



BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES

Volume 9 Issue 2



CHEERS for the Parent—Child Relationship!



Each letter of CHEERS stands for an important element in securing a healthy bond with your baby and teaching social-emotional competence.



Cues

Cues are behaviors your baby uses to tell how he feels and what he needs. Responding sensitively and quickly to cues like coos, crying, and pointing provides a way for your child to learn about trust.

Holding

You may have heard that “holding a baby too much can spoil them.” However, there is no such thing as holding an infant “too much!”

Research shows that holding your baby builds brain connections and is an important part of promoting overall health and development. Snuggle your baby as often as possible, and discover all the benefits it offers you both!



Expression

Communicating with your baby through sounds, songs, reading and verbal expression helps your baby learn to talk and learn to communicate with others. The more your baby is exposed to language, the better prepared she is for reading and academic success.



Empathy

Babies are tuned in from birth to our feelings, paying attention to how we interact with them. They learn from our tone of voice and facial expressions.



The more one on one interactions you have with your child, fostering empathy and kindness, the more skills she will gain toward developing friendships and other healthy relationships.

Rhythm & Reciprocity

Rhythm and reciprocity looks like a “dance” between you and your little one. The pleasurable flow of taking turns interacting and responding to each other shows your child he is important and teaches him to value and get along with others. It also builds a young child’s confidence, so that he is eager to try new things.



Smiles

There is some truth to the old adage “laughter is the best medicine.” When you smile at your baby, you encourage him to smile. You teach him that you delight in his company. Both of you benefit from smiling and laughing together, because hormones are released that create a sense of well-being. Learning to enjoy life starts with a smile!

