



**Communication/  
Language**

**Exploring Words**

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on wind.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing that includes a follow-up opportunity to draw something blowing in the wind.
- Option 3** (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing that includes a follow-up opportunity to make pretend rain in a water table activity.



**Cognitive**

**Exploring Objects**

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers practice naming pictured items of familiar clothing and talk about where and when different types of clothing are worn.
- Option 2** (OO) A toddler practices naming actual items of familiar clothing, with opportunities to talk about where and when clothing items are worn.
- Option 3** (OO) A toddler helps a caregiver put clothing items on a toy doll or teddy bear and talks with a caregiver about the names of clothes and parts of a body they go on.



**Self-Regulation**

**Focusing and Remembering**

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers observe a game of freeze.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers participate in a game of freeze with caregiver guidance.
- Option 3** (IG) Toddlers participate in a game of freeze with minimal caregiver guidance.



**Social-Emotional**

**Interacting with Others**

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on how children around the world are alike in many ways.
- Option 2** (OO) A toddler participates in a book sharing, with a follow-up opportunity to use a handheld mirror to explore facial features and expressions.
- Option 3** (IG) Toddlers draw a picture of self.



**Physical/Health**

**Using Our Hands**

- Option 1** (OO) A toddler shakes a sound-making object, with guided practice in starting and stopping shaking movements.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers move shakers during a song, including opportunities to stop movement of the shaker when the song ends.
- Option 3** (IG) Toddlers start and stop shaking a shaker while listening to different songs.

(OO)=One-to-One, (IG)=Informal Gathering



## 12–24 Months

### Option 1 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

**Receptive language**  
**Expressive language**

Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on wind.



#### Key Concepts

Wind



#### Materials Needed

*Wind* by Carol Thompson



#### Also Promotes

Cognitive

**BEGIN:** *[Invite several toddlers to join you to read a book. Show the cover of the book. Point to specific images on the cover when discussed.]*

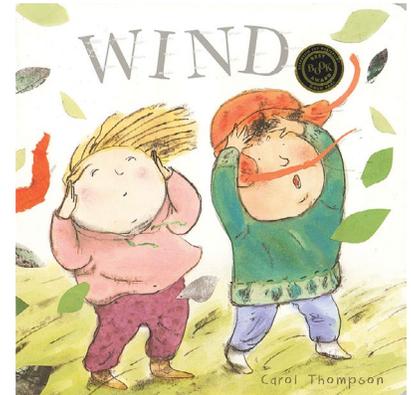
Our book is about a windy day.

**ASK:** What is happening in this picture that tells us it is a windy day?

*[Follow-up prompt, if needed:  
“What do we see?”*

*Pause for toddlers to respond.*

*Repeat and expand comments. If not mentioned by toddlers, point out the leaves blowing around, a child’s hair being blown, and a child holding onto a hat that is being blown by the wind.]*



**EXPLAIN:** Our book is called *Wind*. Our book uses some fun words to tell us about wind.

**ACT:** *[Open the book. Hold the book close to the toddlers. Follow the words with your finger as you read. Below are strategies for engaging toddlers in the book:*

- *Emphasize fun word sounds and invite toddlers to imitate some of the words. Examples: “The girl says ‘wheeee!’ Let’s all say ‘wheeee’ like the little child in our book.” “The wind says ‘swoosh.’ Let’s all say ‘swoosh’ together!”*
- *Point to and describe pictures. Example: “Look at the little boy’s hat! The wind snatched the hat away. The wind is blowing the hat.”*
- *Expand on the book text and ask specific questions to strengthen toddlers’ understanding of the story. Example: “The boy is holding onto his hat. What do you think would happen if he let go?”*
- *Respond to toddlers’ comments and pointing by repeating and extending their responses and words. Example: “Wyatt, you are smiling and pointing to the dog. The dog’s fur is blowing in the wind! This is a silly picture.”*



## **Option 1 continued**

- *Connect the book information to toddlers' experiences with wind. Ask about trying to walk outside or watch things blow around on a windy day.*
- *Read enthusiastically and vary your voice to add a dynamic quality.]*

**RECAP:** The words in our book told us about a windy day. The wind swooshed and soared! The pictures helped us understand the story. The wind blew the children's hair and snatched a hat! What else did the wind blow in our story?

### What to Look For—Option 1

Toddlers will enjoy the interesting words and whimsical illustrations in this book. Many toddlers will likely repeat some of the words with you; others may prefer to watch and listen. Spend more time on pictures that seem to be of special interest to toddlers.

### More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

**Extra support** ■ Invite toddlers to repeat the “shhh” quietly on the last page of the book. Example: “The wind says ‘shhh.’ The wind stopped blowing. Let’s quietly say ‘shhh.’” ■ A toddler who is especially interested in the book may like to look at the book again with you in a one-to-one situation.

**Enrichment** ■ Invite toddlers to raise their arms and pretend to sway in the wind. ■ Encourage toddlers to look closely at a picture to find less prominent images. Example: “This is a bird flying in the wind. Can you find what else in our picture is flying in the wind?”

## 12–24 Months

### Option 2 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

Receptive language  
Expressive language

Toddlers participate in a book sharing that includes a follow-up opportunity to draw something blowing in the wind.



#### Key Concepts

Wind



#### Materials Needed

*Wind* by Carol Thompson  
Crayons  
Large sheet of paper  
Masking tape

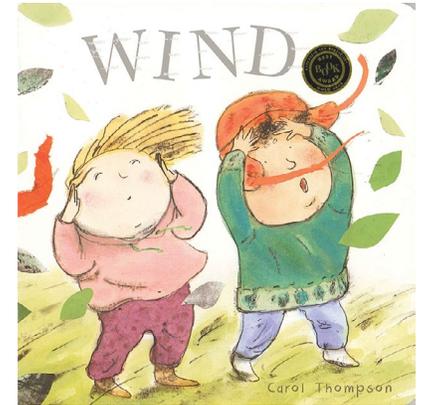


#### Also Promotes

Cognitive  
Physical/Health

**Be Prepared:** Tape the paper to a low table.

Invite several toddlers to join you to read a book. Read the story, emphasizing the words that describe the wind. Invite toddlers to repeat some of the words with you. Example: “This word is ‘swoosh.’ Let’s have fun saying ‘swoosh’ together.” Use strategies suggested in Option 1 for sharing the book.



