

# Building Blocks of Early Intervention

Champaign Co. Board of DD



# What Can our family expect from Early Intervention?

- You and I will decide together where to meet based on what we are working on at the time. While most families choose to meet us in their home, we have the flexibility to meet at day care or public places like the library. Even though the places may change, the methods I use to help you and other people in your child's life are the same.
- We know that you are the expert on your child. I will work with you to figure out what a typical day looks like, what your child likes to do and what may be challenging for your child. When we meet, we'll talk about what has happened since our last visit and how that has helped your child do what he/she likes and needs to do. We may try some things together, such as helping your child take part in playtime, mealtime or other activities that are important to your family. I can answer any questions you have about child development, parenting ideas and resources in the community that could help with your child's learning. Before I leave our visit, we will come up with a plan for what we are all going to do before we meet again.

Rush, D. D., & Shelden, M. L. (2008, January). Script for explaining an evidence-based early intervention model. *BriefCASE*. Retrieved from [http://www.fipp.org/Collateral/briefcase/briefcase\\_vol1\\_no3.pdf](http://www.fipp.org/Collateral/briefcase/briefcase_vol1_no3.pdf)

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Why does my child only have one person from Early Intervention that comes on a regular basis?

Every family has one person that is your main contact to our program—we call this your Primary Service Provider (or PSP). They are part of a much larger team of experienced and skilled professionals (including occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, physical therapy and developmental specialists) that they can get information from or ask to come on a joint home visit. Research tells us that it is better to have one person supported by a team of people than it is for you to have a number of people working with your family. When you have too many people asking you to do something different, that's time taken away from the things you and your child like doing or need to do and may mess up your daily routine.

## My doctor says my child needs therapy. Why don't I get to see the therapist every week?

Our services are different from those you might get if you chose to receive “clinical” therapy. We focus our interventions on ordinary life situations (like eating meals, dressing or playing with siblings) and the opportunities children have to learn through the activities they are already engaged in. Our team tries to teach you the techniques we use so your child is receiving learning opportunities any time you interact with him/her. We don't need to be there for your child to be learning and developing!

Rush, D. D., & Shelden, M. L. (2008). Script for explaining an evidence-based early intervention model. *briefCASE*, 1(3), Retrieved from [http://www.fipp.org/Collateral/briefcase/briefcase\\_vol1\\_no3.pdf](http://www.fipp.org/Collateral/briefcase/briefcase_vol1_no3.pdf)

	Language	Problem Solving	Social-Emotional	Motor (Large and Small)	Things to try
<b>1</b>	<p>Different cries let you know their needs (hunger, sleep, etc.)</p> <p>Responds to different sounds</p>	<p>Gazes at faces</p> <p>Brings their hands to mouth and sucks</p> <p>Tracks a close object moving slowly</p>	<p>Makes brief eye contact</p> <p>Comforted by a caregiver</p> <p>Prefers looking at faces</p>	<p>Lifts head when on their tummy</p> <p>Sucks on their bottle efficiently</p>	<p>Give them bright pictures, rattles and squeaky toys</p> <p>Put on their side with fist and fingers near face.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p>Turns head to a sound</p> <p>Looks at person talking</p> <p>Coos using vowel sounds (like “aah”, “eee” or “ooo”)</p>	<p>Looks at their hands</p> <p>Does two things at a time (like sucking and looking around)</p> <p>Reaches over their head for objects</p>	<p>Imitates facial movements</p> <p>Show excitement</p> <p>Smiles with a purpose</p>	<p>Lifts head when laying on tummy and turns from side to side</p> <p>Brings hands together</p>	<p>Talk, sing and coo with child</p> <p>Let child look in mirror</p> <p>Give lots of tummy time</p>
<b>3</b>	<p>Turns to find a sound</p> <p>Responds to their name</p> <p>Makes sounds to show they're happy</p>	<p>Looks at small objects with hands, fingers and eyes</p> <p>Explores objects in mouth</p> <p>Looks at person or object for at least a minute</p>	<p>Knows and responds to a familiar face</p> <p>Loves attention and affection</p> <p>Laughs</p>	<p>Sits with help</p> <p>Holds toys with both hands</p> <p>Reaches and grabs for objects</p> <p>Rolls from tummy to back</p>	<p>Describe and talk to child about their routine or familiar items</p> <p>Give toys that are safe to mouth</p> <p>Play “Peek-a-boo” or “so-big”</p>

