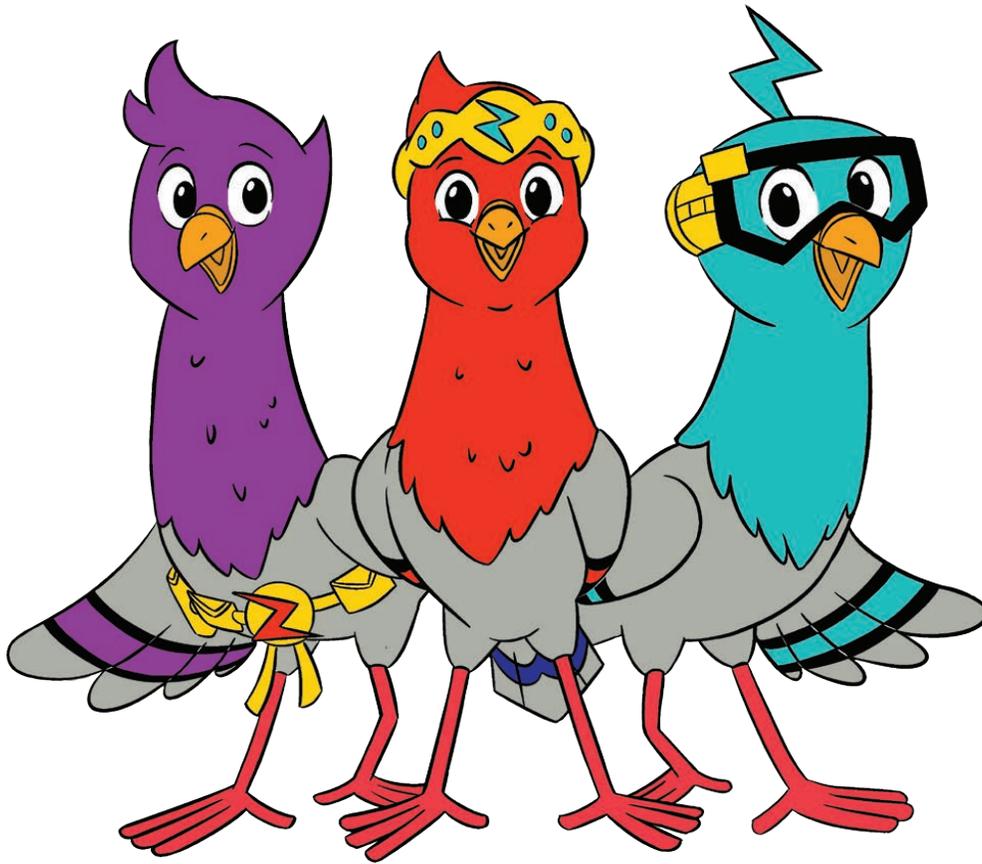


# BABY BRAIN BUILDING

A parent/caregiver and child curriculum for advancing executive function and literacy skills in children ages 0-3 years.



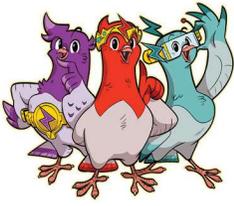
Developed by:



This initiative is made possible by:

Robin Hood's Fund for Early Learning and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.





# BABY BRAIN BUILDING CURRICULUM

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# BABY BRAIN BUILDING CURRICULUM

## About the Baby Brain Building Curriculum and the Children’s Museum of Manhattan

In 2018, the Children’s Museum of Manhattan (CMOM) launched plans for the Baby Brain Building program, an initiative made possible by Robin Hood’s Fund for Early Learning and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This three-year project allowed CMOM to pioneer innovative strategies for advancing executive function and literacy skills for children ages 0-3 in low-income communities. More specifically, the Baby Brain Building program was geared towards families living in homeless shelters and was piloted with shelters across New York City’s five boroughs. The Baby Brain Building program consists of two direct service components and online family activity cards. The first is a series of five in-person workshops facilitated by someone familiar with the curriculum. The second is the learning hub, a permanent installation of museum-grade graphics and interactive features at the site.

### About CMOM

Founded in 1973, the Children’s Museum of Manhattan (CMOM) has evolved from a grassroots collective offering much needed arts education into a beloved destination and resource for children, families, and educators from across the five boroughs and from around the world. The Museum offers interactive exhibits and workshops for children and families from all socio-economic backgrounds. Our work is researched-based and designed to help children build the intellectual, emotional, physical, and social skills needed to thrive in today’s world. CMOM combines early childhood education, health education, arts and science education, and cultural awareness education to stimulate children’s learning directly; to help parents provide the best foundation and support for their children’s formal education; to train educators and health professionals; and to pioneer new ways to connect families to formal education and research. Beyond welcoming visitors on-site, CMOM serves broad audiences through outreach programs in partnership with schools, libraries, shelters, and Head Start centers throughout New York City; and online tools and curricula.

## Summary of CMOMs Research Findings

### Evaluation Results

The Children Museum of Manhattan’s Baby Brain Building program was evaluated by an outside evaluation firm, WolfBrown, with efforts led by Dr. Steven Holochwost. The program was evaluated through a process of formative and summative assessment. As part of the summative evaluation, parents were asked to complete a series of brief surveys that were administered just before and just after caregivers attended each session, which we called entry and exit tickets. Each survey asked caregivers a series of questions to assess their knowledge of young children’s development and to gauge their self-efficacy with regard to their ability to promote these skills among their children.

These surveys were administered to 35 mothers (average age: 28 years; 37% Black/African American, 29% Latino Hispanic) of young children (average age: 2.5 years). Our analyses of the survey data revealed that even after attending a single program session, parents exhibited a 3% increase in their knowledge of child development, and a



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10% increase in their self-efficacy. However, parents continued to make increases in both of these areas in subsequent sessions: in the case of knowledge, a 13% increase was observed from the beginning to the end of the fifth session parents attended; for self-efficacy, increases peaked at 20% from pre- to post- following the second session parents attended.

We also conducted semi-structured interviews with parents who attended multiple sessions of the program. These interviewed revealed that parents perceived CMOM to be a safe space in which the women created a “sister circle” to talk about their experiences as mothers and women living in New York during a global pandemic. In many ways, the program delivered in its goals to not only give children the space to learn, but to do the same for their mothers as well.

## Background of program and curriculum development

### Overview of the Baby Brain Building Family Workshops

The five Baby Brain Building workshops are designed with the goal of promoting intergenerational learning and high quality engagement among children and adults. As with all Baby Brain Building program elements, the workshops place particular emphasis on activities which have been proven to foster foundational language and executive function skills among young children. We approach parents and caregivers as partners in the learning process, and invite them to actively participate alongside their children. All workshops are designed for families with children ages three years and younger, with flexible and appropriate options for younger or older children, up to age five. The workshops are not sequential, and our research has shown that even attending just one workshop makes an impact on the knowledge families have about executive function skills and language development. Our research also demonstrated that the more families come, the more knowledge they will gain. Each workshop is approximately 90 minutes, and it is suggested that they should always include light snacks or refreshments. Each week, participating families should receive a Baby Brain Building Toolkit — a set of developmentally appropriate toys, books, art materials, resources and tools for sensory exploration — that they can be used at home to extend learning long after the program has ended. For some workshops, parts of the toolkits are crafted during the art-making portion of the program, in others, all components of the toolkits are distributed at the end of the workshop.

### Iterations of the Baby Brain Building Curriculum

The education team at CMOM developed this curriculum over several years and developed multiple iterations of lesson plans and workshop guides. The curriculum was created using input and resources from the Harvard Center for the Developing Child, Vroom, Brooklyn Public Library, and EC Prism with the University of Oregon. The three-year trial and error process of curriculum development began with a series of focused on early childhood educators presenting information and executive function vocabulary to parents during key parts of the workshop. As the educators began to experiment with new workshop routines and discussion questions, they consistently found that families were most receptive when given the opportunity to speak with each other about their own experiences with their children. More parents and caregivers returned again and again in the workshop series where they were given



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the chance to learn from each other and make meaningful connections with others in the community. This discovery led to a sharp adjustment in the curriculum, where parents and caregivers were encouraged to see themselves as teachers. Every workshop discussion started with a cheer:

**“Who’s the teacher?” – Early childhood educators**  
**“I’m the teacher!” – Parents and caregivers**

Discussion questions were rewritten to draw out personal anecdotes from parents and caregivers and “Teacher Tips” were added to remind both parents and caregivers, as well as the early childhood educators, of suggestions and ideas that could be shared during the discussions. The early childhood educators were instructed to play with the family unit, not just the parents and caregivers or the children separately, and model play strategies. They held one-on-one conversations throughout the workshops, and shared their own experiences with child development, all designed to build trust and understanding in the community.

All these iterations and in-depth research have led to this five-session workshop model can be implemented by staff in any family shelter, library, museum, community center, or early childhood center.

### Workshop Structures:

Each workshop is structured similarly:

**Center Time:** Open-choice play with familiar and unfamiliar objects. Children and their caregivers may choose to play together or side-by-side. This is a great way to warmly invite families into the workshop space. It also provides an opportunity for educators to model interactions and discuss the program with caregivers.

**Circle Time:** Guided by the educators, the group sings, does movement activities, and reads a story related to the overarching workshop theme. The facilitators also use this as an opportunity to spark some discussions using suggested discussion questions.

**Discovery Bag:** Families discover mystery objects related to the overarching workshop theme by using their senses and making predictions.

**Art Projects/Sensory Activities:** Together, families create an art project, puppet, game, sensory toy, etc. that they can enjoy together at home. This is also a great opportunity for families to share mindfulness moments and practice working creatively with their children.

**Closing:** Together, families cool down as the facilitator shares some discussion questions. Families review the workshop’s Toolkit project and hear a little bit about next week’s session.

**Teacher Tips:** Facilitators should share these insights with families to connect executive function skills and the Baby Brain Building research to practical tips and tricks for parents. Understanding how children’s learning, language, and social skills develop will help families communicate and allow adults to help their children regulate emotions and behaviors.



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### Workshop Themes:

**My Body Can Move!** Families will read Eric Carle's book *Head to Toe* and create a variety of shaker instruments for a kick-off dance party.

**My Colorful Feelings.** Families will read Anna Llenas' book *The Color Monster* and create their own colorful sensory bottles to help them describe and identify their emotions.

**Let's Make a Plan!** Families will try some feathered sensory activities and practice making their own plans just like in Chris Haughton's book *Shh! We Have a Plan*.

**Wait for the Cake.** Families will practice taking turns and following recipes by making their own playdough and silly cakes, just like the one that George ate in Chris Haughton's book *Oh No, George!*

**Zooming around Town.** Families explore transportation through art activities, letter and shape recognition, and by reading Christoph Neimann's book *Subway*.

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# WORKSHOP GUIDES

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# BABY BRAIN BUILDING CURRICULUM

## Workshop Guides

### Sample Workshop Introduction Script

Welcome to the Baby Brain Building Workshop! My name is \_\_\_\_\_. This workshop is for both you and your child to have fun and learn together. Right now, children can explore and play with the center time materials, while we talk with the grownups.

Every interaction you have with your child is an opportunity for them to learn and you are their very best teacher! The motto for our workshops is... **“Who’s the teacher? I’m the teacher!”**

Let’s say it together: “Who’s the teacher?” “I’m the teacher!”

Because you are your child’s best teacher! You’ve been building your baby’s brains since they’ve been born. This workshop is an opportunity to reinforce what you’ve already been doing, and to learn from each other! The more you play with your child, the more your child will learn.

Both in this workshop and at home, we are always building babies’ brains. To start this workshop, what do you think builds babies’ brains?! (if silence...) What can you do with your child to help them gain more control over their mind and body as they learn in school, make new friends, and deal with challenges.

Some examples could include reading, singing, talking, modeling, pretend play, etc. How do you think these build your baby’s brain?

Your child’s brain is growing very fast right now as they are laying the building blocks for brain development! We call these building blocks “executive function and language skills.” Building these foundations gives your child a leg up in Kindergarten and beyond. We’ll work on these skills over the next few weeks.



## Workshop 1 - My Body Can Move!

### What to know before you teach...

**Executive Function Skills** are a set of skills that give children more control over their mind and body as they learn in school, make new friends, and deal with challenges.

Some examples of these skills include:

**Working Memory:** Enables us to juggle information, make decisions, follow directions, and speak in different languages!