At the conclusion of the story, invite toddlers to the low table covered with paper. Make crayons available. Encourage toddlers to pretend the white paper is the sky. We can draw things on the paper that are being blown by the wind. Offer suggestions from the book of things blown by the wind. Show book illustrations if toddlers seem confused by your specific suggestions, but do not encourage toddlers to copy what is shown in the book. Encourage toddlers to draw what they wish. Talk with toddlers about their marks on the paper. Make reference to the story, if possible. Example: “You’re drawing the dog’s ears. The wind made the dog’s ears stand up!” Print a simple title on the paper (such as *A Windy Day*) and display the paper on a wall for the day.

### 👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

The drawing segment of the activity is likely to be brief for some toddlers and involve marks that are not recognizable images. These are developmentally appropriate expectations of a drawing activity at this age. Remember that marks are meaningful. The drawing opportunity supports (1) the cognitive tasks of reflecting on and representing a specific aspect of the story or some other experience, and (2) the fine motor task of holding and manipulating a drawing tool. Some toddlers may not be interested in drawing with the crayons and may leave the activity. Others may enjoy making marks as you talk with them about the story or their experiences with wind and their actions with the crayons. See the Option 1 What to Look For description regarding the book reading segment of the activity.

### 📊 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

**Extra support** ■ If a toddler seems unsure how to use the crayons, demonstrate making several simple marks on the paper. Example: “I am making lines on the paper with my crayon. All of us can make marks on the paper with our crayons.”

***Option 2 continued***

**Enrichment** ■ Make marks or a very simple drawing with the crayons alongside toddlers without suggesting that they copy your work. Talk about your efforts as a springboard to encouraging toddler talk. Example: "I am drawing a hat. The hat is orange, like the hat in our book. The hat is blowing in the wind! What are you drawing?"

## 12–24 Months

### Option 3 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

**Receptive language**  
**Expressive language**

Toddlers participate in a book sharing that includes a follow-up opportunity to make pretend rain in a water table activity.



#### Key Concepts

Rain



#### Materials Needed

*Rain* by Carol Thompson  
Several large foam sponges  
Water table or tub with water



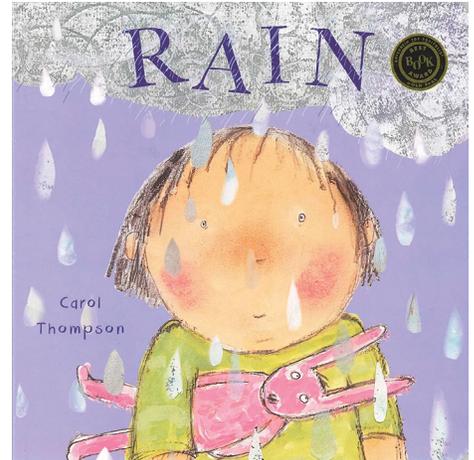
#### Also Promotes

Cognitive  
Physical/Health

**Be Prepared:** Put 2–3 inches of warm water in the water table or tub.

Invite several toddlers to read a silly book about a rainy day. The strategies described below can help toddlers understand the story and expand their understanding of words:

- Emphasize words that describe the sounds of raindrops. Invite toddlers to repeat some of the words with you. Example: “The raindrops say ‘plip, plop.’ ‘Plip, plop’ is fun to say! Let’s all say ‘plip, plop’ together!”
- Encourage toddlers to describe what they see in pictures. Example: “What is the girl doing in the puddles?”
- Help toddlers connect the book information to their experiences. Example: In the book’s illustration of an umbrella, point out an umbrella that is available in your room.
- Ask questions that encourage toddlers to anticipate what happens next in the story. Example: “Uh oh, it is starting to rain on the girl! She looks surprised. What do you think the girl is going to do next?”
- Repeat and extend a toddler’s comments. Example: A toddler says “rain!” and a caregiver says, “Yes, it is raining on the girl in our book! The raindrops are saying ‘drip, drop.’”



At the conclusion of the story, invite the toddlers to make rain at the water table. Demonstrate how to squeeze a sponge to make “rain.” Remind toddlers we keep the water inside our table. Give each toddler a sponge and encourage toddlers to explore the sponges in the water. Talk with toddlers about their explorations and describe their actions. Example: “Christopher is squeezing the sponge and watching the water drip down!” Draw attention to the sounds of “rain” hitting water in the table. Example: “What do we hear?”

### What to Look For—Option 3

This enjoyable book and follow-up activity directly connect to the Block 8 Cognitive activity plan focused on watching and making water move. During the water segment of the activity, look for signs of “we know about squeezing sponges!” and help toddlers recall prior experiences with sponges in water.

## Option 3 continued

The unique opportunity of the current option is to pretend the water is rain, and to represent parts of the story through the sensory experience of making raindrops.

Look for ways to help toddlers connect the water experiences to the book. Use some of the words offered in the book, such as “plip,” “plop” and “splash.” You also may wish to talk with toddlers about how the water feels, such as “wet” or “cold.” Some toddlers will enjoy working with the sponges, and others may use their hands to explore the water and maybe make raindrops by cupping their hands or letting water flow through their fingers. Positively acknowledge all ways of making raindrops.

The book’s silly descriptions of the rain can enhance toddlers’ understanding of words, and the illustrations of the child playing in the puddles are likely to be familiar to toddlers. Some toddlers may repeat some of the words with you.

### More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

**Extra support** ■ Limit the number of toddlers who participate at the same time in water table explorations to facilitate use of space and materials. ■ Toddlers may enjoy extra time to explore the sponges in the water table or an opportunity to return to the water table at a later time.

**Enrichment** ■ Draw attention to some of the emotions shown in the book illustrations, such as the main character feeling happy, surprised, sad, and excited. Example: “The girl’s face looks sad in this picture. She may look sad because she is getting wet in the rain. I wonder if she will look sad in the picture on the next page.”



### Interest Area

**Materials Needed:** *Wind* by Carol Thompson, *Rain* by Carol Thompson, several age-appropriate crayons (such as Crayola® My First Palm Grip Crayons for ages 12 months and up), drawing paper

Look at and talk about illustrations in the books with several toddlers. The illustrations appear similar to crayon drawings and may encourage toddlers to make their own drawings on paper. Talk with toddlers about their drawings. If a toddler provides words to describe a drawing, ask if he/she would like you to write his/her words on the paper.



