

#2.3 – My Classroom Community

Before You Begin

- Review the Introduction and Preparation for the Focus Area – My Family and My Community for guidance in planning for this topic of study.
- Refer to Developing Weekly Activity Plans for Adventure for Toddlers for information on how to develop your plans.

Big Ideas

Here are some big ideas that you can help toddlers explore:

- I am a part of a center and classroom community.
- I am beginning to make friends with other children in my classroom.
- My friends and I do things together in my classroom.
- The people in my center have names.

Teacher Note: Consider extending this Topic of Study over several weeks. There is so much for toddlers to learn about being a part of a classroom community. Carry over experiences from one week to another because toddlers enjoy and learn through repetition.

Materials to Collect and Make

Featured Books

Teacher Note: See **Book List** section for books to read from the previous two Toddler Topics.

Storytelling Figures and Mother Goose Rhyme

- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the Mother Goose Rhyme, Jack and Jill, (See Attachment: [Jack and Jill](#))

Books to Make

- *Friend, Friend, Who Do You See?* (See Attachment: [Friend, Friend, Who Do You See?](#))
- *We Are Friends*

Teacher Note: *We Are Friends* is the same book that was introduced in **Toddler Topic #1.4 – Feelings and Emotions**

Materials

- Photo album
- 3 Ring binder
- Circular objects for printing
- Pictures of trains
- Hoop and beanbags

Book List

Are You My Mother? by P. D. Eastman

Ask Mr. Bear by Marjorie Flack

Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by Clement Hurd (available in multiple languages)

Guess How Much I Love You by Sam McBratney, illustrated by Anita Jeram (also available in Spanish)

Have You Seen My Duckling? By Nancy Tafuri

In the Rain with Baby Duck by Amy Hest, illustrated by Jill Barton

Just Me and My Dad by Mercer Mayer

Kiss Good Night by Amy Hest, illustrated by Anita Jeram

The Napping House by Audrey Wood, illustrated by Don Wood

Peter's Chair by Ezra Jack Keats

Ring Around a Rosie by Annie Kubler

Row, Row, Row Your Boat by Annie Kubler

Ten, Nine, Eight by Molly Bang

The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn, illustrated by Ruth E. Harper and Nancy M. Leak

The Runaway Bunny by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by Clement Hurd

The Three Bears by Paul Galdone

The Three Little Pigs by Paul Galdone

Time for Bed by Mem Fox, illustrated by Jane Dyer

Where's My Hug (originally published as *Don't You Feel Well, Sam?*) by Amy Hest, illustrated by Anita Jeram

Reading Books with Toddlers

Note: Review the section in *Curriculum Tips and Techniques* on Reading Books with Children, for suggestions on how to use books with children.

Learning Goals:

SE3.1 Shows awareness of self as unique individual (*sense of identity, characteristics of self and others*)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences

Planned Activity: We Are Friends (YT & OT)

Materials: *We Are Friends* Book

How to begin:

- Take a photo of each child in your group as he or she is engaged in an activity.
- Put the photos into a small, one-photo-per-page album.
- Label the album, ***We Are Friends***.
- Sit on the floor and say, "I'm looking at this book about friends. I see a picture of Jamie playing with the cars. Here's a picture of Manuel eating his lunch."
- Invite children to join you in looking at the book.
- Turn the pages and describe what each child is doing. Be sure to include the child's name.
- Turn the pages and invite children to name the child on each page. Invite older toddlers to describe what each child is doing.

Extension:

- Place the book in the Library Area so children can look at it independently.
- Join a child who is looking at the book and involve him or her in naming the children and describing the activity.
- Take photos of children playing side-by-side and put them in an album. When sharing this album with children make comments such as, "Randall and James are both looking at books."

Planned Activity: *Friend, Friend, Who Do You See?* (YT & OT)

Materials: *Friend, Friend, Who Do You See?* (See Attachment: [Friend, Friend, Who Do You See?](#))

How to begin:

- Take a photo of each child in your group.
- Copy the pages of the book. You will need multiple copies of the third page so there is a page for each child.
- Attach a photo for each child and complete the page with his or her name.
- Laminate the pages or put into clear page protectors.
- Bind with metal rings or place in a three ring binder.
- Say to children, "I'm going to the book area and read a book about our friends."
- Show the cover of the book and say the title.
- Turn the pages and read the book making sure the children can see and name their friends.
- Invite older toddlers to join in saying the language pattern of the words.

Extension:

- Place the book in the Library Area so children can look at it independently.
- Join a child who is looking at the book and involve him or her in naming the children and saying the language pattern.

