



**Communication/
Language**

Exploring Words

Option 1 (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing about a popular song enjoyed by children from many cultures and say “hello” in some different languages.

Option 2 (IG) Toddlers engage in physical movements as part of a book sharing about a popular song.



Cognitive

Sorting and Matching

Option 1 (IG) Toddlers explore size differences in toy bears during guided water play.

Option 2 (IG) Toddlers use play dough to create small and big items for small and big toy bears.

Option 3 (OO) A toddler matches toy bears by size and color with caregiver guidance.



Self-Regulation

Getting Calm

Option 1 (IG) Toddlers practice calming down after a stimulating activity.

Option 2 (IG) Toddlers practice breathing slowly and deeply as a way to calm down.



Social-Emotional

Exploring Feelings

Option 1 (OO) A toddler explores ways to communicate and respond to some common emotions.

Option 2 (IG) Toddlers sing about and show facial expressions for some common emotions.



Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) A toddler practices beginning skills in catching a colorful scarf.

Option 2 (IG) Toddlers practice tossing and catching a colorful scarf.

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



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

Toddlers participate in a book sharing about a popular song enjoyed by children from many cultures and say “hello” in some different languages.



Key Concepts

Pictures
 Happy
 Hello



Materials Needed

If You’re Happy and You Know It! (Singalongs) by Anna McQuinn



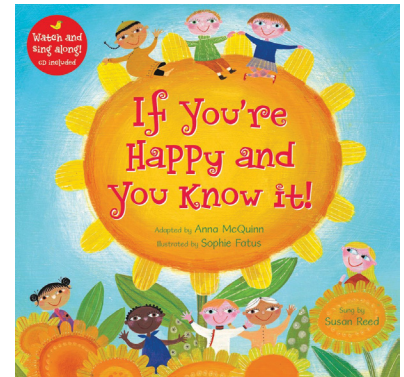
Also Promotes

Social-Emotional

Be Prepared: Become familiar with the pronunciation of “hello” in several languages offered in the book. The Internet and/or coworkers are good sources. Include languages that are spoken by children in your room or familiar adults at your center.

BEGIN: [*Invite 3–4 toddlers to read a book about a song we know.*]

Our book is about children from different places in the world singing a song we like to sing. The song is, “If You’re Happy and You Know It.”



ASK: [*Show book cover. Point to pictured children.*]

The children shown on the cover of our book are happy.

- How do their faces tell us they are happy? (smiles)

ACT: [*Read the book text. You may wish to omit the second repetitive phrase for each verse.*]

Invite toddlers to describe what children are doing. Repeat and expand on toddlers’ responses.

Just prior to the book’s presentation of “hello” in 14 languages:

- *Explain that people can talk and sing in different languages. Draw attention to languages in addition to English that may be used by children or caregivers in your room.*
- *Explain that our book shows children saying “hello” in many different languages.*
- *Say several of the “hello” words, one at a time, as you point to the corresponding illustration/word. Draw attention to word sounds, such as the /j/ sound in bon jour.*
- *Encourage toddlers to repeat the hello greeting with you.*

Return to several pages with familiar text and lead toddlers in singing a segment of the song.]

RECAP: The words and pictures in our book told us about children from different parts of the world singing a song that we like to sing. We sang part of the song. We said “hello” in some different languages.

**Option 1 continued****👁️ What to Look For—Option 1**

The multicultural aspect of the book, including pictures and “hello” languages, may be a new experience for some toddlers in your gathering. Connecting different languages to toddlers’ experiences, such as children or adults they know, can help toddlers strengthen their understanding that we can talk, read, and sing in different languages.

Avoid using the CD that accompanies the book in this activity. Using your own voice has many advantages over a recorded voice and music, as described in the *User Guide*. Note the book’s CD is included in the suggested Interest Area activity.

📈 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Explain that our book shows drawings of children, not photographs of real children. ■ Talk about when people say “hello” to someone. Offer examples, such as when we see people for the first time during the day (a caregiver greeting a child and family upon arrival) or when we answer a phone call. ■ Use a leisurely pace with the book, so children have time to look at and talk about the pictures.

Enrichment ■ Remind toddlers that we often say “hello” to someone at the beginning of our day in the room. What do we say when someone leaves for the day? (goodbye) ■ Invite an adult or child in your room or center who speaks a language in addition to English to share some frequently-used words with toddlers in their native language.

24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Receptive language
Expressive language

Toddlers engage in physical movements as part of a book sharing about a popular song.



Key Concepts

Song
Move



Materials Needed

If You're Happy and You Know It! (Singalongs) by Anna McQuinn
Carpet squares—1 per toddler

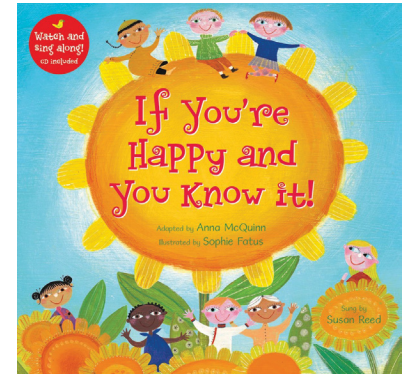


Also Promotes

Physical/Health
Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: This activity is for toddlers who are familiar with the book through participation in Option 1 or a similar book sharing. Select verses in the book you want to sing with toddlers as part of doing physical movements involved in the verse. Consider toddlers' motor skills and familiarity with the song in selecting verses.