### Family Child Care

**Materials Needed:** *Rain* by Carol Thompson, water table, several large foam sponges

Involve older toddlers and preschool-age children in your setting with the Option 3 sensory activity at the water table. Children gathered at the table might like to take turns making raindrop sounds by squeezing their sponges and exploring what happens with slower versus faster squeezes.



## 12–24 Months

Option 1  
Informal Gathering

## Skill and Goal

## Object inquiry skills

Toddlers practice naming pictured items of familiar clothing and talk about where and when different types of clothing are worn.



## Key Concepts

Dressed  
Clothes



## Materials Needed

*Oliver West! It's Time to Get Dressed!* by Kelly Louise (author) and Rebecca Sinclair (illustrator)

or

*Getting Dressed with Lily and Milo* by Pauline Oud

or, if available

*Let's Get Dressed* by Caroline Jayne Church



## Also Promotes

Communication/Language

Revised: 6/30/2023

**UPDATE:** The book originally featured in this activity plan (*Let's Get Dressed* by Caroline Jayne Church) may be difficult to secure. Two additional book possibilities are now offered (see Materials Needed). The plan's suggested strategies for engaging children accommodate any of the books listed in Materials Needed.

**BEGIN:** *[Invite several toddlers to join you to talk about getting dressed. Point to the socks and shoes you are wearing. Example: "I put on these socks this morning when I got dressed. Then I put on these shoes. I put the socks and shoes on my feet. Let's all point to the shoes we are wearing today!"]*

*Encourage toddlers to point to their shoes. Then display the book cover.]*

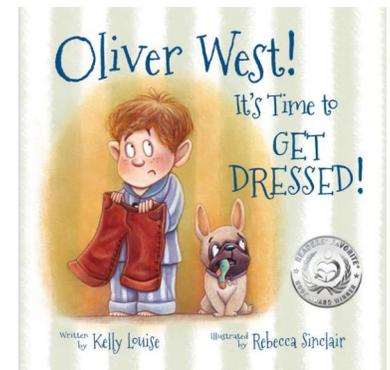
**ASK:** Let's look at the picture on the cover of our book.

*[Use questions to encourage children to talk about clothing items shown on the book cover and what the pictured child or animal is doing or might do with the clothing item. Examples:*

- *Louise and Sinclair book: "It looks like the boy is wearing his pajamas. What is he holding in his hands?" "What do you think he'll do with the pants?" "What's in the dog's mouth?"*
- *Oud book: "There are pictures of a rabbit and a mouse on the cover of our book. Here are the rabbit's tall ears. Here is the mouse's tail. The rabbit's name is Lily. The mouse's name is Milo. What are Lily and Milo doing?"*
- *Church book: "What is the little boy doing?" "What does the teddy bear have on its paw?"*

**EXPLAIN:** Our book is called \_\_\_\_\_ (point to and say book title). All of us got dressed this morning. Let's find out if some of the types of clothes we are wearing today are shown in our book.

**ACT:** *[Open the book and hold it so each toddler can easily see the illustrations. Read the text with enthusiasm. Use your own words to describe illustrations. Adjust your descriptions in response to children's reactions. The strategies described below can help strengthen toddlers' understanding of different items of clothing and where the clothing is worn on our body.]*



**Option 1 continued**

- *Point to and say the name of items of clothing shown in the book. Encourage toddlers to repeat the name of the item with you. Describe where the item is worn on our body. Example: “These are socks. Socks go on our feet.”*
- *As part of discussing different types of clothes, encourage toddlers to point to the part of their body where the clothing item is worn. Ask whether toddlers are wearing this type of clothing today.*
- *Emphasize the book’s descriptions of how we put on a specific item of clothing, such as one leg at a time for pants, pulling up our pants, lifting up our arms to put on a dress or shirt.*
- *At the appropriate time in the book, discuss with children why it is important to be dressed to play outside or to wear a particular type of clothing, such as shoes.]*

**RECAP:** Our book today helped us talk about the clothes we wear and where we put different types of clothes on our body. Let’s all point to where we would wear a hat on our body. What do we call this part of our body? (our head)

** What to Look For—Option 1**

This activity involves a number of cognitive challenges in identifying and understanding where and when different types of clothing are worn. Two strategies included in the activity description—inviting toddlers to say whether they are wearing the same type of clothing today and pointing to where the type of clothing is worn on their body—are aimed at helping toddlers connect a clothing item to their experiences and understandings. The strategies help make the activity meaningful to toddlers. The suggested approach in the opening segment (drawing attention to your socks and shoes) is another way to support meaningful learning. Keep in mind that families may use clothing item names that differ from those included in the book (sneakers, sandals, shoes). Help toddlers learn different names for similar types of clothing.

Many toddlers will recognize familiar clothing items and may know some or all of the item names. Others may recognize an item and look to you to provide the item’s name. Encourage toddlers to repeat the name of each clothing item the boy puts on. Toddlers who prefer to watch and listen will benefit from hearing names of the clothing items.

** More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

**Extra support** ■ Invite toddlers to point to their socks (when you invite them to point to their shoes) if all toddlers are wearing socks. ■ Invite toddlers to take turns pointing to an item of clothing shown in the book that you name. You may wish to approach this in steps, such as: “Is there a picture of a sock on this page? Where is it?”

**Enrichment** ■ Invite toddlers to take turns pointing to and saying what part of our body is connected to a particular clothing item. ■ Invite toddlers to compare some of the clothes they are wearing. Example: “Let’s look at the socks each of us is wearing today. Are any of us wearing the same color of socks?”



## 12–24 Months

### Option 2 One-to-One



#### Skill and Goal

##### Object inquiry skills

A toddler practices naming actual items of familiar clothing, with opportunities to talk about where and when clothing items are worn.



#### Key Concepts

Clothes



#### Materials Needed

Box or bin

Clothing items (see Be Prepared)

*Oliver West! It's Time to Get Dressed!* by Kelly Louise (author) and Rebecca Sinclair (illustrator)

or

*Getting Dressed with Lily and Milo* by Pauline Oud

or, if available

*Let's Get Dressed* by Caroline Jayne Church



#### Also Promotes

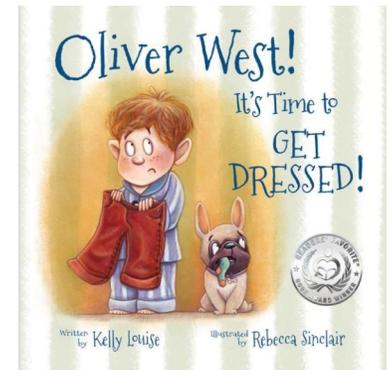
Communication/Language

Revised: 6/30/2023

**UPDATE:** The book originally featured in this activity plan (*Let's Get Dressed* by Caroline Jayne Church) may be difficult to secure. Two additional book possibilities are now offered (see Materials Needed). The plan's suggested strategies for engaging a child in the activity accommodate any of the books listed in Materials Needed.

