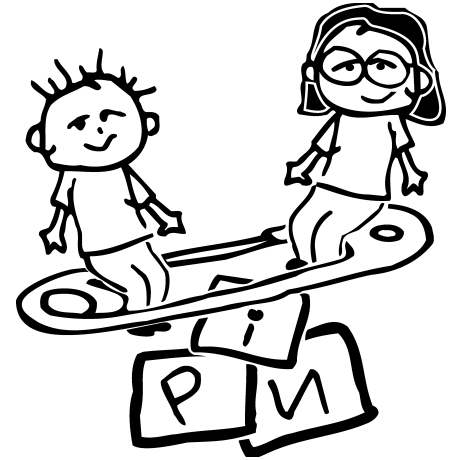


# Preschool Inclusion News



Spring 00

Philadelphia Inclusion Network

## *Baby Signs*

**P**hiladelphia Inclusion Network recently completed its first training course titled "Infant Toddler Caregiver Training" for child care providers caring for children under the age of three. One session of the 5 part training series focuses on building relationships with infants and toddlers. An important aspect of building relationships is communication. From the moment babies are born they start communicating with the world around them. Infants display body language, facial expressions, and all sorts of verbal sounds to communicate with others. How many times have you wished you could look into an infant's eyes and know what is going on inside their mind? Learning to use "Baby Signs" can contribute to our understanding of what babies are trying to tell us.

Communication, like physical contact, is an essential part of an infant's development. Infants naturally use smiling, cooing, and crying to communicate their needs and feelings. They also learn to express themselves

ing.

Communication is a learned process. It is a give and take. Infants can make sense of our complex world long before they can react to it through words. In their desire to learn how to react they will use whatever means of communication is presented to them by those caring for them. In addition to using words and sounds with infants care givers can use Baby Signs. Baby Signs are simple hand gestures that are associated with words. For example, when you reach to pick up a child you may at the same time say "I'm going to pick you up". The infant will learn to associate your open arms with being picked up. Over time the infant may begin to use their open arms to communicate to you they want to be picked up. A common sign that is often used represents the word 'bye bye', a simple wave goodbye. Another Baby Sign, for the word 'eat', is signed by touching the tips of your fingers to the tip of your thumb and then tapping on your lips.

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*Quarterly  
Newsletter*

through touch, movement and eye gaz-

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# BOOK NOOK

## *Using Signs with Infant and Toddlers*

- ♦ *Sign With Your Baby: How to Communicate with Infants Before They Can Speak.* By: Joseph Garcia.
- ♦ *Baby Signs : How to Talk With Your Baby Before Your Baby Can Talk.* By: Linda Acredolo & Susan Goodwyn
- ♦ *Word Signs : A First Book of Sign Language.* By: Debby Slier.
- ♦ *Animal Signs : A First Book of Sign Language.* By: Debby Slier.

***When you come across a book that you think would be of interest to teachers, parents or children, please send the book title, author and brief description of the material to Preschool Inclusion News.***

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## *Baby Signs*

Continued from page 1

If you use this sign with infants they will be able to learn to express “I would like something to eat” by signing even before they learn to use the word eat. While eating, an infant can learn to sign the word ‘more’ by watching you repeat the same hand position as the word eat but this time doing it with both hands then tapping the tips of your fingers together while saying “do you want more”? Another sign that may be common to child care is the sign for milk. Every time the infant drinks milk show the sign for milk before and after they drink. Simply make repeated motions similar to milking a cow. Sometimes infants will use this sign to mean anything to drink. If you are aware of this then you can begin to offer signs for other types of drinks.

Babies have control over their hands long before they develop the skills required for talking. Babies pick up and imitate gestures even though we are not consciously teaching them. By teaching simple signs, starting as early as 6-8 months, more and more care givers are encouraging early communication. Take advantage of this opportunity to build an early foundation for effective communication. Remember, the goal of Baby Signs is not to teach a set of specific signs. Rather, it is to enrich the relationship between you and children and to provide them with a sense of connection that comes with the ability to



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## Baby Sign Rules:

- ♥ Always use the sign and the word together
- ♥ Use praise, enthusiasm, & encouragement
- ♥ Repetition is the key to learning
- ♥ Have fun and enjoy watching your baby sign

*“This is the time when the brain is growing very rapidly. It is too precious a time to waste, and that’s what I like about the idea of signing very young”*

