

Infant and Toddler Development and Responsive Program Planning

A Relationship-Based Approach

Fourth Edition



Donna S. Wittmer

Sandra H. Petersen

 Pearson



INFANT AND TODDLER DEVELOPMENT AND RESPONSIVE PROGRAM PLANNING

A Relationship-Based Approach

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ZERO TO THREE: The National Center for
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Student Edition

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**We would like to dedicate the fourth edition to our husbands
and children who support our work continuously and wholeheartedly
and to our grandchildren who teach us each day what it is like to be a child.
We appreciate them more than words can say.**

**Donna Wittmer
Sandy Petersen**

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Preface



This new edition of a comprehensive, applied text not only covers but *celebrates* infant and toddler development from birth through age 36 months, curriculum and program planning, and guidance using a relationship-based model. In addition, it focuses on the importance of families' and teachers' relationships and responsiveness in interactions with children; the latest developmental research; an emphasis on child-centered planning; strong coverage of infants and toddlers with special needs; and an emphasis on the effects of culture, families, and quality programs on infant-toddler development and interactions. It is research based and written so that the information is accessible and highly motivating to a wide range of readers.

What Is a Relationship-Based Approach?

Infants and toddlers have emotional and social needs to feel safe, valued, loved, and appreciated for their individuality and to be deeply connected with their family, culture, important adults, and peers. Supportive and positive relationships meet these needs and create the environment in which development proceeds.

Infant and Toddler Development and Responsive Program Planning uses a relationship-based model as a framework for understanding how infants and toddlers grow and learn with the support of their families and teachers. A relationship-based model respects the effects of an individual child's characteristics and the environment on the quality of the child's relationships. These relationships then become the filter and the catalyst for children's sense of well-being and development. As you use the relationship-based model to discover the importance of the infant and toddler years, we hope that you will gain a sense of enthusiasm and excitement about the influence that infant and toddler professionals can have on the quality of experiences and programs for young children and their families.

What This Book Provides for Our Readers

Our text provides a foundation in how infants and toddlers develop, in typical and atypical ways, and in program planning. See a detailed description on the next page.

Why and How of Developmental Practice

We present all aspects of development within the context of brain development and the foundational structure of emotional development and early relationships. We want students to understand *why*, according to the science of child development, certain practices support or hinder an infant's or toddler's optimal learning—and *how* to provide responsive, high-quality programs. This book integrates theory, research, and practice in usable language for teachers.

Program Planning

In addition to including developmental content, it also uniquely includes program planning, which highlights the following components:

- **D**eveloping the foundation of a program,
- **T**he teacher's roles,
- **T**he importance of relationships with families and how to provide culturally sensitive care,
- **A** responsive planning process,
- **C**onducting sensitive transitions and routines,
- **C**reating responsive and relationship-based environments,
- **P**roviding responsive experiences and opportunities for children, and
- **A** relationship-based approach to guidance.

An Emphasis on Culture and Children with Disabilities

To fully respect the impact of culture on early development, information on this and on the importance of inclusion of children with disabilities in early care and learning programs is included throughout the book. These topics are presented as they relate to the major content of each chapter, such as how disabilities may affect learning or how people from different cultures approach learning. Many of the scenarios in boxes are about children who develop atypically as well as on a more typical trajectory.

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SPECIAL PEDAGOGICAL FEATURES

Other useful pedagogical features in this text include the following:

- **Strategies to Support:** At the end of each development chapter, a Strategies to Support box summarizes specific strategies for teachers and other adults that facilitate the child's development in that domain.
- **Observation and planning forms** for individuals and groups in Chapters 12, 13, and Appendix D.
- Each development chapter presents a comprehensive chart, **Developmental Trends and Responsive Interactions**, which describes the capacities of the child as well as developmental milestones. It includes examples of development to help students connect theory with practice; lists teacher or parent interaction strategies to support development and learning; and provides a list of toys, materials, equipment, and other environmental supports that enhance development and learning. These tables also appear in Spanish in Appendix C.

