CODMAN CURRICULUM FOR GROUP WELL-CHILD CARE

Adding a Trauma-Informed Lens to Group Medical Visits for Caregivers & Children



Lodman Square Health Center



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CODMAN CURRICULUM FOR GROUP WELL-CHILD CARE

Introduction

WHAT IS GROUP WELL-CHILD CARE?

Group Well-Child Care is an opportunity to care for children and their caregivers together during the exciting and often challenging first year of life. There are many advantages to group-based dyad care:

Longer visits – The group format broadens the interface between a provider team and patient, allowing for in-depth discussion of critical topics and observation of caregiver and child behavior and development.

Resources – Applying team facilitation, specifically using a case manager as a cofacilitator, allows for integrated access to social resources that often determine the capacity of a family to care for a new infant.

Active Learning – The group format allows time for interactive group activities using tangible teaching tools that help caregivers learn critical concepts.

Empowerment – Participatory facilitation that challenges the group to actively answer their own questions and jointly solve problems in an empowering process that builds the self-trust necessary to overcome the challenges of parenting.

Support – The normalizing and supportive environment of a group of families dealing with shared issues allows for meaningful implementation of a trauma-informed curriculum that candidly addresses toxic stress, childhood adversity, and child protection.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW TO START A GROUP?

This curriculum is a collection of facilitation activities that may be effectively layered with the activities, guidance and skills outlined in the CenteringParenting® curriculum to offer a trauma-informed approach to group well-child care. It assumes that the facilitator is comfortable with standard preventive well-child and postpartum care as well as group facilitation. The Centering® Healthcare Institute provides group prenatal (CenteringPregnancy®) and group well-child care (CenteringParenting®) curricula, patient facing materials and trainings with specific focus on group facilitation (www.centeringhealthcare.org).

Group visits can be chaotic and unpredictable and it is important to allow flexibility so that issues that are important to the group are addressed. However, these are medical visits, so the facilitator team should ensure that critical issues of caregiver-child safety and health are not missed. Balancing these needs is challenging but essential to effective group care. The medical visits are for caregivers and babies. Ideally, the same social support person would attend each group with caregiver and baby.

WHAT IS TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE?

A trauma- informed approach is a structure or framework of care that acknowledges and responds to the effects of trauma, as defined by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (https://www.samhsa.gov/nctic). Acknowledging and respecting an individual's past experiences is essential to providing care for young families. This curriculum seeks to support families who have experienced trauma and stresses to be the caregivers they want to be and also to support their child's resilience and maximum potential. In fostering secure attachment, stress mitigation, and protective play, these activities are designed to gently support caregivers and their relationships with their infants.

This curriculum was created to address the specific needs of the Codman Square community in Dorchester, MA as identified through community and patient needs assessment. Our particular challenges include poverty, violence, social isolation, depression, obesity, diabetes, access to healthcare, access to safe play, unplanned pregnancy, and preterm birth. The Codman Curriculum can be used freely by other health centers, but should be adjusted to meet the unique needs of each community served.

This is the first draft of a curriculum developed by a team of facilitators, co-facilitators, case managers, educators and providers at Codman Square Health Center with experience in group medical visits. The Vital Village Network has financially and conceptually supported the process of incorporating trauma-informed activities into the curriculum. This first draft was studied during a 3 month implementation period, focus group analysis, and an iterative, PDSA-style improvement cycle.





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OVERVIEW OF CODMAN CURRICULUM FOR GROUP WELL-CHILD CARE

VI	SIT	SESSION NAME	TARGET ISSUE	WARMUP
	1 Month	The Seed	Soothing & Safety	Introductions
ŕ	2 Month	Trust Through Touch	Physical Attachment & Serve and Return	Baby's Personality
*	3 Month	The Mirror	Emotional Attachment & Baby Learning	Parenting Tip
	4 Month	Flip Your Lid	Toxic Stress & Coping Mechanisms	Observations & "New Ingredients"
<u> </u>	5 Month	Healthy Lifestyles	Exercise & Eating	Flip Your Lid Reflections
	6 Month	Family Values	Reflective Parenting	Baby's Ingredients
Š	8 Month	Brain Building Blocks	Play	Found Objects
	10 Month	Building the House	Structure, Discipline & Understanding	Building the House
K ≞	12 Month	Birthday Party	Language Development & Parent Empowerment	Little Seed





