

## Welcome to Our Program!



### Our Commitment to Your Family

Early Head Start and other programs that serve infants and toddlers offer your child a safe place to learn. We know you are your child's first teacher and want to work with you to care for him. As your partner in your child's education and care, we are dedicated to:

- Valuing your culture, beliefs, and traditions in raising your children.
- Listening to your concerns and share ideas on healthy child development.
- Supporting and encouraging you throughout your child's time in our program.
- Helping you find community resources, such as those for food, housing, and medical care.
- Contacting you in case of an emergency. You can help us by keeping your baby's emergency contact phone numbers updated.

### Our Commitment to Your Child

We care for your 12-month-old baby by meeting her physical needs, but also following to health and safety guidelines, supporting her in meeting milestones, and creating strong bonds between your child and her caregivers. We encourage you to do these things at home, too. We are always available to answer any questions you may have.

## Nutrition

We encourage you to have meals as a family whenever possible. Eating together on a regular basis will have a positive effect on you and your child. Healthy eating habits start early, and we work with your child during the day to get them on the right path.

- Sitting together during meals helps children talk to each other, solve problems together, and learn how to feed themselves.
- We provide healthy foods for meals and snacks including vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean protein, dairy foods, and foods low in sugar. We offer children whole milk and water to drink.
- We encourage your child to feed himself. He decides how much of his meal to eat.
- We do not use food as a reward or punishment.



### AT HOME TIP!

Include your child in family meals.



## Healthy Teeth

Keeping your child's teeth healthy is important. We support you in daily routines to encourage healthy teeth.

- We help your child brush her teeth at least once after a meal during the day.
- We give her fluoridated water when she is thirsty.
- Our program's Health Manager or Health Consultant is readily available for answering your health and dental questions. We can also assist your family in finding a dental health professional in your area.

## Physical Development

Your child is moving more. Most 12-month-olds are now cruising and will be walking without support by 14 months of age. Being able to move from place to place gives your child a sense of power and control—his first real taste of physical independence. He also may be able to pick up small objects with his thumb and forefinger. Our program is designed to support your baby's learning and development.

- We have safe spaces for him to pull up to standing, cruise, and try to walk.
- We provide opportunities for safe play throughout the day so that he can learn and be active.

Remember, each child is unique and develops at his own rate. Talk to us or your health care professional if you have any concerns.

## Establishing Routines

Children benefit from days that are regular, predictable, and consistent.

- We include naps as part of the daily schedule.
- We can work with you to establish a routine when you drop her off and pick her up. A routine will make this transition go more smoothly.
- Let us know if you need help establishing routines at home. We may have some ideas that will make your life easier.

## Relationships

You may notice your child clings to you around new people or when you leave. Separation anxiety and fear of strangers are common at this age.

- We talk to and hold your child to help him feel comfortable and secure.
- We respect your child's fears and ask strangers to approach slowly.



### AT HOME TIP!

Tell your child when she's done something right. Say, "I like it when you..." Doing this helps her know what she should do.

## Guidance

Your child needs to know she can depend on adults to set limits. This helps your child can learn self-control. It also keeps your child safe. Providing a safe place for your child to explore means you can spend less time making and enforcing rules. In our program, we work to provide a consistent, stable environment for your child.

- We keep rules short, simple, and enforce them consistently.
- We use positive support and offer redirection to guide your child to make good choices throughout the day.

## Language and Literacy

Language progresses from “mama” and “dada” to include other words. Your child understands more and is making his wants known.

- We help him develop language by naming objects and people, talking with him, and encouraging him to “use his words” to tell us what he wants and needs.
- We read to your child every day.
- We do not allow him to watch TV, videos, or digital media while in our care.



### AT HOME TIP!

When you read together, let your child turn the pages.

## Staying Healthy and Safe

We provide a clean and safe environment for your child to help her grow and develop in healthy ways:

- We practice good handwashing throughout the day, including before and after meals and diapering. You can help us by making sure to wash your and your baby’s hands upon arrival each morning.
- Getting the proper amount of sleep is important for your baby’s development. We include a nap every day as part of the daily schedule.
- We support you in working with your baby’s health care professional to make sure your child is up to date on all her immunizations (shots).

Adapted from *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, 4th Edition, Copyright 2017. Published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

- We can offer you more information. [The Health Tips for Families Series](#) from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness offers valuable information on a variety of health topics.



### AT HOME TIP!

If you haven’t child-proofed your home yet, now is the time! Install door and cabinet locks, safety gates, and other safety equipment. Learn more about creating a safe space for your baby by reading [Injury Prevention Starts at Home](#).

## Questions to ask your health care professional at your child’s 12-month check-up:

- How can I create daily routines with my child?
- Will my child’s feeding habits and appetite change?
- What can I do to caring for my child’s teeth?
- How can I keep my child safe at home and in the car?

Use the [Well-Visit Planner](#) to help get organized and learn more about what to expect at your baby’s well-visit! For strategies to keep your baby safe on the road and in the car, read [Keeping Children Safe in Vehicles](#) and explore the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) website.