**Self-Control:** Assists us to stop and think, focus, set priorities, control our body, and resist impulsive actions.

### Materials

- **General:** Center time kits and name tags.
- **Discovery Bag:** Options include: Egg shakers, scarves, soft blocks, and bean bags.
- **Activities:** Cardboard tubes with tops, markers, sturdy tape, rice, crayons or paint sticks, stickers, dot markers, and big soft beads.

### Center Time

Different play centers should be spaced out throughout the room, allowing for free choice and conversation.

Facilitators should introduce themselves, play with each of the families, and help the group get settled.

### Circle Time Discussion Questions

Invite everyone to sit together in a circle. To help with the transition, try beating a drum gently, sing a familiar song, or ring a chime to indicate the transition.

- Facilitators should introduce themselves and the workshop, then let the families share their names. Invite families to reflect on center time using the discussion questions below:
  - What did you do together during center time? Did your child have to practice sharing or waiting their turn?



**Teacher Tips:** Waiting is hard! At this age, children are still learning how to control their behavior and take turns. This workshop series contains some strategies to help children wait.

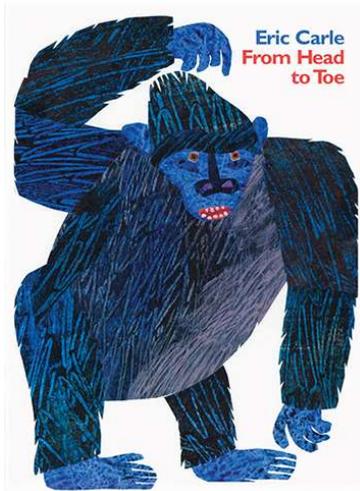
### Discovery Bag

- Pass the bag around the circle. Invite adults and kids to pay close attention as you shake the bag. Ask them to use their senses and describe their observations to try to guess what's inside.
- Parents and children will be eager to see what is inside! Practice having each family take a turn guessing what is inside and then counting to 3 before opening. This is a good strategy for practicing their impulse control!



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## Storytime Suggestion and Discussion Questions: *From Head to Toe* by Eric Carle



- Read-Aloud - *From Head to Toe* by Eric Carle
- Discussion Question: What books do you read at home?



**Teacher Tips:** Reading and talking with children is so important for language development, even when they are little babies. Ages 0-5 is the period of the most language development

- Throughout the read-aloud, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - On each page/illustration, when the character says, “I can do it!,” invite participants to do the action described in the book (or grown-ups can model for their kids if they are too young). Families can also use their silly animal voices when they say, “I can do it!” together!
  - Try asking simple questions about the story to help our little ones develop their language skills! Even the youngest babies who aren't speaking yet are always learning new words. Remind families that at home tonight, they can try asking children yes or no questions, even when they think they can't answer.

## Art Project

### Musical Shakers

- Invite families to follow their child's lead. They may choose to continue playing in the play area or create their own musical shaker at the art station.
- Families will make their cardboard musical shaker using any of the materials available. They can test out how much and what different kinds of materials to put inside and listen to the differences.
- Throughout the art activity, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - Practice taking turns collecting the materials to help practice their impulse control.
  - Offer some options for materials and have a child select just a few.
  - Encourage the adults to model for their children!



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**Teacher Tips:** Give simple, step-by-step prompts to the children while we're doing our art projects. Especially for very young kids, it is important that we break actions and instructions down into bite-sized pieces. They can absorb what we're saying at their pace and practice their important executive functions skills -- working memory and self-control! Both are skills that will help them do better in school and in social settings.



### End of Workshop Discussion Questions

Gather families together again for a circle time (or just at their art stations) and offer some of the following discussion questions:

- What did you enjoy doing with your child today? Did you notice anything new?
- Some of us made musical shakers today, and some of us will make them at home. How do you think you might use these shakers together with your child?
- What kind of things do you do at the park or playground?
  - This can initiate a discussion about routines, following directions, sharing or waiting for their turn, or even using a safe body!
- What kinds of questions do you ask or what do you talk about with your child before going to the park?



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- What kinds of things can you do to help children practice their self-control and language skills?



**Teacher Tips:** Families can practice taking turns, giving and following simple directions, or asking simple yes or no questions to help their child's development

Be sure to come back next week and tell your friends! We'll be exploring colors and feelings!

## Toolkits

Your toolkit is a great opportunity to practice some of the ideas we talked about today! It is fun to read the book first, then have a dance party with your shakers and colorful scarves. Talk to your child about what they hear with their ears when they shake their shakers. When you sing to your baby, they bond with you and your voice. Play Freeze Dance and practice counting 1,2,3 before freezing.





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## Additional Activities

- **Freeze Dance:** Play Freeze Dance with egg shakers or scarves. When the music stops, so do you!
- **Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes:** Sing this popular song and try following along!
- **Finger-play games:** Sing songs about your fingers and toes while you practice wiggling those fingers and pointing.
- **Block stacking:** Construct different kinds of towers and structures and take turns knocking them down in silly ways.
- **Parachute or blanket:** People can hold onto a handle and shake it fast, then slow, move it up and then down. Children can run underneath or even lay down and watch it rise and fall over them!

## Additional Book Suggestions

*Dancing Feet!* by Lindsey Craig

*I'm a Frog* by Mo Willems



## Workshop 2 - My Colorful Feelings

### What to know before you teach...

**Executive Function Skills** are a set of skills that give children more control over their mind and body as they learn in school, make new friends, and deal with challenges.

Some examples of these skills include:

**Mental Flexibility:** Helps us to think creatively, switch tasks, adjust to changes, and see the world from other perspectives.

**Self-Control:** Assists us to stop and think, focus, set priorities, control our body, and resist impulsive actions.

### Materials

- **General:** Center time kits and name tags.
- **Discovery Bag:** Options include: Mirrors, bean bags, colorful blocks, and stretchy sensory bands (Monkey Noodles).
- **Activities:** Plastic bottles with lids, colorful pom poms, colorful chips or pipe cleaners, googly eyes, colorful paper, and tape.

### Center Time

Different play centers should be spaced out throughout the room, allowing for free choice and conversation.

Facilitators should introduce themselves, play with each of the families, and help the group get settled.

### Circle Time Discussion Questions

Invite everyone to sit together in a circle. To help with the transition, try beating a drum gently, sing a familiar song, or ring a chime to indicate the transition.

- Facilitators should introduce themselves and the workshop, then let the families share their names. Invite families to reflect on center time using the discussion questions below:
  - How was your child feeling throughout center time? Was there anything they enjoyed or that they showed they did not like?



**Teacher Tips:** Talking to children about feelings and emotions can help them learn how to understand and control the way they react to things!

### Discovery Bag

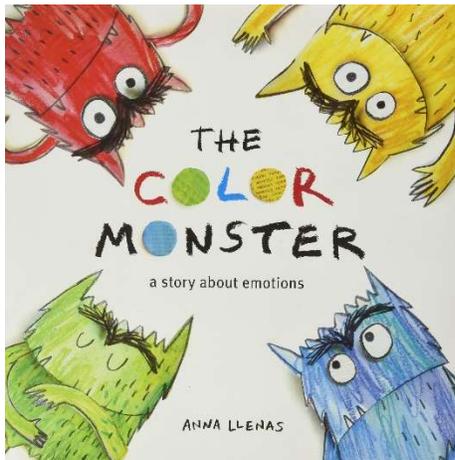
- Pass the bag around the circle. Invite adults and kids to pay close attention as you shake the bag. Ask them to use their senses and describe their observations to try to guess what's inside.



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- Parents and children will be eager to see what is inside! Practice having each family take a turn guessing what is inside and then counting to 3 before opening. This is a good strategy for practicing their impulse control!

### Storytime Suggestion and Discussion Questions: *The Color Monster* by Anna Llenas



- Read-Aloud – *The Color Monster* by Anna Llenas
- Discussion Question: What books did you read this week? Does your child have a favorite part or a part that they repeat back to you?



**Teacher Tips:** Reading and talking with children is so important for language development, even when they are little babies. Ages 0-5 is the period of the most language development!

- Throughout the read-aloud, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - This book is about understanding our feelings and controlling our reactions. Let's practice embodying different emotions.  
What does excited, sad, angry, nervous, happy, etc. look like?



**Teacher Tips:** When children practice their smiles, frowns, surprise faces, etc. they are learning how to recognize and control their emotions -- an important skill for them to develop when they are babies and toddlers!

### Art Project

#### Color-Sorting Sensory Bottles

- Invite families to follow their child's lead. They may choose to continue playing in the play area or create their own color-sorting sensory bottles at the art station
- Families can make their own colorful sensory bottles. They can practice sorting the colors by making monochromatic bottles, or jumble them up and make multicolored bottles!
- Throughout the art activity, prompt families with a few suggestions:



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- Practice taking turns collecting the materials to help practice their impulse control.
- Offer some options for materials and have a child select just a few.
- Encourage the adults to model for their children!



**Teacher Tips:** Give simple, step-by-step prompts to the children while we're doing our art projects. Especially for very young kids, it is important that we break actions and instructions down into bite-sized pieces. They can absorb what we're saying at their pace and practice their important executive functions skills -- working memory and self-control! Both are skills that will help them do better in school and in social settings.





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## End of Workshop Discussion Questions

Gather families together again for a circle time (or just at their art stations) and offer some of the following discussion questions:

- What emotions did your child show today?
- When was the first time you saw your baby smile?
- How do you tell your child how you feel?



**Teacher Tips:** Babies and toddlers are very observant and will copy their parents or caregivers! Modeling and sharing emotions with your little ones help children identify emotions.

- Families made colorful sensory bottles today. How could you use those at home?

Be sure to come back next week and tell your friends! We'll be playing with something soft, fluffy, and very colorful!

## Toolkits

Your toolkit today includes a stretchy band, some colorful balls, and a sensory bottle. These are tools to encourage self-regulation and a calm body. Practice taking deep breaths with the stretchy band as you stretch it wide. Practice focus and self-control by rolling a ball back and forth across the floor. Your child can use the sensory bottle when they feel anxious, overwhelmed, or overstimulated. There is something soothing about watching a sensory bottle in action, with colorful materials moving around. You can also play an iSpy game together as a family with the bottles. As a grown-up, you may find both the stretchy sensory bands and sensory bottle to be a relaxing experience too!



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## Additional Activities

- **Simon Says:** Simon says smile, Simon says frown, Simon says stomp your feet...
- **Sticker sorting:** Sort stickers by shapes, sizes, or colors.
- **Sock puppets:** Make a few hand puppets with your socks and practice talking about the different puppets are feeling.
- **iSpy colors:** What colors can you find around you? Take a look in a book and spot your favorite colors!

## Additional Book Suggestions

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle

*Glad Monster, Sad Montser* by Ed Emberly



## Workshop 3 – Let’s Make a Plan.

### What to know before you teach...

**Executive Function Skills** are a set of skills that give children more control over their mind and body as they learn in school, make new friends, and deal with challenges.

Some examples of these skills include:

**Making Plans:** The ability to make a plan or a schedule and stick to it!

**Self-Control:** Assists us to stop and think, focus, set priorities, control our body, and resist impulsive actions.

### Materials

- **General:** Center time kits and name tags.
- **Discovery Bag:** Options include: Feathers, stuffed birds, and pre-recorded bird calls
- **Activities:** Contact paper sheets, feathers, tape, and plastic tongs.

### Center Time

Different play centers should be spaced out throughout the room, allowing for free choice and conversation.

Facilitators should introduce themselves, play with each of the families, and help the group get settled.

### Circle Time Discussion Questions

Invite everyone to sit together in a circle. To help with the transition, try beating a drum gently, sing a familiar song, or ring a chime to indicate the transition.

- Facilitators should introduce themselves and the workshop, then let the families share their names. Invite families to reflect on center time using the discussion questions below:
  - Was there anything that your child remembered from last week? Did they return to a favorite spot or pick up a similar activity from last week? Did they talk about anything they wanted to do today with you?



**Teacher Tips:** Talking to children about the plan for the day or what they are excited about can help them think about what comes next and feel more secure going into the unknown!