CULTURE CLOSE UP

Ms. Katika ran a quiet home family care, offering a rich assortment of experiences. Her assistant Patty loved working there—except for one thing. For example, 2-year-old Rosie chose a tub of large pegs and a board to stick them into. Ms. Katika at first observed and then encouraged her. She gently but firmly kept Rosie there until all 10 pegs were in. Her East Indian belief included building a strong work ethic. Patty believed infants and toddlers should be free to explore. What do you believe and why?

- **Culture Close Up:** Readers who care about infants and toddlers will experience close-up experiences with cultural and family beliefs and goals concerning how infants and toddlers are cared for and how they learn. This edition includes new Culture Close Up features that identify a real-life cultural opportunity that infant and toddler professionals encountered in their work with coworkers, families, and communities. The Culture Close Up includes creative thinking that contributes to relationship building and culturally sensitive practice and usually includes an inquiry that leads to group problem solving.

Other learning features:

- **Reflections and Resources for the Reader** at the end of each chapter provide follow-up questions and reinforcing material to correspond with the chapter's content. Relevant Web links are provided as well.
- **Vignettes** are woven throughout the chapters to illustrate how theories and concepts look in real settings where infants and toddlers learn and develop.
- **Glossary terms** are defined in the margin of the page where the term is used.
- **Quotes** from a variety of early childhood education and child development authors are highlighted throughout the text to illuminate specific points of interest.
- A complete **Summary** at the end of each chapter highlights the major points of that chapter.

Organization

Chapters 1 through 3 set the stage by focusing on early experiences, family relationships, and theoretical perspectives. Chapter 1 describes the current status of the infant and toddler field. Powerful research informs us that the early years matter. Science is establishing that the child's attitudes, knowledge, and skills developed during the first 3 years provide a foundation for a lifetime of learning and loving. Families, as the primary influence on their child's development, build this foundation, and the factors that influence how families function are explored in Chapter 2. Infant and toddler professionals also have a strong influence on whether babies thrive, and it is important that teachers build their practice on knowledge of theoretical perspectives. In Chapter 3, the theories that guide teachers to become purposeful about their work, understand how infants and toddlers develop, know what they need, and appreciate how they learn are described. The observation and documentation strategies highlighted in Chapter 4, provide methods for teachers to learn about children—how they develop and think and what they need to thrive.

The second section of this book describes the remarkable learning and development of children in the prenatal period (Chapter 5), and in the emotional (Chapter 6), social (Chapter 7), cognitive (Chapter 8), language (Chapter 9), and physical or motor (Chapter 10) domains. Each domain of learning and development is explored on several levels that relate to the relationship-based model presented in the first chapter. We describe the capacities that each child brings to that domain and then explore individual attributes such as gender or temperament. Early disabling conditions and intervention strategies are included in "Children with Special Needs." The development of the child within his or her family, culture, and an infant and toddler program is emphasized, along with strategies for supporting that aspect of development. At the end of these chapters, we describe components of programs that support and enhance the development of infants, toddlers, and their families.

The third section of the book (Chapters 11 through 16) takes you, the infant and toddler teacher, into the world of responsive program planning that happens day to day, the relationship way. Equipped with the knowledge of the importance of the early years, theoretical perspectives, and the impressive development of infants and toddlers, you will learn how to plan a program that meets their needs

and supports them as they learn. This process includes *respecting* the child's experience, *reflecting* on his or her intentions and your own reactions, and *relating* to the child through your responsive interactions.

Nurturing and responsiveness are key elements of being an infant and toddler professional, and you will learn ways to promote the emotional development of young children within a program setting. With an emphasis on responsive interactions and relationships, you will discover how to set up an enriched environment full of learning opportunities (Chapter 13). The guidance strategies recommended (Chapter 14) respect the child's culture and individuality, require reflection on the part of the professional, and build infants' and toddlers' capacity to be in constructive relationships with others. Because programs include children with disabilities as well as children with diverse interests, needs, and abilities, Chapter 15 discusses how to individualize programs for children with special needs and how to work with the early intervention system.