Teacher Note: *When you invite a child to join you in an activity, make sure the child is not actively engaged in something interesting.*

Language and Cognitive Materials and Activities

Learning Goals:

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)

EL2.1 Notices and manipulates the sounds of language

SE3.1 Shows awareness of self as unique individual (sense of identity, characteristics of self and others)

Do You Know This Friend of Mine? (Sing to tune of "The Muffin Man")

Do you know this friend of mine,
This friend of mine,
This friend of mine?
Do you know this friend of mine?
Her name is Audra.

Yes, we know this friend of yours,
This friend of yours,
This friend of yours.
Yes, we know this friend of yours.
Her name is Audra.

Teacher Note: *Include each child's name as you sing the song. When you sing the last line in both the first and second verses, point to a child and encourage children to say the child's name.*

Where is Johnny? (OT)

(Sing to tune of "Are You Sleeping? / "Where is Thumbkin?")

Where is Johnny?
Where is Johnny?
There he is. There he is. (Child stands up)
How are you today, sir?
Very well, I thank you.
Now sit down, now sit down. (Child sits back down)

Extensions:

- Have a puppet tap the shoulder of the designated child when you sing "There he is. There he is."

Teacher Note: *Gather a small group of children together to sing this song. Have children sitting in a circle with you. Repeat the song with different children's names. Children will probably not say or sing "Here I am, here I am" and "Very well I thank you." However, you can invite other children to point to Johnny as you sing his name.*

The Children on the Bus

(Sing to tune of "Wheels on the Bus")

The children on the bus wave to a friend (wave)
Wave to a friend, wave to a friend. (wave)
The children on the bus wave to a friend (wave)
All through the town.

The children on the bus say "Let's go and play, (beckon)
Let's go and play, let's go and play." (beckon)
The children on the bus say "Let's go and play" (beckon)
All through the town.

Two Little Blackbirds

Two little blackbirds sitting on a hill. (hold up index finger on each hand)
One named Jack and one named Jill.
Fly away, Jack. (put one index finger behind back)
Fly away, Jill. (put other index finger behind back)
Come back, Jack. (bring one finger from behind back)
Come back, Jill. (bring other finger from behind back)

Extensions:

- Change the verse as follows:

Two little friends sitting so still.
One named Ivory and one named Megan.
Stand up Ivory, (child stands)
Stand up Megan. (child stands)
Sit down Ivory, (child sits)
Sit down Megan. (child sits)

Teacher Note: *Change “Jack” and “Jill” to two of the children in your group. Repeat the verse, including the name of each child who is in the group.*

Learning Goal:

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences

Planned Activity: Storytelling, Mother Goose Rhyme (YT & OT)

Jack and Jill (See Attachment: [Jack and Jill](#))

How to begin:

- Make either felt or magnetic storytelling figures for the rhyme.
- Read the rhyme from a Mother Goose book with children several times so that they are familiar with the characters and the order of events.

Jack and Jill

Jack and Jill
Went up the hill,
To fetch a pail of water.
Jack fell down,
And broke his crown,
And Jill came tumbling after.

- Use the storytelling figures to say the rhyme.
- Change the names in the rhyme to the names of two children in your group and repeat the rhyme with the new names.
- Repeat the rhyme with the names of other children in the group.
- Involve children in placing figures on the storyboard when you feel they can do this.

Learning Goals:**SE1.2 Interacts with peers****EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences****Planned Activity: Reading with a Friend (YT & OT)****Materials:** Two stuffed animals and a favorite children's book such as *Goodnight Moon***How to begin:**

- Go to the book area and begin reading a book to the two stuffed animals.
- Say to a child or children who join you, "I'm reading a book with my friends. Would you like to join us? Now we have four friends."
- Continue reading the book to the end.
- Tell the children who have joined you that you must leave the area to do something else and encourage the children to select a book from the book shelf and continue reading to the stuffed animals and to each other.

Social and Emotional Activities

Learning Goals:**SE2.1 Experiences, expresses, and regulates a range of emotions****SE2.2 Interprets and responds to the feelings of others****Planned Activity: I Need a Hug (YT & OT)****Materials:** doll or soft stuffed animal**How to begin:**

- Gather a small group of children together. Show them the doll or stuffed animal and say, "This doll has been crying because she fell down and bumped her knee. I think she needs a hug."
- Cuddle and affectionately pat the doll, then hug the doll.
- Say to children, "The doll is feeling much better now. Hugs make you feel better."
- Invite each child to pat the doll and give it a hug. Say, "The doll really feels better now because she got lots of hugs."
- Invite older toddlers to discuss times they have received a hug and how it made them feel.

