Step-by-Step

With Moments Together

A Guide for New Mexico Parents and Caregivers of Children Ages Zero to Five

moments
TOGETHER
ready. love. learn.

You are your child's first and most important teacher.

Fortunately, teaching them doesn't have to be hard work—it's play and there are opportunities everywhere! By playing, sharing stories, singing, talking, smiling, snuggling, and dancing with your young one, you create a stable foundation for their future.

Follow these seven easy steps to give your child a great start in life.

1. Share Stories with Me

Help grow their language and imagination by reading or sharing stories aloud.

When we tell stories or read to our little ones, it develops the foundation of language, literacy, and thinking skills.

TIP:
Play with the sound of your voice; point out interesting details and observe what your child finds fascinating.

You're not alone!

This simple, step-by-step guide is here to show you how.

"Share stories with me during the week, even when I'm learning to speak."

"When we take turns, there's a lot to learn."

2. Play with Me

Interactive play is a great way to build your child's brain.

When we follow a child's lead as we play with them, we are helping them grow socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically. Playing with our children is a pleasurable reward for the important work of caregiving.

TIP:
Allow yourself to be playful. Play is the foundation for learning literacy, math, and science skills.

3. Talk with Me

Share lots and lots of words—in any language.

When a young child babbles, gestures, or cries, and we respond—whether that is eye contact, a few words, or a gesture—neural connections are built and strengthened in the child's brain. This kind of brain building helps to develop communication and social skills. Research indicates that the number of back and forth conversations a child experiences in his/her early years is a strong predictor of success in school.

TIP:
When babies are babbling, they're not just moving their mouths. They're actually ready to learn. When you respond, it is the beginning of their first conversations.

blue

"However we talk, I like it a lot."

1   https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/serve-and-return/
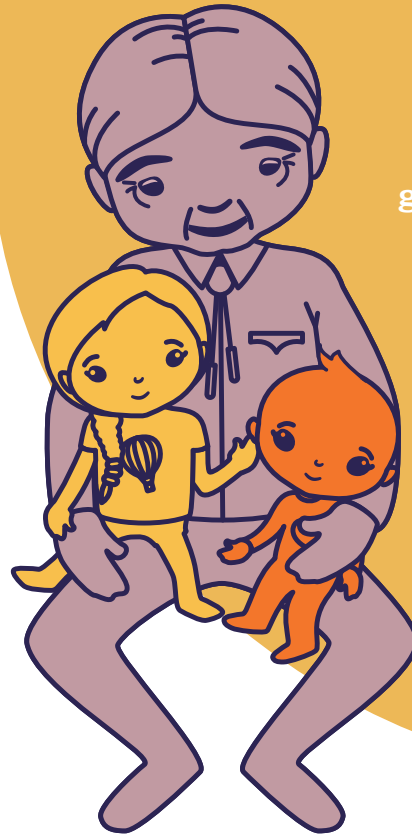
4. Smile with Me

Give them comfort with a simple smile.

When we smile at our little ones, we are connecting and building trust. Smiling releases stress-reducing endorphins that help us feel happier and healthier.

TIP:
Smiling makes everyone feel better and helps give your baby a sense of safety. Giving and receiving smiles are important first steps towards learning positive social behavior.

"A smile from you makes me glad through and through."

5. Snuggle with Me

Provide your child a sense of safety with a hug.

When we snuggle with our little ones, it provides physical and emotional comfort. Because the skin is the largest organ in the human body, loving touch strengthens our immune system and helps us feel safe.

TIP:
Cuddling your child helps provide a secure attachment that leads to self-confidence, empathy, and ability to cope with stress later in life.
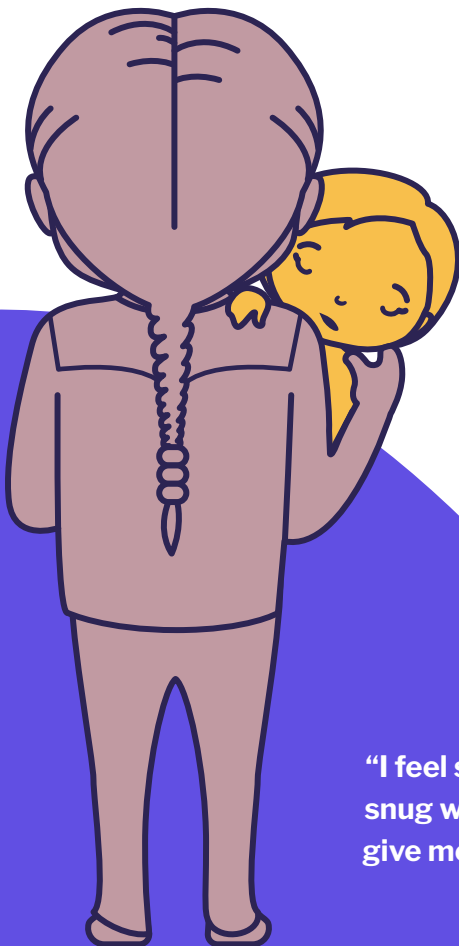
"I feel safe and snug when you give me a hug."

"It doesn't matter to me if you sing off-key."

6. Sing with Me

Help balance their emotions by singing a song, it also helps build their language skills.

When we sing to our little ones, we help them increase their vocabulary and comprehension and also give them the tools that help regulate their emotions.

TIP:
Singing to children supports growth and development even when we can't carry a tune; so have fun and give it a try!

7. Dance with Me

Help them learn and stay healthy by incorporating movement.

Movement in children can help increase memory, perception, language, attention, emotion, and decision making. Some studies have shown that when language is combined with movement, learning increases 90 percent.

TIP:
Dancing with your little one not only introduces them to music and movement, it helps develop their motor skills, coordination, and brain!

"Get up and move. Let's groove."

The Moments Together campaign is an effort out of the State of New Mexico's Early Childhood Education and Care Department.

NEW MEXICO
Early Childhood
Education & Care Department

Learn more about the campaign at
MomentsNM.org

moments
TOGETHER
ready. love. learn.