**Be Prepared:** Secure clothing items (shirt, pants, socks, etc.) included in the book you chose for this activity. Also include some items worn during particular kinds of weather common to your area, such as mittens or rain hats. Place the items in the box/bin.

Invite a toddler to join you to look at and talk about pictures in a book and some clothes. Use the strategies suggested in Option 1 to engage the toddler with the topic. At the conclusion of the book, introduce the box of clothing items. Invite the toddler to pick an item from the box and say its name. Offer hints, if appropriate. Example: "You picked something that we wear on our legs. You are wearing them on your legs right now! Let's think hard about what they are called!" Promptly provide the name of the item if the toddler is unsure.



Depending on the toddler's interest and clothing knowledge level, add more discussion about the clothing by encouraging the toddler to say and point to where the type of clothing would be worn on his/her body, and whether he/she is wearing the type of clothing today. If a type of clothing item is worn during a particular kind of weather, talk with the toddler about how the clothing item is helpful (example: mittens keep our hands warm when it is cold outside). Engage the toddler in a discussion of when he/she wore a weather-related clothing item.

Continue discussion of toddler-selected clothing items as long as the toddler remains interested. It is not necessary to consider all items.

### 👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

Toddlers are likely to enjoy rummaging through the collection of clothing and picking an item that is familiar or somehow appealing. Engaging the toddler in a conversation about his/her use of a clothing item is an important part of the activity. Back-and-forth discussion deepens understanding and promotes vocabulary knowledge and use.

This activity increases the challenge of Option 1 by asking toddlers to say names of real clothing items. Approach the activity as a laid-back practice opportunity, not a test. It is not necessary for a toddler to use the clothing

**Option 2 continued**

item name introduced in the book. As suggested in Option 1's What to Look For section, families may use names of clothing that differ from what is offered in the book.

 **More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2**

**Extra support** ■ If the toddler seems unsure of what item to pull from the collection, select and display two items and ask if he/she would like to talk about one or both of these.

**Enrichment** ■ After several rounds of selecting and discussing clothing items, the toddler may enjoy switching roles, with you picking an item to name and talk about. ■ Encourage the toddler to find a picture in the book that shows an item similar to what he/she is holding. ■ Encourage the toddler to compare characteristics of the real clothing item and the same type of item pictured in the book or worn today by the toddler. What's the same? What's different?



## 12–24 Months

### Option 3 One-to-One



#### Skill and Goal

**Object inquiry skills**  
**Problem-solving**

A toddler helps a caregiver put clothing items on a toy doll or teddy bear and talks with a caregiver about the names of clothes and parts of a body they go on.



#### Key Concepts

Clothes



#### Materials Needed

Doll or teddy bear  
Doll-sized clothing (see Be Prepared)  
Bag



#### Also Promotes

Communication/Language  
Physical/Health

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**Be Prepared:** Secure doll-sized clothing items, such as shirt, pants, shoes, socks. Place the items in the bag.

Invite a toddler to help you put clothes on a toy doll (or teddy bear). Provide the doll and the bag of clothes. Invite the toddler to pull items of clothing from the bag and say the name of each. Promptly offer the item's name if the toddler does not say it, and encourage the toddler to repeat the name with you as both of you look at the clothing item. Ask the toddler where the item goes on the doll. If the toddler points to a body part without naming it, offer the name of the body part as the toddler points.

Talk with the toddler about whether some things should be put on the doll before other things. Example: socks are put on before shoes are put on. Encourage the toddler to recall how he/she gets dressed as part of a discussion about the sequence of clothing items.

Invite the toddler to help you dress the doll. Toddlers are not expected to manage putting the clothes on the doll, but will appreciate a specific part of the task that you offer. Example: You position the clothing item on the doll and the toddler takes the next step, such as putting the doll's arm through the sleeve of a shirt, or pulling on a sock that you position on the toes.

Talk with the toddler about the process of putting on the clothes. Connect to the toddler's experience. Example: "Sometimes it is hard to put a head through the hole in a shirt. Do you ever have trouble getting your head through the hole in a shirt?"

After the doll is dressed, invite the toddler to again point to and say the names of the clothes. Also, ask the toddler whether he/she is wearing the same kind of clothes today. If time and child interest permit, look at pictures of clothing items in the book. Invite the toddler to say the name of each and point to the same type of clothes on the doll, if available.

This activity is meant to be lighthearted, with a collaborative arrangement between you and the toddler during the doll dressing segment.

### What to Look For—Option 3

Watch the toddler's reactions to the activity to determine how much information to share. Toddlers differ in their level of interest in details. Some may respond enthusiastically to developmentally appropriate teaching strategies, such as the second Extra Support tip suggested below. Others may tune out this level of detail. Try to offer an appropriate amount of information

**Option 3 continued**

so the toddler's understanding of getting dressed is enhanced without risking information overload. Although you dress the doll in this activity, engaging the toddler in joint action with the doll dressing can promote problem-solving skills as the toddler considers how the clothing item is put on the doll. Problem-solving is also promoted with a discussion of the order in which clothing is put on.

 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

**Extra support** ■ During the opening review of clothes in the bag, make sure the items are clearly separated from one another so each item can be discussed without the distraction of another item.

■ Prior to dressing the doll, hold up the clothing item, point to and describe its characteristics (such as a hole in a shirt for our neck/head), and talk about how the item is best put on the doll (head before arms in a shirt).

