Learning Objectives
Participants will:

• Examine the research-based concept of “Brain Architecture” and the role of “Serve and Return” in infant/toddler development.
• Understand that infant/toddler growth can be described in terms of the social-emotional, cognitive, language, and perceptual and motor development domains.
• Recognize that infant/toddler development and learning are a part of an integrated process.
• Learn how to use the California Infant/Toddler Learning & Development Foundations and the California Infant/Toddler Curriculum Framework to plan valuable experiences for the youngest children in their family child care (FCC) homes.
• Practice ways to communicate with colleagues and families about how environments and learning strategies can be designed to promote development together.

Activities
• Brain Architecture – Tweet Takeaways!
• Serve and Return – Tweet Takeaways!
• Text Coding: Unpacking the Foundations and Framework
• Where in Your FCC Home Do You Support Each Developmental Domain?
• Reflection and Communicating What You Do

Handouts
1. Brain Architecture & Serve and Return
2. Brain Research Fun Facts
3. Overview of the California Infant/Toddler Foundations and Framework
4. Overview of the Infant/Toddler Developmental Domains
5. Facility Sketch: Family Child Care Home

Presentation Tools
• PowerPoint: Infant Toddler Learning and Development Overview
• Video on Brain Architecture http://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/brain-architecture/
• Video on Serve and Return http://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/serve-and-return/

ECE Competency Areas
• Child Development and Learning
• Learning Environments and Curriculum
Infant and Toddler Development and Learning

Key Points

- Early childhood is a distinct period of life that has value in itself as well as creating the foundation for later years.
- Early experiences affect the development of brain architecture, which provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health. Just as a weak foundation compromises the quality and strength of a house, adverse experiences early in life can harm brain architecture, with negative effects lasting into adulthood.
- Serve and return interactions shape brain architecture positively. When a baby babbles, gestures, or cries, and an adult responds appropriately with eye contact, words, or a hug, neural connections are built and strengthened in the child’s brain and this in turn supports the development of communication and social skills. Much like a lively game of tennis, volleyball, or ping-pong, this back-and-forth is both fun and capacity-building. When caregivers are sensitive, respectful and responsive to a young child’s signals and needs, they provide an environment rich in serve and return experiences.
- The California Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations describe competencies infants and toddlers typically reach during the birth-to-three-year period. In order to make developmental progress, young children need nurturing. Supportive home environments and strong family child care programs facilitate children’s attainment of the competencies specified in the Foundations by providing safe environments and an emotionally secure base for active, playful exploration and experimentation.
- During the infant/toddler years, all children depend on responsive, secure relationships to develop and learn.
- High-quality programs offer infants and toddlers primary relationships in small groups. Family child care is well-suited to providing personalized care that reflects an understanding of individual differences among children.
- FCC professionals need to develop partnerships with children’s families to connect children’s experiences at home with their experiences in the FCC program. These partnerships with families are the cornerstone of culturally sensitive care. Connections with children’s early cultural and linguistic experiences are critically important for social-emotional well-being, the development of identity, and learning.
Sometimes children have special needs that require particular accommodations and adaptations. To serve all children, programs working with infants/toddlers must work to provide appropriate conditions for each child and individually assist each child’s movement along a pathway of healthy learning and development. (Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act—called “the ADA”—prohibits child care providers from discriminating against persons with disabilities on the basis of disability, that is, FCC professionals must provide children and parents with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in child care programs and services. See the Resources section for more information on the ADA.)

Learning across all developmental domains builds young children’s readiness for school.

The Infant/Toddler Foundations are aligned with the Preschool Foundations in four major domains:

- Social-emotional development
- Language development
- Cognitive development
- Perceptual and motor development

The Foundations developed for each domain are based on research and evidence from experience. Suggestions of expert practitioners and examples illustrate the Foundations. The purpose is to promote understanding of early learning and development and guide efforts to support the development and well-being of infants and toddlers.

Young children can be considered from the perspective of one domain, such as social-emotional development or language development. Yet, when taking an in-depth look at a single domain, one needs to keep in mind that learning is usually an integrated experience. For example, an infant may make a cognitive discovery about cause-and-effect while making the connection that a cry leads to a comforting response from an adult.

