



Early Intervention Clearinghouse

<http://eiclearinghouse.org>

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Clearinghouse Revises Family Guide

The Illinois Early Intervention (EI) Clearinghouse has partnered with the Illinois Department of Human Services to update and revise the family guide, officially titled *The Illinois Early Intervention Program: A Guide for Families*.

When your child first enters the EI program, you want to know what to expect. The *Family Guide* provides an overview of the Illinois EI program and its services for you and your child. This revised guide is the culmination of a long process of reviews that gathered input from a wide range of people, including a focus group of parents who have been or currently are in the early intervention system.

The newly revised *Family Guide* includes shorter, more readable text to help families enter and navigate the early intervention system. In addition, the layout is more open and engaging for readers. The easy-to-use worksheets are presented where applicable throughout the guide, not just at the end. And the guide has more clearly defined sections, which makes it easier to refer families like yours to the guide during different stages of the early intervention process.

We hope that the newly revised *Family Guide* will answer

Please see GUIDE, Page 2



State of Illinois
Department of Human Services

A Guide for Families



The Illinois Early Intervention Program
July 2016



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The new *Family Guide* has seven sections:

- Overview of the EI program
- Determining eligibility, entering the program
- Participating in services
- Paying for EI services
- Leaving the EI program
- Your legal rights
- Frequently asked questions by families
- And more ... a glossary of terms, the principles of EI and natural environments, a sample EI contact note, and a worksheet to assist with IFSP planning

Tune Into Your Child’s Sensory Experience to Support Development and Learning

Young children in early intervention (EI) may need extra support and patience as they explore the sensory world around them. Together, families and the EI team can plan for enjoyable sensory play and experiences that can give them the extra support they need to confidently explore their world.

Caregivers may wonder about these big variations in behavior among children. Caregivers may want to know which responses to these experiences are typical and which are not (atypical). A caregiver may even find that a child could show interest and fear at different times—even in response to the same experience. How is it possible that the responses of children could be so different? Families and the EI team can work together to figure out a child’s pattern and support her unique developmental needs. Consider the examples below:



“Beep, beep—vroom!” Joey, a 9-month-old infant, loves riding in the car. He smiles and kicks his legs and waves his arms when his mom puts him in the car. His mom hears him giggling when they drive on bumpy roads and when the engine revs up. Lily, also 9 months old, dislikes riding in the car. She cries when her dad buckles the car seat and screams when the engine rumbles or the horn beeps.

“Splish, splash, bubble bubble!” Hui, a 12-month-old, crawls over to the bathtub with a big smile on her face and pulls up on the edge of the tub when she hears the water running. After her grandma places her in the bath, she kicks her legs and plunges her hands into the water. Brandon, also 12 months old, crawls away from the bathroom when he hears the water running and protests when his mom puts him in the bathtub. He reaches up his arms toward her with a frown on his face.

In the above examples, both responses are typical of young children’s behavior. Infants and toddlers are developing their ability to process and understand different sensory experiences. It is helpful for adults to remind themselves that the world is a new place for them. These very young children are discovering what kinds of textures, sounds, tastes, smells, and sights the world contains and what these experiences feel like to their bodies and what these experiences mean.

Electric hand dryers, flushing toilets, thunderstorms, and fire sirens are all loud sounds. Some children hear these sounds and are frightened. Others hear these sounds and are very excited and interested. In time, children learn what these sounds mean. For example, the flashing lights and sirens from a fire truck mean firefighters are going to help someone. Knowing the sounds means someone in trouble is receiving help, and getting used to the volume and intensity of the sound of the siren after

hearing it many times can make this sensory experience less scary.

Families and EI providers can tune into a child’s sensory experience by watching her response to different sounds, tastes, textures, smells, and sights. Does she go toward loud sounds or turn away from them? Does he like vigorous swinging or does he cry in the swing? Does she laugh and smile at light tickly touches on her toes or relax and respond to firm pressure on her feet? By observing these differences, caregivers and an EI team can work together to provide opportunities that are “just right” for an individual child and help her learn about her world. This EI Clearinghouse newsletter will provide you with resources and ideas for everyday sensory play that can support the learning and development of young children.

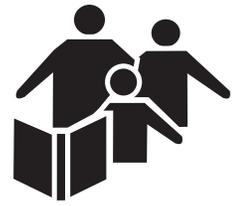
GUIDE

Continued from Page One

many of your questions as you make your journey through the early intervention system. Parents who are just entering the system will find out what they need to know to get started. Parents with children already receiving services may find new information that adds to the quality of their experience with the program. The *Family Guide* is available in English and Spanish on our Web site at <http://eiclearinghouse.org/resources/public-awareness/the-guide/>

Copies are available from your local Child and Family Connections Office. We hope this easier-to-use and more engaging family guide will be helpful to families during the different stages of their journey in the early intervention system and the providers who serve them.

