**Module 5 Handout: Play and Communication “Practical Tips” for Caregivers**

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| During or after breastfeeding, talk and sing to your baby. She is listening and will find comfort in your voice. |
| Imitate your baby’s sounds and gestures. He is communicating with you with his sounds and movements. When he coos, respond to him. Your baby needs to hear you talk. He will learn to talk by listening to others around him. |
| Your baby can start to recognize common words. When you see your child is no longer hungry, ask her, “All done?” If she shows you that she is still hungry, say, “More?” |
| Respond to your baby’s sounds and interests. Call your baby’s name and notice his response. |
| Your baby will start to enjoy different soft foods now, such as soft fruits or cooked vegetables, and needs diverse, colorful foods to meet her nutritional needs. Use words to describe the food and slowly she will understand new words. Name the different foods and parts of her body that she is using to eat, like her fingers and mouth. |
| Talk to your baby as you prepare his meal. Describe what is happening as you interact with him, such as “Here is your bowl” or “Dad cooked you potatoes.” Ask him questions, “Do you want eggs?” Give him time to respond with gestures such as pointing or sounds before you provide a verbal answer. |
| As you feed your child, describe the colors and textures of her food. Encourage her to speak by asking her the name or the color of the food she is eating. Point and tell her the names of the foods after she has had a chance to try and answer you! |
| Sing with your child. Start a song and let him sing parts that he knows. Over time, he can sing more and more himself as he learns more words, and you can practice taking turns. |
| Children learn to love stories when they read together with their parents every day. Ask her to point to different people and animals in a book, magazine, or poster. Praise her for finding the animals and objects! |
| Slowly move colorful objects for your baby to see and reach for. Watch his eyes move side to side as he follows the object. |
| Place your baby on her tummy with a colorful object out in front of her. Watch her reach for it and praise her when she picks it up! She learns by putting objects in her mouth so make sure the object is clean, not sharp, and not too small that she could swallow it. |
| As you introduce new foods for your baby, he is learning new textures and tastes. Encourage him when he tries new foods! Having diverse and colorful foods is important. |
| Give your baby clean, safe household objects to pick up, touch, feel, bang, and explore. Examples of simple toys to play with include small containers or a pot with a spoon. |
| Draw or make simple picture books to develop your baby’s curiosity and help her learn new things. |
| During mealtimes, give your baby small finger foods and encourage him to try new, healthy foods. He is starting to learn how to pick up things with his fingers and chew. He will often make a mess and that is okay! He is learning to feed himself and exploring different types of foods! |
| Play games like “peekaboo” with your baby. While she is looking at you, cover your face with hands or fabric. Say, “Where is Daddy?” Open hands and say, “Boo! Here I am!” Laugh with her as she sees you! She is starting to learn that you do not disappear when she does not see you. |
| Play with your child and encourage him to try harder tasks. Encourage him to stack objects, knock them over, and start again. Give him more objects to stack. Help him if he gets stuck! |
| Encourage your child’s imagination using sock puppets. Make up a story using the puppets. |