ACTIVITY	TEACHING TANGIBLES	CLOSER	COMMUNITY RESOURCES
Five S's	Swaddle and thermometer	My child is like a seed.	Baby Café
Baby Massage	Massage Oil	l am a mother.	Family Nurturing Center
The Mirror	Mirror	I am a mirror for my child.	Boston Public Library
Flip Your Lid	Brain Key Chain	Hands	Parental Stress 24 Hour Hotline
Making Baby Food	Pedometer and Silicone food trays	Mom/Baby Exercise	HealthWorks Gym & Daily Table
Being a Parent is Proactive	Picture Frames	l am a special parent because	Healthy Baby/Healthy Child
Brain Building Blocks	Blocks	New Game	Integrated Behavioral Health Team
Understanding Your Child's Behavior	Board Books about Feelings	What have you learned?	Child Witness to Violence
One-Year Old Star	Birthday Presents	I hope for my child	Early Intervention

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ONE **S** MONTH VISIT

The Seed

Soothing and Safety

BIG PICTURE

This first group lays the foundation for the groups to come: both in the structure of what to expect from group visits, and also in introducing the seed metaphor. Their child, like a seed, contains all the ingredients necessary to grow into an amazing person. They, as new parents, also contain all the ingredients necessary to be great parents. Their job is to nurture the seed by observing and responding to his/her needs.

TEACHING TANGIBLE AND SETUP

Swaddlers, thermometers. Co-facilitator writes "My child is like a seed. He/she contains all the ingredients needed to become an incredible person!" on the board. Baby Café (lacation support team) should be in the room during individual assessments.



Photo by Echo Grid on Unsplash

INTRODUCTION/WARM UP

- The provider does 5-10 minute individual assessments with each family.
- Pull "groupable" questions that arise during individual assessments and have your cofacilitator write them on the board.^[1]
- Baby Café will provide lactation support and breastfeeding information while individual assessments occur.
- Parents/babies circle up around the playmat on the floor. Welcome everyone to group care and introduce co-facilitator/medical assistant and your roles.^[2]

HOUSEKEEPING

- Co-facilitator will then review confidentiality, and make sure everyone has signed forms.
- Co-facilitator will ask the group what they want their ground rules to be (respect, timeliness, no cell phones).
- Co-facilitator introduces group mom/baby care using seed metaphor.
 - "Your child is like a seed. He/she contains all the ingredients needed to become an incredible person."
 - Your mission is to nurture the seed by observing and responding to your baby. What do you think this means?
 - You are like a seed. You, as a new parent, contain all the ingredients necessary to become an incredible parent. When we went around the circle, you guys already noticed so many things about your babies that's the most important skill to have as a parent. Observe and respond!

ACTIVITY: SOOTHING

Have parents share tips with each other on ways to soothe a fussy baby.

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Address questions that arose during individual assessments. Always turn questions back to the group and allow group members to teach each other before you answer questions.

CLOSER

- Circle up and stand. Have everyone repeat this "My child is like a seed. He/she contains all the ingredients needed to become an incredible person!"
- [1] It's always a good idea to ask parents if it's ok to answer their question in the group setting "My guess is that many of the families here are trying to figure out how to teach their children to sleep. Would it be ok if we put "sleep" on the board and bring it up with the group?"
- [2] Remember that this could be their first experience with group care. Many will resist sitting on the floor, but it's important to set this expectation now. Sitting on the floor puts parents close to their babies and as they grow older will allow babies to explore.
- [3] This is a great chance to compliment parents and point out positive parenting for others to learn from.

TWO- **S** MONTH VISIT

Trust Through Touch Physical Attachment and Serve and Return

BIG PICTURE

This group hopes to help parents recognize the concept of attachment: that parents and children interact with each other and develop trust through "serve and return" activities. Parents will reflect how the child is learning trust and love through the parent's responsiveness, the foundation for all of their future relationships.

TEACHING TANGIBLE AND SETUP

Baby oil.

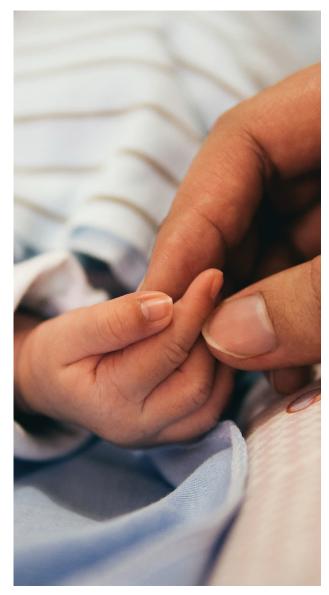


Photo by Aditya Romansa on Unsplash

WARM UP

- Have each mom go around and use one word to describe her baby's personality.^[4]
- Facilitator can show how what parents say reflects not only the child, but also our wishes and our expectations as parents.^[5]