Providers can use the principles of Universal Design for Learning to meet the needs of all children in their care:

- Universal Design is based on the realization that children learn in different ways. Making the environment, play materials, activities, and experiences accessible to all children, is critical to successful learning.
Universal Design is not a single approach that will accommodate everyone; rather, it refers to providing multiple approaches to learning in order to meet the needs of diverse learners. Universal Design provides for multiple means of representation, multiple means of engagement, and multiple means of expression.

- Multiple means of representation refers to providing information in a variety of ways so the learning needs of all children are met.
- Multiple means of expression refers to allowing children to use alternative ways to communicate or demonstrate what they know or what they are feeling.
- Multiple means of engagement refers to providing choices within the setting or program that facilitate learning by building on children’s interests.

- The California Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Program Guidelines are another useful resource as you plan environments, materials, and activities for the youngest children in your care.
Learning Outcome
Participants will learn about the research-based concept of infant brain development as building Brain Architecture.

Format
• Triad work
• Large group discussion

Time needed
• 30 mins

Instructions
• Have the large group watch the “Overview Video on Brain Architecture” (2 mins)
• As they watch, encourage participants to note any new or familiar information presented in the brief video
• In groups of 3, discuss the following questions (written large and displayed on a dry erase board or chart paper (7 mins)
  o What info was familiar or seemed like something you already knew?
  o What new information did you learn about while watching this video?
• Distribute Handout 1 - Brain Architecture and pens to all participants (while groups are talking)
• Ask each team to Tweet Takeaways! (7 mins)
  o In triads, review Handout 1 and discuss what you think are most important things for people outside this room to know about Brain Architecture. What would be helpful for parents to know?
  o Decide together on 2-3 takeaways and write one per index card or sticky note using 140 characters or less (the exact number of characters is not important, the point is to make short, brief statements about what is most important to know).
• In the large group: each triad should share their Tweets, capture them on the dry erase board or chart paper, and discuss themes in the Tweets (10-15 mins, depending on the total number of groups)

Materials
• Computer
• Projector
• Internet connection
• Speakers
• “Overview Video on Brain Architecture” found at: http://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/brain-architecture/
• Dry erase board or chart paper
• Markers
• Index cards or large sticky notes
• Pens or pencils for participants
• Handout 1 - Brain Architecture & Serve and Return
**Learning Outcome**
Participants will understand how the research-based concept of Serve and Return functions in the development of young children.

**Format**
- Triad work
- Large group discussion

(Note to facilitator: this activity can be done in the same triads as the previous activity, or if you want a reason to get people up and moving, have them get into new groups)

**Time needed**
- 30-45 mins

**Instructions**
- Have the large group watch the “Overview Video on Serve and Return” (2 mins)
- As they watch, encourage participants to note any new or familiar information presented in the brief video.
- In groups of 3, discuss this question: (5 mins) Why is Serve and Return important?
- While participants are talking in their groups, write the following question on the board: What are the most important things for people outside of this room to know about the importance of the supporting children with Serve and Return?
- Still in triads, ask participants to refer to the second side of Handout 1 - Serve and Return and discuss
- Ask each team to Tweet Takeaways! (7 mins)
- Decide together on 2-3 takeaways and write one per index card or sticky note using 140 characters or less
- In the large group: ask each group share their Tweets, capture them on the dry erase board or chart paper, and discuss themes (10-15 mins, depending on the total number of groups)
- Distribute Handout 2 - Brain Research Fun Facts and give participants 2 mins to read it
- Ask the group: What does knowing about the developing neural circuits in young children’s brains mean for our work with infants and toddlers?
- Record responses on board and discuss. (10-20 mins)

**Materials**
- Computer
- Projector
- Internet connection
- Speakers
- Dry erase board or chart paper & markers
- Index cards or large sticky notes & pens
- Handout 1 - Brain Architecture & Serve and Return
- Handout 2 - Brain Research Fun Facts

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Section 1: Infant and Toddler Development and Learning
Learning Outcome
Participants will learn that infant/toddler development can be described according to the social–emotional, cognitive, language, and perceptual & motor development domains and consider the way their FCC programs offer children opportunities to develop and learn in an integrated way.