Provide sufficient space between carpet squares for toddlers to engage in some physical movements on the squares without touching each other. Use your own voice, not the book's accompanying CD, to lead toddlers in singing the song. Your voice will be more meaningful to toddlers and will enable you to use a pace and emphasize key words that support toddlers' participation.



Invite 4–5 toddlers to join you in moving our bodies as part of a song we like to sing. Show the book cover and remind toddlers of how the book shows pictures of children from different parts of the world doing movements as part of a song. Ask: What is the song? Enthusiastically respond to toddlers' accurate identification of the song.

Review pages/pictures that show verses you want to sing with toddlers. Point to and describe movements the pictured children are doing. Explain that the words in the song tell us what to do. For each verse, invite toddlers to point to the part of their body that is involved in the movement. Sing the segment of the verse that corresponds to the movement, such as “clap our hands.”

Then lead children in singing a verse and doing the movement described in the song. Begin with a verse/movement that is highly familiar to toddlers in your gathering, such as clapping our hands or stretching our arms. Emphasize that the words in the song tell us how to move our body. Example: “The words in our book say to pat our head.” Engage toddlers in as many verses/movements as time and child interest permit.

Conclude the activity by reminding the toddlers that the words in the song told us what to do. Describe the movements. Invite toddlers to put the carpet squares in their proper storage location.

What to Look For—Option 2

Some toddlers may opt to not sing, and some may prefer to watch rather than do movements. Look for opportunities to say the names of body parts and actions involved in a movement. Some toddlers may not be familiar with the names of some body parts, such as their hips. In addition to the motor actions, the activity supports toddlers' understanding of how words in a song can describe movements and the importance of paying attention to the words. If concentration on a song's words seems to be challenging for some

**Option 2 continued**

toddlers, consider repeating aspects of the Self-Regulation activity plans in Blocks 1 and 7 that promote concentrating on actions communicated in a song's words.

 **More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2**

Extra support ■ Show the book illustration that corresponds to the verse/movement before you lead toddlers in singing the verse and doing the movement. ■ Demonstrate a movement (or invite a toddler to demonstrate the movement) in addition to showing and describing the book's illustration of the movement. ■ Emphasize body part names when you invite toddlers to point to the part of their body involved in a movement. ■ Toddlers may benefit from using a calming-down strategy, such as breathing deeply and slowly, at the end of the activity. See Block 2 Self-Regulation.

Enrichment ■ For 1–2 of the verses, use the song's words only, not book illustrations, to communicate actions. This emphasizes the use of words to tell us what to do and the cognitive task of planning the motor actions.

**Interest Area**

Materials needed: *If You're Happy and You Know It!* (Singalongs) by Anna McQuinn, CD that accompanies the book

Offer the CD for toddlers to use while looking at the book and/or doing movements suggested in the song. Invite toddlers to point to and describe book illustrations that correspond to movements described in the song.

**Family Child Care**

Materials needed: *If You're Happy and You Know It!* (Singalongs) by Anna McQuinn

Preschool-age children may wish to participate in Option 2. Preschool-age and older children may enjoy leading toddlers in saying "hello" in different languages, with your coaching, as part of Option 1.

24–36 Months

Option 1
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal

Problem-solving
Object inquiry skills

Toddlers explore size differences in toy bears during guided water play.



Key Concepts

Big
Little



Materials Needed

Sorting bears (see Be Prepared)
Sensory table
Tear-free shampoo
Containers for water (see Be Prepared)
Several towels



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Physical/Health



Optional Reading

Big Little by Leslie Patricelli
Big Dog... Little Dog by P.D. Eastman

Be Prepared: Secure two toy bears for each toddler, one big and one small. Each toddler's two bears should be the same color. Different colors may be used across toddlers who participate. Example: one toddler has two (big and small) green bears, another toddler has two (big and small) blue bears. A possibility for sorting bears is Lakeshore® My First Sorting Bears. Put warm water in several containers for pouring into the sensory table at the beginning of the activity.

Invite 3–4 toddlers to play at the water table with toy bears. Put some warm water in the table after toddlers join you. Invite each toddler to also pour water from a container into the table. Provide verbal and/or hands-on assistance as needed. While toddlers are watching, add two tablespoons of tear-free shampoo and encourage toddlers to move their hands in the water to create bubbles. Draw attention to differences in big and little bubbles. Encourage toddlers to find and point to big and little bubbles. Toddlers may wish to gently pop the bubbles.

Kneel at the end of the water table and give each toddler one toy bear. Distribute a mix of big and small bears across the toddlers so there is an opportunity for toddlers to compare size. Explain that some bears are big and some bears are little.

Provide time and encouragement for toddlers to explore their bear in the water. Move around the table to talk with each toddler. Observe a toddler before beginning a conversation about his/her play. Then invite toddlers to look at other bears held by toddlers. Ask size-comparison questions. Examples: "Jamie, is your bear bigger or littler than Samantha's bear?" "James, you have a big bear. Who else has a big bear in our table?"

