Communication Scenario: Unique Ways of Communicating

Read through the following scenario and then answer the questions below. Think about the unique ways the infants and toddlers are communicating and how you might respond as an infant and toddler caregiver.

You were recently hired as an infant and toddler caregiver. As part of your orientation, your director asks that you spend time observing throughout the care setting and getting to know the other caregivers, families, infants and toddlers. You feel quite excited about the opportunity and begin right away. The list below highlights some of your observations:

- During drop-off, a mother plays peek-a-boo with her 1-year-old daughter. You hear both the mother and the daughter giggling.

- A caregiver is changing the diaper of a young boy, 18-months-old. She talks about what she is doing, “Benjamin, first we are going to change your diaper. I’m going to try to do this as quickly as I can as I know you want to get back to playing.” Benjamin is making eye contact with his caregiver and holding his clean diaper.

- A sobbing toddler is sitting next to the door. Her father just left. A caregiver is sitting next to her and says, “You seem very sad. Your daddy will be back right after nap.” The caregiver asks the toddler to sit on her lap. The toddler continues to cry and does not look at her caregiver.

1. What communication and language skills do you see and hear?

2. How are the infant’s and toddler's communication efforts being acknowledged and responded to by their caregivers?

3. Would you do anything differently? What experiences might you offer?