### Communication/Language

**Exploring Words**

**Option 1 (OO)** A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of infant facial expressions.

**Option 2 (OO)** An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of infant facial expressions.

**Option 3 (OO)** An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn pages of a book and communicate about pictures of different infant facial expressions.

### Cognitive

**Exploring Objects**

**Option 1 (OO)** An infant looks at an item with high-contrast colors with an opportunity to touch or manipulate the item.

**Option 2 (OO)** An older infant engages in guided play with sound-making toys.

**Option 3 (OO)** An older infant engages in guided play with a pop-up toy.

### Self-Regulation

**Paying Attention**

**Option 1 (OO)** A young infant practices focusing on novel sounds made by a caregiver.

**Option 2 (OO)** An infant practices focusing on novel sounds and facial expressions made by a caregiver.

### Social-Emotional

**Interacting with Others**

**Option 1 (OO)** A young infant goes on a tour of the room in a caregiver's arms to greet and hear the names of some other infants.

**Option 2 (IG)** Older infants participate in a brief hello song and hand wave that recognizes each infant in the gathering.

**Option 3 (IG)** Older infants in a small gathering practice identifying an infant named by the caregiver.

### Physical/Health

**Using Our Hands**

**Option 1 (OO)** A young infant engages in rattle play with a caregiver, with the opportunity to use two hands to reach for a rattle.

**Option 2 (IG)** Infants practice using two hands to take care of pretend babies.

**Option 3 (OO)** An older infant practices using two hands to manipulate a large ball.

(OO)=One-to-One, (IG)=Informal Gathering
**Exploring Words**

**Birth–12 Months**

**Option 1**

**One-to-One**

**Skill and Goal**
- Receptive language
- Expressive language

A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of infant facial expressions.

**Key Concepts**
- Book
- Look

**Materials Needed**
- *Making Faces: A First Book of Emotions* by Abrams Appleseed

**Also Promotes**
- Social-Emotional

**BEGIN:** [Sit on the floor with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant’s head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.

Hold the book about 12 inches from the infant and point to the picture on the cover.]

**EXPLAIN:** I have a book for us to read together! Look, do you see the babies?

[Pause and watch for the infant’s response. The young infant may show interest in the book by vocalizing, turning toward you, gazing at the picture, or reaching out and batting at the book. Respond to the infant’s interest in the book sharing. Example: “You are looking at the pictures of babies, Marcus. You are waving your arms and kicking your legs! Let’s look at some more pictures.”]

**ACT:** [At this age, it is not necessary to read the text. Infants will benefit from hearing you talk about the pictures as you share the book together. Use the following strategies to engage the infant with the book:

- Point to and describe pictures. Example: “See this baby? She has big eyes! The baby looks surprised!”
- Spend more time talking about the pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: “You are looking at a baby who is sad. The baby has tears. She is crying.”
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: “You made a happy sound, Luca! I think you like this picture of the silly baby!”
- Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book sharing.

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest.]

**RECAP:** [Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: “We read a book together! We talked about different kinds of faces. You smiled and kicked your legs when you looked at the silly baby. We pointed to the happy baby’s mouth. This was a fun book to read together!”]
Birth–12 Months
Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language

An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book’s pages and communicate about pictures of infant facial expressions.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Making Faces: A First Book of Emotions by Abrams Appleseed

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: “See the pictures of the babies? Our book is about baby faces.” Open the book and begin looking at the pictures and reading with the infant using the following strategies:

- Invite the infant to help you turn the pages of the book. Turn pages as slowly or as quickly as the infant seems to prefer. It is not necessary to look at each page.
- Point to and describe some prominent features of the facial expression. Example: “Look at this baby. Here are the baby’s eyes. The baby has big eyes!”
- Describe what the infant is looking at. Example: “You are looking at a baby who is angry. The baby’s eyes are closed. Her mouth is open. The baby does not look happy.”
- Talk about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. You may wish to provide additional context or information. Example: “The baby is sad. She is crying. I wonder why the baby is crying.”
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: “You are smiling and kicking your legs! You are looking at the happy baby. You are smiling like the baby in the book. I think you are feeling happy!”
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences and developing knowledge. Example: “You are touching the baby’s ears. The baby has earrings in her ears! Where are your ears? Let’s find them!”
- Use your voice and facial expressions to relate to book pictures. Example: Make a sad face and use a sad voice when talking about the picture of the baby who is sad. Draw attention to your face and voice. “This baby is sad. She is crying. I am making a sad face, like the baby in our book. I am using a sad voice.”
- Recognize the infant’s participation in the book reading. Example: “We had fun reading this book together, Kiara. You looked at the pictures of the babies. You smiled, just like the happy baby. You helped me turn the pages! I think you liked this book.”
Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to hold the book and turn the pages. Provide assistance if needed by keeping all the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages.

Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to the picture on the book cover. Example: “Look at the pictures of the babies. Our book is about baby faces. Let’s look at the pictures of babies in our book! Would you like to help me turn the page?” Some infants may help you turn the page, or turn the pages independently. Begin reading and looking at the pictures with the older infant using the following strategies:

- Point to and describe some features of the faces and facial expressions. Example: “These are the baby’s teeth. These are the baby’s eyes. Let’s find the baby’s nose!”
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you label. Example: “The baby has a mouth. Where is the baby’s mouth? You can point to the baby’s mouth!”
- Spend more time talking about some specifics of pictures that appear to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: “You are pointing to the silly baby. The baby has a scrunched-up nose and a big smile. The baby is making a silly face! Can you make a silly face?”
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: “You said ‘eyes.’ You are pointing to your eyes! You have eyes, just like the baby in the book!”
- Use a voice and facial expression that reflect the picture you are describing. Example: Imitate the face of the baby who looks surprised. Draw attention to your face. Say “I am trying to look surprised, just like the baby in our picture.”
- Recognize the infant’s participation in the book reading. Example: “You helped me hold our book, Elias. You pointed to the baby’s nose. Then you pointed to your nose. You turned the pages to see the next baby face! We had fun reading this book together.”
What to Look For—Options 1–3

The board book featured in the activity options shows five different facial expressions. The contrast of baby faces on white backgrounds can help a young infant focus on each facial expression. Infants are not expected to learn the names and characteristics of each emotion. In general, the book can support an infant’s awareness of differences in how we look. The book can also support an infant’s early awareness that there are words (names, labels) associated with different expressions. This is consistent with the idea that each person has a name, emphasized in the Social-Emotional activity plan in this block. Look for opportunities to spend a little more time on pictures of interest to the infant and to maybe return to a picture that seemed to heighten the infant’s attention. Remember that young infants use actions more than words to communicate their interests, including gazing, pointing, touching, or using his/her hands to bat at or tap the pictures.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Have an object available for the infant to mouth or chew instead of the book.

Enrichment ■ Invite an older infant to join you in imitating happy and sad expressions. The infant may want to look at his/her expression in the mirror at the end of the book.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of books with pictures of babies, several age-appropriate handheld mirrors or toys with mirrors that can be held (such as a block with one mirrored side)

Encourage infants to look at pictures of babies in a book and then look at their own face in a mirror. Hold a mirror for a younger infant to look at. Older infants may enjoy holding their own mirror or mirrored toy. Talk with infants about what they see. Older infants may enjoy pointing to parts of their face that you name, such as eyes, ears, nose, and mouth.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of books with pictures of children and babies, large mirror, several age-appropriate handheld mirrors, basket

Children of all ages enjoy looking at pictures of children. Arrange the books and handheld mirrors in a basket that you place near a large mirror. Invite children to explore the pictures in the books as well as their own reflections in the large and small mirrors. Talk with children about what they see. Older toddlers and preschool-age children may enjoy making silly faces or comparing their silly face to a peer’s silly face. Some children may imitate an expression pictured in a book.
**Exploring Objects**

**Birth–12 Months**

**Option 1**

**One-to-One**

**Skill and Goal**

Object inquiry skills
An infant looks at an item with high-contrast colors with an opportunity to touch or manipulate the item.