Next, give each toddler a second bear. Each toddler's second bear should be the same color as his/her first bear but a different size. See Be Prepared. After a brief time for toddlers to explore their second bear, ask each toddler to put his/her two bears next to each other and hold up or point to the big (or little) bear. Then invite toddlers to put their little (or big) bear in the middle of the water table, so all bears of the same size are together. Ask about the bear that is not in the middle of the table. Example: "All of our little bears are in the middle of our water table. Where are our big bears?"

Conclude the activity by describing what happened. Invite toddlers to dry off their toy bears with towels you provide.




Option 1 continued What to Look For—Option 1

This play-based activity is for toddlers who are learning about size. Notice that the concept of size is not explicitly introduced in the activity description. But there are three intentional opportunities in the activity for toddlers to notice big and small differences in the toy bears. Look for additional, unplanned opportunities, such as a toddler's comment about the size of bear he/she received at the beginning of the activity.

Toddlers may notice color differences. Positively acknowledge their attention to color while also focusing on size. Example: "You have green bears. One bear is big. One bear is little."

If a toddler holds a bear out for you to see, describe it by size. Example: "You are showing me a little bear." If the toddler presents a second bear, ask "Would you like to tell me about the bear?"

Some toddlers may refer to the big-size bears as mommy or daddy. Repeat a toddler's words and extend them into a sentence. Example: If a toddler shows you a big bear and says, "It's a daddy," you might respond by saying, "You are showing me a daddy bear. The daddy bear is a big bear."

 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Sit next to a toddler who may need extra support to refrain from splashing. ■ If several toddlers begin splashing, give each child a small cloth or toothbrush to wash the bears. ■ If a toddler is reluctant to touch the water, move a set of sorting bears to a table so he/she may explore differences and similarities.

Enrichment ■ Play a little game with toddlers by saying "Little bears, little bears come out and dance with me!" Sing a simple tune that supports toddlers in identifying the bear described in the song. Practice in paying attention to the words of a song is also offered in the Communication/Language activity plan in this block. Encourage toddlers to move their little (or big) bears as if dancing.

24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Problem-solving
Object inquiry skills

Toddlers use play dough to create small and big items for small and big toy bears.



Key Concepts

Big
Small



Materials Needed

Sorting bears (see Be Prepared)
Play dough (see Be Prepared)
Small tray



Also Promotes

Physical/Health
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Prepare one ball of play dough about the size of an apple for each toddler and yourself. Place up to four bears of different sizes (two big, two small) for each child on the tray. Two bears (one big, one small) are used by each child for most of the activity. Each child should have the same color of bears; this helps a toddler focus on size differences, not color differences. A possibility for sorting bears is Lakeshore® My First Sorting Bears.

BEGIN: [*Invite toddlers to join a gathering at a table. Give each toddler and yourself a ball of play dough plus one big bear and one small bear. Put the tray of remaining bears aside, not on the table.*]

EXPLAIN: Each of us has two bears. We have a big bear and we have a small bear. Let's use our play dough to make things for our bears.



I am going to make pretend cookies for my two bears. I am going to make a small cookie for my small bear. I am going to make a big cookie for my big bear. Please watch me make my cookies.

ACT: [*Make a small cookie and big cookie as you describe your actions. Example: "I am pinching off a small piece of play dough and making it flat. This will be a small cookie for my small bear."*]

Draw attention to placing the small and big cookies by their respective small and big bears. This is a beginning form of matching. Example: "Here is a small cookie for my small bear. Here is a big cookie for my big bear."

Invite toddlers to make items of their choice (such as chairs or beds) for their two bears. Encourage toddlers to tell what they intend to make and then describe what they made. Toddlers may make as many items as they wish for each bear.

Use your play dough to make additional items for your two bears, preferably items that are suggested by toddlers. Do not lead children's work with their play dough. Example: "Tanya is making beds for her two bears. I am going to do what Tanya is doing. I am going to make a big bed for my big bear and a small bed for my small bear."

**Option 2 continued**

Emphasize *small* and *big* in describing items made by toddlers. Example: “Eli is making a small chair for his small bear.” Encourage toddlers to place small items by the small bear and big items by the big bear.

If time permits and a toddler(s) wants to continue working with play dough and bears, provide an additional bear(s). Ask the toddler whether he/she wants a small bear or a big bear from the tray of available bears. Or if the toddler takes a bear from the tray, ask whether it is a big bear or a small bear.]

RECAP: We used play dough to make things for our toy bears. We made some big things for our big bear. We made some small things for our small bear.

 **What to Look For—Option 2**

Toddlers may refer to the big bears as Daddy or Mommy and the small bears as Baby. Affirm these observations. Example: “This small bear does look like a baby.” Work with play dough can represent a toddler’s everyday experiences with food, sitting, or sleeping.

Generally, toddlers do not create recognizable objects. Holding an idea in his/her mind while manipulating the dough is a valuable process at this age, not shaping the dough in a particular way.

Some toddlers may see humor in making a big cookie for a small bear or a small cookie for a big bear. Appreciate the toddlers’ fun. What is important (and evident in this instance of humor) is toddlers’ awareness of size differences. Also, what looks like a small item to a toddler may appear to be a big item to you.

You may wish to refrain from emphasizing color differences across the bears if you anticipate drawing attention to color will distract from the activity’s intended focus on bear size.