**Enrichment** ■ Place additional clothing items in the bag, such as a diaper or underwear, coat, or hat.

 Interest Area

**Materials Needed:** *Oliver West! It's Time to Get Dressed!* by Kelly Louise (author) and Rebecca Sinclair (illustrator) **or** *Getting Dressed with Lily and Milo* by Pauline Oud **or, if available** *Let's Get Dressed* by Caroline Jayne Church; several dolls or teddy bears dressed in baby clothing, such as pants, shirts, dresses, pajamas, shoes, hats

Arrange the dressed dolls/bears in the housekeeping area. Invite toddlers to play with the dolls/bears. Talk with toddlers about clothing items each doll/bear is wearing. Toddlers may enjoy looking at the pictures in the book while they explore the clothing on the doll/bear they are playing with. Encourage toddlers to name the clothing items their doll/bear is wearing.

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 Family Child Care

**Materials Needed:** See Option 2 or 3

Preschool-age children may enjoy participating in Option 3, particularly the role of dressing the doll. Older toddlers may like to join younger toddlers in the Option 2 activity. Babies will enjoy holding a doll or bear during any of the options.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 1 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal Executive function

Toddlers observe a game of freeze.



#### Key Concepts

Listen  
Freeze



#### Materials Needed

Music  
Music player



#### Also Promotes

Cognitive  
Physical/Health

**Be Prepared:** Arrange for an adult to help you with the activity.

**BEGIN:** *[Invite several toddlers to watch a fun game.]*

We are going to learn a new game today! Our game is called the *Freeze Game*.

**EXPLAIN:** We can freeze our body by stopping what we are doing. We hold our body still when we freeze it.

*[Demonstrate moving around and then freezing your body in a still position. You may wish to make it silly. This should be a fun activity!]*

I am freezing my body. My body is not moving.

Let's say together the word freeze.

Our game has music! I am going to dance when I hear music. I am going to freeze my body when the music stops. I will listen carefully to the music so I know whether to dance or to hold my body still.

**ASK:** What part of our body helps us listen? (our ears)

*[Point to your ears.]*

**ACT:** *[Play music as you dance around for several seconds. Have another adult stop the music as your signal to freeze in place.]*

I had fun dancing! What did I do when the music stopped?

*[Pause for toddlers to respond. Repeat and expand their comments. Emphasize the word freeze.]*

I am going to play the game again! Please watch what I do when the music plays and when the music stops!

*[Move with enthusiasm and smile. Remember, toddlers do not care how you look when you dance.]*

**RECAP:** We learned about a new game today! You watched me dance when music was playing. You watched me freeze when the music stopped playing. I listened carefully with my ears. I listened to the music to know when to dance and when to freeze. This is a fun game!



## 12–24 Months

### Option 2 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

##### Executive function

Toddlers participate in a game of freeze with caregiver guidance.



#### Key Concepts

Listen  
Freeze



#### Materials Needed

Music  
Music player



#### Also Promotes

Cognitive  
Physical/Health

Invite several toddlers to play a game called the *Freeze Game*. Demonstrate what it means to freeze our body. Walk or dance around briefly and then hold your body still. Explain you are freezing your body. Invite toddlers to say the word freeze with you.

Explain that in the *Freeze Game*, we dance when the music plays and we freeze our bodies when the music stops. We listen carefully to know when to dance and when to freeze.

Invite toddlers to join you in playing the game. Example: “Now I am going to play the music. You can dance with me! We need to listen carefully to the music. We freeze our bodies when the music stops!”

Play the music and encourage toddlers to dance with you. Remind toddlers to be careful to not bump into each other. Offer verbal prompts. Examples: “We can hear the music. It is time for us to dance.” “Our music has stopped. That means it is time for us to freeze our bodies.”

Freeze in an exaggerated position when the music stops and encourage toddlers to do the same. Draw attention to what you are doing.

Play the game for several minutes if toddlers remain engaged.

Acknowledge toddlers’ efforts to listen to the music and remember what to do. Example: “We listened carefully to the music. We remembered to stop moving our bodies when the music stopped. This is a fun game to play together.”



**12-24 Months**

**Option 3**  
**Informal Gathering**



**Skill and Goal**  
**Executive function**

Toddlers participate in a game of freeze with minimal caregiver guidance.



**Key Concepts**

Listen  
Freeze



**Materials Needed**

Music  
Music player



**Also Promotes**

Cognitive  
Physical/Health

Invite several toddlers to play the *Freeze Game*. Explain how the game works. Example: “We dance when the music is playing. We freeze our bodies when the music stops.” Demonstrate a freeze by dancing about briefly and then holding your body still. Explain this is a freeze. Emphasize that we listen carefully to the music so we know when to dance and when to freeze.

Play the music and encourage toddlers to dance any way they wish without bumping into each other. Offer verbal support and/or demonstrate dancing and freezing if it appears toddlers need a reminder of what to do. Otherwise, provide minimal guidance so toddlers can practice remembering how to play the *Freeze Game*.

Continue the game for several minutes or until toddlers lose interest. Wrap up the activity by reminding toddlers that we worked hard to listen and freeze our bodies when the music stopped. The *Freeze Game* is fun!

**👁️ What to Look For—Options 1–3**

Look for opportunities to offer verbal support or demonstrations if it seems particularly challenging for a toddler to manage one or more of the three important aspects of self-regulation promoted in this simple game: paying attention to whether the music is playing, remembering what to do when the music plays and does not play, and holding our body in a still position. Having another adult help with the activity will enable you to fully monitor and help as needed.

Give more attention to freezing than to dancing because it is more challenging to hold still than to dance. Toddlers cannot be expected to freeze their bodies for more than several seconds, especially if balance is an issue.

Some toddlers may keep dancing after the music stops, and most toddlers will find it difficult to hold a freeze position. Maintain a flexible and lighthearted approach. Consistently acknowledge toddlers’ efforts and indicate that freezing our body takes a lot of practice.

**📈 More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3**

**Extra support** ■ When you describe what it means to freeze our body, encourage toddlers to practice moving and then freezing their body without music. ■ Provide carpet squares for toddlers to use in Options 2 and 3 to reduce the risk of bumping into each other. ■ If overexcitement is a concern, use slower music and demonstrate a dance that involves swaying your body. ■ Point out differences in our body positions during a freeze. Our bodies freeze in different ways because we all danced in different ways.



- Enrichment** ■ Play fast and then slow music and encourage toddlers to follow the tempo as they dance.  
■ Play the music for shorter periods of time between freeze points.



## Interest Area

**Materials Needed:** music, music player

Invite several toddlers to play the game by taking turns in dancing/freezing and managing the music. Participate enthusiastically with the toddlers as they play the game.