**Key Concepts**

Look
Touch

**Materials Needed**

Object with high-contrast colors (see Be Prepared)

**Also Promotes**

Physical/Health

**Optional Reading**

White on Black by Tana Hoban

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**Be Prepared:** Secure a book or toy that is high in color contrast, such as black and white, and provides tactile or auditory stimulation. Possibilities include a high-contrast rattle, one of the Wimmer-Ferguson Mind-Shapes pieces, and one of the Baby Sees cloth books by Kenny E. Rettore.

Hold a young infant in your arms and invite him/her to look at and touch the high-contrast book or toy you selected for the activity. Make eye contact and use a friendly voice to create interest in the activity. Hold the book or toy about 12 inches from the infant and pause for him/her to react. Hold the item still so the infant can easily see the color contrasts. After a brief period, describe the item as you move it gently. If you are using a book, describe images on the pages.

Invite the infant to touch or hold the item if he/she has not already touched or grasped it. You may wish to initiate direct contact between the item and infant by touching the infant gently on his/her hand or arm with the item. Describe the infant’s exploration of the item, such as feeling the texture of a cloth book, and any sounds the item may make as a result of the infant’s actions, such as crinkling noise that occurs when an item is squeezed. Pause frequently so the infant can respond to your comments or movement of the item and hear the item if it is being manipulated. Speak clearly and use the infant’s name often.

**What to Look For—Option 1**

This activity option uses the benefits of contrasting bold colors to promote an infant’s visual development. This approach was used in Block 1, Option 1 with the book Black on White by Tana Hoban. High-contrast colors are easier for an infant to see than an item with light colors only. Some infants may prefer to look only at your actions with the item. Other infants may quickly grasp the item and maybe move it to his/her mouth for further exploration. The visual stimulation from looking only is valuable. Looking is an important form of inquiry. Touching and manipulating the item can add value to the experience, but they are not essential to learning from the activity.

**More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

**Extra support**

When you introduce the item to the infant, look carefully at the infant’s reaction and, if necessary, adjust to the infant’s preferred distance from the item by moving it closer or further away.

**Enrichment**

If the infant does not seem to notice a feature of an item, such as its texture or a sound it makes when squeezed, gently demonstrate the feature.
Exploring Objects (continued)

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Be Prepared: Select different types of toys (such as a rattle and a chime), and/or toys that make different kinds of sounds.

Sit on the floor facing the infant. Place the toys on the floor in front of the infant. Wait and watch the infant’s reaction. Using clear and simple language, describe the infant’s reactions to the toys. Encourage the infant to hold one of the toys. If the infant does not begin to manipulate the toys, demonstrate grasping and squeezing one of the toys.

Describe the infant’s actions, especially actions that produce a sound. Example: “Riley, you are shaking the orange bird. We can hear the sound of its rattle.” Encourage the infant to repeat an action that produces a sound. Example: “We heard a sound when you moved the bird! Let’s try it again. Try shaking the bird.”

Allow ample time for the infant to explore the toys using his/her own pace. Conclude the activity by describing and showing what happens (a sound) when a toy is manipulated.

What to Look For—Option 2

This activity option promotes the development of an infant’s early awareness of cause and effect by providing a clear result (a sound) when the infant moves the toy. This awareness appropriately develops through the infant’s exploration, not through formal instruction. An infant may hold out a toy for you to shake or squeeze. Comply with the infant’s request by providing a demonstration and then return the toy to the infant with the suggestion that he/she try it.

Some infants may focus on one toy only. Help the infant focus on the sound-making toys by putting away other materials. Too many playthings in an area can be distracting for infants.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Describe the toy the infant selects. Example: “You picked up the orange bird!” ■ Place the materials on a low surface if the infant prefers to stand.

Enrichment ■ Draw attention to differences in the sounds of two toys.
Cognitive

Exploring Objects (continued)

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills
An older infant engages in guided play with a pop-up toy.

Key Concepts
Push
Down
Come back
Pop up

Materials Needed
Infant pop-up toy

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

BEGIN: [Invite a mobile infant to play with the pop-up toy. Sit on the floor facing the infant. Begin with the push-down items in an “up” position. The description below uses a teddy bear pop-up toy as an example.]

EXPLAIN: The little bears go into the boxes if we push them down.

[Demonstrate with one of the little bears. Emphasize the words “push” and “down.”]

We can make a bear come back by pushing this button.