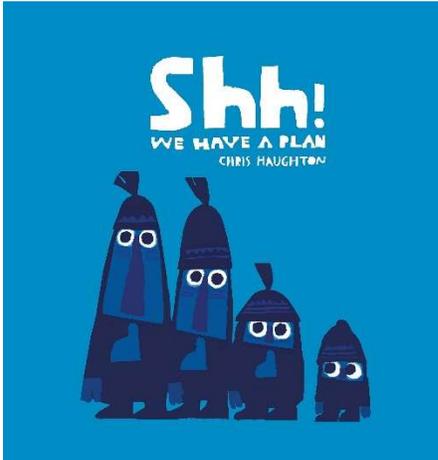
### Discovery Bag

- Pass the bag around the circle. Invite adults and kids to pay close attention as you shake the bag. Ask them to use their senses and describe their observations to try to guess what’s inside.
- If you chose feathers, encourage parents to sprinkle the feathers of their child’s head, then continue and take turns counting to 3 before letting the feathers rain down!



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### Storytime Suggestion and Discussion Questions: *Shh! We Have A Plan* by Christ Haughton



- Read-Aloud – *Shh! We Have a Plan* by Christ Haughton
- Discussion Question: Where do you like to sit down and read in your home?



**Teacher Tips:** Reading and talking with children is so important for language development, even when they are unable to talk back to us. Ages 0-5 is the period of the most language development!

- Throughout the read-aloud, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - This book is all about making a plan and sticking to it. Let's make a plan for how we are going to listen to the story. You could sit down at the start, stand up when the characters are moving, then set back down at the end!



**Teacher Tips:** It can be scary not knowing what is coming next, but making a plan with your child can help them feel safe and comfortable knowing what might happen throughout their day.

### Art Project

#### Feather Collage Sensory Contact Sheet

- Invite families to follow their child's lead. They may choose to continue playing in the play area or create their own feather collage at the art station.
- Families each get two pre-cut contact paper sheets at the art project center. One sheet of contact paper should be taped to a table or cardboard backing, sticky side up! The corresponding sheet should be prepared to cover the finished piece.
- Throughout the art activity, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - Families can make a plan for selecting color placement, design, number of feathers to stick at a time, or taking turns with their art project.
  - Invite parents to ask their children how the contact paper feels on their fingers. Is it soft? Is it sticky?
  - Encourage the adults to model for their children!



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### End of Workshop Discussion Questions

Gather families together again for a circle time (or just at their art stations) and offer some of the following discussion questions:

- What is your morning routine like? Is it easy, or can it sometimes be difficult?
- How do you discuss your plans for the day with your child?



**Teacher Tips:** Making a visual schedule can be helpful in making a plan! It can help families practice and stick to a routine, as well as help children understand what is coming next.

- Today we built up the suspense before opening the Discovery Bag. You can do this too throughout your daily routine, at mealtimes, before going outside, bathtime, etc. Doing preparation activities like counting together before doing something helps kids regulate their emotions and practice some self-control. Both are important



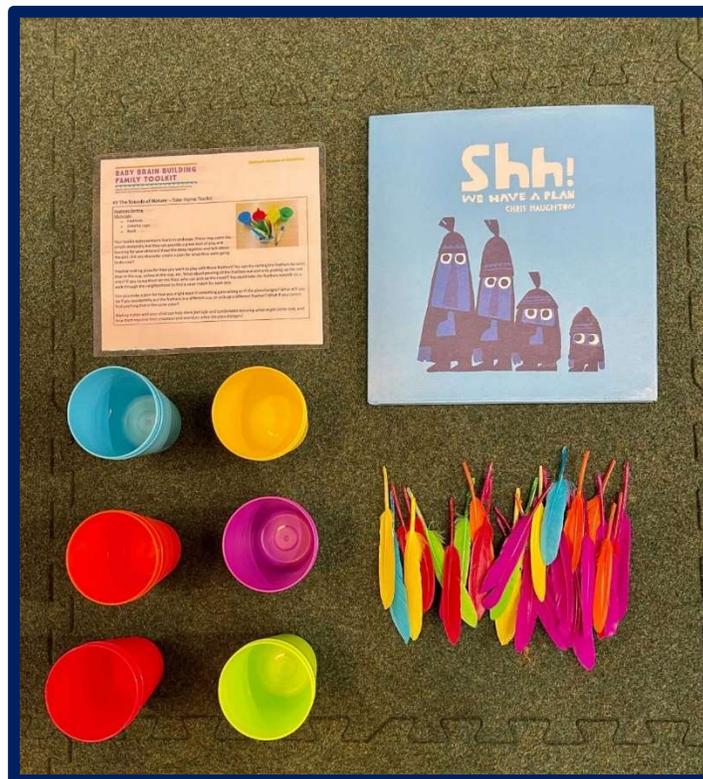
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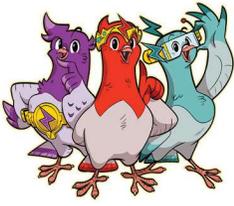
executive function skills. Other than counting to 3, what else could you do to help your children get ready for something?

Be sure to come back next week and tell your friends! We'll be following a recipe and making our own silly little cakes!

### Toolkits

Your toolkit today includes feathers and cups. These may seem like simple materials, but they can provide a great deal of play and learning for your child! You can try sorting the feathers by color – blue in this cup, yellow in this one. What about pouring all the feathers out and only picking up the red ones? If we dump them on the floor, who can pick up the most?





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## Additional Activities

- **Simon Says:** Simon says smile, Simon says frown, Simon says stomp your feet...
- **Feather toss:** Throw feathers in the air and try to catch them.
- **Simon Says colors:** Let's make a plan...Simon says only pick up the blue feathers.
- **At-home visual schedules:** Draw pictures of each day's plan.

## Additional Book Suggestions

*My Good Morning* by Kim Crockett-Corson

*Pete the Cat: I Love my White Shoes* by James Dean



## Workshop 4 – Wait for the Cake

### What to know before you teach...

**Executive Function Skills** are a set of skills that give children more control over their mind and body as they learn in school, make new friends, and deal with challenges.

Some examples of these skills include:

**Mental Flexibility:** Helps us to think creatively, switch tasks, adjust to changes, and see the world from other perspectives.

**Self-Control:** Assists us to stop and think, focus, set priorities, control our body, and resist impulsive actions.

### Materials

- **General:** Center time kits and name tags.
- **Discovery Bag:** Options include: Tealights, hourglass timers, cupcake or muffin liners.
- **Activities:** Flour, vegetable oil, salt, cream of tartar, boiling water, food coloring, glycerin, mixing bowls, spoons or spatulas, measuring cups.

### Center Time

Different play centers should be spaced out throughout the room, allowing for free choice and conversation.

Facilitators should introduce themselves, play with each of the families, and help the group get settled.

### Circle Time Discussion Questions

Invite everyone to sit together in a circle. To help with the transition, try beating a drum gently, sing a familiar song, or ring a chime to indicate the transition.

- Facilitators should introduce themselves and the workshop, then let the families share their names. Invite families to reflect on center time using the discussion questions below:
  - While you were out playing at center time, did you or your child have to wait your turn for anything? Were any other children waiting to have a turn with something your child was using? What was that like?



**Teacher Tips:** Waiting can be hard work, but it doesn't have to be boring! While waiting for their turn, children can play games like iSpy, practice deep breathing, sing a familiar song, or make up a silly story.

### Discovery Bag

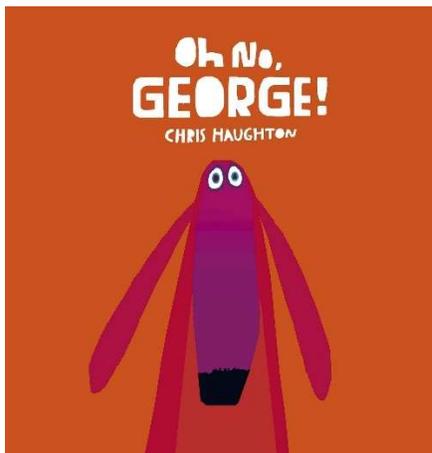
- Pass the bag around the circle. Invite adults and kids to pay close attention as you shake the bag. Ask them to use their senses and describe their observations to try to guess what's inside.
- Have children come up one at a time and practice counting to 3 before peaking in the bag.



## BABY BRAIN BUILDING CURRICULUM

- If you chose tealights, have caregivers control the switch on the base of the candle. At the count of three, have the children blow the candle out as the caregivers flip the switch at the base! It almost feels like magic.

### Storytime Suggestion and Discussion Questions: *Oh No, George!* by Christ Haughton



- Read-Aloud – *Oh No, George!* by Christ Haughton
- Discussion Question: Does anybody speak other languages here? If so, how do you say 'wait' in your language? Esperar, attendre, đợi, chờ, chờ đợi, chờ đợi, chờ đợi...



**Teacher Tips:** Reading and talking with children is so important for language development, even when they are unable to talk back to us. Ages 0-5 is the period of the most language development!

- Throughout the read-aloud, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - This book is all about practicing self-control! Our friend George was eating the cake and chasing the cat, but by the end he learned to wait and think about it before acting.



**Teacher Tips:** Grown-ups can model thinking about their actions and feelings before doing something by practicing a waiting strategies. These include game like iSpy, singing a familiar song, or making up stories with their children while they wait

### Art Project

#### Make Your Own Playdough Cakes

- Invite families to follow their child's lead. They may choose to continue playing in the play area or create their own playdough. Families may work together in small groups, or independently with their child to make their playdough using this recipe from TheImaginationTree.com:



## BABY BRAIN BUILDING CURRICULUM

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups plain, all purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil (Substitutes: Baby oil or coconut oil)
- 1/2 cup salt
- 2 tablespoons cream of tartar
- 1-1.5 cups boiling water (Add in increments until it feels just right)
- Gel food coloring (Optional)
- A few drops of glycerin (The secret ingredient for stretch and shine!)

### Directions:

1. Mix the flour, salt, cream of tartar and oil in a large mixing bowl.
  2. Add food coloring to the boiling water then into the dry ingredients.
  3. Stir continuously until it becomes a sticky, combined dough.
  4. Add the glycerin (optional).
  5. Allow it to cool down then take it out of the bowl and knead it vigorously for a couple of minutes until all of the stickiness has gone.
  6. If it remains a little sticky then add a touch more flour until it feels just right.
- If families need guidance, prompt them to share responsibilities like pouring in the flour, measuring the salt, etc. Portions can then be distributed to individual families in bowls so they can add their own colors
  - Throughout the art activity, prompt families with a few suggestions:
    - Having a step-by-step recipe can help with our plan and make waiting easier! For example, if your child is excited about mixing but it is not time yet, you can show them how many steps are left before they mix. Knowing when something will occur can sometimes make the waiting easier.
    - Practice counting while stirring or color recognition when selecting your colors.
    - Once you've made your playdough, try making the shape of a cupcake for someone special. You could sing *Happy Birthday*, then smash it to make one all over again!



# BABY BRAIN BUILDING CURRICULUM



## End of Workshop Discussion Questions

Gather families together again for a circle time (or just at their art stations) and offer some of the following discussion questions:

- Today we followed a recipe to make playdough together. When you are preparing food or doing household chores like laundry at home, what are some ways that you involve your child?



**Teacher Tips:** Waiting patiently is a skill and young children are still working to develop this important skill! As the most important adult in your child's life, parents and caregivers can encourage children as they learn and practice this skill, and model it for them regularly

Be sure to come back next week and tell your friends! We'll be making our very own stamps!

## Toolkits

In your toolkit today you'll find cupcake liners so you can turn your playdough – and some premade modeling dough – into mini pretend cakes!



# BABY BRAIN BUILDING CURRICULUM



## Additional Activities

- **Red Light, Green Light:** Practice stopping and starting, waiting and going, based on what color the light is!
- **Pretend Cooking:** Using pots, pans, and utensils to practice stirring motions, and sing kitchen or cooking songs that you know in different languages!

## Additional Book Suggestions

*Waiting is Hard* by Mo Willems

*Waiting* by Kevin Henkes



## Workshop 5 – Zooming Around Town

### What to know before you teach...

**Executive Function Skills** are a set of skills that give children more control over their mind and body as they learn in school, make new friends, and deal with challenges.

Some examples of these skills include:

**Working Memory:** Enables us to juggle information, make decisions, follow directions, and speak in different languages!

