and respect their child's emotional state. Use your judgement to know when it is time to stop and wind down.
- Find a flow. You may want to start with something that gets everyone's attention. Then move into something with a little action. End with something that brings the energy back into calm so that you can begin your topic discussion.
- “Read the room” and observe how babies and parents respond. Shift gears if needed.
- Developmental Moments make good mood changers. Have something simple in mind (like humming or swaying) that takes no planning or props. This only takes a minute and can calm parents as well as babies.

As you plan, remember that it is quite ok to use a cheat sheet! On the zoom call no one will see your list. But even when we return to in person, it is ok to have your list in front of you. It shows you prepared or are willing to try something new!

## **Choosing Activities**

It is not necessary to include all these ideas—use them to help develop a framework, try a new approach or figure out your own personal style.

- Just for fun, choose an activity that fits your topic of the day.
- Include an activity that appeals to one of our 5 senses.
- Include something using motor skills—fine or large.
- Include something that enhances communication between parent and child.
- Remember that parents love it when their baby gets to be highlighted.

## **Be Kind to Yourself and Model Imperfection**

- Keep your sense of humor! Lean in to awkwardness. Appeal to the group for help!
- Think you can't carry a tune? Most songs can easily be turned into a chant or even a rap!
- Forgot your prop? Parents of babies can certainly empathize!
- Activity flopped? Like in parenting, just acknowledge, shrug, laugh and move on...

## **Set yourself up for success**

- Have your own props and “emergency supplies” ready.
- But go easy on yourself! Don't let not having the right prop keep you from doing a Developmental Moment of some kind. Doing something simple is better than not doing anything at all!
- Help parents be ready. Remind parents ahead of time of anything to bring to the computer/have ready to participate. (bubbles, blanket, scarf—but keep it simple).
- If baby is sleeping, parents can grab a stuffy and do the activity that way.

## **Have realistic expectations--for yourself and for them**

Parents, as well as babies, have temperaments or personalities likely to show up at this time.

- Extroverts ready to jump into anything new. Or they may be chatting and need a clear sign when it's time to move from Break Time to Developmental Movements and Topic.
- Introverts may dislike anything showy. Shy people may be reluctant to talk or stand out. But they may be listening intently and remembering the words to every song or steps to every activity and do them with baby when they are home alone all week!
- Just like with children, you can set the stage, but you cannot control it.

Groups as a whole tend to have personalities, too. Some groups instantly find things in common and bond easily. Others have a harder time feeling comfortable together. And remember: new parents are TIRED and may just want to sit and listen.

## Resources:

Video on brain building and serve and return:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpiYNkkNmEo>

Hand in Brain graphic: <https://images.app.goo.gl/i5cns6yuAJ23v9K2A>

Research on importance of hearing words:

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/feb2014/the-word-gap>)

Lots of games to add to your repertoire and videos demonstrating: <https://pathways.org/growth-development/0-3-months/milestones/>

More activities described on cards:

[https://assets.ctfassets.net/khbu829tujdl/LyHni4h8ESCUGSOaGoWKw/e03dc7433989a2790a4560f0a52a4a1d/Vrom\\_Tips-Age\\_0-1-English-Low\\_Ink.pdf](https://assets.ctfassets.net/khbu829tujdl/LyHni4h8ESCUGSOaGoWKw/e03dc7433989a2790a4560f0a52a4a1d/Vrom_Tips-Age_0-1-English-Low_Ink.pdf)

Sign language video showing “diaper change”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbwgqkH7UxI8>

Sing language video showing “all done” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DBCnRoOcsQQ>

For more ideas, see the handout for parents: Everyday Developmental Moments.

For support and information about developmentally appropriate activities or best practices:

[www.westseattlepreschools.org](http://www.westseattlepreschools.org) or [ssccp@gmail.com](mailto:ssccp@gmail.com)

***Authors: Annie Garrett and Becky Huntley, parenting educators from South Seattle College Co-op Preschool and Parent Education Program for families with infants through kindergarten***

### **Baby Put Your Pants On**

Baby put your pants on, pants on, pants on,  
Baby put your pants on, 1 2 3.  
Baby put your shirt on, shirt on, shirt on,  
Baby put your shirt on, 1 2 3.  
Baby put your shoes on, shoes on, shoes on  
Baby put your shoes on, 1 2 3.  
Baby put your hat on, hat on, hat on  
Baby put your hat on 1 2 3.  
Now that you're all dressed, all dressed,  
all dressed,  
Now that you're all dressed, let's go play.

OR

Baby Put Your Pants On  
Baby put your pants on, pants on, pants on,  
Baby put your pants on, 1 2 3.  
Not on your head and, not on the floor  
Baby's gonna dance right out the door.

## **Teddy Bear**

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Turn Around  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Touch the Ground  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Show Your Shoe  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear That Will Do  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Go Upstairs  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Turn Off the Light  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Say Goodnight

## **Tick Tock**

Tick Tock Tick Tock  
I'm a little cuckoo clock  
Tick Tock Tick Tock  
Now it's one o'clock—Cuckoo  
(cuckoo number of times on the clock)

## **To quiet the mood: (gently sway and rub baby's back)**

Soft kitty, warm kitty covered in fur  
Soft kitty, warm kitty, purr purr purr

## **If you're happy and you know it (to foster EQ--emotional intelligence—name it and tame it!)**

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands  
If you're sad and you know it, cry a tear  
If you're mad and you know it, take a breath  
If you're scared and you know it, get a hug

*Authors: Annie Garrett and Becky Huntley, parenting educators from South Seattle College Co-op Preschool and Parent Education Program for families with infants through kindergarten*