

Learn Every Day®: The Program for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos

Distance Learning Guidance: Addressing Unfinished Learning

During times of major disruption to child care and schooling unfinished learning for children birth to age three is not the same challenge as compared with the needs of older children and students. Nonetheless, we want all young children to continue their growth and development in a way that maximizes their potential.

The most important activities for our youngest learners require minimal special equipment or expertise. They simply involve talking, singing, reading, and basic play with a variety of household objects, books, and toys, and responsive interactions throughout the day. Helping an infant or young child feel safe, secure, loved and respected are paramount. Encouraging multiple opportunities each day for the child to move freely also are essential: supervised tummy time, sitting and crawling opportunities for infants, and walking, climbing, running, and jumping activities for toddlers and two-year-olds. Fine-motor activities for toddlers and two-year-olds build eye-hand coordination and a foundation for later writing: finger painting, play dough, manipulating small blocks, and drawing with crayons, sidewalk chalk, or water and a paint brush.

Remind caregivers to beware of too much screen time for children birth to three. They tend to learn best through live, human interactions and with actual objects, although high-quality digital learning tools are now widely available and can be beneficial. Young children today are digital “natives,” and digital screens are everywhere. A healthy balance between screen time and a variety of other activities is the goal. Encourage parents to set limits for screen time each day, and have times and activities where no screens are allowed for anyone, such as meal time. Suggest that they select apps and programs recommended by proven resources, such as Common Sense Media, and that they watch the screen with their young child, to make it a more interactive experience.

Helpful Resources:

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/aaps-new-guidelines-for-screentime-617171>

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>