**Self-Control:** Assists us to stop and think, focus, set priorities, control our body, and resist impulsive actions.

### Materials

- **General:** Center time kits and name tags.
- **Discovery Bag:** Options include: Toy cars, trains, airplanes, train tracks, or other vehicles.
- **Activities:** Wooden blocks and other found objects, sticky foam shapes, stamp pads, cardboard boxes or paper.

### Center Time

Different play centers should be spaced out throughout the room, allowing for free choice and conversation.

Facilitators should introduce themselves, play with each of the families, and help the group get settled.

### Circle Time Discussion Questions

Invite everyone to sit together in a circle. To help with the transition, try beating a drum gently, sing a familiar song, or ring a chime to indicate the transition.

- Facilitators should introduce themselves and the workshop, then let the families share their names. Invite families to reflect on center time using the discussion questions below:
  - What skills did you practice from last week? Did you or your child practice any waiting activities, follow directions, or take turns?



**Teacher Tips:** Talking about activities from previous days or weeks with your children can help them develop their working memory and language skills!

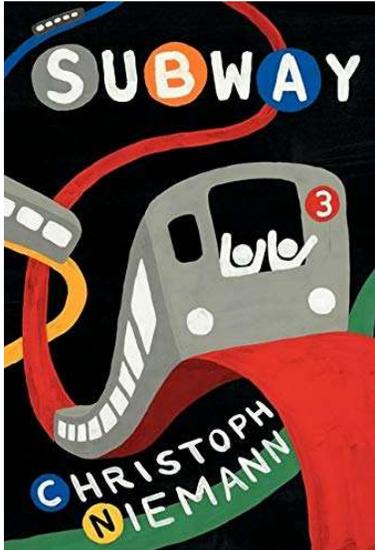
### Discovery Bag

- Pass the bag around and encourage parents and caregivers to make the sounds of transportation vehicles. Ask your child how they recognize those sounds or where they have heard them before! Have children come up one at a time and practice counting to 3 before peaking in the bag.
- Based on the sounds, have children guess what could be inside and let them reach in to grab one item each!



## BABY BRAIN BUILDING CURRICULUM

### Storytime Suggestion and Discussion Questions: *Subway* by Christoph Niemann



- Read-Aloud – *Subway* by Christoph Niemann
- Discussion Question: What kinds of transportation do you take around your town or city? Try closing your eyes and imagining what it feels like to be on it. What do you hear, smell, see, or touch?
- Throughout the read-aloud, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - We're reading about a family that loves to ride all the trains. What is your favorite way to get around?



**Teacher Tips:** When children use their memory to describe things, it strengthens their working memory, which helps children hold onto information long enough to use it! This is especially important for reading and math in school.

- What new words did we find in this book?



**Teacher Tips:** Reading with children regularly develops and expands their vocabulary, preparing them for kindergarten and future learning!

### Art Project

#### Stamp Trains

- Invite families to follow their child's lead. They may choose to continue playing in the play area or create their own stamps at the art station
- Families can start by stacking blocks and playing with them. They should then select their favorite shapes, or some letters and numbers, to stick onto the sides of their blocks.



**Teacher Tips:** Anything that you stick on the block will come out in reverse when you stamp it, so try to find shapes, numbers, and letters that are the same both ways! Ex. 1, 8, I, A, T, or H.



## BABY BRAIN BUILDING CURRICULUM

- Throughout the art activity, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - What numbers, shapes, and letters do you see when you go around town? Where do you see them and when can you and your child point them out?
  - Giving a step-by-step recipe can help with our plan and make waiting easier!
  - Select your favorite color and practice stamping on a cardboard box or some paper! Try making a pattern with a few different stamps!



### End of Workshop Discussion Questions

Gather families together again for a circle time (or just at their art stations) and offer some of the following discussion questions:



## BABY BRAIN BUILDING CURRICULUM

- When you are on a long trip, what kinds of things do you do with your child?



**Teacher Tips:** Parents should feel encouraged to talk to their child about what they see around them frequently, even if their child is so young that they are not talking back yet!

- Are there any tools or toys that you give your child to keep them busy?



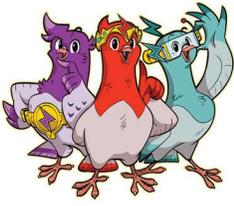
**Teacher Tips:** Young children do not learn as well through watching TV or videos, even those labeled as educational programming! Children learn much more through conversation, games, and projects.

**IF IT IS THE LAST SESSION:** Share what a wonderful experience it has been! Remind families that they can continue to help their child develop their executive function skills by doing all the things we practiced in these workshops. Facilitate an end of series discussion using the following suggestions:

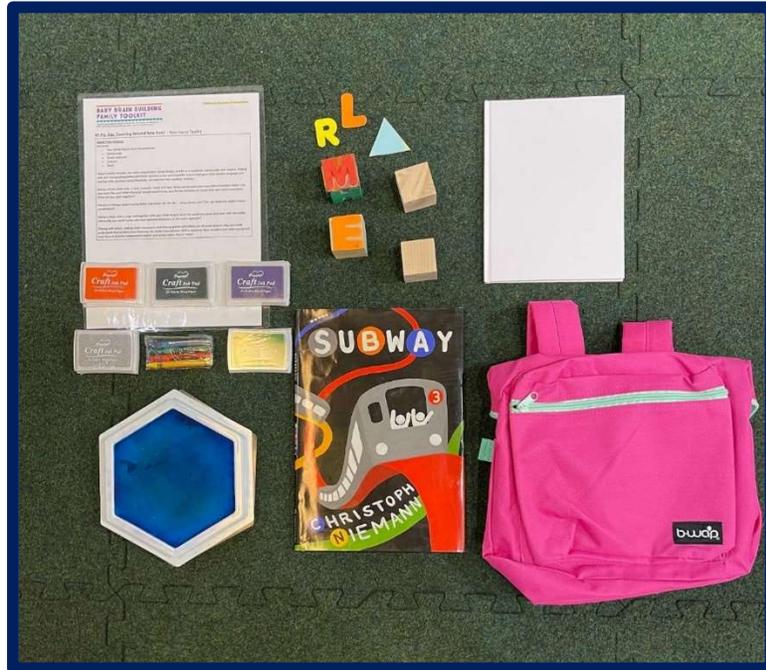
- What are some of the favorite activities or skills you tried in these past few workshops?
  - Making a plan together before you do something.
  - Reading books together everyday.
  - Singing songs together, especially songs that include movements.
  - Playing games that challenge them, like Freeze Dance, Simon Says, or Red Light, Green Light.
  - Talking about what you did together yesterday, earlier today, and what you will do tomorrow.
  - Talking about and naming feelings and emotions.
  - Giving your child choices and following their lead.
  - Practicing taking turns.
- What is one more thing you are excited about trying at home this week?

### Toolkits

Today's toolkit includes a personal stamp pad and a notebook to start your stamping adventures. Have your child stamp the notebook with their homemade stamps and make up a story based on the letters and numbers! Make a pattern with your stamps and ask which stamp should come next. For example: 1, H, 1, H, 1, ...What comes next?



## BABY BRAIN BUILDING CURRICULUM



### Additional Activities

- **Red Light, Green Light:** Practice stopping and starting, waiting and going, based on what color the light is!
- **Dancing train or Conga Line:** Have people line up and dance around the room together in a line. Take turns being the leader.
- **Cardboard Box Trains:** Have children sit in decorated cardboard boxes and push them around the room while they sing, “Chugga, chugga, choo, choo!”

### Additional Book Suggestions

*The Cars and Trucks* by Todd Parr

*Trains* by Byron Barton



## At-a-Glance Sheet

# WORKSHOP 1 – My Body Can Move!



### Materials

**Discovery Bag:** Options include: Egg shakers, scarves, soft blocks, and bean bags.

**Activities:** Cardboard tubes with tops, markers, sturdy tape, rice, crayons or paint sticks, stickers, dot markers, and big soft beads.

### Discussion Qs

#### Circle time

- What did you do together during center time? Did your child have to practice sharing or waiting their turn?
-  **Teacher Tips:** Waiting is hard! At this age, children are still learning how to control their behavior and take turns. This workshop series contains some strategies to help them wait. Try counting until 3 before opening the discovery bag or singing a song while you wait!

#### Read Aloud

- What books do you read at home?
-  **Teacher tips:** Reading and talking with children is so important for language development, even when they are little babies. Ages 0-5 is the period of the most language development!

#### End of Workshop

- What did you enjoy doing with your child today?
- What kind of things do you do at the park or playground?
  - This can initiate a discussion about routines, following directions, sharing or waiting for their turn, or even using a safe body!
- What kinds of things can you do to help children practice their self-control and language skills?
  -  **Teacher Tips:** Families can practice taking turns, giving and following simple directions or asking simple yes or no questions to help their child's development.

### Art Activities

- Families will make their cardboard musical shaker using any of the materials available. They can test out how much and what different kinds of materials to put inside and listen to the differences.
- Model giving step-by-step instructions throughout the art activity, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - Practice taking turns collecting the materials to help practice their impulse control.
  - Offer some options for materials and have a child select just a few.
  -  **Teacher Tips:** Give simple, step-by-step prompts to the children while we're doing our art projects. Especially for very young kids, it is important to break actions and instructions down into bite-sized pieces. They can absorb what we're saying at their pace, and practice their important executive functions skills -- working memory and self-control! Both are skills that will help them do better in school and in social settings.





## WORKSHOP 1

# MY BODY CAN MOVE! – TAKE HOME TOOLKIT

## SHAKE TO THE MUSIC

### Materials

- Shakers
- Scarves
- Stickers
- Crayons
- Book

### Activities

Your toolkit today includes colorful scarves and shakers. Your body moves in wonderful ways, so shake to the beat of your favorite song with your new scarves and shakers! It can be fun to read your new book first, then have a dance party any time of the day. When you sing to your baby, they bond with you and your voice.

Play Freeze Dance, and practice counting 1,2,3 before freezing. Counting 1,2,3 before freezing helps children practice their self-control! The shaker and scarves also stimulate your child's senses. Talk to your child about what they hear with their ears when they shake their shakers. Ask them which parts of their body they want to move next? Use the scarves to play Peek-a-boo with your child!



### Teacher Tip

When children notice and describe the feelings on their little bodies, they are developing important communication skills and learning about their body.



## At-a-Glance Sheet

# WORKSHOP 2 – My Colorful Feelings



### Materials

**Discovery Bag:** Options include: Mirrors, bean bags, colorful blocks, and stretchy sensory bands

**Activities:** Plastic bottles, colorful pom poms, colorful chips, googly eyes, colorful paper, and tape.

### Discussion Qs

#### Circle time

- How was your child feeling throughout center time? Was there anything they enjoyed or that they showed they did not like?
-  **Teacher Tips:** Talking to children about feelings and emotions can help them learn how to understand and control the way they react to things!

#### Read Aloud

- Discussion question: What books did you read this week? Do they have a favorite part? Is there a part that they repeat back to you?
-  **Teacher Tips:** Reading and talking with children is so important for language development, even when they are little babies. Ages 0-5 is the period of the most language development!
- What does excited, sad, angry, nervous, happy, etc. look like?
-  **Teacher Tips:** When children practice their smiles, frowns, surprise faces, etc. they are learning how to recognize and control their emotions -- an important skill for them to develop when they are babies and toddlers!

#### End of Workshop

- What emotions did your child show today?
- When was the first time you saw your baby smile?
- How do you tell your child how you feel?
  -  **Teacher Tips:** Babies and toddlers are very observant and will copy their parents

or caregivers! Modeling and sharing emotions with your little ones can help them learn how to respond.

- Families made colorful sensory bottles today. How could you use those at home?
  - This can initiate a discussion about exploring colors and emotions at home.

### Art Activities

- Families can make their own colorful sensory bottles. They can practice sorting the colors by making monochromatic bottles, or jumble them up and make multicolored bottles!
- Throughout the art activity, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - Practice taking turns collecting the materials to help practice their impulse control.
  - Offer some options for materials and have a child select just a few.
  - Encourage the adults to model for their children!