Some toddlers may finish the activity after 5–10 minutes, whereas other toddlers may maintain a longer focus.

 **More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2**

Extra support ■ Ask a toddler to point to his/her small (or big) bear. ■ Sit next to a toddler who may be easily distracted. Some toddlers take comfort in being next to an adult and find it easier to focus. ■ If a toddler has little experience with play dough, he/she may need extra support to use the materials. Reassure a toddler that the things he/she makes with a ball of play dough are fine. Avoid making things for toddlers. Encourage toddlers to explore and create their own forms. ■ Use “big bear” and “small bear” voices when you describe each.

Enrichment ■ Ask a toddler if his/her two bears are the same. If a toddler does not readily identify the size difference or says “yes,” put your two bears side by side. Explain: “Look at how I put my two bears next to each other. Please do the same thing with your bears. Do your two bears look the same?” ■ Some toddlers may enjoy learning novel words such as huge, gigantic, and tiny.

24–36 Months

Option 3 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Problem-solving Object inquiry skills

A toddler matches toy bears by size and color with caregiver guidance.



Key Concepts

Same
Different
Big
Little
Put together



Materials Needed

Sorting bears in different sizes, colors (see Be Prepared)
Basket



Also Promotes

Self-Regulation
Physical/Health
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Secure up to 10 sorting bears that differ in size (big, little) and color (2–3 colors). Include at least one pair of big/little bears that are the same color and at least two bears of the same size (big or little) that are the same color. A possibility for sorting bears is Lakeshore® My First Sorting Bears. Place all bears in a basket.

Invite a toddler to join you at a low table or on the floor to play with toy bears. Encourage the toddler to help you remove all of the bears from the basket. Explain that some of the bears are big and some of the bears are little. Point to an example of each. Also, explain that there are different colors of bears. Point to several different colors of bears as you name colors. Describe the size and color of some bears you and the toddler remove from the basket. Example: “You are putting a little green bear on our table.”



Tell the toddler that we can have fun putting together bears that look the same and bears that look different. Demonstrate the concepts of same and different as follows:

- Put a big and a little bear of the same color next to each other. Explain the bears are different. One is big, one is little.
- Put two bears of the same size and color next to each other. Explain that the bears are the same. Both bears are big (or little). Both bears are the same color. Explain that things that are different are not the same.

Put the bears used for demonstration purposes in random places among the other bears.

Invite the toddler to put together some bears that are the same. Begin with the characteristic (color or size) that you anticipate will be relatively easy for the toddler to match. Do not specify a number to put together. Example: “Please put together some little bears. The bears can be different colors.” “Please put together some green bears. Remember, this is the color green. The bears can be little or big.” Describe and talk with the toddler about what he/she put together.

If the toddler remains interested, invite him/her to put together some bears that are different. Remind the toddler that things that are different are not the same. Again, do not specify a number to put together. Examples: “Please put together a little bear and a big bear. They can be the same color or different colors.” “Please put together some bears that are different colors. They can be big or little.” Describe and talk with the toddler about what he/she put together.

Option 3 continued

Conclude the activity by describing what happened and enthusiastically acknowledging the toddler's efforts to pay attention to the toy bears.

 **What to Look For—Option 3**

This is a challenging activity that supports object inquiry skills in noticing characteristics of the toy bears plus self-regulation skills in paying attention to characteristics of objects. Especially important in paying attention is to ignore an object characteristic (color or size) that is not involved in putting together bears that are the same or different. The activity can be made less challenging by omitting size or color in the selection of sorting bears (see Extra Support tip).

Tailor the activity to a toddler's emerging skills in noticing and comparing object characteristics. Promptly limit or expand the activity according to the toddler's initial reactions.

The activity is not intended to teach about numbers. This is the reason the activity description suggests not specifying the number of bears to put together. For certain, some toddlers may work hard to put together all available bears that meet the request, such as all little bears or all red bears. Eagerly support their interest without imposing a number goal.

 **More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3**

Extra support ■ Provide one color of bear only or one size or bear in different colors if you anticipate it will be too challenging for a toddler to consider both size and color. Using fewer bears is also a way to provide less challenge. ■ Explain that things (bears) match when they are the same.

Enrichment ■ Instead of telling what characteristic of bears (size or color) to put together, simply invite the toddler to put together bears that are the same and then bears that are different. Describe the toddler's actions and encourage discussion of the toddler's thinking and actions.

**Interest Area**

Materials needed: small blocks, sorting bears, blanket or thick fabric, dollhouse and furnishings, scissors, paper, narrow strips of paper in different lengths and in two different colors

Arrange small blocks and sorting bears of different sizes on a blanket or thick fabric on a low table to create a quiet play spot for open-ended play. Another possibility is to put big and little teddy bears with the dollhouse and furnishings. Participation in any of the activity options may prompt toddler interest in size differences as part of their play.

If toddlers enjoy cutting with scissors, provide a basket of narrow strips one half inch wide and in varying lengths. Cut the strips from two colors. Toddlers may arrange the cut bits on the table or glue them onto paper. Hold a strip at each end and encourage a child new to cutting to snip the strip of paper.