The quest for quality experiences for very young children leads us to focus on what it means to be a professional who works with infants, toddlers, and their families. Chapter 16 describes the professional's journey toward developing an identity as an infant and toddler professional; becoming reflective; creating and nurturing relationships for professional development; and advocating for teachers, children, families, programs, and the community to move the profession forward.

We hope this book inspires you to promote the well-being, competence, and quality of life for infants and toddlers and their families. We also hope that it is the beginning of a new or renewed journey to develop a community of caring that recognizes the importance of the infant and toddler years. Infants and toddlers are depending on it.

Instructor Resources

The following ancillaries can be downloaded from www.pearsonhighered.com by instructors who adopt this text. Click on "Educators" and then "Download Instructor Resources."

Instructor's Resource Manual: An extensive *Instructor's Resource Manual* includes learning objectives, a multitude of active learning strategies, ideas for using the videos embedded in the text, and resources such as videos, DVDs, articles, and books to accompany each chapter of the text.

Test Bank: The Test Bank contains multiple-choice and essay items for every chapter.

PowerPoint Slides: These slides cover the major points and strategies of each chapter.

Test Generator Software: Known as TestGen, this test-generator software permits instructors to create and customize exams.

Course Management: The assessment items in the Test Bank are available in a variety of learning management system formats.

Acknowledgments

No book is written without affecting the lives of the friends and families of the authors. We especially want to thank our husbands, children, and sons-in-law for their never-ending support and encouragement. They, and our grandchildren, provide a secure and joyous base from which to explore this field.

We have shared numerous professional and personal experiences, and we have been influenced by many of the same individuals and programs. Together, we gratefully acknowledge and thank Dr. Ron Lally and Dr. Peter Mangione for their mentorship, friendship, and untiring leadership in their efforts to improve the quality of early care and learning programs for young children. Because they embrace their Fellows as family, we thank everyone at ZERO TO THREE who has led to the promotion of relationship-based practice. These people have deepened our understanding of the infant family field and have been a constant source of support for us.

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We would also like to thank Carla Mestas, who took many of the excellent photos in the book that represent relationship-based care and education. We would like to thank Janelle, a wonderful family child care provider and all of the parents and teachers who provided the photographs of themselves and beautiful children throughout this text.

We would like to say a special thank you to Dr. Alice Honig, professor emeritus at Syracuse University, and a mentor and friend of Donna's since graduate school, for her continuous warm support and her infinite wisdom about infants and toddlers. For their influence on our visions of quality for infants, toddlers, and families, we also offer our gratitude and affection to Rose Bromwich, Jeree Pawl, Judith Pekarsky, Lillian Sugarman, Judie Jerrald, and Tammy Mann.

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The Importance of the Infant and Toddler Years: A Relationship-Based Approach

LEARNING OUTCOMES

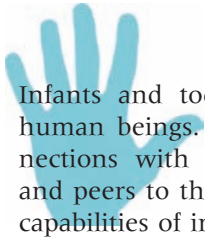
After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- Explain the importance of the prenatal, infancy, and toddler periods, including how infants and toddlers learn and how adults can support their learning and development
- Define a relationship-based model of thinking about children's development and programs for infants and toddlers and describe why it is important
- Describe the programs that serve infants, toddlers, and families, the importance of knowledgeable professionals, and how to apply the relationship-based approach



Pearson Education

It is easier to build a child than to rebuild an adult. (Author unknown)



Infants and toddlers are delightful and engaging human beings. They need healthy emotional connections with their responsive families, teachers, and peers to thrive. In this book we emphasize the capabilities of infants and toddlers to learn. We also

emphasize how sensitive interactions and relationships influence infants' and toddlers' well-being.