[Demonstrate by pushing a button and describing how the bear came back. Repeat your demonstration of pushing down a bear and then pushing a button for the bear’s return if the infant seems unclear about what happened.]

ACT: [Encourage the infant to push down a bear. Provide another demonstration only if necessary. Describe and demonstrate the “return” button if necessary. Offer a little cheer when the bear pops up.]

Describe the infant’s actions. Example: “Amari, you pushed the bear into his house.”

Recognize the infant’s awareness of how the toy works. Example: “You really know how to push the button. The little teddy bear pops up every time!”

RECAP: [Describe what happened. Example: “You pushed on the teddy bears and made them all go down into their houses. Then you pushed buttons and the teddies popped out!”]

What to Look For—Option 3

Look for and enthusiastically acknowledge the infant’s discovery of how the pop-up toy works. The pop-up mechanism provides immediate and satisfying reinforcement for the infant’s emerging awareness of cause-and-effect actions with the toy. Some infants may clap their hands or vocalize after pushing down a bear or figuring out how to make the bear pop up. Emphasize cause-and-effect connections in your opening demonstration. Example: “First I push the button down. Next, the bear pops out!” But ensure the infant is in control of his/her discovery of how to manipulate the toy. An infant may look to you
**Option 3 continued**

for help. You may wish to offer another demonstration or simply reassure the infant that he/she can figure it out.

**More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3**

**Extra support**  If an infant has difficulty using one hand, suggest he/she try the other hand.

**Enrichment**  Encourage the infant to push down two or three of the items, so most or all are down before pushing the release button for each.

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**Interest Area**

**Materials needed:** 3 books per child, infant bells or shakers, pop-up toy, musical chime

Place several infant bells or shakers on the floor. Infants will enjoy moving the rattles and hearing the sounds. Small rattles on a blanket may interest younger infants. Depending upon infants’ ages, use wrist rattles or larger rattles infants can spin.

Place a variety of sound makers on a mat or rug for infants to discover. Seeing beads inside a clear rattle can support an early mobile infant’s developing awareness of cause and effect in shaking the rattle.

Older infants who have participated in Option 3 will enjoy exploring the pop-up toys on their own. On another day, attach a musical chime to a steady handrail for infants to tug to hear a tune.

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**Family Child Care**

**Materials needed:** heavy-duty quart- or gallon-size zip plastic bag, light corn syrup (or clear hair gel), food coloring, several beads and items, duct tape

A bag similar to the water mat can be easily made for toddlers and preschool-age children. Children will enjoy squeezing the bags and watching items move as colors combine and change. If possible, make a bag for each toddler and preschool-age child. Ask children to sit at a table with you when using the bags to prevent leaks.

Here is one option for making a bag: Pour 1/3 cup light corn syrup (or clear hair gel) into a heavy-duty quart- or gallon-size zip plastic bag. Add two drops yellow food coloring. Next, add one drop of red or blue food coloring to the bag. Place several beads or other items inside the bag. Close the bag, removing most of the air. Place the bag into a second identical bag. Rotate the first bag so the openings of the two bags are on opposite sides. Secure the outer bag with duct tape.
**BEGIN:** [Hold a non-mobile infant in your arms with his/her head well supported in the bend of your arm, ensuring the infant can clearly see you.]

*Smile and encourage the infant to make eye contact with you.*

**ACT:** I am smiling at you! Do you see my face?

[Pause and acknowledge the infant’s response. Example: “You are looking at me! You can see that I am smiling at you. Now you are smiling too!”]

I am going to make a silly noise! You can listen to the sound I make. You can watch my mouth make the sound.

[Make a soft “raspberry” sound with your mouth and lips while maintaining eye contact with the infant. Describe the infant’s response. Example: “You are smiling so big! I think you like the silly sound I made. Do you want me to make the sound again?” If the infant remains engaged, repeat the raspberry sound.]

Depending on the infant’s reaction, you may wish to vary the sounds that you make, such as changing your tone or volume. Some infants may move their lips in an attempt to copy you. Others may enjoy watching and listening.

Listen closely for any vocalizations the infant makes in response to your actions. Acknowledge and imitate each vocalization. Example: “I hear you making a cooing sound. I am going to make a cooing sound, too!”