Extensions:

- Use a soft puppet for this activity. Give the puppet a name such as Huggy or Huggy Bear. Involve the children in finding a special place for the puppet so that they can give the puppet a hug anytime they want to.
- Give hugs to children when they seem to need it; when they seem frustrated, sad, or tired, for example.
- Role-play with a child and the puppet. Talk for the puppet. Talk about how the puppet feels sad or hurt. Model how to comfort the puppet to make it feel better. Have the puppet ask the child if he ever feels sad and what makes him feel better when he is sad. What does he think would make other people feel better when they are sad?

Teacher Note: Consider re-reading the book, *Hug*, by Jez Arborough, one of the featured books in the Topic of Study: *Feelings and Emotions*.

Learning Goal:

SE1.2 Interacts with peers (*social skills*)

Planned Activity: Sharing Tub (YT & OT)

Materials: dish tub or other container, large pegs and two peg boards

How to begin:

- Place a tub with pegs between two peg boards on a table. Make sure there are enough pegs so that two children can fill their peg boards.
- Invite two children to join you at the table. Say, “Kassandra, here is a peg board for you and here is one for you, Miguel. You can share the pegs in the tub.”
- Observe to see if one child tries to hoard all of the pegs. If so, join them and say, “There are enough pegs for both of you to share. Take one peg at a time.”

Extensions:

- Use this same technique with other materials. For example, put play dough toys between two older toddlers playing with play dough and invite them to “share the toys.”
- Put a tub of crayons between two children who are scribbling. Invite the children to “share the crayons.”

Teacher Note: *Toddlers are not yet ready to “share” by giving up what they are playing with to someone else or to voluntarily give another child half of their play dough, for example. Providing a sufficient number of interesting toys and materials and duplicates of some toys minimizes conflict over sharing, which is an unreasonable expectation for most toddlers. Use the word “sharing” in situations such as those described in the **Sharing Tub** experience.*

Teacher Note: *When you invite a child to join you in activity, make sure the child is not actively engaged in something of interest.*

Sensory and Art Materials and Activities

Learning Goals:

SE1.2 Interacts with peers

PH2.1 Demonstrates fine motor strength, control, and coordination (*hand-eye coordination*)

MT4.1 Explores and describes shapes and spatial relationships (*shape knowledge*)

Planned Activity: Printing Circles with Friends (OT)

Materials: newspaper to cover the table, large sheet of butcher paper, circular objects such as lids from small containers, tops for spray cans, empty thread spools, paper towel rolls cut into 2 inch sections, pie pans, washable liquid tempera paint, paint shirts/smocks, paper towels for cleanup

How to begin:

- Assemble the circular objects and place in a basket or dish tub for children to explore.
- Cover table with newspaper.
- Pour 2 colors of paint in two separate pie pans.
- Add 2 or 3 circular objects to each color of paint.
- Cut the large piece of paper into a large circle and tape it to the newspaper.
- Allow 2 or 3 children at a time to paint with the objects. Assist children in putting on paint shirts or smocks.
- Talk with children about friends making circles together.
- Observe the children as they use the different objects and describe the circles they are making. For example, "Raymond is making blue circles. Ashley is making a big yellow circle."
- Use paper towels to wipe off hands. Have children wash hands if necessary.

Extensions:

- Involve children in creating a **Friends Collage**.
- Have a collection of old magazines such as parenting and children's catalogs that have pictures of children doing things together.
- Invite toddlers to look through the magazines and find pictures of friends.
- Assist toddlers to tear out or cut the pictures from the magazines and glue them to a large sheet of paper. Write the word **Friends** on the collage.

Teacher Note: *If children are unable to look through the magazines and find the pictures, have a variety of pictures precut from magazines. Invite each child to look through the pictures and find one that he or she likes and glue it to the paper.*

Learning Goals:**SE3.1 Shows awareness of self as unique individual** (*preferences*)**PH2.1 Demonstrates fine-motor strength, control and coordination****PH2.2 Adjusts grasp and coordination to use tools****CA2.1 Explores, manipulates, creates, and responds to a variety of art media** (*exploration of art*)**Planned Activity: Friendship Quilt (OT)****Materials:** 10" x 10" squares of butcher paper (at least one per child), washable markers, crayons, tape**How to begin:**

- Plan for this experience to take place over several days.
- Offer children different art media for drawing on the squares of butcher paper.
- Encourage each child to draw on a square. **DO NOT FORCE A CHILD TO DRAW IF HE OR SHE DOES NOT WANT TO!**
- Tape the squares together on the back side into a quilt pattern.
- Say to the children that they have made a friendship quilt.
- Display the quilt in the classroom at children's eye level.
- Write on an index card "Friendship Quilt" and post the card on the wall just above the quilt.
- Invite families to look at the friendship quilt the children have made.