*Dr. Martha Bullock Lamberts, Human Development*

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## Things to Remember:

- i It is never too late to begin signing. You can even use signs after toddlers begin speaking.
- i Use signs as early as 6 months understanding that an infant may not produce a sign until their eight or ninth month or beyond.
- i Get familiar with a few signs you will use such as MORE, MILK, EAT
- i Show infants signs at every opportunity and be consistent with the way you make the signs.
- i Always repeat each sign you show. The more infants see a sign, the faster they will learn it and use it.
- i When infants attempt their first sign, encourage and help them to shape their hands.
- i Begin playing signing games such as “hide and seek” and “catch the worm” with infants.
- i Be patient. All children are different and need to be treated according to their own pace of development.

## Update: Philadelphia Inclusion Network

**P**hiladelphia Inclusion Network is celebrating it's 5th year of providing training for community day care and preschool programs.

- PIN **recently completed** a 10-week training with childcare providers in North East Philadelphia. Thirteen participants representing 7 centers and 9 classrooms learned about topics including promoting children's social competence, specific diagnosis including Autism and ADHD, strategies for working with families, and creating adaptations to promote children's participation in everyday classroom activities and routines.
- In the fall of 1999 PIN **received renewed funding** from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education. PIN staff are preparing a continuation of center-based training in addition to a new extension of the model. The new extension includes staff working in family day care settings and also in community settings such as libraries, recreation centers, playgrounds etc.
- PIN was also **recently awarded state funding** through the Child Care Resource Developers, Quality Initiative Grants. The objective of the project funded by this grant is to provide training to family and center-based programs with an emphasis on infants and toddlers.

If you or your staff are interested in participating in the Philadelphia Inclusion Network center-based, family or community based training, or the infant toddler training please contact **Suzanne A. Milbourne @ 215-503-1608**.

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*We must have a  
place where children  
can have a whole  
group of adults they  
can trust.  
Margaret Mead*

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## Toddler's Creed

*Author Unknown*



*If I want it, it's mine.  
If I give it to you and change my mind later,  
it's mine.  
If I can take it away from you, it's mine.  
If I had it a little while ago, it's mine.  
If it's mine, it will never belong to anyone else, no matter what.  
If we are building something together, all the pieces are mine.  
If it looks just like mine, it's mine.*

*Submitted by Marguerite Grizzi, Chicago, Illinois*

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# FYI

## The Child Care Information Helpline

1-877-4PA-KIDS

The Helpline will answer parents' questions about child care and connect parents to local child care resources. The Helpline also refers callers to other child-related programs, including the Children's Health Insurance Program, Child Abuse Hotline, and Early Intervention Programs. Please share with everyone.

If you have helpful information that child care providers may benefit from please send it to the  
Preschool Inclusion News  
to be included in our next edition.

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*"Even though I  
can't talk yet, I  
know more than  
you think I  
know"*

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## Philadelphia Teaching & Learning Collaborative

**P**hiladelphia Teaching & Learning Collaborative (TLC) is based in the Child & Family Studies Research Program at Jefferson University. TLC is providing training for early intervention staff (primarily birth to three) and families to promote children's learning opportunities through participation in community settings and activities. TLC also facilitates collaborations among early intervention providers to enhance consistency among services and supports for children and their families. These activities are funded by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Mental Retardation Services.

### Upcoming Training

- T** June 13 Policy and Procedures - IFSP  
Schriner's Children's Hospital - Auditorium
- T** June 22 Policy and Procedures - Participation  
Schriner's Children's Hospital - Auditorium

For more information call Lalita Boykin at 215-503-1636.

# Teacher to Teacher



In this section your questions about inclusion issues will be answered by teachers that have been there before and have advice for you.

Dear Teachers,

I am a family child care provider and have three young children during the day (ages 6 months to three years) and at 3:00 I have four more children for after school. I can remember mom telling me to come home and do my homework immediately. I am having a hard time getting these children to come in and sit and do their homework. I am trying to get the other three up, changed and feed their snacks. So I can't keep on top of them. By 4:00 most of their homework isn't done yet. I don't know what to do with this big age difference and activities after-school. I know many of you are in similar situations. Please help with some ideas.