**WORKSHOP 2**

**MY COLORFUL FEELINGS – TAKE HOME TOOLKIT**

**SENSORY BOTTLES**

**Materials**

- Sensory bottle
- Stretchy sensory bands (Monkey Noodles)
- Colorful balls
- Book

**Activities**

Your toolkit today includes a monkey noodle, some colorful balls, and a sensory bottle. These are tools to encourage self-regulation and a calm body. Practice taking deep breaths with the monkey noodle as you stretch it wide. Practice focus and self-control by rolling a ball back and forth across the floor. Your child can use the sensory bottle when they feel anxious, overwhelmed, or overstimulated. There is something very soothing about watching a sensory bottle in action with colorful materials moving around. You can also play an iSpy game together as a family with the bottles. Who can find the orange ball first? As a grown-up, you may find both the monkey noodle and sensory bottle to be a relaxing experience!

Read your story together and talk about how each of the characters felt. Describe how each character looked using some fun colorful words! Was anybody sad, happy, angry, or afraid? How could you tell? Have you ever felt that way?

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**Connecting their own feelings with characters in books helps children develop their language and literacy skills. Finding names for emotions helps children learn to understand, control, and share their feelings.**

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**Teacher Tip**



## At-a-Glance Sheet

### WORKSHOP 3 – Let’s Make A Plan!



#### Materials

**Discovery Bag:** Options include: Feathers, stuffed birds, and bird calls from a speaker. (Monkey Noodles).

**Activities:** Contact paper sheets, feathers, tape, and plastic tongs.

#### Discussion Qs

##### Circle time

- Was there anything that your child remembered from last week? Did they return to a favorite spot or pick up a similar activity from last week? Did they talk about anything they wanted to do today with you?
-  **Teacher Tips:** Talking to children about the plan for the day or what they are excited about can help them think about what comes next and feel more secure going into the unknown!

##### Read Aloud

- Discussion question: Where do you like to sit down and read in your home?
-  **Teacher tips:** Reading and talking with children is so important for language development, even when they are unable to talk back to us. Ages 0-5 is the period of the most language development!

##### End of Workshop

- What is your morning routine like? Is it easy, or can it sometimes be difficult?
- How do you discuss your plans for the day with your child?
-  **Teacher Tips:** Making a visual schedule can be helpful in making a plan! It can help families practice and stick to a routine, as well as help children understand what is coming next.

#### Art Activities

- Invite families to follow their child’s lead. They may choose to continue playing in the play area or create their own feather collage at the art station.
- Families each get two pre-cut contact paper sheets at the art project center. One sheet of contact paper should be taped to a table or cardboard backing, sticky side up! The corresponding sheet should be prepared to cover the finished piece.
- Throughout the art activity, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - Families can make a plan for selecting color placement, design, number of feathers to stick at a time, or taking turns with their art project.
  - Invite parents to ask their children how the contact paper feels on their fingers. Is it soft? Is it sticky?



**WORKSHOP 3**

**LET'S MAKE A PLAN – TAKE HOME TOOLKIT**

**FEATHERS SORTING**

**Materials**

- Feathers
- Colorful cups
- Book

**Activities**

Your toolkit today contains feathers and cups. These may seem like simple materials, but they can provide a great deal of play and learning for your children! Read the story together and talk about the plot. Did any character create a plan for what they were going to do next?

Practice making plans for how you want to play with these feathers! You can try sorting the feathers by color, blue in this cup, yellow in this cup, etc. What about pouring all the feathers out and only picking up the red ones? If you dump them on the floor, who can pick up the most?! You could take the feathers outside on a walk through the neighborhood to find a color match for each one.

Can you make a plan for how you might react if something goes wrong or if the plan changes? What will you do if you accidentally put the feathers in a different cup, or pick up a different feather? What if you cannot find anything that is the same color?



**Teacher Tip**

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**Making a plan with your child can help them feel safe and comfortable knowing what might come next, and help them regulate their emotions and reactions when the plan changes!**

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## At-a-Glance Sheet

# WORKSHOP 4 – WAIT FOR THE CAKE



### Materials

**Discovery Bag:** Options include: Tealights, hourglass timers, cupcake liners, or small sweet treats.

**Activities:** Flour, vegetable oil, salt, cream of tartar, boiling water, food coloring, glycerine, mixing bowls, spoons, and measuring cups.

### Discussion Qs

#### Circle time

- While you were out playing at center time, did you or your child have to wait your turn for anything? Were any other children waiting to have a turn with something your child was using? What was that like?
-  **Teacher Tips:** Waiting can be hard work, but it doesn't have to be boring! While waiting for their turn, children can play games like iSpy, practice deep breathing, sing a familiar song, or make up a silly story.

#### Read Aloud

- Does anybody speak other languages here? If so, how do you say 'wait' in your language? Esperar, attendre, dǎngdài, gidalida, zhdát', đợi...
-  **Teacher Tips:** Reading and talking with children in different languages at a young age can be so important for their language development.

#### End of Workshop

- Today we followed a recipe to make playdough together. When you are preparing food or doing household chores like laundry at home, what are some ways that you involve your child?
-  **Teacher Tips:** Waiting patiently is a skill and young children are still working to develop this important skill! As the most important adult in your child's life, parents and caregivers can encourage children as they practice this skill and model it for them.

### Art Activities

- Invite families to follow their child's lead. They may choose to continue playing in the play area or create their own playdough at the art station.
- Families may work together in small groups or independently with their child to make their own playdough.
- If families need guidance, prompt them to share responsibilities like pouring in the flour, measuring the salt, etc. Portions can then be distributed to individual families in bowls so they can add their own colors.
- Throughout the art activity, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - Having a step-by-step recipe can help with our plan and make waiting easier! For example, if your child is excited about mixing but it is not time yet, you can show them how many steps are left before they have to mix. Knowing when something will occur can sometimes make the waiting easier.
  - Practice counting while stirring or color recognition when selecting your colors!



**WORKSHOP 4**

**WAIT FOR THE CAKE – TAKE HOME TOOLKIT**

**PLAYDOUGH CAKES**

**Materials**

- Your Playdough
- Cupcake Liners
- Additional Model Magic
- Sand timers
- Book

**Activities**

Your toolkit today includes your homemade playdough, some additional model magic, cupcake liners, and a sand timer. These tools can help you practice all different kinds of waiting games. Waiting can be hard work for anybody, but you can help your child develop skills to help them pass the time when they have to wait their turn.

Using the cupcake liners and your playdough or model magic, make a pretend cupcake together. What kinds of decorations do you each want to put? Take turns adding your decorations and make sure to wait until it is your turn! You could even put them in a pretend oven and wait for them to bake before playing with them again. Sing a song or read a book while you wait!

The sand timer can help children understand and visualize how long they might have to wait for something. Try using it to take turns sharing a toy, waiting until all the sand is at the other side before you start again.



**Teacher Tip**

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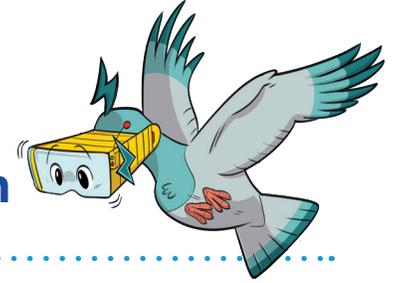
**Learning how to wait their turn and control their behavior is very important for succeeding in school. Practicing waiting and sharing around the house will develop their impulse-control, an important executive function!**

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## At-a-Glance Sheet

# WORKSHOP 5 – Zooming Around Town



### Materials

**Discovery Bag:** Options include: Toy cars, trains, airplanes, train tracks, or other vehicles.

**Activities:** Blocks and other found objects, sticky foam letters and shapes, stamp pads, and cardboard boxes or paper.

### Discussion Qs

#### Circle time

- What skills did you practice from last week? Did you or your child practice any waiting activities, follow directions, or take turns?
-  **Teacher Tips:** Talking about activities from previous days or weeks with your children can help them develop their working memory and language skills!

#### Read Aloud

- Discussion question: What kinds of transportation do you take around your town or city? What is your favorite way to get around? What new words did we find in this book?
-  **Teacher Tips:** Reading with children develops and expands their vocabulary, preparing them for Kindergarten and future learning!

#### End of Workshop

- When you are on a long trip, what kinds of things do you do with your child?
-  **Teacher Tips:** Parents should feel encouraged to talk to their child about what they see around them frequently, even if their child is so young that they are not talking back yet!
- Are there any tools or toys that you give your child to keep them busy?
-  **Teacher Tips:** Children do not learn very well through watching TV or videos, even those labeled as educational programming! Children learn much more through conversation, games, and

projects.

### Art Activities

- Invite families to follow their child’s lead. They may choose to continue playing in the play area or create their own stamps and trains at the art station.
- Families can start by stacking blocks and playing with them. They should then select their favorite numbers, shapes, and letters to stick onto the sides of their blocks
  -  **Teacher Tips:** Anything that you stick on the block will come out in reverse when you stamp it, so try to find shapes, numbers, and letters that are the same both ways! Ex. 1, 8, I, A, T, or H.
- Throughout the art activity, prompt families with a few suggestions:
  - What numbers, shapes, and letters do you see when you go around town? Where do you see them?
  - Select your favorite color and practice stamping on a cardboard box or some paper! Try making a pattern with a few different stamps!



**WORKSHOP 5**

**ZOOMING AROUND THE CITY – TAKE HOME TOOLKIT**

**STAMP TRAIN PATTERNS**

**Materials**

- Your stamp blocks from the workshop
- Stamp pads
- Small notebook
- Crayons
- Book

**Activities**

Today’s toolkit includes your own unique letter stamp blocks, as well as a notebook, stamp pads, and crayons. Playing with and manipulating letters and letter sounds is a fun and impactful way to help your child develop language and reading skills, practice mental flexibility, and exercise their working memory!

Stamp a letter or number, draw eyes, a nose, a mouth, hands and feet. What sounds does your new character make? Can you move like your character would move? Invite your family members to create their own letter-characters. What can you spell together?

Practice creating a pattern using letters and colors. M I M I M I ... what comes next? Can you make the pattern more complicated?

Stamp a letter onto a page and together with your child think of all of the words you know that start with that letter. Eventually, you could create your own personal dictionary of the entire alphabet!

.....

**Playing with stamps, making characters, and playing games with letters and numbers are all great ways to help your child understand that symbols have meaning. No matter how old your child is, exposing them to letters and letter sounds will help them to become independent readers and writers when they’re ready!**

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**Teacher Tip**

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# FLYER TEMPLATES

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# BABY BRAIN BUILDING

family workshops.

An art, music and movement program series for you and your child



Workshops are designed for children age five and younger



**DAYS, TIME, AND LOCATION:**

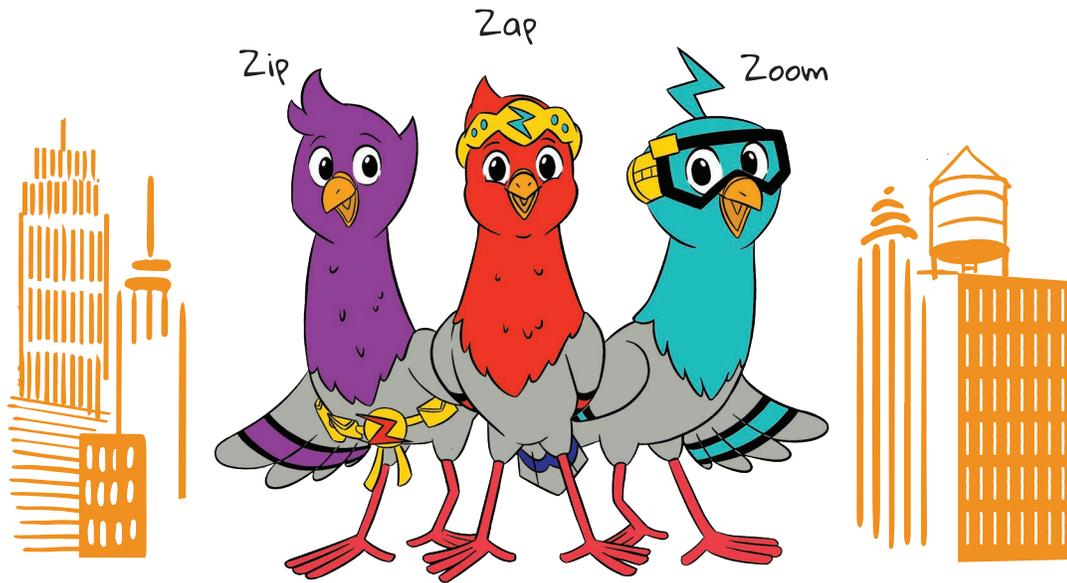
**DATES:**

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**BABY BRAIN  
BUILDING  
ACTIVITY CARD  
RESOURCES**

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# Hello from ZIP ZAP & ZOOM!



