

## SUGGESTIONS FOR ENRICHING THE ENVIRONMENT

- Place children who are not mobile, where they have opportunities to see and hear new things, see familiar things from different views, and watch or join in with others. Hang clear, simple pictures, mobiles, and unbreakable mirrors where infants and toddlers can see and/or hear them.
- Provide objects of varying sizes, textures and shapes to play with such as empty appliance boxes (check for staples and sharp edges), baskets, or pillows.
- Provide toys and household items that pose problems for children to solve, such as empty containers with matching lids, measuring cups, pots and pans, sorters, busy boxes, simple puzzles, and large Duplo® blocks.
- Make a chart with pictures, showing the schedule for the day. Hang it up in an area where adults and children can see it.
- Provide dolls and other *open-ended materials* to encourage pretend play.



## EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

- Hide toys while infants are watching and encourage them to find them. Play peek-a-boo and hide-and-seek.
- Give children a chance to collect, sort, and organize objects and materials both indoors and outdoors. Make sure children who have disabilities and infants who are not mobile, have access to the same wide range of materials.
- Use *routines* and real-life situations to help children learn. For example, talk about body parts during diapering or “hot” and “cold” while eating.
- Talk about things that go together and the concepts of “same” and “different” while sorting laundry and picking up toys.
- Give children many experiences with *cause and effect*, such as winding up a toy, playing a music box, shaking a rattle, and rolling balls down a ramp.
- Welcome questions from children about why things happen. If possible, show them while explaining (if a child asks, “Where did the ice go?” that was in a pitcher of water, put out a bowl of ice and invite children to watch what happens).
- Help children work together on *age-appropriate* computer games that require them to remember things or figure out the solution to problems.
- Play a variety of games, including games that involve imitation such as “Simon Says” and “Follow the Leader.”
- Play games that involve thinking and reasoning, such as “I Spy...” or “I’m thinking of an animal that...”