

Introduction and Preparation for the Focus Area – On the Go

Introduction

During the first 18 months of life, children are usually referred to as young infants (birth to 8 months) and mobile infants (8 to 18 months). Children between the ages of 18 and 36 months are usually called toddlers. The Topics of Study in **Focus Area #6, On the Go**, have been developed for Toddlers.

As in all of the Focus Areas, there are activities that support all of the Domains of Child Development and Early Learning with a strong emphasis on the following Domains: **Language Development (LD)** and **Emergent Literacy (EL)**.

Toddlers are very much involved with the concept of being on the go, whether it be with their toys with wheels and their ride-on vehicles, or with vehicles in which they travel with their families. They are also fascinated with vehicles used by construction workers and by community helpers.

Through both planned and spontaneous experiences, caregivers can provide opportunities for toddlers to discover many things about being on the go.

Teacher Notes

- *In this Focus Area, **On the Go**, there are three Topics of Study:*
 - *Toys and Ride-on Vehicles with Wheels*
 - *Going Places*
 - *Construction and Community Helper Vehicles*
- *Many of the experiences in this Focus Area have an age designation of either Younger Toddler (YT) or Older Toddler (OT) these two age designations do not specify age in months.*
- *Use your knowledge of individual children to determine which activities are appropriate for which children in your care.*
- *Consider extending a Topic of Study over several weeks. There is so much toddlers can learn about this topic. Carry over activities from one week to another because toddlers enjoy and learn best through repetition.*

Arkansas Minimum Licensing Requirements (rev. 1.1.15) requires the following:

400 Program – 401 Program Requirements for all ages

5.1 The facility shall have an approved curriculum with weekly activity plans appropriate for the developmental needs of each group of children.

To assist your program in meeting this requirement, refer to Developing Weekly Activity Plan for Adventures for Toddlers for information on how to develop your plans. In addition, 2 different examples of blank Weekly Activity Plan sheets are included. Feel free to make copies of the plan sheet you select and use it each week. To help you in planning, there are 4 samples of completed Weekly Activity Plans that you may use as guides when developing activity plans for your group of children.

Should you choose to develop your own Weekly Activity Plan sheet, feel free to use the information presented here as a guide.

Resources

- Children's books can be purchased online, from school supply catalogs or local book stores.
- Check with your local library for the availability of children's books.
- **The Infant /Toddler Library**, from Lakeshore Learning (50 photos and activity cards focusing on the following topics: Transportation, Farm Animals, Nature, Pets, Home, Food, Community Helpers, Emotions)
- CDs which can be ordered online or from school supply catalogs:
 - Baby Beluga by Raffi
 - Songs for I Love You Rituals 2 with songs by Dr. Becky Bailey and music by Mar Harman
 - Toddlers on Parade, KIMBO Educational
 - Sea Gulls Music for Rest and Relaxation by Hap Palmer
 - Quiet Time by Raffi
 - Singable Songs for the Very Young – Great with a Peanut Butter Sandwich by Raffi
 - Toddlers Favorite Music – for Little People

Picture File

- Collect pictures that relate to this Focus Area – **On the Go**. Examples of pictures to collect include:
 - pictures of all types of transportation such as: tricycles, bicycles, 4-wheelers, motorcycles, cars, trucks, SUVs, vans, buses, boats, airplanes
 - pictures of vehicles used by construction workers and by community helpers: cement truck, dump truck, backhoe, bulldozer, pickup truck, ambulance, tow truck, red fire truck, police car, mail truck, garbage truck

Include small (index card size) as well as larger pictures.

Consider mounting the small pictures on index cards. Laminate or cover all of the pictures with clear, self-adhesive paper for durability.