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest, such as looking elsewhere.

**RECAP:** [Smile and make eye contact with the infant as you describe what happened. Example: “You watched my face. You listened to me make sounds. Then I copied some of your sounds! We had fun together.”]
Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration
An infant practices focusing on novel sounds and facial expressions made by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch
Listen

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to hear and watch some silly things. Sit across from the infant, who may prefer to stand facing you. Greet the infant by extending both of your hands as an invitation to hold the infant’s hands. Draw attention to your big smile. Example: “Good morning, Joaquin! I am happy to see you today. Do you see my face? I am smiling.”

Announce that you are going to make a silly noise. Example: “I am going to make a silly noise. You can listen to the sound I make!” Make a soft “raspberry” sound. Pause after the sound to acknowledge and describe the infant’s reaction. Example: “You listened to the silly sound I made! You are smiling at me. I think you liked the sound. Would you like me to make another silly sound?” Explain that you are using your mouth and lips to make the silly sounds. Some infants may watch your mouth and lips closely, and others may attempt to imitate you. If the infant remains engaged, repeat several more raspberry sounds that vary in tone and volume. Acknowledge the infant’s responses, particularly any vocalizations. Example: “You are moving your mouth and making sounds. You are watching and listening to me. You are making sounds too!”

If the infant continues to remain visually engaged, repeat a raspberry sound immediately followed by a silly face. Comment on how the infant is watching and listening to you. Offer a second raspberry sound followed by a silly face if the infant seems interested.

Imitate any silly sound or face the infant makes. Draw attention to how you are doing what the infant did.

Conclude the activity when the infant begins to lose interest or you anticipate the silly actions may be overstimulating. Acknowledge the infant’s focus during the activity. Example: “We had fun watching each other, Luciana. You watched me smile. You listened to my silly sounds. You made sounds too! Thank you for playing with me.”

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Watch the infant’s interest in the activity to determine how much to change your silly sounds and how long to sustain the activity. Repeatedly acknowledge the infant’s attention to your sounds and face, as suggested in the activity descriptions. Imitating the infant’s sounds and/or facial expressions is a clear way to show you are fully engaged with the infant and supports responsive interactions. Ensure the activity is enjoyable for each infant by keeping your expressions and sounds pleasant and silly. The length of the activity is likely to differ significantly across infants.
More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support  ■ Point to your mouth when you explain that your mouth is making the silly sounds.
■ Adapt your approach if you anticipate the activity may be overstimulating to an infant. Make sounds that are soft and lower in tone, offer several sounds only, and offer facial expressions without sounds in the second segment of Option 2.

Enrichment  ■ Encourage the infant to make his/her own sounds during the activity. Acknowledge and imitate any vocalizations.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: large mirror

Sit in front of a large mirror with 1–3 infants. Describe what the infants are seeing. Example: “You are looking at Sara. That is you in the mirror! Look, you are smiling. Your face in the mirror is smiling!” Make some of the silly sounds offered in the activity options. Point to and describe how the sounds come from your mouth. Encourage the infants to watch your mouth and lips in the mirror. Have fun with the infant exploring different sounds and faces in the mirror.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several paper towel tubes

Children of all ages enjoy making different silly sounds. Introduce the paper tubes and demonstrate how speaking or making silly noises into the tube can change the sound. Invite interested children and toddlers to talk into a tube. Talk with children about what they hear. Infants and young toddlers will enjoy listening to the sounds of their older peers.
**BLOCK 10**

**Interacting with Others**

**Birth–12 Months**

**Option 1**

**One-to-One**

- **Skill and Goal**
  - **Social interaction skills**
  - A young infant goes on a tour of the room in a caregiver's arms to greet and hear the names of some other infants.