ACTIVITY: BABY MASSAGE

- First, before starting the massage, think about how you (the parent) are feeling. Are you feeling rushed, hassled, tired, frustrated, open, content, sad? What are you feeling towards your baby?
- Baby massage is an extension of how you are feeling and sharing that with your baby. Some times are right for baby massage (when you are feeling open, not stressed, loving) and others are not (when you feel frustrated, rushed or hassled).
- Have each mom get their baby undressed down to the diaper (if awake).
- Start with baby's belly, then go to arms, hands, legs, feet. Try going slow, then fast. How does your baby respond?
- Point out moms that are communicating with their babies both verbally and nonverbally
- What is baby learning while you massage them? (comfort, trust, good touch).
- One of the most important skills to have as a parent is to reflect back to your baby, baby "serves" (she smiles, coos, claps) and you "return."^[6]
- What do you think of this? Have you noticed yourself/your child doing this?

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Address questions that arose during individual assessments. Always turn questions back to the group and allow group members to teach each other before you answer questions.

CLOSER

Have each mom go around and fill in the blank to the following phrase:

I am a _____ mother.

- [4] This is a chance to applaud families for being great observers. You can also bring back the seed metaphor from the first group.
- [5] This also is a time where you can urge families to think about the words that they are using to describe their kids. For example, if someone calls their child "nosy," nudge them to call the child "curious" or "observant" instead. This can spur a reflection about how each word has a different connotation and influence what a child aspires to be.
- [6] Point out dyads that are doing "serve and return" smiling, cooing back and forth, making similar facial expressions.

THRE-MONTH VISIT

The Mirror

Emotional Attachment and Baby Learning

BIG PICTURE

Children learn from their families. This group strives to bring intention to the idea that parents are mirrors for their children and that children learn from the "serve and return" interactions that adults have with them. Children model their behavior and words after their parents, and that they can feel the emotions and stresses of their parents.

TEACHING TANGIBLE AND SETUP

Baby mirrors.

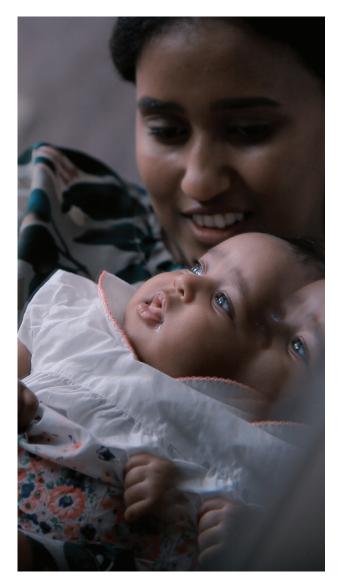


Photo by Gift Habeshaw on Unsplash

WARM UP

Have each mom share a parenting tip that they would give a new mom.^[7]

ACTIVITY: THE MIRROR

- Have each mom look at their baby for 30 seconds it will be tempting to talk during this time, but just allow them to be face-to-face with their child and see what happens.*
- Reflect back to them what you saw or heard during this time (cooing, giggling, talking, laughing, touching faces).
- Ask the moms the following questions:
 - How do you feel looking at your baby? (Good)
 - How does your baby feel?
 - Do you have memories of people looking at/talking with you like this?
 - What is your baby learning?
 - Where else does your baby learn these things? (Can TV do this?)^[8]
- Give each pair a mirror.
- Is your baby interested in the mirror? What is she looking at? What is she learning?
- Now look at yourself in the mirror. What do you see? What do you think your child sees when she looks in your face?
- "I am a mirror for my child." What does this mean?

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Address questions that arose during individual assessments. Always turn questions back to the group and allow group members to teach each other before you answer questions.

CLOSER

"I am a mirror for my child and I want him or her to see _____."

* The authors of this curriculum would like to acknowledge Marjorie S. Rosenthal, MD, MPH and Ada M. Fenick, MD at Yale University School of Medicine for inspiring this activity with their innovative ideas.

- [7] This is a great chance to reflect back to parents how much they have learned in such a short amount of time.
- [8] Often there is an uncomfortable discussion that comes in this session that babies are watching TV already, they like it, and parents like it too. It's important to let parents acknowledge these feelings and then challenge their own beliefs about why it may not be the best thing for their children. Does a TV teach interaction or relationships? What are alternatives – music, reading?

