

Working with babies

Every interaction with a baby counts, so it is important that if you care for babies you truly understand the positive impact you can have. See our top tips for working with babies.

Stimulating environment

Practitioners can support healthy brain development in babies by providing a stimulating environment. A newborn's brain immediately begins to form trillions of connections between neurons that enable the baby to see, hear, smell and learn. The practitioner's role is vital in helping these connections to form by providing babies with exciting and interesting experiences.



Interests

Children's unique interests are central to tuning them in to learning. It is important to observe children's interests and respond to accordingly as this will help to support and extend their learning and development. Plan learning activities which support an individual child's interests rather than offering general activities for all children. Effective observation and assessment will help you to plan correctly for individual needs.

Settling-in period

The settling-in period is essential in helping babies to form attachments and positive relationships with their main carers in nursery. Having a 'buddy system' in place means that if the child's main carer is absent, the baby has another person with whom they feel safe and secure.

Language development

Language development is crucial for babies and every opportunity to talk to babies should be taken. Examples include singing songs and rhymes during care routines such as nappy changes, commenting on what you are doing as you move around the room and responding to babies' gurgles, sounds, gestures and babbles to develop the 'serve and return' of conversation.

Learning through experiences

From birth, children learn through experiences in their everyday environment. The opportunity to learn through experimentation and exploration is important for babies to prepare for more formal learning later. As soon as babies can sit comfortably and can grasp and handle objects, they can be given treasure baskets to play with. Babies gain rich, sensory experiences through mouthing and handling the objects that they select.

Find out more: Contact our training team on 01484 407070 or email training@ndna.org.uk