Who are we talking about when we use terms like *infants* and *toddlers*?

The word infant derives from Latin words meaning “not yet speaking.” It emphasizes what the child cannot do and reflects the baby’s total dependence on adults. The word toddler, however, demonstrates our change in perspective, for it focuses on the child’s increasing mobility and burgeoning independence. (Kutner)

The general term *infants and toddlers* refers to children from birth to 36 months of age. An **infant** is a baby from birth to approximately 12 months of age. From age 12 to 36 months, infants become **toddlers**, walking and even running in a straight-legged manner that causes them to toddle—sometimes wobble, weave, and bobble—as their physical and mental abilities develop at lightning speed. At times we may refer to young toddlers from 12 to 18 months of age and older toddlers who are 18 to 36 months of age. In this textbook, the terms *babies*, *infants and toddlers*, and *infancy* are used to refer to children from birth to age 3. **Prenatal** development occurs prior to birth. From the prenatal period to age 3, babies grow from helpless dependency to children with a rich collection of relationships, skills, attitudes, and behaviors.

Who are the professionals who work with infants, toddlers, and their families? We use the term **infant and toddler professional** to refer to the broad range of specialists who teach or administer child learning and development programs, which include *center infant and toddler programs* and *family (home) child care programs*. *Infant and toddler professionals* also refers to professionals who support families in the care and education of their children through home visits, early intervention, and family support programs. These types of programs are defined and discussed later in the chapter and text.

The term **teacher** refers to a professional who has received specialized training to work with young children individually and in groups. He or she is in a position of responsibility with infants and toddlers in a classroom or home setting. We have chosen to use the word *teacher* rather than the more commonly used term *caregiver* because of the mistaken notion that caregivers give care but do not support children’s education. The reality is that with infants and toddlers, *teaching* is

- taking care of infants’ and toddlers’ physical needs,
- interacting with them in responsive ways that meet their emotional and social needs and facilitate their development,
- setting up an environment that promotes learning in all domains, and
- working closely with the families of the children to build trusting relationships with them.

The term *teacher* is *not* used in this book for someone who imparts knowledge, but rather someone who provides caring, sensitive interactions and opportunities that support children’s learning. These interactions and opportunities build on children’s interests, strengths, and needs.

In this book when the term **caregiver** is used, it is in the context of any adult who takes care of and cares about young children. Caregivers include parents, teachers, grandparents, and others.

Our goal for this book is that you gain an appreciation for how vitally important the prenatal period and the first 3 years of life are. Our hope is that you will become knowledgeable about and gain a passion for promoting the well-being, competence, good developmental outcomes, and quality of life of infants and toddlers and their families. *Well-being* refers to “how a child feels and thinks about him- or herself and the joy and satisfaction that the child experiences in regard to his or her relationships and accomplishments” (1, p. 26). *Competence* refers to how effectively the child adjusts to day-to-day changes—how adaptable and flexible a child is. This is the outward manifestation of “*good developmental outcomes*” (p. 26, italics added). *Developmental outcomes* include the increasing abilities in learning, language, motor, emotional, and social skills. *Quality of life* refers to the child’s feelings about the value, worth, living conditions, and relationships that he or she experiences. We hope that your enthusiasm and excitement about these four goals will grow and guide you in your interactions with, beliefs about, and support for infants and toddlers.

We promote a relationship-based model that fosters infants’ and toddlers’ optimal **mental health** in the context of the children’s family, culture, community, and world. When toddlers reach age 3, they will be mentally healthy if they

- feel competent and confident,
- enjoy intimate and caring relationships,
- feel safe,
- have basic trust in others,
- regulate and express emotions in healthy ways,
- communicate and are understood,
- feel valued for their unique personalities,
- have the energy and curiosity to learn, and
- enjoy excellent health and nutrition.