FOUR-MONTH VISIT

Flip Your Lid

Toxic Stress and Coping Mechanisms

BIG PICTURE

Dr. Dan Siegel and Mary Hartzell, authors of *Parenting from the Inside Out*, developed the Hand Model of the Brain that simply and accurately demonstrates what happens when stress causes a person to "flip their lid."^[9] Stress, particularly toxic stress, changes brain development and decreases neuronal connections. This activity strives to help parents recognize when they are stressed (when they "flip their lid"), what is toxic stress, how this can affect their children, and what they can do to protect their children (namely, continue to be responsive to the child).

TEACHING TANGIBLE AND SETUP

Brain stress ball. Watch the Dan Seigel video prior to the session to see how he describes the Hand Model of the Brain at http://bit.ly/1NdpOSf and "Flipping your Lid" at http://bit.ly/1DucqBZ

WARM UP

What have you observed about your child this month? How have they changed? Have you noticed any new ingredients?

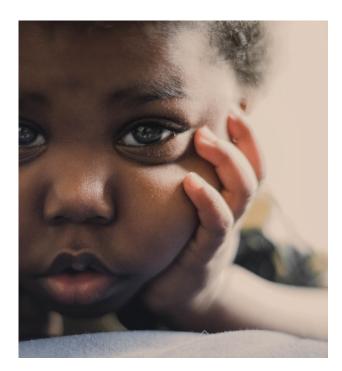


Photo by iam Se7en on Unsplash

ACTIVITY: FLIP YOUR LID^[10]

- Introduction: Today we are going to talk about stress, how it affects us and how it affects our kids. How it affects our brains and how it affects our kids' brains.
- Show the simple hand model of the brain: spinal cord, midbrain and frontal cortex.
 - Spinal cord (forearm and wrist): Controls breathing, heartbeat, coordinates sensation and movement of the body
 - Midbrain (thumb tucked under fingers): Controls fight or flight reflex, memories, emotions, "instinctual" responses, the "caveman" part of your brain
 - Frontal cortex (fingers): The only area that "thinks," controls adult reasoning, understanding, coordination, confidence, self-esteem. This part keeps developing until we are in our 20s and is the most important
- Flipping Your Lid (fingers go up, thumb is exposed) This is what happens when something or someone pushes your buttons and causes us to act more like "fight or flight."
 - What things lately have caused you to flip your lid?
 - What does it feel like to flip your lid?
 - What do you do to calm yourself down (use your frontal cortex)?
 - Sometimes we flip our lids more easily based on experiences we've had in the past
- With your kids, the same things can happen. And part of what we need to do as parents is to help them learn how to "unflip."
- Introduce the concept of toxic stress: stress that overwhelms the brain and normal coping, like child abuse, neglect, drug dependence, community violence, poverty, homelessness.
 - How does this type of stress affect kids? (Similar to having their lid flipped all the time, kids who experience toxic stress have more trouble unflipping)
 - How do you think that changes a child's brain development?
- What do we do to protect our kids?
 - Observe and respond to their needs
 - Love them, comfort them, spend time with them, play with them
 - Take care of ourselves so that we can take care of them
 - Teach them how to unflip

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Address questions that arose during individual assessments. Always turn questions back to the group and allow group members to teach each other before you answer questions.

CLOSER

- Come together in a circle. Look at your own hands. What story do they tell? How do you care for your hands? What have your hands seen? Touched? Worked?
- Look at your baby's hands. What story do they tell? What do you want these hands to know, to see, to do?
- Look at your neighbor's hands. What is her story?

[9] More resources at: http://drdansiegel.com/

[10] This group is more didactic than the others and welcoming ongoing discussion is very important.

FIVE- MONTH VISIT

Healthy Lifestyle Exercise and Eating

BIG PICTURE

Keep active! This group focuses on how parents can support healthy lifestyles even when their children are very young, including healthy foods and simple exercises. Parents are modeling a healthy lifestyle for their children. (This is yet another way that parents are mirrors).

TEACHING TANGIBLE AND SETUP

Pedometers and silicone food trays. The cofacilitator should have good baby foods like bananas, avocados and a baked (or microwaved/ cooled) sweet potato ready.



Photo by Mahdiar Mahmoodi on Unsplash

WARM UP

Have the moms answer the following questions: "When in the last month did you flip your lid? BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, what did you do to calm yourself down?"