	Language	Problem Solving	Social-Emotional	Motor (Large and Small)	Things to try
4	<p>Associates words with objects or people</p> <p>Babbles using repeated syllables (like “ma-ma” or “ba-ba”)</p> <p>Says single syllables (such as ba, pa, da, ma, and na)</p> <p>Looks for named parent</p>	<p>Will look at books for short periods of time</p> <p>Explores objects with mouth</p> <p>Likes to drop, throw or bang objects</p> <p>Curious about everything</p>	<p>Upset when parent leaves room</p> <p>Seeks attention</p> <p>Loves simple games like “Peek-a-boo”</p>	<p>Sits without help</p> <p>Rolls, scoots or pulls body with arms</p> <p>Stands while holding on to support</p> <p>Moves object from one hand to the other</p> <p>Bangs two objects together</p>	<p>Start giving child their own cup and safe spoon</p> <p>Read board books, focusing on labeling objects with child</p> <p>Roll different sized balls or play with boxes to open/close</p>
5	<p>Responds to simple requests</p> <p>Tries to say a few words</p> <p>Understands 1-15 frequently used words</p> <p>Points, gestures or makes sounds to let you know wants and needs</p>	<p>Looks at small objects or little details</p> <p>Experiments with objects to find out what will happen (like the light switch)</p> <p>Knows where hidden objects are</p>	<p>Knows the difference between familiar person and stranger</p> <p>Watches and imitates what people are doing</p> <p>Gets caregiver’s attention and tries to be near them</p>	<p>Crawls on hands and knees</p> <p>Cruises furniture</p> <p>Stands alone</p> <p>Walks alone</p> <p>Stacks two blocks</p> <p>Points with index finger</p>	<p>Safety proof the house</p> <p>Provide toys to pour at bath time</p> <p>Encourage self-feeding</p> <p>Identify and label objects in the house or in a book</p>

	Language	Problem Solving	Social-Emotional	Motor (Large and Small)	Things to try
6	<p>Follows simple directions</p> <p>Uses words with gestures to let you know wants and needs</p> <p>Combines two words</p> <p>Names at least three pictures</p> <p>Know six body parts</p>	<p>Takes things apart and tries to put them together again</p> <p>Knows three animal sounds</p> <p>Tries to get around simple obstacles</p> <p>Explores cabinets and drawers</p>	<p>Says "no" often</p> <p>Tries to help with household chores (such as cleaning up a spill or sweeping the floor)</p> <p>Comforts others</p> <p>Feeds self with spoon with help</p> <p>Removes socks and shoes</p>	<p>Walks backward</p> <p>Throws a ball forward</p> <p>Climbs</p> <p>Runs without falling</p> <p>Scribbles with crayons</p> <p>Can turn doorknob</p>	<p>Give child lots of time to play outside</p> <p>Start using finger paints</p> <p>Practice stacking blocks or other toys</p> <p>Sing songs and learn finger plays like "The Itsy Bitsy Spider"</p>
7	<p>Can name eight objects</p> <p>Uses four word sentences</p> <p>Has more than 200 words in their vocabulary</p> <p>Asks what, where and when questions</p>	<p>Follows two step directions (such as "pick up your shoes and takes them to the door")</p> <p>Likes pretend play</p> <p>Knows difference between little and big</p>	<p>Loves the word "mine"</p> <p>Follows 3-5 simple household rules</p> <p>Dresses and undresses with help</p> <p>Likes playing with other children</p>	<p>Catches a ball</p> <p>Walks up and down stair while alternating their feet</p> <p>Builds a tower 6-8 blocks tall</p> <p>Copies a circle</p>	<p>Use dress-up clothes to make-believe play</p> <p>Talk about colors, size and shapes of objects</p> <p>Start helping child to learn to ride a tricycle</p>