 Family Child Care

Materials needed: variety of big and small play materials, basket of jar lids in different sizes, stacking rings, cloth bags, larger sheets of paper, crayons, play dough, fat drinking straws

Provide a variety of play materials that are big and small. Infants will enjoy playing with a basket of jar lids in different sizes. Sit with infants and describe their actions. On another day, place stacking rings in a cloth bag for mobile infants to explore. Talk with infants about the big and little sizes.

In addition to offering Options 1, 2, or 3, identify the interests of the toddlers in your care and select play materials in different sizes. Provide large sheets of paper and crayons for toddlers to make big marks. Use different words to describe size, such as little, small, tiny, large, and enormous!

Preschool-age children may enjoy making play dough birthday cakes for the bears. Provide fat drinking straws cut in half to represent each year. Consider sharing the rhyme “Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear” while children are at the table with little and big bears. Encourage children to move the little (or big) bears as you adapt the rhyme. Example: “Little bear, little bear, turn around. Big bear, big bear, touch the ground.”



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Self-control

Toddlers practice calming down after a stimulating activity.



Key Concepts

Calm down



Materials Needed

None



Also Promotes

Physical/Health

Social-Emotional

Be Prepared: The following review of ways to calm down can be used at the end of any stimulating experience, including the Communication/Language song and movement activity in the current block. The strategies were introduced in ELM's Self-Regulation (Getting Calm) activities for younger toddlers (12–24 months).

Children benefit from advance notice that an activity is about to end. Example: “We will do one more action with our song. Then we will stop.”

Open the calming-down segment by acknowledging that our activity is fun and exciting. You may wish to say that you are excited and ready for a rest. Invite toddlers to join you in calming down. We rest our bodies and our minds when we calm down.

Lead toddlers in doing the following steps:

- Relax our arms.
- Put our hands in our lap (if sitting).
- Take several deep and slow breaths.
- Close our eyes briefly.
- Quietly hum or sing part of a song at a slow tempo. Example: Part of “If You’re Happy and you Know It” could be sung or hummed at a very slow tempo in the Communication/Language activity for the current block.

Explain that your body and mind feel calmer. Ask toddlers whether they feel calm. It is good to slow down and give our body and mind a rest.



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Self-control

Toddlers practice breathing slowly and deeply as a way to calm down.



Key Concepts

Calm down
Slowly
Deeply



Materials Needed

None



Also Promotes

Physical/Health
Social-Emotional

Be Prepared: The following review of breathing deeply and slowly as a way to calm down can be used at the end of any stimulating experience, including the Communication/ Language song and movement activity in the current block. Breathing slowly and deeply is introduced in Block 5 to older toddlers (24–36 months).

As suggested in Option 1, children benefit from advance notice that an activity is about to end. Open the calming-down segment of the activity by acknowledging that our activity is exciting and we need to calm our bodies and minds. Remind toddlers that breathing deeply and slowly is one way we can calm down.

Remind toddlers that parts of our body move when we breathe in and breathe out. Invite toddlers to lie on the floor and put their hand on their stomach. We want to relax our hand. We want to open our hand and place it on our tummy. Encourage toddlers to notice how their hand moves up and down when we breathe in and out deeply and slowly. Explain that the air we breathe in and out moves part of our body.

Invite toddlers to breathe in and out with you. Example: “I am going to take a deep breath in and then take a deep breath out. Please breathe in and out with me. Let’s see what happens with our hand on our stomach when we breathe deeply and slowly.”

Lead children in breathing in and out 3–4 times. Offer reminders, as appropriate, about breathing slowly and deeply and keeping our hand open and relaxed on our stomach. Do not encourage toddlers to breathe in and out at the same time.

At the conclusion of the breathing routine, ask toddlers whether they feel calmer. Encourage toddlers to think about how breathing slowly can help them feel calm when they are upset. Invite toddlers to use slow breathing at other times during the day when they would like to feel calm.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

It is not necessary for a toddler to feel overly excited to benefit from participating in a calming-down routine. There may be a future point when a toddler is truly excited and would benefit from the routine he/she practiced at an earlier point.

If toddlers are looking around the room or seem reluctant to close their eyes in Option 1, encourage them to look at something in front them or at the floor. Explain that looking all around a room can make us feel excited. Closing our eyes or looking at one thing can help us pay attention to ourselves. We do not want to pay attention to other things when we are trying to calm down.



Although Option 2 focuses on one of several parts of Option 1, it can be challenging for toddlers to coordinate the three main parts of the activity: breathing slowly, breathing deeply, and paying attention to how their stomach moves. Provide attention to the part(s) of the process that seems most challenging. Some toddlers may need guidance in locating their stomach and placing their hand in an open position. Some toddlers may make a fist. Offer help in opening the hand so fingers are apart and can feel the stomach move. You may wish to place your hand over the toddler's hand to encourage a relaxed hand with all fingers touching the stomach.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Offer a demonstration and description of each step prior to leading toddlers in calming down. ■ Sit next to a toddler who has difficulty calming down. Offer quiet coaching on what to do. ■ Provide one-to-one guidance to toddlers who report that their hand did not move up and down.