Homework Horrors in East Oak Lane

Dear Homework Horrors in East Oak Lane:

First I would consider getting some help for when the after school children arrive. If this option is not viable, then sit down with the after school children and plan a schedule of daily events. Don't be afraid to compromise or to be a little different when it comes to completing homework. Remember children are little adults who get tired just as we do. They need a transitional period between school and homework that is fun and allows them to unwind from their day. Try having the children prepare creative snacks that increase energy and do not require constant supervision while you are settling the waking infants/toddlers. After snack is completed including clean up, have the older children entertain the younger children with reading a story or putting on a silly show prior to beginning homework. Also take advantage of resources in your neighborhood such as the library or community center for story hour, the grocery store, the park or playground.

Dear Teachers,

There are many 'active' kids in our class. One child in particular, I seem to spend all my time chasing after this kid to get him to 'sit down, calm down,

come here, be still, listen, don't throw, don't hit'. I think he is ADHD. Should I tell his parents to get him tested? If he is not on Rydalin, will he ever be successful in my room?

Tired of running in University City

Dear Tired of Running :

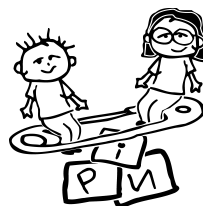
There could be other reasons that are causing this child to appear to have ADHD. The child could have sensory issues where he can not regulate his own sensory needs or communicate the need for sensory stimulation. Instead of chasing the child constantly or focusing on the undesired behaviors, try making him your assistant. Give him small tasks, praise him for the effort, and redirect him if necessary. I would also recommend talking with the family to see how the child responds to various situations at home. Ask the parents if they have any concerns with his behavior. Follow the family's leads. If the family does have concerns, then I would connect them to the proper resources to have the child evaluated. If the family does not, don't push. You don't want to put a diagnosis/ label on a child especially if that diagnosis/label turns out to be incorrect. This could put a strain on your relationship with the family.

Do not train children to learn by force and harshness, but direct them to it by what amuses their minds, so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of genius of each.

Plato

## Send your questions and advice to:

Philadelphia Inclusion Network  
130 South 9th Street  
Suite 220



Dear Teachers,

I just attended the PIN Infant/Toddler training in May. We learned about infant brain development and how the physical environment can influence overall child development. I would like to explore ways of setting up my classroom that will support good brain development. Can you make suggestions on books or video tapes that that you have used - ones that talk about setting up the physical environment? What have you done in your classroom to make it a fun learning place for the children?

Karina in Center City

Dear Teachers,

I am in a bind. I am concerned about a child in my care who is not keeping up with the other children and is not yet talking or feeding himself. He is three years old. I have mentioned this to his mother but she said she thinks he is fine. What do I do now - I don't want this mom to think that I am really negative but I really feel like I need to do something to help the child. Other children are starting to notice that he is not feeding himself during lunch. I have tried to talk with mom at the end of the day when she picks him up but she is always in a hurry to get home for her other children.

Please send suggestions, Lori in the Northeast

You can do anything with children if you only play with them.

*Otto von Bismarck*

**Please fill out the form below if you would like to be added to our mailing list.  
FAX to 215-503-1640 or mail to CCFSRC/OT, Thomas Jefferson University,  
130 South 9th Street, Suite 220, Philadelphia, PA 19107-5233.**

### Check one:

☐ Please add me to the mailing list. ☐ Please update my mailing information.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PROGRAM \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

I RECEIVED AT COPY OF THIS NEWSLETTER \_\_\_\_\_ ON \_\_\_\_\_  
(where) (date)



## ***Sneak Preview***

The next issue of the *Preschool Inclusion News* will feature

### **“Building Baby’s Brain Power”**

- what early childhood educators can do to promote  
healthy brain development.

Early care of infants and toddlers has a profound impact on the development of brain function, a child's ability to learn, and their ability to regulate their own emotions. We cannot see what is going on inside an infant's or toddler's brain and perhaps the greatest misunderstanding about a newborn's brain is that it is simply a small version of an adult brain. New thinking in brain research tells us that the prenatal and newborn brain is not a fully developed brain. Rather it is a brain waiting to "get hard wired", in other words it is in the process of developing and maturing.

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## **Preschool Inclusion News**

Philadelphia Inclusion Network  
Thomas Jefferson University  
OT-Child & Family Studies Research Programs  
130 S. 9th Street  
Suite 220  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

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### *Inside This Issue*

***Baby Signs -***  
*Communication with*  
*Infants before they can speak!*

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