



**Pass
Along to
Parents**

Promoting Resilience In Infants and Toddlers

The warm connections a child has with another familiar person are called relationships. These relationships might be with a mother, father, grandparent, and other relatives or important caregivers. Happy relationships help a child form healthy attachment. When infants and toddlers have healthy relationships that support attachment, they learn to trust that the world is safe, and they have confidence to explore and learn. Here are some tips and strategies to help promote and strengthen each of the three protective factors for infants and toddlers - 1. Attachment/Relationships; 2. Initiative; and 3. Self-Regulation.

Supporting Attachment and Relationships

- Let your child's caregiver know what you do at home to comfort your child. Good communication between parents and teachers helps your child go back and forth between home and school much easier. This helps your child feel safe and comfortable.
- During daily routines such as meals, bath time, and nap time, you can engage in eye contact and share smiles, conversations, stories, and books. These day-to-day interactions are a way for you and your child to continue building strong ties to each other, the foundation for later relationships.
- Respond to your child's attempts to communicate with you through facial expressions, gestures, cooing, babbling, and words. Gently mirror his sounds and expressions. Your encouraging responses help your child learn to value himself and others.

Supporting Initiative

- Let your child's caregiver know when you are working on a new self-help skill at home (such as feeding oneself, toilet training, etc.). This information will help increase opportunities for you and your child's caregiver to work as a team.
- Give your child lots of opportunities to explore and let her choose what is interesting and appropriate for her to play with. Learning to make good decisions is a skill that children will use for the rest of their lives.
- Provide items for exploration and play that are open-ended and capture the imagination. Playing with a variety of different items stimulates your child's brainpower. Try items like: pots and pans and spoons for making music, plastic bowls for stacking, scarves for dancing or playing peek-a-boo.

Supporting Self-Regulation

- When an unexpected change is about to happen, give your child reminders before hand whenever possible. Rituals and predictable routines are important for your child, and he may not like for them to change. Daily routines help your child know what will happen next and give him a sense of safety and security. When a child knows what is happening next, it helps him learn to deal with frustration.
- Join your infant or toddler in the thing she likes to do. Be silly, play, sing, and have fun. Help her understand and label the happy feelings you both are having. As she gets older, she will be able to let you know when she is ready for play, or when she is too sleepy or hungry, or when she just wants to be held. This will help you both get to know each other's cues.
- Create a quiet spot that your toddler can go to when she needs to control her feelings or regain her energy. This special spot will help her regroup and relax. Stay close by to let her know you are ready to help her rejoin in play when she is ready!



For more tips and strategies to build resilience and protective factors in infants and toddlers, contact deca@devereux.org.
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Devereux Drive, Villanova, PA, 19085