Enrichment ■ After 3–4 rounds of breathing slowly and deeply in Option 2, invite toddlers to practice breathing again, this time even more slowly. Example: “Let’s breathe deeply again. This time, let’s find out if we can breathe more slowly.” ■ Invite toddlers to put a soft toy on their stomach in Option 2 to notice how their stomach moves when breathing deeply and slowly (see Block 5, Self-Regulation Option 3).



24–36 Months

Option 1 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Awareness of emotions

A toddler explores ways to communicate and respond to some common emotions.



Key Concepts

Face
Feeling



Materials Needed

Making Faces: A First Book of Emotions by Abrams
Appleseed



Also Promotes

Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Invite a toddler to look at pictures of children's faces.*]

We are learning about different ways we can feel inside. We know about feeling happy, and we know about feeling sad.

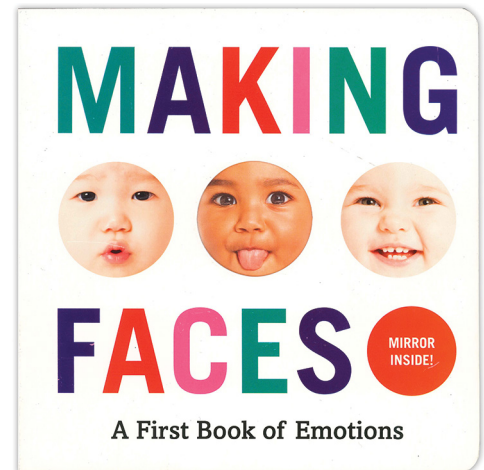
ASK: [*Show book cover. Point to the faces.*]

- Which baby looks happy?
- What tells us the baby is happy? (smile)

EXPLAIN: Our book shows different types of faces. Let's look at each face and talk about what the child may be feeling. Our book is called *Making Faces*.

ACT: [*Use the following approach to each pictured face:*

- Ask the toddler what the child may be feeling. If the toddler seems uncertain, offer two feeling possibilities, one of which is accurate. Example: "Do you think this baby is feeling happy or sad?" If you offer a name for the pictured expression, encourage the toddler to repeat the name with you.
- Describe and point to features of the facial expression that communicate the emotion. Example: "This baby looks like she is going to cry. Here are some tears in the baby's eyes."
- Encourage the toddler to point to the facial expression on the next page that communicates the emotion shown on the prior page. Example: "Which face looks angry?"
- Ask: What is something we can do when we feel (emotion)? Include the following in the discussion of possible things to do:
 - Happy: clap our hands
 - Sad: get a hug
 - Angry: take a deep breath
 - Surprised: say "oh my"
 - Silly: laugh and laugh





Option 1 continued

- *Take additional time on the sad and angry pictures to talk about how getting a hug can help us feel better when we feel sad and how taking a deep breath can help us feel better when we are angry.]*

RECAP: Everyone can feel the ways we talked about. It is okay to feel sad or angry or happy or silly or surprised.

What to Look For—Option 1

A toddler may try to make a face similar to the pictured face. Acknowledge this effort. “You are showing me a sad face.”

Some toddlers may need support for identifying the pictured face among the collection of five faces. One approach is to point to 1–2 pictures and ask if the baby looks like he/she is feeling the emotion under discussion.

The examples of how we can respond to feeling sad and angry are different from the other three emotions explored in this activity. The suggestions (sad: get a hug; angry: take a deep breath) are among some positive ways to deal with these emotions. Suggestions for the other three emotions focus on ways to express an emotion, such as laughing when we feel silly. Encourage the toddler to talk about other things we might do when we feel sad or angry or other ways we can show we are happy, silly, and surprised.

Look for ways to emphasize the names of emotions shown in the five pictures and to encourage the toddler to say the emotion name. An important step in emotion awareness is to be familiar with emotion names.

The pictured faces intended to show surprise and silly may be difficult for a toddler to identify. There are many ways children and adults can communicate feeling surprised and silly through facial expressions. You may ask the toddler to show what his/her face looks like when he/she is feeling surprised (or silly).

This activity option extends the attention to feelings in Blocks 16 and 17 (Social-Emotional). The book was featured in a Block 18 activity for younger toddlers (12–24 months) with a focus on facial expressions.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Explain that angry and mad mean the same thing. ■ Explain that surprised means something happened we did not expect to happen. Offer an example that is familiar to the toddler, such as a toddler’s surprise at having a parent come early to retrieve the toddler from your room one day.

Enrichment ■ A toddler may enjoy exploring his/her face in the mirror at the end of the book.



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Awareness of emotions

Toddlers sing about and show facial expressions for some common emotions.



Key Concepts

Feeling



Materials Needed

Making Faces: A First Book of Emotions by Abrams
Appleseed



Also Promotes

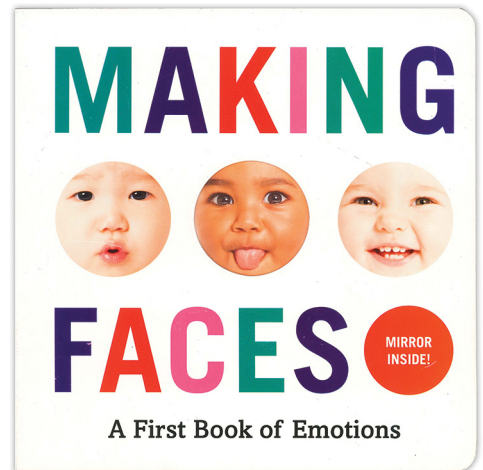
Communication/Language
Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: This activity is for toddlers who are familiar with the five feelings shown in the *Making Faces* book featured in Option 1. Be familiar with the tune of the “If You’re Happy and You Know It” song.