Format
- Individual work
- Pair share
- Large group discussion

(Note to facilitator: this can also be reframed as a “move about” activity with each of the symbols listed on the wall and participants bringing their key points to each and writing them under each symbol)

Time needed
- 30-45 mins

Instructions
- Distribute Handout 3 - Overview of the California Infant/Toddler Foundations and Framework & pens or pencils
- Put the following on the board or chart paper for everyone can see:
  - ! Engaging or gripping, new information
  - √ Knew that, good reminder
  - ? Questions and/or anything confusing
  - ≠ Disconnects, confusion, discomfort
  - * New ideas, new thinking, or “ah-ha!” moments
- Give participants 5-10 mins to code the text using these symbols as they read Handout 3
- Ask participants to find a partner and discuss what marks they made on the pages and why. Ask them to note any questions to bring back to the larger group discussion (10-15 mins)
- While groups are meeting, write the following questions on the board:
  - What experience do you have using the Infant/Toddler Foundations?
  - How can the idea of Universal Design be applied in your care of children?
  - Have you used the Infant/Toddler Curriculum Framework?

Materials
- Handout 3 - Overview of the California Infant/Toddler Foundations and Framework
- Pens or pencils
- Dry erase board or chart paper & markers
Text Coding: Unpacking the Foundations and Frameworks

- How can you imagine using these resources?
- Bring the large group back together and ask each group to share 1-2 lingering questions from their conversation and capture them on the board. Once captured, ask if anyone in the room can help clarify or know of any resources to help get the answers for remaining questions (5-10 mins)
- Use the questions above to prompt a discussion with participants about how they currently use (or might use) these resources. Inform participants that the full documents are available free online and are a tremendous resource for providers. (5-20 mins)
Where in Your FCC Home Do You Support Each Developmental Domain?

**Learning Outcome**
Participants will consider what their space offers for each developmental domain.

**Format**
- Individual work
- Pair share
- Large group discussion

(Note to facilitator: this can also be reframed as a “move about” activity with each of the symbols listed on the wall and participants bringing their key points to each and writing them under each symbol)

**Time needed**
- 30-50 mins

**Instructions**
- Pass out Handout 5 - Facility Sketch: Family Child Care Home and pencils and ask each participant to sketch a rough outline of the space available to children in their care. (No need to include parts of the home children cannot access.) This does not need to be perfect - just enough to roughly represent the space. (5-7 mins)
- Pass out Handout 4 - Overview of the Infant/Toddler Developmental Domains and read through the handout together (10-15 mins)
- In pairs, ask participants to review their space sketch and discuss with their partner where in their program there is space for children to practice these skills in each domain area. Ask them to note what domain areas they think offer the MOST opportunity for children and what domain areas could offer MORE opportunity to children. (15-20 mins)
- As a large group, ask participants to share the areas they feel support children the most and which areas they want more support in. Capture their ideas on the board. (10-15 mins)

**NOTE:** the areas where they want more support can be used to help you design future trainings and/or Technical Assistance. You could also ask providers to partner up for tours of their sites and/or encourage them to bring photos to share how they set up their environments to meet children's needs.

**Materials**
- Pencils (enough for all participants)
- Handout 4 - Overview of the Infant/Toddler Developmental Domains
- Handout 5 - Facility Sketch: Family Child Care Home
Reflection and Communicating What You Do

**Learning Outcome**
Participants will practice ways to communicate with colleagues and families about the ways in which environments and strategies are designed to promote development in an integrated way.

**Format**
- Personal reflection
- Pair share

**Time needed**
- 20-30 mins

**Instructions**
- Personal reflection; provide enough time for participants to respond to the following questions (write the two questions on the board): (5-7 mins)
  - What are the most important 2-3 things you feel you have learned today?
  - In what ways do you demonstrate support for the individual development and learning of all children?
- Prompt participants to review they have written and ask them to imagine how they would communicate these points to families and parents in their program. Ask them to revise and refine it to a paragraph or two and imagine using in a pamphlet advertising their program. (5-7 mins)
- (Trainer note: this is a good opportunity for you to offer follow-up technical assistance to support providers in the process of developing these materials for those that are interested.)
- Share your pamphlet’s key points with a partner and provide feedback to each other—identify at least one thing that resonates with you and if applicable, one point you think might be strengthened or clarified. (10-15 mins)

**Materials**
- Dry erase board or chart paper & markers
- Paper and pen/pencils
Early experiences affect the development of brain architecture, which provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health. Just as a weak foundation compromises the quality and strength of a house, adverse experiences early in life can impair brain architecture, with negative effects lasting into adulthood.