Hi! We are Zip, Zap, and Zoom - New York City's most super pigeons! Maybe you have seen us around the city - at the park, the deli, or waiting for the bus? Every day, we set out to explore and learn in our city. We hope you will join us!

## ACTIVITY CARDS FOR EVERYDAY

### LEARNING ON THE STREETS OF NEW YORK!

#### Family Activities:

The back of each card includes activities to inspire you to **LOOK**, **TALK**, **MOVE**, and **PLAY** together.

#### Build Learning Skills:

By doing these activities with your children, you can help them build **language** and **listening skills**, and practice **taking turns** and **following directions** - all skills needed for success at the playground, at school, and in life!

#### Ages:

These activities are designed for children **under four**.



#### Tips for using the illustrations on the front of the cards:

- Arrange the cards in order of your daily schedule. Talk about your plans for the day.



- Play "I Spy" with the illustrations. I spy fruits. I spy the color red. I spy the pigeons.



- Play counting games with the illustrations: How many socks in the laundromat? How many eggs in the kitchen?



Have fun!  
- Your Friends,  
Zip, Zap, Zoom

#### ROBINHOOD

Created by the Children's Museum of Manhattan with funding provided by the Robin Hood Fund for Early Learning. © 2019

# Hello from the **KITCHEN!**



In our kitchen something's always cookin',  
Whether we're in Manhattan, Queens, the Bronx, or Brooklyn.

## LEARNING TOGETHER IN THE CITY

### LOOK

Pick a recipe to make and find the ingredients in the fridge, cabinets, or pantry. Cooking together helps children learn to follow directions.

### TALK

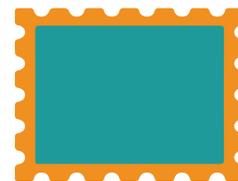
Rhyme with kitchen words! "See you soon, spoon!" "Jump up, cup!" "Can you cook, book?" What else can you rhyme?

### PLAY

Start a jam band! Gather pots, spoons, chopsticks, and cups. Play solo. Play together.

### MOVE

Create an obstacle course using chairs, blankets, a table, and pillows! Crawl, hop, and wiggle through the course.



Postcard

FROM:

- Zap & Zip,  
Your Best  
Blueberry Bakers

# Hello from the LAUNDROMAT!



Lots to fold, but now it's done. Laundry days are so much fun!

## LEARNING TOGETHER IN THE CITY

### LOOK

What colors do we see? Let's find something that fits me. Now, let's find something that fits you! Describing and comparing everyday objects helps children pay attention to detail and build language.

### TALK

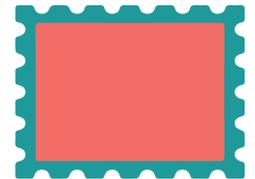
Is the laundry warm or cold, dry or wet? How do we move the wet clothes to the dryer? Where do we fold the dry things?

### PLAY

Match socks and toss pairs into the laundry basket. Find new ways to toss - overhand, behind your back, and under your leg.

### MOVE

Who do we see in the washing machine glass? Can we jump up? Squat down? Move side to side? What else can we do to see our reflection?



Postcard

FROM:

- Zap and Zoom,  
Your Washing  
Wizards

# Hello from the NEST!



Good night! Sleep tight!

## LEARNING TOGETHER IN THE CITY

### LOOK

Pick a book to read at bedtime. Pointing out words and pictures helps children develop listening skills and build vocabulary.



### TALK

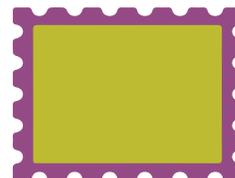
Let's talk about our day. What was our favorite part? Why did we love it? What will we do tomorrow?

### PLAY

Sing a lullaby together to wind down from the day. Gently tickle arms, legs, and tummy while making eye contact.

### MOVE

Stretch out like an animal before going to sleep. Become a cat, dog, or cow. Be as quiet as a mouse.



Postcard

FROM:

- Zip, Zap, Zoom,  
Your ZZZZ  
Experts

# Hello from **UNDERGROUND!**



We LOVE taking the subway. It's so much faster than flying.

## LEARNING TOGETHER IN THE CITY

### LOOK

Count the train cars as they pull into the station. What letters and numbers do we see?

### TALK

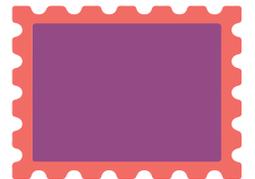
Where are we going today? What train will get us there? Where will we get off?

### PLAY

Play "I Spy". I spy the conductor. I spy a newspaper. I spy a backpack. What else can we spy?

### MOVE

Copy each other's beats with hands and feet. Taking turns helps children practice communication and listening skills that are important for school and life.

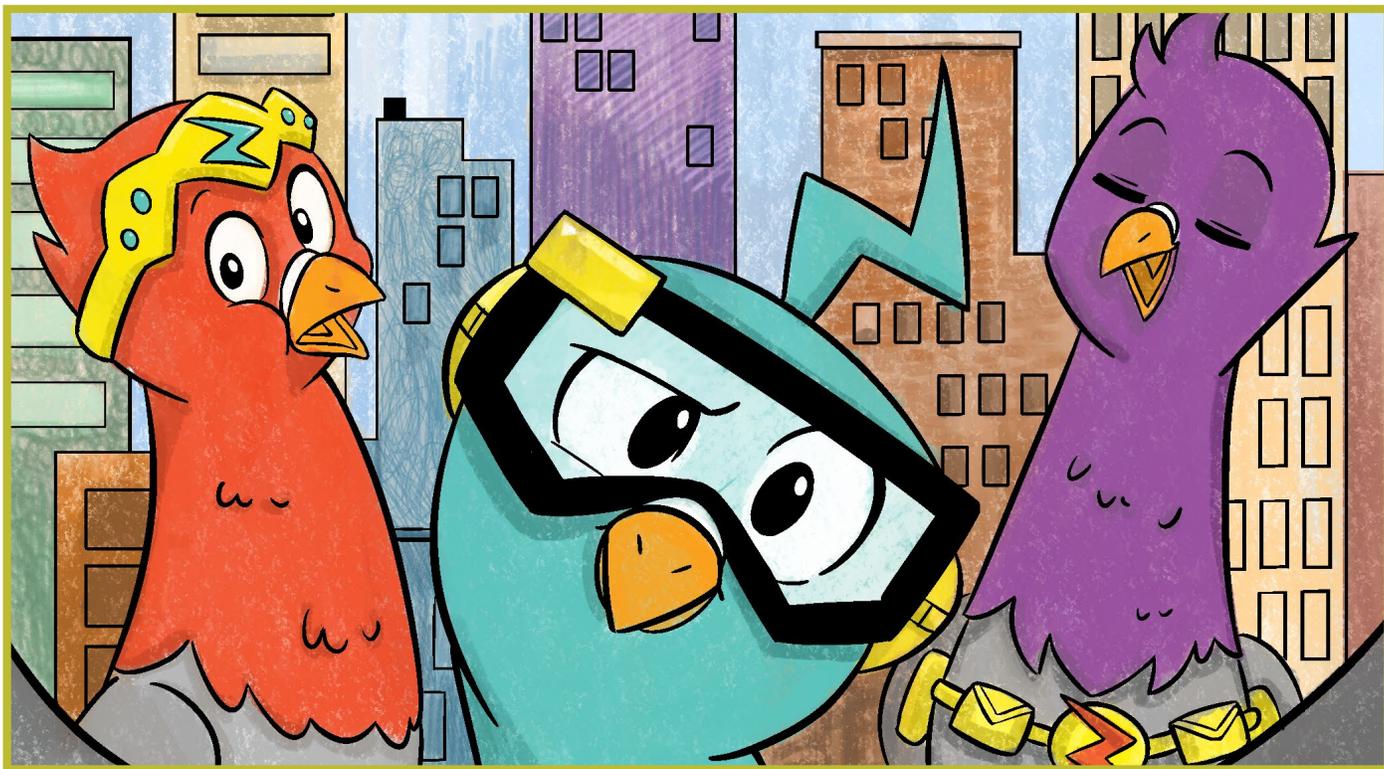


Postcard

FROM:

- Zap and Zoom,  
Your High Flying,  
Fine Feathered  
Friends

Hello from the **STREETS OF NYC!**



Even pigeons love selfies!

## LEARNING TOGETHER IN THE CITY

### LOOK

Take photos of the cool things we see today! Talking about what you see helps to develop children's language and their ability to communicate thoughts and ideas.

### TALK

How many photos did we take today? Which is our favorite? What photos will we take tomorrow?

### PLAY

Play "Find Five". Find five shapes. Five colors. Five animals. Five doors. What else can we find?

### MOVE

Walk the streets in silly ways. Take big steps. Take tiny steps. Hop over sidewalk cracks.



Postcard



FROM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
- Zip, Zap, Zoom,  
Your Camera-Ready  
Pigeons  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Hello from the **BUS STOP!**



While we wait, so much to see, a bike, a bus, and a New York taxi.

## LEARNING TOGETHER IN THE CITY

### LOOK

Point to the different types of vehicles we see on the street. Can we spot a bus, bicycle, skateboard, taxi, or truck? What else do we see?

### TALK

Copy the sounds of the city. What sound does the bus make? How about the subway or a bulldozer? Recognizing and describing the city's sounds helps children develop listening skills and language.

### PLAY

Sing songs about ways we move around the city. Try "The Wheels on the Bus" and "Row, Row, Row, Your Boat." Can we make up a new song?

### MOVE

Play a game of "Stop and Go!" Move fast and slow!



Postcard



FROM:

- Zip, Zap, Zoom,  
City Movers  
and Shakers

# Hello from the **PARK!**



Lots of parks in NYC. So much fun for you and me!

## LEARNING TOGETHER IN THE CITY

### LOOK

Collect leaves, flower petals, rocks, and twigs. How many colors and textures can we find?

### TALK

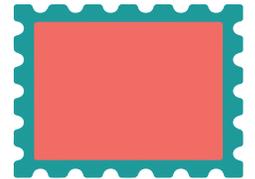
Build a nest with sticks, grass, leaves, and anything else we find. Who lives in a nest? What might we find there?

### PLAY

Play "Simon Says!" Do something only if Simon says to do it. Simon says start the game now! Taking turns leading and following in a game or conversation helps children learn how to play and communicate with others.

### MOVE

Follow each other's moves! Jump. Spin. Twirl. Leap. How else can we move?



Postcard

FROM:

— Zip, Zap, Zoom,  
Your Playful  
Park Pigeons

Hello from the **DELI!**



Around the corner and down the street,  
To our local deli for something to eat!

## LEARNING TOGETHER IN THE CITY

### LOOK

Find the many different colors of fruits and vegetables.

### TALK

What did we do today? How did we get to the store?  
What did we do after?

### PLAY

Name grocery items while unpacking the bags together. How fast can we sort the groceries into small and large items? Describing and naming the items you see helps children make connections between words and objects and build language.

### MOVE

Pretend to be fruits and vegetables. Can you stretch long and straight like a carrot or become big and round like an orange?



Postcard

FROM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Zoom and Zap  
Your Deli Dates

Hello from **NYC!**



Summer or winter, fall or spring,  
We love to wear just the right thing!

## LEARNING TOGETHER IN THE CITY

### LOOK

Is it sunny, cloudy, warm, or cool outside? Look out the window. Press your hand against the glass to help find the answer.

### TALK

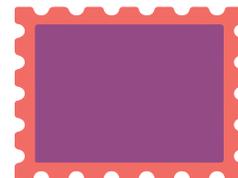
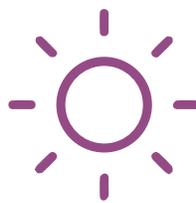
What will we wear today? Shorts or pants? Shoes or sandals? Will we need an umbrella or a hat?

### PLAY

Get silly! Put one sock on your hand and make it talk. Put your arms through a pair of pants and move like a robot.

### MOVE

Find the beat with “Freeze Dance”. When the music stops, strike a pose! Playing games helps children learn to follow directions, an important skill they will need for learning at school, in sports, and in life.



Postcard

FROM:

- Zip, Zap, Zoom,  
Your Super  
Stylish Pigeons

# Hello from the BATHROOM!



Rub a dub dub, Zap's in the tub.  
Zoom can't speak, he's brushing his beak.