ACTIVITY: MAKING BABY FOOD

- Have moms mash peas, boiled carrots, sweet potato, avocado and banana into baby food and feed it to their babies. Note to facilitator: If a baby doesn't "like" something, this is an opportunity to say "she didn't like it today. Make sure to re-introduce it again."
- Ask the moms the following questions:
 - What are the ways you get your child to eat? (Seated in chair, fewer distractions, eating with others, tries to feed self)
 - Does baby watch you eat? What do you think that's about?
 - With what foods do you worry about choking?
 - When do you worry about allergies?
 - What about bottles?

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Address questions that arose during individual assessments. Always turn questions back to the group and allow group members to teach each other before you answer questions.

CLOSER:

- Why is it hard for new moms to get exercise?
- What are things that you have heard about moms doing?
- Have all parents and babies stand up and walk around in a circle. Ask parents to come up with ideas and show them to each other. Examples may be:
 - Lunges holding baby
 - Walking backwards, shuffling, pushing baby in stroller/front pack
 - Do the twist (works obliques), holding baby brings whole new intensity
 - Spend tummy time together, lift legs up/do plank
 - FussBusters: high knees
- These exercises can be something fun and silly to do with your baby, and may even calm them down.



Family Values Reflective Parenting

BIG PICTURE

This group strives to facilitate a discussion that parents can be the parents that they want to be and can choose to repeat or ignore the parenting styles that they have seen in the past.

TEACHING TANGIBLE AND SETUP

Picture frames with "Family Values" template for families to fill out.



Photo by Gift Habeshaw on Unsplash

WARM UP

- Write down on a scrap piece of paper what amazing "ingredients" you have discovered about your child (aka what is your child doing now).
- The co-facilitator will put the paper in a container that will be passed around. Each participant will read a scrap.

ACTIVITY

Please refer to the CenteringParenting® Curriculum

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Address questions that arose during individual assessments. Always turn questions back to the group and allow group members to teach each other before you answer questions.

CLOSER

I am an amazing parent because _____.

EIGHT-MONTH VISIT

Brain Building Blocks _{Play}

BIG PICTURE

Play promotes healthy brain development. This group will encourage parents to keep playing with their children to stretch their minds and make "brain building blocks" for future learning success. Play also is protective, helping form their mind even when exposed to toxic stressors. The goal is for families to realize how many games they are already playing with their children and how important this play time is.

TEACHING TANGIBLE AND SETUP

Wooden blocks. Lay out only found objects for the children to play with this session – spoons, measuring cups, cloth napkins, tupperware. Draw empty pyramid on the board as drawn on the following page.



Photo by Markus Spiske on Unsplash

WARM UP

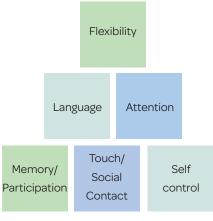
Babies will be playing with the found object toys on the playmat. Have parents go around and describe what their babies are doing and why they might be enjoying it.^[11]

ACTIVITY: BRAIN BUILDING BLOCKS

- What is a game that you play with your baby?
- Have each parent model the game/song/play with the baby and then everyone try it.
 - Compliment the parent on what they are doing (they get recognition for good parenting, and others want to do what they are doing to also be good parents)
 - As parents share their games, fill in the pyramid on a board as below and then fill in the "building blocks" with the "lessons" that a child is learning as below.

Remember that it is most powerful to use the examples that parents share. These may be possible examples of games (or to fill further group discussion):

- Lap games (pat-a-cake) memory, self control, language
- Hiding games (hide a toy under a cloth) memory, flexibility, attention
- Imitation games (waving together) touch, attention, language
- Showing baby a toy memory, language
- Role play (cleaning a surface) memory, self control
- Finger plays (the itsy-bitsy spider) language, attention, memory, flexibility
- Conversations (follow baby's attention and name objects) language, social contact



BRAIN BUILDING BLOCKS

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Address questions that arose during individual assessments. Always turn questions back to the group and allow group members to teach each other before you answer questions.

CLOSER

Go around the circle and have families talk about a new game that they learned today that they want to play with their child and why they think their child will enjoy it.

[11] This is another great chance to compliment parents on their observation skills.

TEN-

Building the House

Structure, Discipline and Understanding your Child

BIG PICTURE

A key to knowing how and when to discipline your child is understanding where they are coming from. The goal of this session is to have parents develop a game plan for understanding and dealing with tough behavior. They will also see that by creating clear structure for their children they can actually shape some of this behavior.