**Brains are built over time, from the bottom up.** The basic architecture of the brain is constructed through an ongoing process that begins before birth and continues into adulthood. Simpler neural connections and skills form first, followed by more complex circuits and skills. In the first few years of life, 700 to 1,000 new neural connections form every second. After this period of rapid proliferation, connections are reduced through a process called pruning, which allows brain circuits to become more efficient.

**Brain architecture is comprised of billions of connections between individual neurons across different areas of the brain.** These connections enable lightning-fast communication among neurons that specialize in different kinds of brain functions. The early years are the most active period for establishing neural connections, but new connections can form throughout life and unused connections continue to be pruned. Because this dynamic process never stops, it is impossible to determine what percentage of brain development occurs by a certain age. More importantly, the connections that form early provide either a strong or weak foundation for the connections that form later.

**The interactions of genes and experience shape the developing brain.** Although genes provide the blueprint for the formation of brain circuits, these circuits are reinforced by repeated use. A major ingredient in this developmental process is the serve and return interaction between children and their parents and other caregivers in the family or community. In the absence of responsive caregiving—or if responses are unreliable or inappropriate—the brain's architecture does not form as expected, which can lead to disparities in learning and behavior. Ultimately, genes and experiences work together to construct brain architecture.

**Cognitive, emotional, and social capacities are inextricably intertwined throughout the life course.** The brain is a highly integrated organ and its multiple functions operate in coordination with one another. Emotional well-being and social competence provide a strong foundation for emerging cognitive abilities, and together they are the bricks and mortar of brain architecture. The emotional and physical health, social skills, and cognitive-linguistic capacities that emerge in the early years are all important for success in school, the workplace, and in the larger community.

**Toxic stress weakens the architecture of the developing brain, which can lead to lifelong problems in learning, behavior, and physical and mental health.** Experiencing stress is an important part of healthy development. Activation of the stress response produces a wide range of physiological reactions that prepare the body to deal with threat. However, when these responses remain activated at high levels for significant periods of time, without supportive relationships to help calm them, toxic stress results. This can impair the development of neural connections, especially in the areas of the brain dedicated to higher-order skills.
Serve and return interactions shape brain architecture. When an infant or young child babbles, gestures, or cries, and an adult responds appropriately with eye contact, words, or a hug, neural connections are built and strengthened in the child’s brain that support the development of communication and social skills. Much like a lively game of tennis, volleyball, or Ping-Pong, this back-and-forth is both fun and capacity-building. When caregivers are sensitive and responsive to a young child’s signals and needs, they provide an environment rich in serve and return experiences.

Because responsive relationships are both expected and essential, their absence is a serious threat to a child’s development and well-being. Healthy brain architecture depends on a sturdy foundation built by appropriate input from a child’s senses and stable, responsive relationships with caring adults. If an adult’s responses to a child are unreliable, inappropriate, or simply absent, the developing architecture of the brain may be disrupted, and subsequent physical, mental, and emotional health may be impaired. The persistent absence of serve and return interaction acts as a “double whammy” for healthy development: not only does the brain not receive the positive stimulation it needs, but the body’s stress response is activated, flooding the developing brain with potentially harmful stress hormones.

Building the capabilities of adult caregivers can help strengthen the environment of relationships essential to children’s lifelong learning, health, and behavior. A breakdown in reciprocal serve and return interactions between adult caregivers and young children can be the result of many factors. Adults might not engage in serve and return interactions with young children due to significant stresses brought on by financial problems, a lack of social connections, or chronic health issues. Caregivers who are at highest risk for providing inadequate care often experience several of these problems simultaneously. Policies and programs that address the needs of adult caregivers and help them to engage in serve and return interactions will in turn help support the healthy development of children.