## LEARNING TOGETHER IN THE CITY

### LOOK

Smile wide and count your teeth! How many are on the top and the bottom?

### TALK

Create a bedtime routine together. Do we brush before or after we bathe? Do we read or sing songs before bed?

### PLAY

Play "Sink or Float!" Choose a rubber duck, spoon, rag, and ball. Take turns placing them in the bathtub. What sinks? What floats? Taking turns helps children learn to communicate with others.

### MOVE

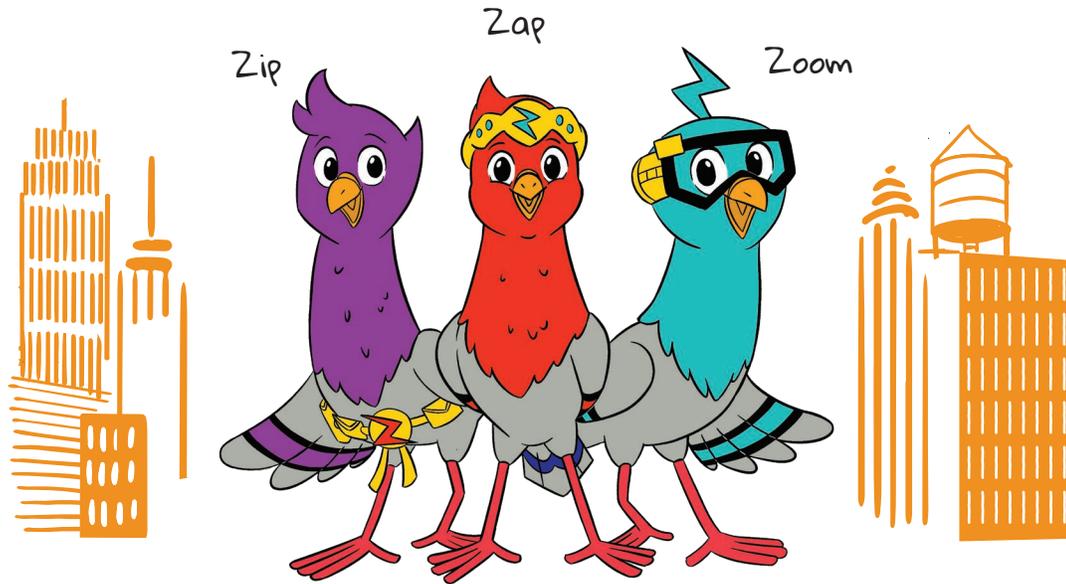
See how fast we can get out of our clothes and into pajamas! Ready, set, go!



Postcard

FROM:

- Zap and Zoom,  
Your Ready-for-Bed  
Birds



¡Hola! Somos Zip, Zap y Zoom ¡Las súper palomas de la ciudad de Nueva York! ¿Tal vez nos has visto por la ciudad, en el parque, en el deli o esperando el autobús? Todos los días, nos proponemos explorar y aprender en nuestra ciudad. ¡Esperamos que te unas a nosotros!

## TARJETAS DE ACTIVIDADES PARA EL APRENDIZAJE DIARIO

### ¡APRENDIENDO EN LAS CALLES DE NUEVA YORK!

#### Actividades Familiares:

El reverso de cada tarjeta incluye actividades para inspirarlos a **MIRAR**, **HABLAR**, **MOVERSE** y **JUGAR** juntos.

#### Desarrollar Habilidades de Aprendizaje:

Al hacer estas actividades con tus hijos, puedes ayudarlos a desarrollar habilidades de **lenguaje** y **audición**, a practicar **tomar turnos** y **seguir instrucciones**- ¡todas las habilidades necesarias para tener éxito en el patio de recreo, en la escuela y en la vida!

#### Edades:

Estas actividades están diseñadas para niños menores de **cuatro años**.



Que te diviertas!  
- Tus amigos,  
Zip, Zap y Zoom

#### Consejos para usar las ilustraciones en el frente de las tarjetas:

• Organiza las tarjetas de acuerdo con tu horario de hoy. Habla sobre tus planes para el día.



• Juega "Yo Espío" con las ilustraciones: Yo espío frutas. Yo espío el color rojo. Yo espío las palomas.



• Juega a contar con las ilustraciones: ¿Cuántos calcetines hay en la lavandería? ¿Cuántos huevos hay en la cocina?





En nuestra cocina, algo siempre se está cocinando.  
Ya sea que estemos en Manhattan, en Queens, en el Bronx o en Brooklyn.

## APRENDIENDO JUNTOS EN LA CIUDAD

### MIRAR

Elijan una receta para hacer y encuentren los ingredientes en la nevera, los armarios o la despensa. Cocinar juntos ayuda a los niños a aprender a seguir instrucciones.

### HABLAR

¡Rima con palabras de la cocina! “Abraza a la taza”, “Camina en la cocina”, “Prepara con la cuchara”.

### JUGAR

¡Empiecen una banda! Reúnan ollas, cucharas, palillos y tazas. Juega solo. Jueguen juntos.

### MOVER

¡Creen una carrera de obstáculos con sillas, mantas, una mesa y almohadas! Arrástrense, salten y muévase por la pista.



Postal

DE:

- Zap y Zip,  
TUS amigos  
Panaderos

# Saludos desde la LAVANDERÍA



Hay mucho que doblar, pero ya está hecho.  
¡Los días de lavandería son muy divertidos!

## APRENDIENDO JUNTOS EN LA CIUDAD

### MIRAR

¿Qué colores vemos? Encontramos algo que me quede bien ¡Ahora, encontremos algo que te quede bien a ti! Describir y comparar objetos cotidianos ayuda a los niños a prestar atención a los detalles y a desarrollar el lenguaje.

### HABLAR

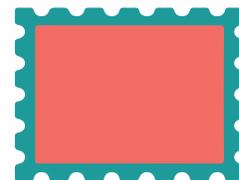
¿La ropa está caliente o fría? ¿Seca o húmeda?  
¿Cómo pasamos la ropa mojada a la secadora?  
¿Dónde doblamos la ropa seca?

### JUGAR

Hagan coincidir los calcetines y arrojen los pares a la canasta de la ropa. Encuentren nuevas formas de lanzar: sobre la cabeza, por detrás de la espalda o por debajo de la pierna.

### MOVER

¿A quién vemos en el vidrio de la lavadora? ¿Podemos saltar? ¿Agacharnos? ¿Movernos de lado a lado? ¿Qué más podemos hacer para ver nuestro reflejo?



Postal

DE:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
- Zap y Zoom,  
Tus magos  
del lavado  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Saludos desde el NIDO



¡Buenas noches! ¡Sueña profundo!

## APRENDIENDO JUNTOS EN LA CIUDAD

### MIRAR

Elijan un libro para leer antes de acostarse. Señalar palabras e imágenes ayuda a los niños a desarrollar habilidades para escuchar y desarrollar vocabulario.



### HABLAR

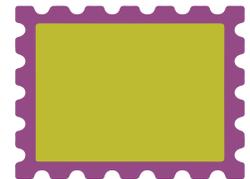
Hablemos de nuestro día. ¿Cuál fue nuestra parte favorita? ¿Por qué nos encantó? ¿Qué haremos mañana?

### JUGAR

Canten una canción de cuna juntos para relajarse del día. Cosquillea suavemente brazos, piernas y estomago haciendo contacto visual.

### MOVER

Estírense como un animal antes de dormir. Conviértanse en un gato, perro o vaca. Se silencioso como un ratón.



Postal

DE:

- Zip, Zap y Zoom,  
Tus expertos  
soñadores

# Saludos desde el **SUBTERRÁNEO**



Nos encanta tomar el tren. Es mucho más rápido que volar.

## APRENDIENDO JUNTOS EN LA CIUDAD

### MIRAR

Cuenten los vagones del tren cuando lleguen a la estación. ¿Qué letras y números vemos?

### HABLAR

¿A dónde vamos hoy? ¿Qué tren nos llevará allí?  
¿Dónde nos bajaremos?

### JUGAR

Jueguen "Yo Espío". Yo espío al conductor. Yo espío un periódico. Yo espío una mochila. ¿Qué más podemos espíar?

### MOVER

Copien los latidos de cada uno con las manos y los pies. Tomar turnos ayuda a los niños a practicar las habilidades de comunicación y escucha.



Postal

DE:

- Zap y Zoom,  
Tus amigos  
voladores y  
emplumados

# Saludos desde las CALLES DE NUEVA YORK



¡Incluso las palomas aman los selfies!

## APRENDIENDO JUNTOS EN LA CIUDAD

### MIRAR

¡Tomen fotos de las cosas geniales que vean hoy! Hablar sobre lo que ves ayuda a desarrollar el lenguaje de los niños y su capacidad para comunicar pensamientos e ideas.

### HABLAR

¿Cuántas fotos tomamos hoy? ¿Cuál es nuestra favorita? ¿Qué fotos tomaremos mañana?

### JUGAR

Jueguen a “Encuentra Cinco”. Encuentren cinco formas. Cinco colores. Cinco animales. Cinco puertas. ¿Qué más podemos encontrar?

### MOVER

Caminen por las calles de manera divertida. Den grandes pasos. Den pequeños pasos. Salten sobre las grietas de la acera.

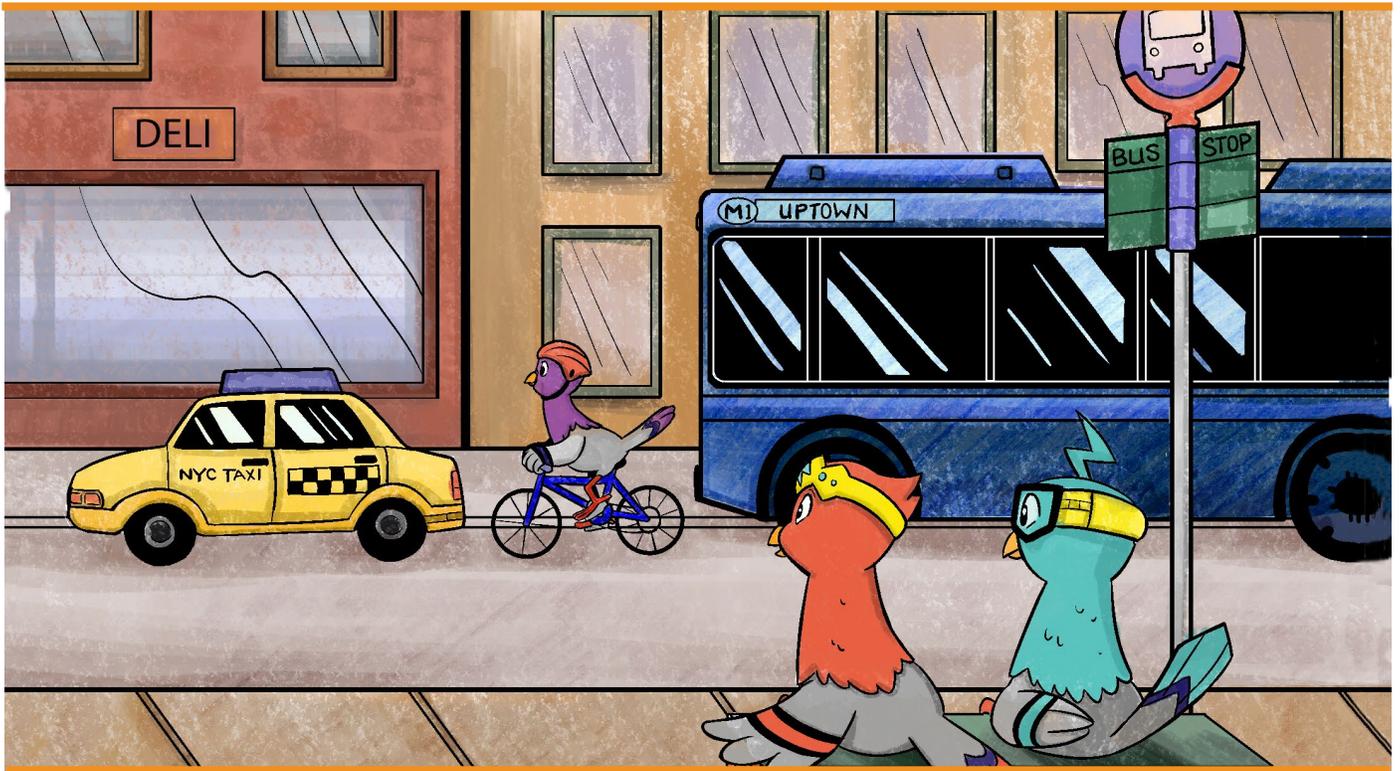


Postal

DE:

- Zip, Zap y Zoom,  
Tus palomas listas  
para la cámara

# Saludos desde la **PARADA DE AUTOBÚS**



Mientras esperamos, hay mucho que ver.  
Una bicicleta, un autobús y un taxi de Nueva York.