Extensions:

- Gather paper of different textures: butcher, construction, grocery bag, newspaper, old posters, wall paper, wrapping paper, newsprint.
- Cut the paper into squares of the same size.
- Tape the squares together on the back side into a quilt pattern.
- Pour two or three colors of tempera paint into pie pans.
- Provide brushes for painting.
- Invite children to paint on the quilt. Allow children to paint anywhere on the quilt they choose, using any color they choose.
- Observe to see if children notice how the paint looks different on different types of paper.
- Say to children that they have made a friendship quilt.
- Display the quilt in the classroom at children's eye level.
- Print on an index card "Friendship Quilt" and post the card on the wall just above the quilt.
- Invite families to look at the friendship quilt the children have made.

Teacher Notes:

- *Have children wear paint shirts or smocks when they are painting. Have wet paper towels handy for wiping off hands.*
- *It is not necessary to write children's names on the quilt squares, especially if families are invited to look at the quilts. You do not want families comparing children's art efforts or noticing that their child did not make a square.*

Learning Goals:

SE1.2 Interacts with peers (*social skills*)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*follows directions*)

Planned Activity: Friends on the Train (OT)

Materials: pictures of trains, 4 or 5 children's chairs

How to begin:

- Show children pictures of trains. Identify the engine, the cars and the caboose.
- Introduce "train" language to the children: choo-choo, chug, chug, woo, woo, and "All aboard." Invite children to make the train noises with you.
- Line up 4 or 5 children's chairs in a row.
- Say, "All aboard the friends train", sit in one of the chairs and invite children to join you.
- Sing a song such as "Down at the Station" or "Little Red Caboose." Add to the song the train noises you and the children have been practicing.

Extension:

- Suggest that children be "train friends." Model what this means with one child by having the child be the caboose and you be the engine. Shout "All aboard" and have the child stand behind you and hold on to you as you move about the room.
- Invite children to pair up to be "train friends." Make the train noises as the children move about the room. Have the engines and cabooses switch places and repeat the activity.
- Play recorded train songs such as "The Little Red Caboose" as the children move about the room in pairs.
- Consider doing this activity outdoors where there is more room to safely move about.

Movement, Music and Gross Motor Activities

Learning Goals:

SE1.2 Interacts with peers

PH1.1 Demonstrates locomotor skills

Planned Activity: Ring around the Roses (YT & OT)

Materials: None for first activity – hoop for **Extensions**

How to begin:

- Invite 2 or 3 children to join you and form a circle by holding hands.
- Sing the following song:

Ring around the Roses

Ring around the roses,
A pocket full of posies;
Ashes! Ashes!
We all fall down.

- Fall down with children on the last line.

Extensions:

- Introduce a hoop and help each child hold onto the hoop with one hand, all facing the same direction. Help children space themselves around the hoop.
- Sing the song as you all move in a circle and all fall down together.

Learning Goals:**SE1.2 Interacts with peers****PH1.1 Demonstrates locomotor skills****LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (follows directions)****Planned Activity: Hokey Pokey (YT & OT)****Materials:** None**How to begin:**

- Gather a small group of children, no more than 4 or 5. Help them position themselves a safe distance from each other so they have plenty of space to move.
- Begin by saying, "We're going to sing a song and you're going to do what the song says to do. Put your arms out to your side. If you touch your friends, move so that everyone has enough space."
- Sing the following song and do the motions:

Hokey Pokey

You put your hand in (put hand in circle)
You put your hand out (put hand out of the circle)
You put your hand in and you shake it all about.(put hand in circle and shake it)
You do the hokey pokey (twist body)
And you turn yourself around. (turn around in circle)
That's what it's all about. (clap to beat)

Teacher Notes:

- *Add other body parts as children are ready for this; foot, elbow, head, and whole body (whole self) for example.*
- *Do not be concerned about right and left. This is a concept that toddlers cannot understand. Knowing body parts and following directions are the important things that are happening with this experience.*
- *The Hokey Pokey song is available on many children's CDs. However, the tempo is often so fast that toddlers are unable to follow the directions. Also, the song usually includes "right" and "left" and caregivers sometimes get caught up in this concept, rather than the body parts and following directions experience.*