- **Key Concepts**
  - Name

- **Materials Needed**
  - None

- **Also Promotes**
  - Communication/Language

Hold an infant securely in your arms so he/she can see into your room (not on his/her back, looking up). Take a brief tour to meet several other infants in your room. Focus on infants who are alert and engaged in an activity. Emphasize that everyone has a name. Introduce the infant you are carrying to the infant engaged in an activity. Example: “This is James. He is having a snack. James, this is Samantha. She is going around our room to meet some friends today.” Wave at the infant engaged in the activity without compromising your firm hold on the infant in your arms. Walk slowly so the infant has a good chance to look at people and activities in your setting. As you walk to meet another infant, talk about activities or people or objects the infant seems to be looking at. Conclude the tour with a brief summary of who the infant met and what they were doing.
Invite several infants to join you for a hello song. Explain that we are going to sing a song about each of us. Begin by pointing to an infant in the gathering and saying his/her name. Example: “This is Makayla. Let’s all wave hello to Makayla!” For each infant in the gathering, offer a big smile and wave of your hand as you sing the following words to a tune of your choice:

Hello, (child’s name).
Hello, (child’s name).
Hello, hello, hello!

Encourage infants to participate by waving to the named peer, saying “hello,” and/or singing along. Acknowledge different forms of infant participation in this brief session, including watching you and others.
Inviting 4–5 infants to help you find an infant in a small gathering. Say the name of an infant in the gathering and ask where the infant is. Example: “Do you see Ethan? Where is Ethan?” Encourage infants to point to the named peer and for the named peer to wave hello with his/her hand. You may wish to demonstrate waving hello in the first or second “finding” of an infant. Offer a big smile and enthusiastic response to “finding” the infant you name. Example: “Here is Ethan! We found Ethan! Ethan is waving hello to us!”

Immediately after an infant is “found,” encourage infants to say the name of the child. Example: “Who did we just find?” Lead infants in saying the name. Emphasize that we are saying names. Example: “Ethan is the name of our friend. Everyone has a name.”

After all infants in the gathering have been “found,” say your name as someone to find. Example: “Where is Miss Becky? Do you see Miss Becky?” If this request seems especially puzzling to some infants, promptly wave your hand and repeat your name. Example: “Here is Miss Becky. I am Miss Becky! I am waving to you!” Conclude the session by reminding infants that each of us has a name.

**What to Look For—Options 1–3**

The activity options promote the idea that each child has a name. Infants should not be expected to remember each name. The hello element of each option is a way to recognize the infant as well as the infant’s name.

The Option 1 tour of a room is a variation of a Block 1, Option 1 activity in which a caregiver describes parts of a room to an infant. In the current option, the caregiver walks with a young infant securely in his/her arms to meet some other infants in the room. Pay attention to what the infant seems to be looking at so your description focuses on the infant’s interest. Consistently say the name of other infants met during the brief tour. Young infants will not understand most of the words you say, but a repetitive routine of saying names can help support the infant’s general awareness that people have names.

In Option 2, infants will enjoy hearing their name in the song you offer and being the recipient of an enthusiastic hello wave. This option is a variation of a Block 6, Option 3 activity that invited infants to use a teddy bear to wave to a peer. The current version does not include a teddy bear and encourages infants to directly wave to a peer as part of a brief hello song. Anticipate different types of infant participation. Infants may want you to lead a second round of the song and waving. The first round of the activity may serve as a demonstration of what to do in a second round.
Anticipate that in Option 3, the named infant will be eager to identify himself/herself. An infant's self-regulation skills are at an early stage of development that does not support “sitting still” while others find you in the gathering. Look at other infants in the group when you ask the whereabouts of a specific child, and then look at the named child when his/her presence is identified. Some infants may not readily identify themselves, perhaps because their family calls them by a nickname not used in your room or the infant is still learning his/her name. Supportively remind the infant of his/her name. Also, many infants will not know the names of other infants in the gathering. Repeat the names of infants several times when each is “found.”

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

**Extra support** Reassure infants in Option 2 that we will sing hello to each infant in our gathering. In Option 3, stand near the named infant after he/she is identified, place your hand over the infant’s head, and repeat his/her first name.

**Enrichment** Combine Options 2 and 3 by offering Option 3 prior to Option 2. In this arrangement, saying hello to each child (Option 2) follows and reinforces the more challenging work of identifying a named infant (Option 3).

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**Interest Area**

**Materials Needed:** sheer scarves

Provide several scarves for older infants to use in “hiding” from a caregiver and peers. Say the child’s name when he/she removes the scarf from his/her face and encourage the infant to say his/her name.