The Importance of the Early Years

Recent science of brain development shows that experiences provided by parents and other early childhood caregivers have a greater influence over a child’s positive self-identity, social development, and learning potential than any later interactions with classroom teachers or university professors. (Lally)

The new discoveries on the importance of the early years are exciting. We know now how much infants and toddlers are learning prenatally and through the first 3 years of life. The experiences that they have in the early years influence how well they grow, develop, and learn. The early years have a long-lasting effect on who the infant and toddler is and will become. Infants’ and toddlers’ early experiences will influence their ability to learn, feelings of self-worth, sense of competence, and capacity to love and care for others.

Caring adults are absolutely crucial for young children’s optimal development.

Some infants and toddlers are healthy, have enough to eat, feel safe and loved, are talked to in responsive ways, and feel like valued members of their families and cultures. Sadly, other infants and toddlers are hungry, fearful, surrounded by violence, or abused and neglected. Do these early experiences make a difference? Yes, without a doubt. *No other stage of human development requires as much learning and results in as many changes as the first 3 years of life.*

Early childhood is both the most critical and the most vulnerable time in any child's development. (Brazelton & Greenspan)

Parents and professionals are learning more each day about how the kinds of environments in which an infant or toddler lives has a strong and lasting influence on that child's development.

Sammy, age 15 months, opens his eyes after a nap and cries out for his mother. As she comes to the side of the crib, she says soothingly, "Hello, you're awake? How are you feeling?" He wiggles around and then turns over and gradually stands up to see her better. His face relaxes and he smiles as she asks, "Are you ready to get out of your crib?" He answers by reaching up with his hands, getting ready for her to reach in the crib and pick him up.

In this short but important interaction, Sammy is learning that he is important enough to be responded to quickly, that he can make things happen in this world, and that adults can be trusted to meet his needs most of the time. He is learning about who he is, how to be a generous partner in a relationship, and important concepts about the world in which he was born. These are the most important things for him to be learning at this time in his life, and these lessons will serve him well in years to come. If Sammy consistently receives this kind of responsive care, he will continue to thrive.

The infancy years do matter—and you can make a difference in promoting the health, wellness, quality of life, and happiness of children and families in these important years of development. Working with infants and toddlers is definitely not just babysitting! The work of parenting, caring for, and educating young children from birth to age 3, during this time of rapid growth and development, is among the most important work that exists.



The importance of the first 3 years of life cannot be disputed.

Brains Are Building—Now Is the Time

It is easier to build a child than to rebuild an adult. (Author unknown)

A ray of sunlight dances across 6-month-old Tamara's line of vision. Her dad talks warmly to her about the bright light, her eyes, and what she is seeing. We can't see inside of Tamara's head as new signals race along neural pathways in her brain. If we look closely, though, we can see it in her eyes, as they show curiosity, wonder, and joy.

In another home, the stresses of life have caused Jo's parents to reach the end of their coping skills. As Jo, barely 1-year-old, reaches for a forbidden cookie, her hands are slapped hard, as they are, frequently. We can't see how hormones of fear surge in her brain, and how development is hindered by the constant fear and vigilance that Jo must maintain to protect herself, but if we look closely, we can see it in her eyes, as they show sadness, panic, anger, and pain.

The discoveries about the brain development of Tamara, Jo, and other infants and toddlers have been remarkable. This knowledge has influenced parents' and professionals' beliefs about the importance of the early years. For Tamara everyday experiences evoke a healthy bath of hormones in her brain, helping build strong circuitry and creating a platform for learning. For Jo a bath of harmful, stress-induced hormones bathe her brain, which is being built to be vigilant to danger rather than other information around her.

As a mom, dad, or teacher talks to a baby, a song is sung, or the baby is positioned on the parent's body where he can see the playing dog, the baby reacts to these events, taking in information, processing it, and storing it. The synapses and the pathways formed actively create a web of learning in the brain. This is why early responsive experiences are so crucial: Those synapses that have been activated many times by virtue of repeated early experience tend to become permanent to ensure optimal emotional, social, language, and thinking development. The synapses that aren't activated disappear (2).