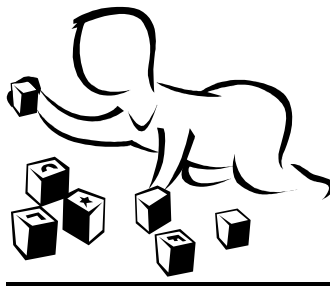
	Language	Problem Solving	Social-Emotional	Motor (Large and Small)	Things to try
8	<p>Knows an item by what it does (like “give me the item we eat with”)</p> <p>Carries on a conversation</p> <p>Asks “why” questions</p> <p>Knows words to a favorite song</p>	<p>Names four colors</p> <p>Completes eight piece puzzle</p> <p>Can stay on one task for five minutes</p> <p>Marches in time to the music</p>	<p>Waits for someone else to take a turn</p> <p>Shares toys without being asked</p> <p>Answers simple questions</p> <p>Asks for help</p> <p>Wants to be helpful</p>	<p>Can stand on one leg</p> <p>Bounces and catches a ball</p> <p>Learns to fasten buttons, zippers and snaps</p> <p>Strings small beads on a string</p>	<p>Have a music parade with singing, marching and dancing</p> <p>Help child learn to brush their own teeth and wash hands</p> <p>Create art projects with crayons, scissors and glue</p>

Furuno, S. (2004). Hawaii early learning profile (HELP): Help checklist. VORT corporation.

Every child moves at their own pace to learn new skills! We're here to celebrate your child's successes and give your family support when you need us to!

# Play

Children learn best through play! Infants and toddlers need play to help them grow their cognitive, language, social-emotional and motor skills.



## When you play with your child it:

- ✓ Builds attachment between you and your child,
- ✓ Helps your child make sense of her everyday experiences,
- ✓ Helps your child understand and learn to control their feelings,
- ✓ Develops school readiness skills by growing your child's attention span, memory and focus Teaches your child cooperation, sharing, empathy and how to help others,
- ✓ Strengthens your child's large and small muscles,
- ✓ Teaches your child to use words to tell others their ideas.

Ebert, C. (2013, June). *The power of play: Effective play-based therapy and early intervention.* , Columbus, OH.



# What should I look for when my child plays?

There are many different types of play that a child learns as they grow.

**Random and Exploratory Play:** your child is having fun learning and exploring their environment! They are seeing, touching, hearing, tasting and getting sensory input. Toys are shaken, banged, batted and put in their mouth.

**Cause and Effect Play:** When a child can sit by themselves, they start to learn they can control what a toy does. At this stage, your child loves repetition because it is predictable. Toys are pushed, pulled, pounded, thrown (often for attention) and dumped.

**Purposeful (or functional) Play:** At this stage, a child learns how toys should be used. They know that you drive a train on the track or use the toy bottle with a baby doll. As a child learns through this type of play, they should start answering questions like “Show me what you want to eat” or “What do you wear on your feet?”.

**Symbolic Play:** Around age 3, a child’s ability to play make-believe begins. In this stage, a child may pretend to feed a stuffed animal or pretend to call someone on the phone. To do this, a child must rely on their past experiences to create play out of context.

Ebert, C. (2013, June). *The power of play: Effective play-based therapy and early intervention*, Columbus, OH.

*Just like adults, children are more likely to pay attention and learn during activities they find fun and interesting. Because you are the expert on your child, we will be looking to you to help identify the things you are already doing or want to do to provide your child with more opportunities to participate in fun activities.*

# Cognitive

During the first three years of life, children are working hard at developing trillions of pathways through the brain for learning. More than any other time in life, the connections the brain makes in its first three years make a huge difference in later development.

## *What Can I do to help my child's cognitive skills?*

Choose developmentally appropriate toys: While noisy toys are fun, children often benefit more from toys that cause them to think about cause-and-effect, such as blocks or stacking rings.

Have your toddler help with clean-up: Cleaning up toys can help a child practice their sorting skills and teaches them the difference between big and small objects.

Give safe opportunities for messy play: Children need to get messy! Playing with sand, water or even mud can help a child learn about the properties of different objects and helps them better explore the world.

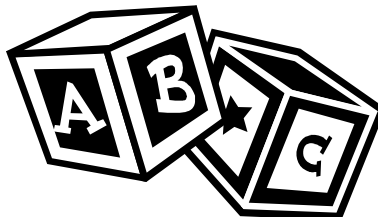
Scholastic. (n.d.). *20 ways to boost your baby's brain power*. Retrieved from <http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/thinking-skills-learning-styles/20-ways-to-boost-your-babys-brain-power>

## *Did you Know?*

*A child's cognitive development is the way a child understands the world and how they are able to demonstrate that knowledge to others. Because of this, a child's cognitive and communication skills are closely related.*

# Communication

Communication is made up of two parts. **Receptive communication** is what we hear and understand. **Expressive communication** is what we say to others.