Invite 4–6 toddlers to join in singing about different ways we can feel. Show the book cover and review each of the five large pictures that show a child communicating a specific feeling. Encourage toddlers to say the name of the feeling. Repeat the name. Suggest a way we can show or deal with what we are feeling, as follows:

- If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.
- If you’re sad and you know it, get a hug.
- If you’re angry (mad) and you know it, take a deep breath.
- If you’re surprised and you know it, say “oh my.”
- If you’re silly and you know it, laugh and laugh.

Then invite toddlers to stand and sing a verse of “If You’re Happy and You Know It” for each feeling. Preview the key phrase, such as “get a hug,” prior to singing the verse. Do actions when appropriate, such as clapping your hands, pretending to give or get a hug, and taking a deep breath. Accentuate “oh my” with voice and facial expression when you say it.



👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

The familiar tune of the song encourages toddlers to think about an emotion shown in facial expressions and in prior discussion without the task of learning a new song. This promotes the self-regulation skill of short-term memory and offers another opportunity to say an emotion word.

The activity is more challenging than Option 1 because it involves song, some actions, and activity alongside peers. The popular song is featured in the Communication/Language activity in the current block with different physical movements requested in the song.

Some toddlers may prefer to watch, whereas others may enjoy doing the actions but prefer not to sing.



Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Show the pertinent picture of a child in the book prior to singing the corresponding verse.

Enrichment ■ Encourage toddlers to show a facial expression that communicates the feeling featured in the verse. It is not necessary for toddlers to mimic the face shown in the book.



Interest Area

Materials needed: *Making Faces: A First Book of Emotions* by Abrams Appleseed, *Baby Faces* by Margaret Miller, 3–4 nonbreakable, handheld mirrors in different sizes

Place a basket of 3–4 mirrors in a comfortable reading area along with the suggested books. Invite toddlers individually or in small gatherings to look at faces in the books, and to explore their own reflections in the mirrors. Some toddlers may make different faces in the mirrors, whereas others may enjoy exploring their facial and hair features. Talk with the toddlers about what they see.



Family Child Care

Materials needed: Different mirrors, including the Interest Area materials and mirrors affixed to walls

Children of all ages enjoy seeing their reflection in a mirror. Babies can look at themselves in a large mirror affixed to the wall, and older children will enjoy use of a full-length mirror to observe themselves dressing up and playing different roles. Encourage preschool-age and older children to show emotions that are more challenging to communicate in facial expressions, such as feeling frustrated or proud.



24–36 Months

Option 1 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Gross motor development

Fine motor development

A toddler practices beginning skills in catching a colorful scarf.



Key Concepts

Open

Catch

Watch



Materials Needed

Movement scarf



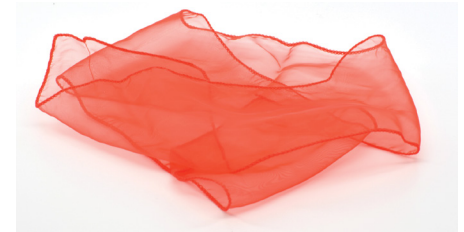
Also Promotes

Cognitive

Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: Catching an object supports eye-hand coordination. By approximately 24–30 months, most toddlers have developed body coordination that enables them to catch an object or begin learning to catch. This activity is designed for a toddler who appears ready to learn and practice how to catch a soft, slow-moving item.

BEGIN: *[Invite a toddler to join you to play catch. Sit or kneel on the floor facing the toddler, with about 2–3 feet between you and the toddler. The toddler may wish to stand. Show the scarf.]*



EXPLAIN: Here is a scarf for us to catch. I am going to practice catching the scarf by tossing it into the air.

I will watch the scarf after I toss it. I will open both of my hands, put my hands together, and put my hands in front of my body. I will try to catch the scarf with both of my hands.

[Demonstrate catching the scarf by describing each of the following actions after you toss the scarf in the air:

- *Hands open and in front of my body*
- *Watch the scarf*
- *Try to catch the scarf with my open hands*

Emphasize and show again how you put (extended) your arms in front of you. Also, emphasize how you may need to move your open hands so they are under the scarf when it falls.]

ACT: Now I will toss the scarf to you so you can practice catching our scarf. Are you ready?

[Pause and look at the toddler for a sign that he/she is ready. The “ready” sign may be a smile.

Guide the toddler’s actions by describing the steps you demonstrated earlier:

- *Hands open and together and in front of your body*
- *Watch the scarf*
- *Try to catch the scarf with your open hands*

Toss the scarf after the toddler puts his/her hands in the catching position (first step).

**Option 1 continued**

Enthusiastically acknowledge the toddler's efforts.

Offer 2–3 more practice opportunities. Adapt your action with the scarf in response to the toddler's efforts. Examples: For Extra Support, drop (rather than toss) the scarf into the toddler's hands. For Enrichment, move back about 12 inches before tossing.

Enthusiastically describe any effort the toddler makes to move his/her open hands to catch a scarf that shifts slightly in direction after it is tossed.