## Family Child Care

**Materials Needed:** music, music player

Children of all ages will enjoy the *Freeze Game*. Older children can offer examples for toddlers to imitate. Babies will enjoy watching the children dance when the music plays and freeze when the music stops. Invite older toddlers and children to take turns being in charge of turning the music on and off.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 1 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

##### Social interaction skills

Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on how children around the world are alike in many ways.



#### Key Concepts

Book  
Children  
Same



#### Materials Needed

*All Kinds of People* by  
Shelley Rotner & Sheila M.  
Kelly



#### Also Promotes

Communication/Language

**BEGIN:** [*Invite several toddlers to join you to read a book about children.*]

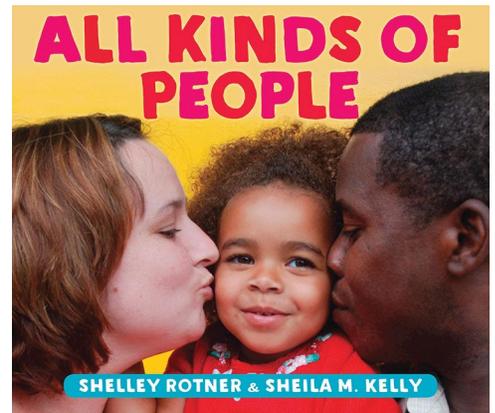
Our book has pictures of children. The children shown in our book live with their families in many different parts of the world. Some of the children in our book look different than children in our room or other children we know. The children shown in our book do many of the same things we do. They are like us in many ways.

**ASK:** [*Show cover of book.*]

- Let's look at this picture of a girl and her parents. What's happening in this picture?

[*Pause for toddlers to respond. Repeat and extend responses.*]

- I think the girl in our picture is smiling because her parents are kissing her. Do you get a kiss from your parent or other people in your home?



**ACT:** Let's open our book and talk about pictures of children.

[*Open the book and hold it so each toddler can easily see the pictures. Read the text or use your own words to describe pictures.*]

*Emphasize how activities shown in the illustrations are similar to some activities of children in your room. Examples: "The children in this picture are reading a book, just like we read a book. Do you think the children in our picture are reading a book we have read?" "You are pointing to the boys playing in the water, Angelo. The boys are having fun together. You like to play outside with your friends."*

*Point out familiar facial expressions and gestures. Example: "The children in this picture are smiling. These girls are waving hello. These boys are smiling at each other. I think the boys are friends. Do we smile and sometimes wave at children in our room?"*

*Draw attention to pictured children's characteristics that are similar to characteristics of some children in your room. Example: "Adeline is pointing to the picture of the boy who is wearing glasses. Adeline wears glasses, just like the boy in the picture."]*

**Option 1 continued**

**RECAP:** The children in our book do many of the same things we do. The children smiled. The children had friends. The children were kissed by their parents!

**👁️ What to Look For—Option 1**

Young children enjoy looking at pictures of other children. This book is an opportunity to support toddlers' early awareness of self and others. Toddlers will differ in how much attention they give to the clothing and skin color differences beautifully represented in this book. The important theme of this activity is that children around the world are alike in many ways. Cognitively, toddlers are not able to develop a concrete understanding of the world, although they may have lived in other parts of the world or have family members who visit or stay for long times in another part of the world. The pictures in this book can support a beginning appreciation of cultural differences.

**📈 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

**Extra support** ■ Some pictures will be of greater interest than other pictures. Use a book-reading pace that flows with toddlers' responses to the pictures.

**Enrichment** ■ Offer to look at the book again with toddlers who show particular interest in the pictures.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 2 One-to-One



#### Skill and Goal

##### Social interaction skills

A toddler participates in a book sharing, with a follow-up opportunity to use a handheld mirror to explore facial features and expressions.



#### Key Concepts

Face



#### Materials Needed

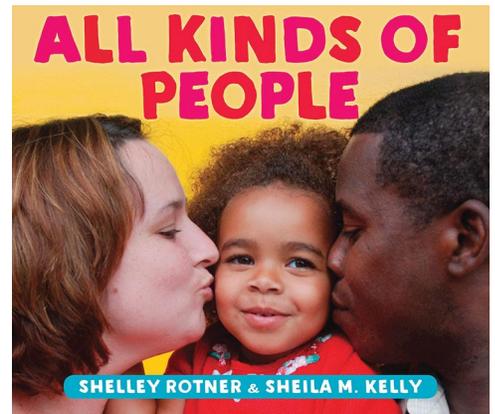
*All Kinds of People* by Shelley Rotner & Sheila M. Kelly  
Small handheld mirror



#### Also Promotes

Communication/Language  
Cognitive

Talk with the toddler about pictures in the book. Focus on facial features and expressions, especially smiles. Draw attention to ways the children’s faces are different and similar. After spending time with the book, offer the mirror to the toddler to hold and explore. Invite the toddler to look at his/her reflection and enthusiastically ask who the toddler sees. Encourage the toddler to say his/her name. Example: “Who do you see? (Pause for toddler to respond.) Yes, Carlos’ face is in the mirror!” Invite the toddler to look at his eyes, mouth, and hair in the mirror. Encourage the toddler to try smiling in the mirror, like the children in the book smiled. Close the session with a brief description of what the toddler did with the mirror. Example: “You saw yourself in the mirror! You knew the face in the mirror was you, Carlos! You looked at your eyes and your nose. You smiled, just like the children in the book smiled!”



### 👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

Recognizing their own image in a mirror is an important step in toddlers’ development of a sense of self. The toddler will likely enjoy the experience of holding a mirror and looking at his/her facial expressions and features. Some toddlers may have fun making silly faces. Look for opportunities to connect the toddler’s exploration of his/her face to the faces of children shown in the book. Use of a mirror requires eye-hand coordination and spatial skills. Your assistance may be needed. See Extra Support tip.

### 📈 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

**Extra support** ■ Demonstrate how to hold a mirror, especially the distance between mirror and face. Sit next to the toddler if he/she is having difficulty focusing the mirror on his/her face so you can provide verbal support and, if necessary, hands-on assistance.

**Enrichment** ■ Encourage the toddler to make different kinds of smiles, such as a big smile and a smaller smile. ■ Invite several toddlers to participate in the mirror activity. Give each toddler a mirror to hold and use to examine their reflections. Talk with the toddlers about their similarities and differences.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 3 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

##### Social interaction skills

Toddlers draw a picture of self.