Even before they're born, a child is starting to hear words and recognize their parents' voices. From birth, one of the most important things a parent can do to help their child learn to communicate is to talk to them!

**Self-talk** is telling your child what you are doing. If you're not used to it, this might feel silly—but your child is listening to everything you say! Describing what you're cooking for dinner or what you're doing during bath time are great ways to start labeling the world for a child.

**Parallel Talk** explains to a child what they are doing. When you narrate what a child is doing during play or tell them what they're going to do that day as you're dressing them in the morning, children are able to connect their actions to words.

*Strategies to Help Your Child Talk: Parallel and Self Talk.* [Web log message]. (2011, November 08). Retrieved from <http://www.playingwithwords365.com/2011/11/strategies-to-help-your-child-talk-parallel-and-self-talk/>

***As your child learns to talk, you are their favorite person to talk to! Don't forget to take the time to praise their sounds, gestures and words.***

# Hearing

Hearing is an important part of a child's social, emotional and cognitive development in their first years of life. If a child has even a mild or partial hearing loss it can affect their ability to speak and understand language.

One of the most common causes of hearing loss in young children is chronic ear infections. Even if your child passed their newborn hearing screening, if you notice they don't understand what you're saying to them, have little or no speech or have suffered from several ear infections before the age of three, you may want to speak to your pediatrician about further hearing testing.

Nemours Foundation. (n.d.). *Hearing evaluation in children*. Retrieved from <http://kidshealth.org/parent/general/eyes/hear.html>

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends NO screen time (TV, iPad, etc.) for children under the age of two. For two-year-olds, pediatricians say you should limit screen time to 1-2 hours a day.

Even if a program is educational, it is still keeping children from the exploring and interacting that they need to help their brain develop at this age. Always remember no TV show or iPad app will replace the important role you have in teaching your child to talk!

## Did you Know?

Nemours Foundation. (n.d.). *How TV affects your child*. Retrieved from [http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/tv\\_affects\\_child.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/tv_affects_child.html)

# Gross (Large) Motor

Tummy Time is an important way for babies to strengthen the muscles in their neck. This will help them roll and crawl. If your baby spends too much time on their back, it can actually change the shape of their head and affect their brain development.

Tummy time doesn't have to be stressful! There are lots of fun ways to allow your baby to have time on their tummy without actually putting them on the floor. Here are some different activities to try:

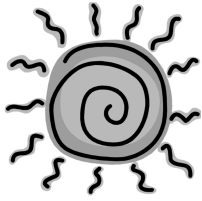
- For quality cuddle time, lay your baby on your chest. This is a great time to get some skin-to-skin contact (also called Kangaroo care) for little ones.
- Once a baby has control of their head, they may enjoy lying tummy down across your legs while you're sitting on the couch.
- Carrying a baby tummy down or facing out (while supporting the head and neck of infants) will help develop head and neck strength.

Barger, E. (n.d.). *Tummy-time activities*. Retrieved from <http://www.parents.com/baby/development/physical/tummy-time-activities/>

Children, no matter their age, need a chance to explore their environment. For infants, this can happen through tummy time and being carried around in different positions. It is very important to remember that a “container” (like a swing or car seat) is not a substitute for giving your child different motor experiences. Without an opportunity to stretch and strengthen muscles through play as babies, children can have gross motor delays, social and communication problems as well as sensory integration issues. When possible, try to limit your child's time in a “container” to three hours a day.

Hobbs, B. (2011, May 04). *The “container baby” lifestyle*. Retrieved from <http://nspt4kids.com/parenting/the-container-baby-lifestyle/>





It's so important for children to have time to get outside to explore! There are opportunities outside to help your child with all areas of development. Here are some ideas for all four seasons:

### **Winter:**

Little ones can explore clean snow with their hands while toddlers love helping parents or older siblings make a snowman. Even though you have to limit how long little ones play outside on cold, snowy days, be sure to include them in on the fun!