Just-Right Sensory Play



Young children receive input from their surroundings throughout the day. Their responses to what they see, hear, feel, taste, and smell are influenced by how they process the world around them. Balancing the amount, type, and frequency of activities is an important component of just-right sensory play. Here are some things you can do to help when children show high and low sensitivity to various senses:

Sight and Sound

- Dimming lights, using muted colors, and decluttering the room (walls, shelves) can minimize visual stimulation.
- Sound machines, relaxing music or nature sounds, and white noise can help to block some of the overstimulating sound in the environment. Noise-blocking headphones also can be used.



Taste and Smell

- Teething rings or cold washcloths can provide oral input for those young children who need it.
- Irritating smells should be avoided. Soothing smells might help a child relax or focus on a task.



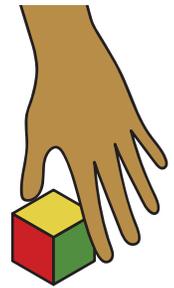
Gravity and Movement

- Swings, teeter totters, rocking toys, ride-on toys, small indoor trampolines, and baby yoga can all provide needed movement input.
- Heavy work—tossing beanbags into a bucket, pushing a toy stroller filled with weighted objects, push-ups, playing catch with weighted balls, or army crawling—provides joints and muscles with input.



Touch

- Play dough, shaving cream, dry pasta, rice, cornmeal, fabric, and ice cubes all provide sensory input. Each of these can be put in plastic zipper bags to minimize the “feeling” for children who have difficulty touching messy things.
- Sand and water play are also easy ways for young children to receive sensory input. By changing the temperature of the water or adding objects that allow pouring/dumping, you can raise the sensory input.



Watch your child’s sensory signals to decide whether he is getting too much, or not enough, input from the environment. Those cues will help you plan activities or modify the environment to provide a just-right sensory day for your child.

As always, contact your child’s health care provider or early intervention provider, such as an occupational therapist, with questions.

 For more information, visit the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse at <http://eiclearinghouse.org>

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Early Intervention.



Resources for Fun Sensory Activities

Books

No Longer A Secret: Unique Common Sense Strategies for Children With Sensory or Motor Challenges

By Doreit Sarah Bialer and Lucy Jane Miller
Call Number: WS 340 .B4702 2011

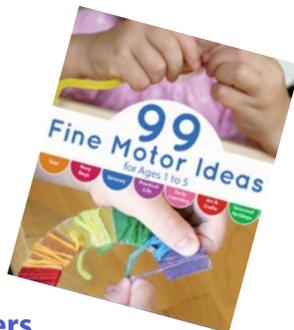
Balanced and Barefoot: How Unrestricted Outdoor Play Makes for Strong, Confident, and Capable Children



By Angela J. Hanscom
Call Number: HQ 782 .H346 2016

99 Fine Motor Ideas: For Ages 1 to 5

By Nicolette Roux
Call Number: WE 103
.F4934m 2014



Raising Kids With Sensory Processing Disorders

By Rondalyn Varney Whitney
Call Number: WS 340 .W611 2014

Simple Low-Cost Games and Activities for Sensorimotor Learning

By Lisa A. Kurtz
Call Number: LC 4026 .K87 2014

Active Baby, Healthy Brain: 135 Fun Exercises and Activities to Maximize Your Child's Brain Development From Birth Through Age 5½

By Margaret Sassé
Call Number: GV 1203 .Sa792 2010



Understanding Your Baby's Sensory Signals

By Angie Voss
Call Number: WS 340 .V932u 2014

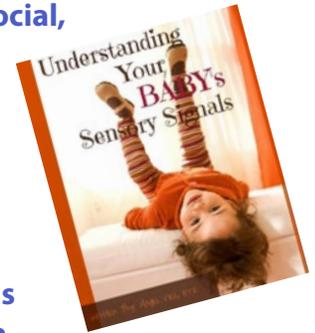
50 Fantastic Things to Do With Babies

By Sally Featherstone
Call Number: HQ 774 .F43 2013



The Whole Spectrum of Social, Motor, and Sensory Games

By Barbara Sher
Call Number: GV 1203
.S4953 2013



Fun With Messy Play: Ideas and Activities for Children With Special Needs

By Tracey Beckerleg
Call Number: GV 183.6 .B396 2009

DVDs

A Sensory World: Making Sense of Sensory Disorders

By TCU Institute of Child Development
Call Number: WS 340 .Se575w 2010

Applying Sensory Integration Principles Where Children Live, Learn, and Play

Pediatric Therapy Network
Call Number: WS 340 .Ap589 2003

Sensory Integration Strategies

Girard Sagmiller Trust
Call Number: WS 340 .B4592 2007

Getting Kids in Sync

By Carol S. Kranowitz
Call Number: WS 340 .K89gd 2006

eBooks Are Here!

You can now check out and download eBooks instantly, using the 3M Cloud Library app on most devices. For more detailed instructions and a downloadable instruction sheet, please visit the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse Web site.



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