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**Family Child Care**

**Materials Needed:** sheer scarf

Invite all the children in your care to participate in Option 3. Older toddlers and children may enjoy clapping to the simple rhythm during the song. After the song, invite one child at a time to hide under a scarf. Ask “Where is (name of child)?” Toddlers and older children can say their name as they remove the scarf. Infants and young toddlers will delight in playing this version of the *Peekaboo* game.
Using Our Hands

**Birth–12 Months**

**Option 1**

**One-to-One**

**Skill and Goal**

*Fine motor development*

A young infant engages in rattle play with a caregiver, with the opportunity to use two hands to reach for a rattle.

**Key Concepts**

Watch
Reach

**Materials Needed**

2 soft rattles

**Also Promotes**

Social-Emotional
Communication/Language

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Sit on the floor facing an infant who is on his/her back, or place the infant on your lap so his/her back and head are fully supported by your body. Hold one of the rattles where the infant can easily see it. Slowly move the rattle to one side and then to the opposite side. Talk with the infant about the rattle. Depending upon level of development, some infants may watch the rattle, and some infants may attempt to reach for the rattle. Describe the infant’s actions. Example: “You reached for the rattle with both hands.”

Hold the rattle near the middle of the infant’s chest with both of your hands. Encourage the infant to reach for the toy. Touching or grasping the toy may be exciting for the infant. The infant may kick his/her legs in excitement. Typically an infant who can grasp a rattle will bring the rattle to his/her mouth for discovery.

Look for and describe instances of the infant using both hands to reach for or grasp the rattle. If the infant grasps the rattle in one hand and makes no attempt to use both hands at the same time with the rattle, offer a second rattle for the hand the infant is not using to hold the first rattle. This provides an opportunity for the infant to use both hands at the same time, each one for a different object.

Conclude the activity when the infant begins to lose interest or show fatigue. Positively acknowledge the infant’s actions with the rattle(s).

**What to Look For—Option 1**

About four months of age, many infants begin reaching for an object with both hands at the same time. This may or may not occur in the current activity option. Offering a second rattle potentially supports the infant’s use of two hands at the same time. The infant may drop the first rattle to hold the second rattle in the same or other hand. Holding two rattles, one in each hand, is more challenging for the infant to manage than coordinating two hands to hold one rattle. It is beneficial for the infant to direct his/her exploration of the rattle. Do not use your hand to position the infant’s hand on a rattle. Bring the activity to a close if the infant is getting tired or overstimulated. Help an infant feel calm by repositioning or holding the infant while talking with a quiet voice.
More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

**Extra support** If the infant does not reach for the rattle when you initially present it, lightly touch the rattle to the infant’s hand. Recognize that the infant may prefer to watch you manipulate the rattle.

**Enrichment** In a later offering of this activity, provide a rattle of a different texture or size than provided for the first experience.
Using Our Hands (continued)

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Be Prepared: Place one doll (or soft animal) in each of the containers, which serve as pretend beds in the activity.

Sit on the floor close to 2–3 infants who are able to sit with or without support. Explain that we are pretending to take care of some babies. The babies are sleeping in their beds. Give each infant a pretend bed with a doll in it. Point to the dolls and pretend beds as you describe each. Pointing is important because the infants will not understand many of the words you use.

 Invite the infants to remove the dolls from their pretend beds. Example: “Our babies are waking up! We need to take the babies out of their beds.” Demonstrate using two hands to gently take the dolls from their beds.

Next, invite the infants to give their baby a good morning hug. Demonstrate how to give the doll a hug with both of your arms while enthusiastically saying “good morning!” Encourage the infants to hug their doll with two arms.

Finally, explain that our babies are getting tired. It is time to go to bed. Example: “It is night night time. We put our babies in their beds.” Demonstrate how to use two hands to gently put the doll in a pretend bed. Encourage the infants to put their doll in the pretend bed.

Describe the infant’s efforts with your requested actions. Emphasize use of both hands. Example: “Andre, you are using two hands to hold your baby doll.”

