



Off to a Good Start: Playing Together Information Sheet 3



Why this Is important

Socialisation is essential to help babies begin to develop an awareness of self, who they are as a separate being, and how they relate to other people and objects. It enables relationships to develop that will support the child as a social being. All development and learning are influenced by the effectiveness of early socialisation.

Recent restrictions will have impacted on young children's opportunities for socialising, both with wider families and friends, as well as strangers, including other similarly aged children.

'For babies and young children to flourish they need to pay attention to how they understand and feel about themselves and how secure they feel in close relationships: in doing so they develop capacities to make sense how they and other people experience the world.' (Birth to Five 2021)

What to look out for - Observing

- Your baby is looking directly at you when engaging in play together. Your baby may smile, babble, gesture or say words to you too.
- Your child may look back when crawling, or walking away to check you are there, you are their safe person.
- Your baby may show you their interests and how you can engage in their play. By watching your child you will be able to follow their lead in their play and respond to them.
- Your baby may show you what they don't like doing by pushing an object away/ shaking their head/ crying/ saying no.



Resources to use

- Mirrors
- Toy cleaning equipment .e.g broom, mop, pegs.
- Boxes, blankets to make cosy areas
- YOU! Providing love, care and attention to your little one and modeling good social behavior are the best ways to promote your baby's social development



What is your child learning?

Activities and experiences to offer to try



Sense of Self

Put on your favourite music as a family. Have scarves, ribbon sticks, instruments and move in different ways to the music.

Creating snug spaces for child or adult and child to sit together. Using a cardboard box, bed sheets/cushions.



Joy of shared experiences

Creating a space to be tuned in to your child's play. One way to do this is to engage in [copy cat play](#) with mirrors.

[Make family photo books](#) with your child either printed or electronically so can swipe across. Enjoy sharing these together and talking about your fun experiences.



How to form relationships

Make funny faces and funny noises for your baby to enjoy.

Have joint experiences together, popping bubbles, throwing, kicking balls, building towers, peekaboo with materials. This provides opportunities to interact and [take turns](#).



How to interact with their environment

Play interactive games together like round and round the garden or passing toys to and fro.

Share books naming the things your child points to and asking them to point to parts of the picture.

Pretend play. Provide opportunities for your child to copy household activities e.g. sweeping or hanging out the washing.

More Ideas and further suggestions

[Baby cues & baby body language: a guide](#) - By Raising Children Network

[How and when do babies develop social skills?](#) - By NCT

[Brilliant Brains - paying attention to the same things](#) – By BBC Tiny Happy People