- Post some of the pictures on the wall at toddler's eye level. Observe to see if toddlers look at the pictures and point to and/or name the objects or people in the pictures. Join them and expand on what they say. For example, say to Megan who is looking at a picture of a school bus, "Megan, you're looking at a school bus. Your sister, Ellen, rides a yellow bus like this one to school."
- Put some of the small pictures in a container and place it in the library area so that it is accessible to children. Observe a child as he takes the pictures out of the box. Should the child bring a picture to you, involve him in discussing what he sees in the picture. "That's a picture of a fire fighter and his red fire truck. Do you remember when we heard a fire truck and we all watched it go by the window?"
- Keep some of the pictures in a basket or tote bag within easy reach. Use the pictures with an individual child or a small group of children. Invite them to name the some of the vehicles and to talk about what is happening in the pictures. Allow children to look at the pictures on their own. Model and talk with them about the proper way to handle the pictures.
- Determine if funds are available to purchase **The Infant /Toddler Library** from Lakeshore Learning.

Teacher Note: Refer to **Curriculum Tips and Techniques** – Picture File, for additional information about how to organize a picture file.

Toddler Environment

The toddler environment should always provide equipment and materials for language experiences, manipulative exploration, gross motor and block play, sensory exploration, pretend play and outdoor exploration. The following additions to the environment are intended for the entire Focus Area: **On the Go**. Specify on your Weekly Activity Plan sheet which materials to add for that week.

Language Area

- Add the following books:
 - *Vehicles to Ride On*
 - *Vehicles for Community Helpers*
 - *Vehicles for Construction Workers*
- Add container of pictures that have been laminated or covered with clear self-adhesive paper. (See **Picture File**, page 2 for examples of types of pictures to collect.)
- Add Vehicle Shoebox Kit (3 different sets of vehicles)

Manipulative Exploration

- Add puzzles for all types of vehicles: ride on, travel in, construction and community helper vehicles
- Add divided utensil holders and small cars (such as Matchbox cars) that can roll in different sections

Gross Motor & Blocks

- Add shoeboxes or medium-size boxes to serve as garages (cut an opening in the box large enough for vehicles to enter)
- Add various small vehicles with wheels
- Add cardboard boxes decorated like a train or bus; boxes large enough for an older toddler to sit inside.
- Post pictures of construction and community helper vehicles in the block area.
- Create a highway by selecting a large piece of vinyl or linoleum. Use black electrical tape to create a long road that is wide and straight with only a few curves.
- Create two highways with the vinyl and tape; highways that are far enough apart so that toddlers have space as they play beside each other.
- Add automobile and truck magazines and sales books from auto dealers

Sensory Exploration

- Add sensory tub with sand and small vehicles
- Add sensory tub with water and small vehicles
- Add bubble wrap, corrugated cardboard and large sheets of sandpaper to block center

Pretend Play

- Add a construction worker prop box: hard hat, lunch boxes, tool belt and work gloves
- Add a shopping cart and/ or a doll buggy to the pretend play area
- Add empty boxes of popular food items: pasta boxes, cracker and cookie boxes, small cereal boxes. Stuff boxes with newspaper and tape down ends for durability.
- Create a train or bus by lining up three or four chairs

Outdoor Exploration

- Create a carwash outdoors: ride-on vehicles, bucket, sponges, rags for drying vehicles.
- Create an obstacle course for children to push, pull, or ride their vehicles through.
- Create an automobile paint shop: wheel toys, bucket and paint brushes.
- Use colored chalk to create highways on the sidewalk.

Safety Note: *It is the responsibility of the child care program and each employee to ensure the safety of toddlers in the program. This includes the materials and equipment provided for children's use. Should you have safety questions, the developers of this curriculum suggest that you consult with your Child Care Licensing Specialist for technical assistance.*

*Curriculum books such as The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & 2s, 2nd and 3rd Edition, contain safety information. See **Curriculum Tips and Techniques, References and Resources**, for additional resources.*

Family Connection and Engagement

Send home a note to families stating that for the next few weeks the children will be involved in the focus area: **On the Go**. They will participate in experiences that focus on vehicles they see at home, on the highway and in their community. How families can be involved in this focus area will depend on the situation of each child and his or her family.

Consider some of the following ways to involve the families:

- Invite families to send pictures of vehicles. Specify the vehicles that the children will be learning about.
- Invite families to send pictures of family or work vehicles.
- Suggest that families call their child's attention to the family vehicles, to the vehicles they see as they are driving around, and to vehicles they see on construction sites.