### **Spring:**

Spring can be a rainy time but also a great time for infants and toddlers to explore lots of different things! As you go on a walk on warmer days, be sure to label the flowers, leaves and animals you may see. Don't forget to take time to splash in a mud puddle—just be sure you have time for a bath afterwards!

### **Summer:**

Long, warm days make for a great time to explore nature! Sandboxes are a wonderful way for toddlers to explore different textures and to practice using their muscles to make sandcastles. Even infants can get into the fun by spending tummy time in the sun. Be sure to watch for dirt and grass near their mouth!

### **Fall:**

Fall is a wonderful time to let toddlers help you rake leaves or pick up sticks. Infants may enjoy feeling different textures of fallen leaves. Children of all ages love carving pumpkins into funny or scary faces—with an adult's help, of course!

Honig, A. S. (n.d.). *Infants & toddlers: Let's go outside!*. Retrieved from <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/infants-toddlers-let39s-go-outside>

# Fine (Small) Motor

## Coloring

While coloring apps on a phone or iPad can be great for long car rides, it is important that children have lots of practice coloring with crayons and a blank sheet of paper.

When a toddler starts to color, they usually grab the crayon with their fist and use their whole arm to color random scribbles on the page. With practice, they may start to control their hand and wrist movements. At this stage children might also start imitating your coloring by drawing a line or circle after you show them how. Older toddlers may interpret their scribbles as common objects (such as little dots symbolizing raindrops). It can be fun to help them create stories about their drawings, which can help them learn important cognitive and communication skills too!

Crosser, S. (n.d.). *When children draw*. Retrieved from [http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/EarlyChildhood/article\\_view.aspx?ArticleID=130](http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/EarlyChildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=130)

### Why is it important that my child use both hands to grab a toy?

You might hear us talk about **bilateral movements** or **crossing midline**. As they develop their fine and gross motor skills, it's important that children learn to move across the middle of their body with their arms and legs reaching to the opposite side. This skill helps with feeding, dressing, reading and writing (just to name a few!).

*Crossing midline*. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.therapiststreetforkids.com/CrossingMidline.html>

# Sensory

All children learn by experiencing the world with all five senses. When children take what they're experiencing, process it through their brain and learn how to respond, it's called *sensory integration*.

There are different types of sensory input that we receive everyday:

Proprioceptive: We receive sensations from our muscles and joints telling us where we are in relation to other objects and how to move. We get this kind of input when we lift, push or pull heavy objects.

Vestibular: This type of input helps us understand our movement and the action around us to help with coordination and balance. We receive this type of input from movement, especially spinning, swinging or hanging upside down.

Tactile: We get tactile input from touching objects, feeling vibrations or experiencing pain. We learn a lot about an object just by feeling it. Oral tactile problems can often lead to picky eating or feeding problems.

Auditory: Auditory input is both what we hear and how we listen. Often, loud noises can overwhelm our auditory senses. This type of input is closely connected to our vestibular senses.

Visual: This is the way we process what we're seeing. At times, children with problems with their sensory processing find what they're looking at or the lights in a room over-stimulating.

*Sensory diet activities.* (n.d.). Retrieved from [http://sensorysmarts.com/sensory\\_diet\\_activities.html](http://sensorysmarts.com/sensory_diet_activities.html)

*It's important to pay attention to what your child's behavior tells you about their sensory needs. You know best how your child responds to different sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches.*



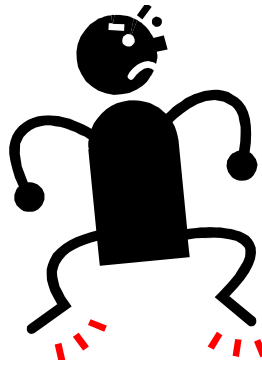
# Social-Emotional

During their first years, children are constantly learning about how to interact with others by observing the world.

Even before they can talk, children have ways of letting us know what they need or want. But did you know that when you listen to their cues, you're helping them develop their social skills too?

- Ninety percent of communication between caregivers and children is nonverbal. Learning how to read a child's cues, like rubbing their eyes, crying or arching their back, is an important way to communicate love to your child.
- Most infants learn early on to copy facial expressions, including noticing how your mouth forms words or understanding what different emotions look like. It's not long after this happens that children learn to look back toward their caregiver in a new situation to gauge their reaction. Because your child responds to your mood, they are more likely to be upset if you are too.