#### Key Concepts

Face



#### Materials Needed

Pieces of white paper—1 per toddler

Crayons



#### Also Promotes

Communication/Language

Cognitive

Physical/Health



#### Optional Reading

*All Kinds of People* by Shelley Rotner & Sheila M. Kelly

Invite several toddlers at a time to a low table to draw a picture of himself/herself. You may wish to remind toddlers that our face has eyes, a nose, and a mouth. Also remind toddlers that there is hair on our head that they may wish to include in their drawing. Talk with toddlers about what they are drawing. Some toddlers may wish to include another person or special toy in the picture. This activity is likely to be very short for most toddlers. Positively acknowledge each toddler's effort to show what he/she looks like! Write names on the paper and post in your room (if possible). Or create a book that you make available for toddlers to enjoy.

### What to Look For—Option 3

This activity is about self-expression, not a finished picture. Emerging fine motor skills will lead to differences in the images and details toddlers include in their pictures. Toddlers are not expected to draw recognizable images, but the marks will be meaningful to the toddler and valuable to discuss. Some toddlers will be especially interested in securing specific colors of crayons to draw their eyes and hair.

### More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

**Extra support** ■ Encourage toddlers to share the drawing materials. Example: “Ellison, I can see that Maya is not done with the red crayon yet. Let’s ask her if you can have a turn with the red crayon when she is done!”

**Enrichment** ■ When toddlers are finished drawing, ask if they would like you to write down any words about their drawing (in addition to their name). ■ If you opt to create a book of the drawings, some toddlers may enjoy helping, such as decorating the book cover and choosing a ribbon color to bind the pages.



### Interest Area

**Materials Needed:** *All Kinds of People* by Shelley Rotner & Sheila M. Kelly, several age-appropriate mirrors

Arrange the book(s) and mirrors on a low table. Invite toddlers to explore the book(s) and their reflections in a mirror. Talk with toddlers about what they see as they look in the mirrors. Some toddlers may enjoy playing a game of mimicking one another's silly faces in the mirrors.



### Family Child Care

**Materials Needed:** Age-appropriate mirror for each baby, toddler, and child (or a large mirror for multiple children)

Children of all ages enjoy looking at their images in a mirror (Option 2). Invite children to play a copycat game of making faces in the mirrors. Invite an older child to make a face and encourage the group to attempt to imitate the face in their own mirrors. Give each interested child an opportunity to make a face for others to copy. Toddlers will enjoy watching their older peers making new faces as well as looking at their own reflections. Babies may imitate some simple facial expressions, such as sticking out their tongue or smiling. The copycat game can be done without mirrors too, although there is benefit in children seeing their own face in a particular expression.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 1 One-to-One



#### Skill and Goal

##### Fine motor development

A toddler shakes a sound-making object, with guided practice in starting and stopping shaking movements.



#### Key Concepts

Stop



#### Materials Needed

Transparent shakers—1 per toddler and caregiver



#### Also Promotes

Self-Regulation  
Communication/Language  
Cognitive

Sit facing one toddler who is holding his/her shaker. Encourage the toddler to move the shaker and listen to the beads move inside. Move your shaker in ways consistent with the toddler's movement of his/her shaker.

Explain: "We make sound when we move the shakers. We can hear the sound." Point to your ear when you mention hearing the shakers' sounds.

Next hold your shaker still with both hands. Encourage the toddler to make his/her shaker stop. In a soft voice explain: "Our shakers make no sound when we make them stop."

Depending on the toddler's reactions to the activity, repeat the shake-and-stop sequence or stand up for a lively shake-and-stop game. Whether you continue to sit or stand, move your body as you move the shaker. Stop moving and hold your position. Encourage the toddler to imitate your stop. Talk with the toddler about actions with the shakers, especially making a sound and stopping the sound.



### 👁️ What to Look For—Option 1

The activity provides a listening experience driven by actions with a shaker. Making the shaker move and stop moving are important parts of the activity. Some toddlers may be interested in watching the beads. Emphasize that the toddler's hand is making the shaker move and the beads move. The beads make the sound. Other toddlers may enjoy shaking without regard to what's inside the shaker or the sound it makes. See the Extra Support tip for how to respond to a toddler's continued shaking of a shaker.

The sound of some shakers may be annoying to some toddlers. If a toddler reacts adversely to the shaker, try other items that create a less harsh sound. Example: Make a softer sound using a ping-pong ball in a one-quart container. Some toddlers may enjoy the sound of dry sand shaking in a small container.

**Option 1 continued****More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

**Extra support** ■ Talk when the shaker is not making sounds, so your voice does not compete with the shaker sound. Talk softly. ■ Encourage a toddler to use his/her whole arm to shake the sound maker, and then to shake it with his/her hands. ■ If a toddler keeps shaking the shaker when you indicate it is time to stop, use a hand signal, such as putting up your open hand in a “stop” position, and repeat “we are stopping now” in a friendly voice. Do not take away or control the toddler’s shaker. The toddler may not be ready for shake-and-stop activities. More time with the shaker may be appropriate. Describe what the toddler is doing (versus not doing) with the shaker.

**Enrichment** ■ Offer a variety of sound makers. Draw attention to the different sounds. ■ Emphasize that we use our hand(s) to move the shaker.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 2 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

##### Fine motor development

Toddlers move shakers during a song, including opportunities to stop movement of the shaker when the song ends.



#### Key Concepts

Stop  
Start



#### Materials Needed

Shakers—1 per toddler and caregiver  
Recording of “Shake My Sillies Out” as written by Raffi Cavoukian



#### Also Promotes

Self-Regulation  
Communication/Language  
Cognitive

Invite toddlers to join you in an open space. Give each toddler a shaker. Invite toddlers to sit or stand. Encourage toddlers to start shaking their shakers when the recorded song is playing and stop shaking their shakers when the song stops. Emphasize that our hands are moving our shakers. Demonstrate shaking and especially stopping shaking. Put your shaker in your lap or hold it in both hands when you stop the shaking. Example: “Make the shaker hide on your lap. Cover it with your hands.” It will be helpful for toddlers to see your shaker move and stop. Sing or play the first verse of the song “Shake My Sillies Out.” Repeat if toddlers are interested.