What to Look For—Option 2

It will be much easier for an infant to manage the doll by using both hands. Demonstrating how to put the babies to bed may not be necessary. Use the activity plan flexibly, so infants can include their interests in caring for a baby doll. Some infants may enjoy laying down on the floor with the doll to pretend to sleep and wake up.

If infants remain close to you at the end of the activity, extend the play by suggesting that we help the babies dance. Demonstrate using both hands to move a toy doll from side to side.
More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Assist an infant in managing the box and doll. Example: Hold the sides of the box to provide guidance on where the doll is to go.

Enrichment ■ Offer pretend bottles to older infants for feeding their doll. Demonstrate how to pat the doll’s back after the infant feeds the bottle to the doll.
Birth–12 Months
Option 3
One-to-One

BEGIN: [Sit on the floor close to an infant who is able to balance in a sitting position. Offer the infant a ball.]

Here is a ball for you! You can hold the ball with two hands.

ACT: [Describe the infant’s actions with and responses to the ball. Example: “I see you smiling and patting the ball with two hands. Your hands make a little sound when you pat the ball!”

Provide time for the infant to explore the ball on his/her own. Then create an opportunity for the infant to reach with both hands by beginning a little game of handing the ball back and forth.]

May I have the ball?

[Hold your hands out toward the infant. If the infant does not hold the ball toward you, he/she may not understand the game of passing it back and forth. If the infant is willing, take the ball and hold it for a moment and then pass it back.

Use a cheerful voice to announce the exchange. Example: “Mr. Brendon holds the ball. Next, Mikal holds the ball!” Lead the game of passing back and forth several times.]

You got ahold of our big ball with two hands.

[If the infant remains interested in moving the ball, explain that you will roll the ball. Encourage the infant to get the ball with both hands.

Describe the infant’s reaction, including how he/she connects with the ball. Example: “You got the ball.”

Continue a back-and-forth interaction with the infant. If the infant enjoys getting ahold of the rolling ball, roll it to him/her a few more times. Some infants may be more comfortable handing the ball back and forth to you.]

RECAP: [Describe what happened, especially any uses of both hands with the ball. Example: “You held our ball with two hands. We handed the ball back and forth. You got the rolling ball with two hands.”]

What to Look For—Option 3

In addition to the opportunity to use two hands, this activity option offers an important element of handing the ball back and forth. The turn-taking pattern of the game is comparable to turn-taking the infant experiences when you talk with him/her and wait for a response. A ball rolling toward the infant may be very exciting! As the ball rolls toward the infant, he/she has the cognitive
Option 3 continued

challenge of figuring out how and when to reach for it. Let the infant deal with this problem-solving task. Avoid using the activity as instruction in rolling and catching a ball.

Some infants will be happy to hand the ball back and forth. An infant may not wish to release a ball when he/she first receives it, at least initially. An infant may tap or slap the ball as part of his/her exploration. Remain close and give the infant time to explore the ball independently. Gently reintroduce the idea of handing the ball back and forth by describing and demonstrating what you mean. Positively accept that some infants may not be interested in this plan!

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If the ball rolls away, return it to an infant who does not have the skills to get the ball on his/her own. ■ If the infant has difficulty grasping the ball, use a smaller or softer ball. ■ Help an infant roll a ball to you by sitting closer to the infant.

Enrichment ■ Increase the space between you and the infant so a rolled ball travels further from you to the infant. ■ For a mobile infant, roll the ball away from the infant and encourage him/her to move toward it.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: balls, lightweight sensory tubes, teddy bears and dolls, books
Infants engaged in tummy time will enjoy simply looking at balls placed near them. Balls of several sizes can be displayed where infants can easily reach them.
Provide play materials that infants will enjoy exploring and holding with two hands, such as lightweight sensory tubes or long narrow toys.
Arrange teddy bears and dolls in the boxes used in Option 2 for continued play. To support Option 3, place a ball next to a book opened to a bold picture of a ball.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: ball, bin of infant snap-link beads
Encourage mobile infants and toddlers to manipulate and hold items with two hands. During play periods, sit with children to roll a ball to them. Preschool- and school-age children will enjoy the challenge of carrying one or two items on a tray. Toddlers will enjoy carrying a small container with non-breakable objects inside, such as a bin of infant snap-link beads.