

## 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.
- Sharing your child's progress in our program through daily reports.
- 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 2-month-old baby by meeting their physical needs, but also following 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, and we are always available to answer any questions you may have.



## Feeding

Babies should be fed when they show signs of being hungry. Your health care professional can help you identify the different signs of hunger for your baby. Healthy eating habits start early, and we work with your child during the day to get them on the right path. We hold your baby during feeding to help her feel secure and to build our relationship with her. We never prop bottles using a pillow or any other object.

### Formula

If your family chooses to use formula:

- We give the same formula you give at home.
- Formula is stored, prepared, and heated according to safety guidelines.

### Breast (human) milk

We support moms who continue to breastfeed when they return to work or school:

- We store breastmilk in a refrigerator and clearly label it with your baby's name and the date.
- We offer moms who want to breastfeed in the center a comfortable space to do so.

The Office on Women's Health offers additional support and information on breastfeeding. Visit [Your Guide to Breastfeeding](#) to learn more. [Healthy Feeding From the Start: A Resource for Expectant Families](#) provides additional strategies for establishing health feeding habits for your baby.



### AT HOME TIP!

Never put your baby to bed with a bottle. Sleeping with a bottle can increase your child's risk of choking, tooth decay, and ear infections.

## Safe Sleep

At 2 months old, your baby may not have a regular sleep schedule. During the day, he may sleep only 1 or 2 hours at a time. Throughout the day, we use many strategies to help your child establish a healthy sleep routine and stay safe while they sleep.

- We always place your baby on his back to sleep. This is the safest position for your baby!
- Cribs are kept free of toys, stuffed animals, and extra bedding for safety.
- We carefully watch the babies while they are sleeping.
- Our cribs meet current safety standards.



### AT HOME TIP!

Always place your baby to sleep on his back. Remember the phrase "back to sleep" every time you put your baby down for sleep.

## Diapering

Diaper changing is an important part of your baby's daily routine. In our program, we use these opportunities to talk and interact with your baby.

- We change diapers often and as needed. We always make sure diaper areas are clean and healthy.
- We maintain physical contact with her (putting our hand on her tummy) to make sure she is safe and secure.
- Our caregivers sing songs and talk to your baby to connect with her and help build meaningful relationships.



### AT HOME TIP!

When diapering your baby at home, always make sure to keep your hands on her. This will prevent her from falling from the changing area.

## Immunizations (Shots)

Immunizations help your baby stay healthy. Your baby's health care professional provides routine immunizations based on the recommended schedule in your state. There are many ways that we work with you to support your baby's health.

- We support you in working with your health care professional to ensure your baby is up to date on all her shots and gets them when she needs them.
- Our program's Health Managers or Health Consultants are readily available to answer your health and medical questions. We can also assist your family in finding a health care professional in your area.
- 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.



## Tummy Time

Babies need to be active too! Throughout the day, we focus on having fun and playing with your baby while he is awake.

- We have “tummy time” play with babies two to three times each day for a few minutes. “Tummy time” helps him strengthen and develop his muscles. Caregivers offer more “tummy time” based upon your child's enjoyment and increasing abilities.
- For safety during floor play, we keep floors free of blankets, pillows, and soft toys.

## Environment

We have a clean, safe, and cheerful space for your baby to explore.

- Classrooms and toys are checked throughout the day to make sure they are clean and safe.
- We meet state regulations and Early Head Start child-staff ratios. We care for babies in small groups—one adult cares for no more than four infants.
- We promote growth and learning by offering developmentally appropriate infant toys, materials, and experiences.

## Relationships

Building a nurturing relationship with your child is very important to us. When possible, one staff person will provide most of the care for your baby. Having a primary caregiver makes communication easier.

- We are friendly and responsive to you and your baby.
- We hold, speak, and read to him, building a positive relationship.
- We respond to his cues and tell him when we are about to feed or change him.



### AT HOME TIP!

It's never too early to read to your baby. He loves hearing your voice and being held by you!

## Questions to ask your health care professional at your 2-month well-child visit:

- How can I create a work/school routine with my baby?
- What are ways I can bond with my baby?
- How can I tell when my baby is hungry? Tired?
- How can I help my baby be safe while she sleeps?
- What are ways to keep my home safe for my baby?