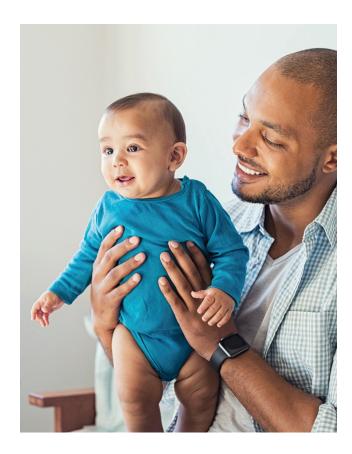
TEACHING TANGIBLE AND SETUP

The Feelings Book.

WARM UP

Part of how we protect our children is by giving them shelter. Creating structure in your child's life is like building a good strong house around them. Go around the circle.

- What are some of the things you do in your family to create this structure?
- Most families use rules and schedules to help them build this structure. What are some of the rules and/or schedules in your house?



- What does this structure have to do with discipline?
- What about physical punishment? Does it work?^[12]

"Building the house" helps shape your child's behavior! By knowing what the "rules" are, you are giving your child a chance to be "good," to please you. Your child is also less likely to feel stressed if they know what to expect.

You are the parent and are in control of the situation. Though it is hard work to create this structure and stick with it, shaping behavior now, will help prevent discipline problems in the future. The best way to discipline is not to need to discipline at all!

ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOR

- Ask parents to share some of their child's behaviors that they did not understand or that made them frustrated. Then ask the following questions ('NUF said mnemonic)
 - 1. Name it:
 - a) What is the behavior?
 - b) How does my child feel?
 - c) How do I feel?
 - d) Is it dangerous or just annoying?
 - 2. Understanding it:
 - a) Is there a basic need that needs to be met? (i.e. hunger, exhaustion, cold/heat, sickness, thirst, fear)
 - b) What is she communicating?
 - 3. Fix it:
 - a) Tell her you understand. Name the emotion for her. ("You feel frustrated")
 - b) Fix basic needs
 - c) If it's just an annoying behavior, it is worth disciplining? Try distraction
 - d) Is there a rule that she knows about that you can reinforce, or do you need to make a rule about this one. ("In our family, we do not jump on the couch" "We have a rule that we do not hit or bite in our house")

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Address questions that arose during individual assessments. Always turn questions back to the group and allow group members to teach each other before you answer questions.

CLOSER

What is something you have learned from the other parents in this group? For the next group: Have each parent record videos and take pictures of their baby communicating. They will share this with everyone during the twelve month visit/one year birthday celebration

[12] The American Academy of Pediatrics in their 1998 position statement outlines effective discipline. Corporal punishment has limited effectiveness and is potentially deleterious. Guidance for Effective Discipline. Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health. Pediatrics Apr 1998, 101 (4) 723-728;DOI: 10.1542/ peds.101.4.723.

TWELVE-MONTH VISIT

Birthday Party! Language Development and Parent Empowerment

BIG PICTURE

This group celebrates how the families and how the seeds have grown! It is an opportunity to share accomplishments in development and communication and discuss how we can continue to foster these skills as parents. It is also a chance to introduce language development to families.

TEACHING TANGIBLE AND SETUP

Birthday gifts – sippy cups, bibs, and books, birthday party supplies and meal to share.

WARM UP

Go around the circle and have each person answer the question: "What has your little seed grown into?"



Photo by freestocks.org on Unsplash

ACTIVITY: ONE YEAR OLD STAR

- Have each mom share the pictures and videos they took of their baby since the last visit with the group. Have the parent explain how this is an example of communication.
- Your children will be starting to use words soon. How do they learn to do this? How can you help them learn language (Speak more to baby – babies who hear more words and are spoken to more often develop better language skills. Read more to baby – at least one book with baby on your lap each day. Play more.)
- What is a word? How does your baby know that she used the "right" word? How can you show them this? Congratulate them for using a unique "word" by applauding, repeating it, and being affectionate (hug, pat on head, touch shoulder).
- What has your baby learned this year? What will they continue to learn?
- Celebrate the babies' one year birthdays and all the hard work the moms have accomplished!

ACTIVITY: REVIEW OF FAMILY VALUES

- Write up the values that were developed in Group #6.
- Are these still true for us? Which ones?
- Anything that we would add or change now as more experienced parents?

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD:

Address questions that arose during individual assessments. Always turn questions back to the group and allow group members to teach each other before you answer questions.

CLOSER:

- Review where families should go for their next well-child visit (back to their primary provider at 15 months).
- I hope for my child _____.