Continue as time and toddler interest permit.]

RECAP: We practiced catching a scarf with both of our hands and our eyes. How did we use our hands to try catching the scarf? (opened our hands, put our hands together and in front of our body) How did we use our eyes? (to watch the scarf)

👁️ What to Look For—Option 1

A major advantage of using a scarf to learn and practice catching is that a scarf moves slowly, giving a toddler time to anticipate and plan. Motor planning is supported when a tossed scarf shifts direction, requiring the toddler to move the position of his/her open hands. Positively point out any adjustments a toddler makes with his/her hands in response to a scarf that moves in a different direction. Another advantage of a scarf is its softness. An uncomfortable bump on the nose can be discouraging for any child learning to catch.

If a toddler reaches for a scarf you toss, positively acknowledge his/her efforts to get the scarf and offer a reminder that we are practicing how to catch by holding open our hands.

If a toddler tosses a scarf after catching it, positively acknowledge the interest in helping the scarf move in the air. Avoid letting the activity drift into a toss-and-catch routine. Option 2 supports practice in tossing and catching. Some toddlers have experience and confidence in both throwing and catching, but generally toddlers of this age benefit from repeated and varied experiences in catching. This is the reason for Option 1's focus on catching.

If this activity option is too challenging for a toddler, promptly transition to an activity of rolling a soft ball for the toddler to catch. Catching a rolling ball is a valuable way to practice eye-hand coordination. Consider adapting the Physical/Health activity in Block 2, Option 1 for younger toddlers (12–24 months).

📊 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Offer an additional demonstration and description of steps that are challenging for the toddler to do. ■ Move closer to the toddler before tossing a scarf.

Enrichment ■ To make the scarf move slightly faster, tie one loose knot in the scarf before tossing. ■ If a toddler readily catches the scarf, say the steps as descriptions of the toddler's actions rather than as prompts for what to do. ■ Toss the scarf slightly to the left or right to support the toddler's practice in moving open hands to catch the scarf.



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Gross motor development

Fine motor development

Toddlers practice tossing and catching a colorful scarf.



Key Concepts

Up

Open

Catch

Watch



Materials Needed

Movement scarves—1 per toddler and caregiver



Also Promotes

Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: This activity is for toddlers who have experience catching a scarf through participation in Option 1 or a similar activity. Offer the activity in an open space that supports freedom of movement but not running.

Invite 3–4 toddlers to join you for tossing and catching colorful scarves. Begin the activity by inviting toddlers to pretend they are tossing a scarf. Demonstrate by using one hand to toss an imaginary scarf up into the air. Emphasize we toss a scarf up into the air above us, not away from us. Encourage toddlers to try the actions you demonstrate with a pretend scarf.



Then use a scarf to demonstrate tossing up and catching the scarf in this order:

- Describe again how to toss up.
- Remind toddlers that we catch a scarf by opening our hands and putting our hands together and in front of our bodies. We move our open hands in front of us right after we toss the scarf into the air.
- We watch the scarf.
- We may need to move our open hands to catch the scarf.

Give each toddler a colorful scarf to toss and catch. As needed, assist toddlers in finding a space to toss and catch safely. Repeat prompts for steps in tossing and catching the scarf as appropriate.

Support repeated practice in tossing and catching. Offer reminders of steps that seem challenging. If the activity is overly exciting, request toddlers take a pause by holding their scarf open with both hands and taking some slow, deep breaths. (See the Self-Regulation activities focused on slow, deep breathing in Blocks 2 and 5.)

👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

One of the challenges of tossing and then catching a scarf is simultaneously watching the tossed scarf while putting hands into position for catching it. Some toddlers may use one hand, rather than the suggested two open hands, to catch a scarf. Also, some toddlers may use two hands to toss their scarf. The activity may seem simple but it involves a lot of motor coordination partly connected to watching the scarf.

**Option 2 continued**

Look for signs of fatigue or overstimulation and offer calming-down supports to conclude the activity. See the Self-Regulation activity plan in the current block.

 A small icon of a wooden scaffold structure with three vertical posts and two horizontal beams.**More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2**

Extra support ■ In the opening segment, demonstrate tossing a pretend scarf away from you and then up into the air. Emphasize that in today's activity we toss up, not away.

Enrichment ■ At the conclusion of the activity, invite toddlers to describe how they tossed and caught the scarf.

**Interest Area**

Materials needed: baby shampoo for no-tears bubbles, water smocks, ping-pong balls, sensory table, movement scarves

Provide bubbles in a sensory tub with warm water and encourage toddlers to pop the bubbles. On another day, float ping-pong balls in the sensory tub to provide experiences in figuring out how to pick up a small ball (known as motor planning). Encourage toddlers to drop a ping-pong ball into the water and watch what happens to the water. Provide the scarves in an open area of the room for toddlers to continue practice tossing (Option 1) or tossing and catching (Option 2).

**Family Child Care**

Materials needed: movement scarves

In addition to offering Options 1 and 2 to toddlers, invite preschool-age and older children to toss a scarf with one hand and catch the scarf with the opposite hand. Increase challenge by giving children two scarves. For infants, hold the scarf close enough to see and grasp. Describe an infant's looking and grasping.