*There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future in.
(Graham Greene)*

Our understanding of **windows of opportunity** has made a difference in how we view the importance of the early years. There are windows of opportunity for learning that nature seems to fling open. These windows of opportunity are periods in the development of the brain when specific types of learning take place. Later, like windows stuck with age, they are more difficult to open and use. For example, the learning window for language is from birth to 10 years. However, circuits in the auditory section of the brain are wired by age 1, and the more words used in meaningful ways that a child hears by age 2, the larger her vocabulary will grow. Early-life windows of opportunity have been discovered for vision, hearing, math and logic, cognition, problem solving, and emotional development.

Now is the time to reduce infants' and toddlers' stress levels. The experiences that a child has can affect how the brain is structured. Scientists know that **toxic stress** changes the architecture of the child's brain and other organ systems and causes impairment. Toxic stress increases the risk for children (even into adulthood) to experience stress-related diseases and even impaired thinking abilities. Strong, positive adult-child relationships can buffer the effects of toxic stress on the child (3, 4). You will read more about the effects of stress in later chapters.

We must remember, however, that all is not lost if the infant, toddler, or preschooler has a less than optimal start. Many competent adults have overcome difficult and challenging starts in life. The human brain has a significant capacity to change, but timing is essential. Time and effort are often required to help older children or adults compensate for negative and damaging experiences in their lives. For example, a child whose world has been mostly silent during the first 2 years of life because of a hearing loss or lack of responsive language talk with an adult will likely be delayed in language development. This child will need intensive support to learn how to use language to communicate in a variety of ways. In the future, brain-imaging techniques may help unravel the mysteries of when **sensitive periods** occur and how intervention can remediate losses (5).

The brain power developed during the first 3 years is a foundation for the child to build on for learning and loving, just as a house must have a strong foundation to continue standing. Will the foundation be resilient and sturdy, upon which one can build solidly, or will the foundation crumble easily under the weight of future challenging times—the emotional windstorms, sleet, hail, and drought that may occur in a person's life? The exciting research on brain development in the early years has led to a better understanding of human development and the importance of the first 3 years of life. You will read much more about this exciting research in Chapter 5 of this book.

They Are Competent Learners in the Early Years

While you have been reading this, a newborn baby has opened her eyes for the first time and sensed the closeness of her mother gazing lovingly into her eyes, and a toddler, seeking nurturing, has reached up for his father's hand. In this moment, a young toddler is learning to walk, falling down every 5 seconds but quickly getting up to master the task.

Infants and toddlers are learning each moment of each day. We know that

- learning begins before the baby is born.
- learning is rapid and cumulative in the first 3 years—faster than at any other time in a person's life.
- learning prenatally and in the first 3 years of life provides the foundation for all later learning.
- early experience is built into our bodies (e.g. too much stress can create illness and loving relationships can create health).
- brain growth in the first 3 years determines how the brain is structured and affects all learning (6).

Infants and toddlers truly are remarkable learners. You will learn more about their amazing capabilities to learn in the chapters on emotional, social, cognitive, language, and physical development. Learning is also shaped by both genetics and the environment, children's active learning abilities, their ability to discern patterns, and their ability to learn through social interactions.

Learning Is Shaped by a Dynamic Interaction Between Genetics and the Environment

The impact of a child's experiences is dramatic and specific. It has often been asked which has more effect on a child's development: nature (genetic influences on growth and development) or nurture (environment, experiences, and educational influences on growth and development). This is no longer a controversy in the early childhood field. There is a complex interplay between these two in the development of infants and toddlers. Both play their parts in shaping whom the child will become. Genes provide the blueprint for learning and development. For example, we are genetically programmed to learn and use language. However, we need experiences with language for that learning to happen. When children experience rich language environments, their brain grows and is prepared for further language learning. When children don't hear as many words or aren't involved in infant and toddler "conversations," their brain is not as prepared for later learning. Experience makes the difference!