## APRENDIENDO JUNTOS EN LA CIUDAD

### MIRAR

Señalen los diferentes tipos de vehículos que ven en la calle. ¿Podemos encontrar un autobús, bicicleta, patineta, taxi o camión? ¿Qué más vemos?

### HABLAR

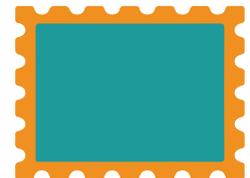
Imiten los sonidos de la ciudad. ¿Qué sonido hace el autobús? ¿Qué tal el tren o una excavadora? Reconocer y describir los sonidos de la ciudad ayuda a los niños a desarrollar habilidades de escucha y lenguaje.

### JUGAR

Cantemos canciones sobre cómo nos movemos por la ciudad. Prueba "Las ruedas del autobús" y "Rema rema rema tu bote". ¿Podemos inventar una nueva canción?

### MOVER

¡Jueguen un juego de parar y avanzar! ¡Muévanse rápido y lento!



Postal

DE:

- Zip, Zap y Zoom,  
Moviéndonos por  
la ciudad.



Hay muchos parques en Nueva York ¡muy divertido para ti y para mí!

## APRENDIENDO JUNTOS EN LA CIUDAD

### MIRAR

Recolecten hojas, pétalos de flores, rocas y ramitas. ¿Cuántos colores y texturas podemos encontrar?

### HABLAR

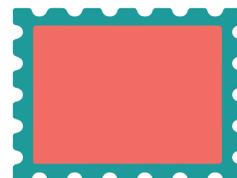
Construyan un nido con palos, hierba, hojas y cualquier otra cosa que encuentren. ¿Quién vive en un nido? ¿Qué podríamos encontrar allí?

### JUGAR

¡Jueguen “*Simón Dice*”! Haz solo lo que Simón te dice. ¡Simón dice que comience el juego ahora! Tomar turnos para liderar y seguir en un juego o conversación ayuda a los niños a aprender a jugar y comunicarse con los demás.

### MOVER

¡Sigan los movimientos del otro! Salta, gira, brinca. ¿De qué otra manera podemos movernos?

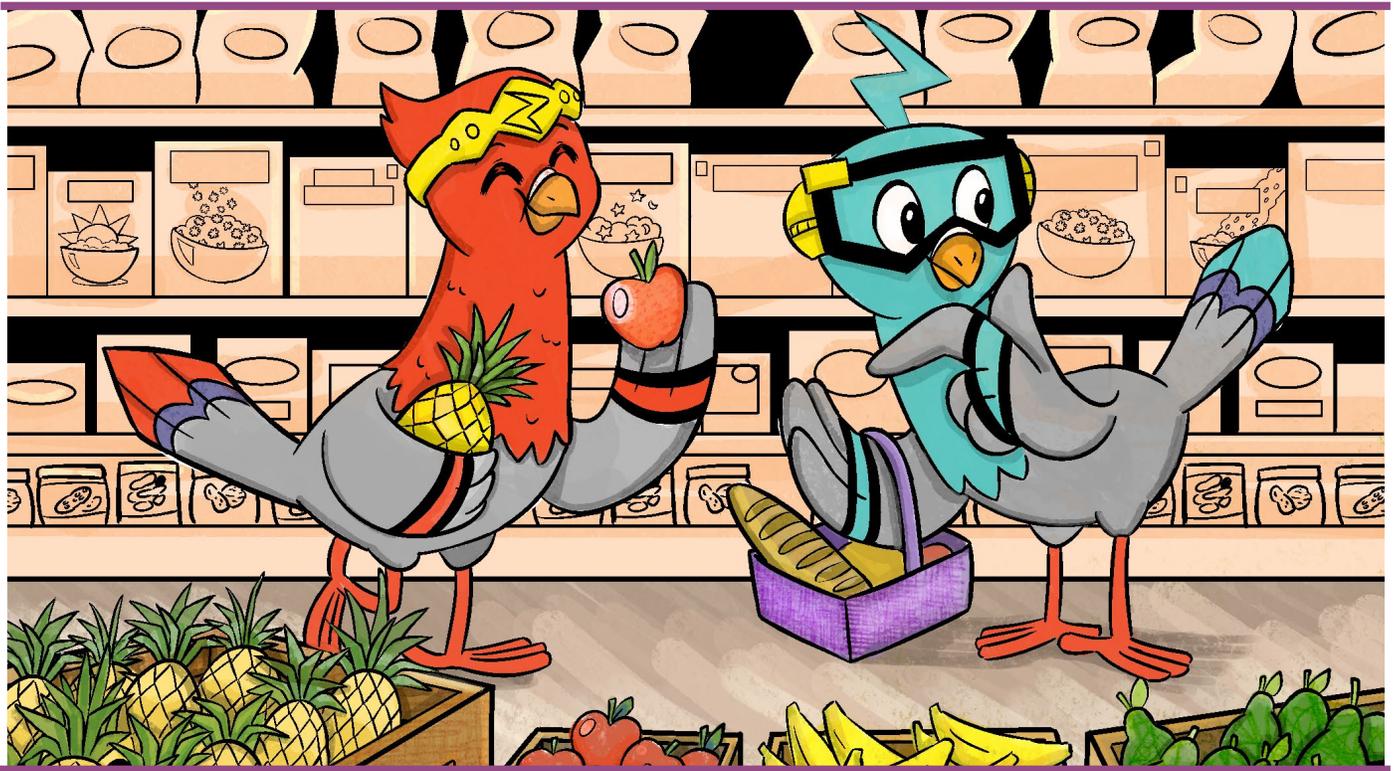


Postal

DE:

- Zip, Zap y Zoom,  
Tus palomas  
juguetonas  
del parque

# Saludos desde el DELI



A la vuelta de la esquina y una calle más abajo  
¡Vamos a nuestro deli local para comer algo!

## APRENDIENDO JUNTOS EN LA CIUDAD

### MIRAR

Encuentren colores diferentes de las frutas y verduras.

### HABLAR

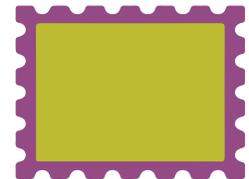
¿Qué hicimos hoy? ¿Cómo llegamos a la tienda? ¿Qué hicimos después?

### JUGAR

Nombren los artículos del supermercado mientras desempacan las bolsas juntos. ¿Qué tan rápido podemos clasificar los alimentos en artículos pequeños y grandes? Describir y nombrar los elementos que ven ayuda a los niños a hacer conexiones entre palabras y objetos y a desarrollar el lenguaje.

### MOVER

Pretendan ser frutas y verduras. ¿Puedes estirarte largo y recto como una zanahoria o volverte grande y redondo como una naranja?



Postal

DE:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
- Zoom y Zap  
Tus acompañantes  
del Deli  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Saludos desde la CIUDAD DE NUEVA YORK



Verano o invierno, otoño o primavera,  
¡Nos encanta vestirnos para la ocasión!

## APRENDIENDO JUNTOS EN LA CIUDAD

### MIRAR

¿Está soleado, nublado, cálido o fresco afuera? Miren por la ventana. Presiona tu mano contra el cristal para encontrar la respuesta.

### HABLAR

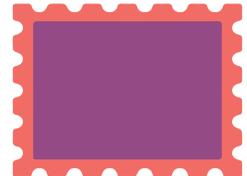
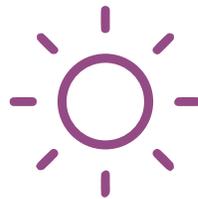
¿Qué nos pondremos hoy? Pantalones cortos o pantalones largos? ¿Zapatos o sandalias?  
¿Necesitaremos un paraguas o un sombrero?

### JUGAR

¡Sean creativos! Pon un calcetín en tu mano y haz que hable. Pasa los brazos por un par de pantalones y muévanse como un robot.

### MOVER

Encuentren el ritmo con “Baile Congelado”. Cuando la música se detenga, ¡hagan una pose! Jugar juegos ayuda a los niños a aprender a seguir instrucciones, una habilidad importante que necesitarán para aprender en la escuela, en los deportes y en la vida.



Postal

DE:

- Zip, Zap y Zoom,  
Tus palomas  
súper elegantes

# Saludos desde el BAÑO



Burbujas y patitos, Zap está en la bañera.  
Zoom no puede hablar, su pico cepillando está.

## APRENDIENDO JUNTOS EN LA CIUDAD

### MIRAR

¡Sonríe y cuenta tus dientes! ¿Cuántos hay en la parte de arriba y de abajo?

### HABLAR

Creen una rutina para acostarse juntos. ¿Nos cepillamos antes o después de bañarnos? ¿Leemos o cantamos canciones antes de dormir?

### JUGAR

¡Jugar "Hundirse o Flotar"! Elijan un pato de goma, una cuchara, un trapo y una pelota. Túrnense para colocarlos en la bañera. ¿Qué se hunde? ¿Qué flota? Cuando los niños toman turnos, aprenden a comunicarse con los demás.

### MOVER

¡Mira qué rápido podemos quitarnos la ropa y ponernos la pijama! ¡En sus marcas, listos, fuera!



Postal

DE:

- Zap y Zoom,  
Tus pájaros listos  
para dormir

---

# FAMILY JOURNAL

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# BABY BRAIN BUILDING FAMILY WORKSHOP

## FAMILY JOURNAL

Take notes or write down your reflections about your experience in the Baby Brain Building workshops!



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# BABY BRAIN BUILDING FAMILY WORKSHOP

## Hub Graphic and Exhibit Package

**SUPERPOWERED LEARNING TOGETHER**

with the Children's Museum of Manhattan

ALL ARE WELCOME! Participate in hands-on activities and experiments that explore the way that our world works and how we can make it a better place. We'll have fun while we learn!

HOW DO YOU POP? HOW ARE YOU?

WELCOME!

ZIP AWAY!

HELLO, HELLO!!

ZOOM AT YOUR SERVICE!

**BODY 'N MIND CLIMB**

**SOUND STATION**

**3 BRAIN POWERS**

**WORKING MEMORY** helps children keep information in mind and access, sort, and organize it in different ways.

**MOVIL FLEXIBILITY** helps children adjust to changes in the world around them.

**IMP CONTROL** helps children master their thoughts, actions, and impulses, and to pause and think before acting.

**SENSORY TRAIN**





# BABY BRAIN BUILDING FAMILY WORKSHOP

## Hub Installations in New York City

Before



After



Before



After





# BABY BRAIN BUILDING FAMILY WORKSHOP

## Posters

Full Size Posters can be downloaded separately



Children's brains grow faster when they are young than during any other time in their life – young children are learning all the time.

- They are learning language – how to understand what people are saying, how to talk, and how to read.
- They are learning how to self-regulate – how to control their feelings and behaviors.
- How well children learn to do these things when they are young is very important for how well they do in school.



Learning to self-regulate, or to control our feelings and behaviors is hard. Kids and adults use three skills, called executive functions, to control their feelings and behaviors as they encounter challenges, solve problems, and make plans to get things done.

There are three executive functions:

- **Working memory:** holding information in your mind and using or changing it.
- **Mental/Cognitive flexibility:** paying attention to the world around you as it changes.
- **Self-control:** doing what you are supposed to, even when it is hard.



Children learn language and executive function skills in lots of ways, but young children learn these things from what they do with the most important person in their lives: you!

Lots of the things you already do with your child help them learn language and executive function skills.

- Talking and singing with your child, even before they can talk, helps them learn language.
- Talking or speaking with them in different languages helps children learn language more quickly.
- Reading with your child, even if you read the same book, helps them learn to talk and how to read.
- Playing games like Simon Says or make believe helps them learn executive functions skills.