### 👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

Some toddlers are likely to watch their peers more than you during the activity. For this reason, it is important to demonstrate how to stop moving our shakers before the song begins. Still, some toddlers may continue to shake their shakers after the song ends. View this as a signal that a toddler is not ready to engage in shake-and-stop actions at this time without additional support, and positively acknowledge the toddler’s efforts. Example: “You really like to shake your shaker! Now we are stopping our shakers. We can shake them again soon!” Refrain from taking or controlling the toddler’s shaker.

### 📈 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

**Extra support** ■ Invite a toddler to sit next to you for extra support. ■ Sing the song and encourage toddlers to make shaking motions without their instruments. ■ Provide carpet squares so each toddler understands where to sit.

**Enrichment** ■ Sing the simple words “Shake, shake, shake, shake, shake, and stop.” to the tune of “ABCD.” ■ For toddlers who want to continue, provide a variety of sound makers and repeat the activity. ■ Introduce and promote the combined actions of shake our head and shake our hand.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 3 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

##### Fine motor development

Toddlers start and stop shaking a shaker while listening to different songs.



#### Key Concepts

Stop  
Start



#### Materials Needed

Shakers—1 per toddler and caregiver



#### Also Promotes

Self-Regulation  
Communication/Language  
Cognitive

**Be Prepared:** Determine a simple, familiar song you can sing the first time toddlers are invited to shake their shakers to a song in this activity.

**BEGIN:** [*Sit on the floor with several toddlers.*]

Today we will make sounds with shakers.

[*Display and describe a shaker. Demonstrate how to make a sound with the shaker.*]

**ACT:** [*Give each toddler a shaker. If appropriate, acknowledge patience in waiting to receive a shaker.*]

*Lead children in shaking the shakers. It is not expected that toddlers will follow a uniform pattern in shaking.*

*Prominently hold your shaker to indicate you have stopped shaking your shaker. Ask toddlers to stop shaking their shakers.*]

**EXPLAIN:** We made a nice sound together by shaking our shakers. We used our hands to shake our shakers.

We can stop our shakers from making a sound.

Stop means the shaker does not move. Our shakers are quiet. We are not moving our hand.

**ACT:** Let's start shaking our shakers again. This time, I will sing a song while we move our shakers. Please stop shaking your shakers when I stop singing the song.

[*Sing a familiar song and lead toddlers in making a sound with their shakers.*]

*When you stop singing, hold your shaker prominently in front of you. Ask toddlers to stop shaking their shakers.*]

**EXPLAIN:** We made another nice sound together by shaking our shakers. We are learning how to stop shaking our shakers.

Let's put our shakers on the floor.

Please look inside your shaker. There are little beads in the shaker. The beads are not moving. The shaker is quiet when the beads are not moving.

**ASK:** Would you like to hear a new song?

**EXPLAIN:** I will sing a song that tells us to shake, shake, and then stop. Let's listen to the song.

**Option 3 continued**

[Sing the following song. Move your shaker each time you sing “shake” and hold your shaker prominently in front of you when you say “stop.”]

**Shake and Stop!**

[Tune: “ABCD”]

Shake, shake, shake, shake,

Shake, shake, shake.

Shake your shaker.

Shake and stop!

[Describe how you stopped shaking the shaker when the song said “stop.”]

**ACT:** I will sing the song again. This time, please shake your shaker with me. We can make a nice sound together!

[Sing the song while leading toddlers in moving their shakers. Again, hold your shaker in front of you when you say “stop.”]

We are learning to start shaking our shakers and then make them stop. Let’s try it again. I will sing our song again. We can say “stop” together when it is time to stop shaking our shakers. Remember to listen to the song so we know when to say “stop.”

[Point to your ear. Guide shaker sounds to start and stop as you sing the song. When it is time to stop, encourage toddlers to say “stop” together as they stop shaking their shakers. Repeat the song if toddlers want to continue.]

**RECAP:** We made sounds with our shakers. We are learning how to use our hand to shake and stop shaking our shakers.

**👁️ What to Look For—Option 3**

This activity is more challenging than Option 2 because two different songs are offered and toddlers are invited to say “stop” as part of the second (“Shake and Stop!”) song. Monitor carefully the ability of toddlers to stop shaking their shakers upon request. If this is too challenging for some (or all) toddlers, shift to a song that does not request toddlers to stop shaking their shakers. See Extra Support tips. The activity plan’s provision for looking at the beads when the shaker is “quiet” may be worthwhile to pursue as a follow-up activity with interested toddlers.

At this age, toddlers are not expected to sing along with you or shake their shakers in a uniform pattern. Recognize singing but do not imply it is expected of everyone. Remember that children will benefit from seeing and hearing you sing rather than listening to a CD, and that you can adjust the song in response to toddlers’ actions when you sing.

**Option 3 continued** More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

**Extra support** ■ Encourage toddlers to repeat the word “stop” when you say “stop” in the song. ■ If toddlers find it challenging to stop the shakers, sing a familiar song(s) with a clear beat while encouraging toddlers to shake their shakers. ■ Acknowledge emerging self-control and learning about stop and start in a reassuring manner to let toddlers know you support their learning.

**Enrichment** ■ Repeat the song with an additional stopping point. Example: “Shake, shake, shake, and stop! Shake your shaker, shake, and stop!” ■ If several toddlers leave the gathering area with the shakers, adapt the activity to walking and shaking the shakers. Continue to describe how toddlers are shaking their shakers and how the sound stops when we stop moving the shakers. Draw attention to the beads not moving when the shakers are quiet. Lead toddlers to the gathering place to conclude the activity.

 Interest Area

**Materials Needed:** basket of shakers, other sound-making toys

Provide a basket of shakers on a low table so toddlers may continue exploration of how to manipulate a shaker and look at the beads. Sing the song offered in the main activity if toddlers seem interested. On another day, use other sound-making toys to experiment and practice making sounds with an object.

 Family Child Care

**Materials Needed:** basket of shakers

Option 3 can be presented to a mixed-age group. Begin the gathering with a song the children will enjoy with the shakers, such as “This Old Man” or “Farmer in the Dell.” Encourage children to shake shakers all through the song. Include the shake-and-stop activity because toddlers will benefit from hearing the word “stop” and seeing older children hold their shakers still.

Encourage older children to demonstrate how to shake the shakers in different ways. Toddlers may wish to follow along or simply watch. Examples:

**Shake your shakers high in the air.**

**Shake your shakers down on the floor.**

**Shake your shakers up and down.**

**Shake your shakers side to side.**