

Step-by-Step

With Moments Together

A Guide for New Mexico
Parents and Caregivers of
Children ages zero to five



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.

You're not alone!

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



Share Stories with Me



“Share stories with me
during the week, even
when I’m learning to speak.”

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.

Play with Me

“When we take
turns, there’s a
lot to learn.”



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.

Talk with Me



“However we talk,
I like it a lot.”

Share lots and lots of words—in any language.

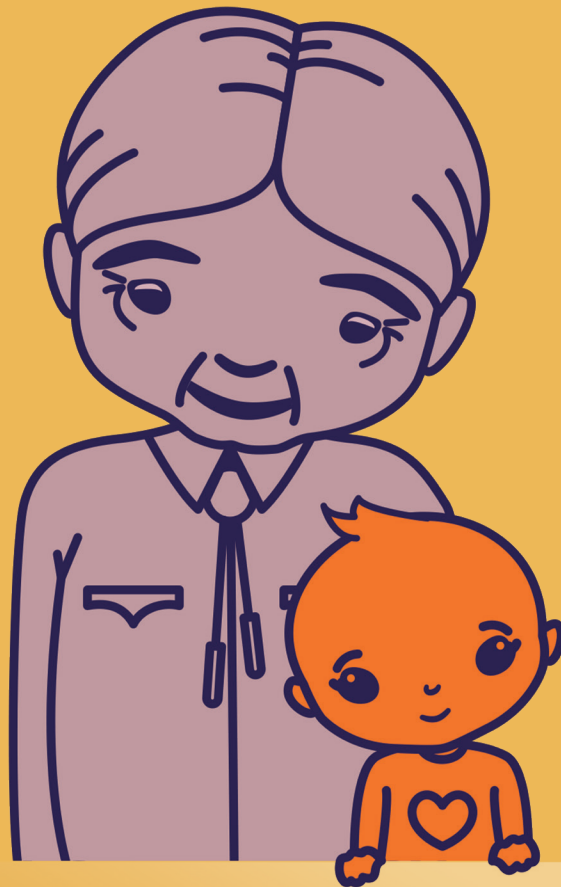
When a young child babbles, gestures, or cries, and we respond—whether that is eye contact, a few words, or a gesture—neural connections are built and strengthened in the child’s brain. This kind of brain building helps to develop communication and social skills. Research indicates that the number of 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.

Smile with Me



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

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.

Snuggle with Me



"I feel safe and
snug when you
give me a hug."

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.

Sing with Me



“It doesn’t
matter to
me if you
sing off-key.”

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!

Dance with Me

“Get up and move.
Let’s groove.”



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!



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

Learn more about the campaign at
[MomentsNM.org](https://momentsnm.org)



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