Experience actually affects whether some genes will be activated, as we know from the new science of **epigenetics** (7, 8).

Children Contribute to Their Own Development Through Active Exploration

Infants and toddlers don't need lessons to learn to walk, or drill practice to learn to talk. Rather, babies desire to walk and talk; they practice on their own and with responsive peers and adults. Infants and toddlers act on their environment; they put objects in containers to learn where they go. They shake, bang, roll, and stack objects to see what will happen. They make all kinds of funny sounds to get a response from a laughing sibling. They have goals, such as getting a favorite adult to look at them or opening a door. They experiment with different strategies to make these events happen. When all is going well, infants and toddlers are curious, energetic, and motivated to experiment and problem-solve. They are communication partners who need to take a turn in a conversation, even if the communication turn is a sneeze or a soft cooing sound. When given the opportunity (and this is how they learn best), they pursue their interests with adults who keep them safe, talk to them, nurture them, and support their learning. They are *motivated* to learn about themselves, others, and the world in which they live.

Children's thinking is "astonishingly competent, active, and insightful from a very early age" (Thompson)

Children Discern Patterns

Infants listen to language and are able to figure out where a word begins and where it ends when used in a sentence. They are figuring out statistical patterns in language (9). They learn which sounds are more likely to follow other sounds. They determine what causes a person or object to react. They learn how to solve problems. They watch and listen and create their own theories about how things

work. For example, through experience they may theorize that one has to shake a box very hard to get the toys out. Through more experience they figure out that they can stick their fingers in the box to get the toys out. They make generalizations like, “only men can be doctors” and “women can be nurses.” They generalize that things that are dropped go down and are surprised when a toy motorized airplane takes off into the air. Their brains are powerful learning tools (10).

Learning Is Social

Infants and toddlers use social cues to learn (11). Very early in the first year they watch trusted adults’ faces to determine if another person or thing is safe. They pay attention to who is nice and who is not, who can be trusted and who can not. They look where an adult is looking or pointing to learn new words. They learn by imitating others. They are capable of learning through their interactions with others.

They Learn So Much in the Early Years

Emotional Skills—“Children’s social and emotional well-being are as important to school readiness as are language and math skills.” (Thompson).

How infants and toddlers learn amazes us. What they learn builds a foundation for all further learning.

They Learn in All Domains

The early years are important because infants and toddlers learn so much in emotional, social, language, cognitive, and physical/motor/perceptual **domains** of learning (See Figure 1.1). Children build on this knowledge as they grow. Future learning builds on past learning.

Infants and toddlers are emotional beings. Infants and toddlers express emotions and are ready to learn about their own and others’ emotions. They learn who they are, where they belong, and whether they are loveable or not. They learn about their own self-worth and their capabilities. They learn who will protect them and whether adults can be trusted. They learn how to be in relationships based on the quality of their first relationships. They learn **self-regulation**.(12, 13)

Infants and toddlers are social beings. They need others. Infants are ready to interact with their special adults who take care of them. They learn through their shared experiences with others. They learn about peers and how to negotiate and cooperate. They are naturally prosocial—caring and helping—and with the right environment prosocial behavior grows. With adult help they learn how to channel aggressive feelings and enjoy others.

They are cognitive beings. They are thinking, seeing patterns in language, sensing regularities (e.g., objects usually fall when dropped), and building expectations for the physical and social environment based on their experiences. They grow in their ability to attend and remember. They gain knowledge about the physical and social world.

They are ready to communicate and learn languages. They learn how to listen and understand language. They learn to express themselves. They learn how to use language to tell people important things (e.g., that they are hungry). They learn to question, and get their needs met. Their vocabulary grows when adults are responsive and use descriptive and loving language with them.