Latvala, C. (n.d.). *11 important baby cues*. Retrieved from <http://www.parenting.com/article/11-important-baby-cues?page=0,1>



As a child learns to talk, temper tantrums can increase.  
This happens for many different reasons:

- Just like adults get cranky when we're hungry or tired, toddlers will let you know when it's snack or nap time.
- As children are learning to talk, they understand more language than they can express. This can be really frustrating and cause tantrums.
- As toddlers become more mobile, they want more control of their environment but don't understand that they can't have everything they want.

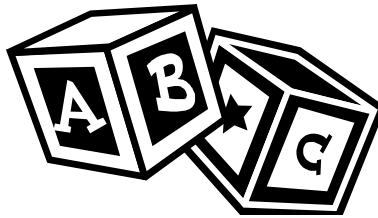
What can you do to make these tantrums happen less?

- For toddlers, negative attention is better than no attention at all. Try catching them being good and praising positive behaviors.
- Try giving a child control over small things, like if they want milk or juice to drink at snack. Just remember to avoid open-ended questions (such as, "do you want to put your toys away?"). Never ask a child a question it isn't okay to hear no for an answer!
- Be consistent! Every family needs to decide how they will discipline their child during a tantrum before it happens and keep that consistent for the child as much as you can. When they've calmed down (or after a set amount of time in time-out), make sure you reassure your child that you love them no matter what.

Nemours Foundation. (n.d.). *Temper Tantrums*. Retrieved from <http://kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/behavior/tantrums.html#>

# Self-Help

As a child's primary teacher in their first years of life, parents play a big role in helping their child learn how to be more independent.



Young children have little understanding of time. That's why routines are so important for children. Little ones order their time by a daily routine, which makes them feel safe and secure. Routines can be especially important as you're teaching your child self-help skills. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- **Keep things consistent.** Children operate best when they know what to expect. When your routine needs to change, explain the change to them and help them prepare for what comes next.
- **Having a bedtime ritual is important for children.** Pick a consistent bedtime and keep the order of events the same. Letting your child get their pajamas from the dresser or picking their bedtime story is a great way to let them help.
- **Include time for transitions during your routine.** Give children warning that they have five minutes until they need to pick up or need to get a bath after their favorite TV show is over. For some children who find it hard to move from one task to another, you may need to try different strategies to make this transition easier.

Medoff, L. (2013, August 06). *Routines: Why they matter and how to get started*. Retrieved from <http://www.education.com/magazine/article/importance-routines-preschool-children/>



**As you're making nutritional decisions for your child, it's important to keep in mind these facts:**

- A baby's digestive system isn't ready to handle cereal or baby food until 4-6 months of age. Remember to get the okay from your pediatrician before starting your child on cereal and focus on introducing one food at a time.
- Did you know that fruit juice can be just as bad as soda for your child? Both fruit juice and soda have been linked to obesity and tooth decay in toddlers. If you choose to let your toddler have juice, make sure it is 100% fruit juice and try diluting it with water.
- Picky eating is normal for toddlers. They may eat a big breakfast and then not be interested in eating much for the rest of the day. At this age, routine is very important so be sure to offer them different healthy options at mealtimes.

American Academy of Pediatrics. (n.d.). *Nutrition*. Retrieved from <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/toddler/nutrition/Pages/default.aspx>

As you encourage your child to be more independent, it's important to provide a safe environment for them to explore. Remember:

- Child safety locks are great for cabinets, doors and even the refrigerator!
- All electrical outlets not in use should have an outlet cover.
- Baby gates are great for guarding the stairs. Remember, it's important for a child to learn how to go up and down stairs by themselves but they always need an adult's supervision.

Editors of Child Magazine. (n.d.). *Babyproofing basics*. Retrieved from <http://www.parents.com/baby/safety/babyproofing/babyproofing-basics/>

# Helpful Information

You can call or text your DS! Remember, we're on home visits most of the day but we'll get back to you as soon as we can.

My cell phone number is \_\_\_\_\_

We also check our email daily!

My email address is \_\_\_\_\_

Be sure to check out our Pinterest boards!

Site address:

There are lots of resources, including websites we love, activities to try and books you may find helpful!