Learning Goals:**SE1.2 Interacts with peers** (*social skills*)**LD1.1 Understands and responds to language** (in child's home language)**Planned Activity: Pass the Beanbag (OT)****Materials:** 2 or 3 identical beanbags**How to begin:**

- Place the beanbags on the floor in an area that is out of the flow of traffic.
- Pick up one of the beanbags and say, "I wonder what we can do with these beanbags."
- Allow children who join you to explore the beanbags. Encourage them to say and demonstrate what they can do with beanbags.
- Collect the beanbags and say, "We're going to play a game with just one of the beanbags" and put the other beanbags out of sight.
- Invite the children to form a circle with you by holding hands, then ask children to drop hands.
- Say, "I'm going to pass the beanbag to John. John, you pass the beanbag to Audrey, and Audrey will pass the beanbag to Leandra."
- Guide the children through the process of passing the beanbag to each other as you say or sing, "Pass the beanbag to your friend, Audrey. Pass the beanbag to your friend Leandra. Pass the beanbag to your friend, Ms. Brown."

Extensions:

- Vary the game by adding the words "Stop" and "Go." Say to the children, "When I say 'Stop', hold the beanbag until I say 'Go'." Make sure each child has a turn holding the beanbag when you say "Stop."
- Add variety by playing music as you pass the beanbag to each other.

Learning Goal:**PH1.3 Demonstrates gross motor manipulative skills****Planned Activity: Roll the Ball (YT)****Materials:** ball**How to begin:**

- Sit on the floor with a young toddler.
- Roll the ball to the child, chanting the following: "I'm rolling the ball to Marcy."
- Encourage the child to roll the ball back to you and chant the following: "Marcy is rolling the ball to Mr. Jones."

Learning Goals:

SE1.1 Forms trusting relationships with nurturing adults (*interactions*)

PH1.1 Demonstrates locomotor skills (*body movement*)

Planned Activity: Let's Go Back and Forth (YT & OT)

Materials: None

How to begin:

- Talk with a toddler about a game the two of you will play; a game called "Back and Forth."
- Sit on the floor, facing a toddler, with legs apart.
- Hold the child's hand and lean backwards as the child leans forward.
- Lean forward as your child leans backward.
- Try to get a rhythm to your rocking as you say "back and forth, back and forth."

Extensions:

- Add variety to the game by singing a song as you go back and forth.

Row Your Boat

Row, row, row your boat
Gently down the stream.
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,
Life is but a dream.

Teacher Note: *Avoid pulling on a child's arms to bring him forward.*

Learning Goals:

PH1.1 Demonstrates locomotor skills

CA1.1 Explores through listening, singing, creating and moving to music

Planned Experience: Movement and Music (YT & OT)

Materials: CD player and CDs

How to begin:

- Include in your daily schedule a specific time to involve children in moving to music.
- Collect CDs that include a variety of musical experiences for the children. See **Resources** located in **Focus Area #2, Introduction and Preparation** for a suggested list.
- Review the CDs in advance and select the songs that you think your children will enjoy.
- Vary the songs you use each day. Include some of children's favorites and add a new one.
- Conclude the movement and music time with a song that will help children calm down from being so active.

Teacher Note: *Include songs with words from a child's home language that is not English.*

Teacher Note: *Include movement and music throughout the day, not just at the schedule time.*

Transition Times

Learning Goal:

CD2.2 Shows flexibility in adjusting thinking and behavior to different contexts (*adjusting behavior to match context*)

Where is Susie?

(Sing to tune of "Are You Sleeping?" / "Where is Thumbkin?")

Where is Susie?

Where is Susie?

There she is. There she is.

Go and wash your hands.

Go and wash your hands.

Wash your hands. Wash your hands.

The Children on the Bus

(Sing to the tune of "Wheels on the Bus")

The children on the bus walk to the playground.

Walk to the playground. Walk to the playground.

The children on the bus walk to the playground.

Its time to go outside.

Two Little Friends

Two little friends

Sitting so still.

One named Ivory

And one named Megan.

Walk to the table, Ivory.

Walk to the table, Megan.

Sit right down. Sit right down.

Teacher Notes:

- *These transitions are adapted from finger plays listed earlier. Adapt other finger plays previously listed in other curriculum plans as transitions to move children from one activity or place to another.*
- *Insert names of children in your group in transitions where names are used.*

Family Connection and Engagement

Send home the following Family Connection and Engagement Activity:

- Activity – "Having Fun with a Friend" (See Attachment: [Having Fun with a Friend](#))

Include a Family Response sheet. (See Attachment: [Family Response Sheet](#))