

Baby Talk

Primary Objectives

14b. Engages in sociodramatic play

Why It's Important

Pretend play experiences with baby dolls provide young children with valuable opportunities to practice communication. Your child can also learn personal care skills and use these opportunities to make sense of her world in a safe and secure environment.

Materials

Blanket; baby dolls; diapers; baby bottles; empty boxes from tubes of baby ointment or empty baby powder containers (from talcum-free products only)

What You Do

1. Place the baby dolls and other materials on play furniture or low shelves where your child can easily reach them.
2. Invite your child to play with the babies. Encourage your child to select a baby to care for. Ask questions that prompt her to think about how to meet the baby's needs. *This baby doesn't have a diaper on. Does yours? Let's get out our diapers to make our babies dry and clean. What else do we need when we change a diaper?*
3. Allow your child to take care of the baby on her own, but offer assistance if needed.
4. Model baby care for your child by showing her how you hold and speak to the baby. *I love you, baby. I'll take care of you.*
5. Encourage your child to explore new ways to take care of the baby by using open-ended language. *What else would you like to do with your baby?*
6. Allow your child to continue to play with the baby dolls for as long as she is interested. Continue to engage her by asking questions and following her lead during play.
7. You can extend this activity by setting up a water tub with soapy water and washcloths for your child to use to wash her baby.