Questions & Answers

Will occasional lapses in attention from adults harm a child’s development?
Probably not. If diminished attention occurs on an intermittent basis in an otherwise loving and responsive environment, there is no need for concern. Indeed, some developmental scientists suggest that variations in adult responsiveness present growth-promoting challenges that may help young children recognize the distinction between “self” and “other,” which is a necessary next step for moving toward greater independence and increasing capacity for self-care and problem-solving.
Are educational toys and multimedia products useful in building healthy brain architecture in young children?
The most important influence on early brain development is the real-life serve and return interaction with caring adults. There are no credible scientific data to support the claim that specialized videos or particular music recordings have a measurable impact on developing brain architecture in the first 2 to 3 years of life. Although a varied array of experiences clearly stimulates learning in the preschool years and beyond, promotional statements about the superior brain-building impacts of expensive “educational” toys and videos for infants and toddlers have no scientific support. For more information, see The Timing and Quality of Early Experiences Combine to Shape Brain Architecture: Working Paper No. 5 on the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University website below. To learn more about research on media use with children of all ages, visit the Center on Media and Child Health website: http://cmch.tv/.
Brain Research FUN FACTS

1 Million New Neural Connections Per Second!

The early years matter because in the first few years of life, one million new neural connections are formed every second. Neural connections are formed through the interplay of genes and a baby’s environment and experiences, especially “serve and return” interactions with adults. These are the connections that build brain architecture—the foundation upon which all later learning, behavior, and health depend.

Early experiences and the environments in which children develop in their earliest years can have lasting impact on later success in school and life. Barriers to children's educational achievement start early, and continue to grow without intervention. Differences in the size of children's vocabulary first appear at 18 months of age based on whether they were born into a family that is able to provide a healthy and stimulating environment or not. From early infancy, children reach out for interaction with others through babbling, facial expressions, and speaking, and they develop best when provided with responsive caregiving in a language-rich environment.

Significant adversity impairs development in the first three years of life—and the more adversity a child faces, the greater the odds of a developmental delay. Early experiences actually get into the body, with lifelong effects—not just on cognitive and emotional development, but on long-term physical health as well.

What this means:
1. Getting things right the first time is easier and more effective than trying to fix them later.
2. Early childhood matters because experiences early in life can have a lasting impact on later learning, behavior, and health.
3. Highly specialized interventions are needed as early as possible for children experiencing toxic stress.
4. Early life experiences actually get under the skin and into the body, with lifelong effects on adult physical and mental health.
5. All of society benefits from investments in early childhood programs.

Overview of the California Infant/Toddler Foundations and Framework

The *California Infant/Toddler Learning & Development Foundations* (Foundations) are at the center of California’s infant/toddler learning and development system. They describe how children develop and what they learn. The Foundations illustrate the competencies that infants and toddlers need for later success.

**Guiding Principles**

Several guiding principles influenced the creation of the Foundations. These principles stem from both developmental theory and research and from best practice in the infant/toddler care field.

1. **The family and its culture and language play a central role in early learning and development.**
2. **Infancy is a unique stage of life that is important in its own right.** Development in infancy can be described by three age periods—birth to eight months, eight months to 18 months, and 18 months to 36 months. Each age period is distinct, although there is often overlap from one to the next.
3. **Infants and toddlers are competent yet vulnerable at every stage of development.** Nurturing relationships provide the foundation for emotional security and optimal learning and development.
4. **Emotions drive early learning.** Infants and toddlers are active, curious learners who are internally driven to interact with social and physical environments. Infants and toddlers learn in a holistic way rather than one domain at a time.
5. **Early development includes both quantitative and qualitative change.** With quantitative shifts, the infant extends or adds competencies to similar existing competencies. With qualitative shifts, the infant combines new knowledge and abilities with existing knowledge and abilities to function in a different and more complex way.
6. **Early development reflects an interplay of differentiation and integration.** For example, young infants typically use their mouths to explore all objects to learn about them (less differentiated behavior), whereas older children mainly use their mouth to taste or explore different kinds of food (more differentiated behavior). An example of integration is that older children may be able to engage in several behaviors such as talking, walking, and carrying an object simultaneously (more integrated behavior), whereas younger children may need to focus all of their energies on doing one behavior at a time (less integrated behavior).

These principles apply to the Foundations, curriculum planning, and assessment practices aligned to the Foundations.
Overview of the California Infant/Toddler Foundations and Framework

Infant/Toddler Foundations Overview

The first chapter focuses on the first four months of life. Separate foundations in each domain were not written for the first four months because every aspect of early development relates to all domains simultaneously. Although development during the first four months is undifferentiated, it has a profound influence on subsequent development in every domain. The chapter on the early months highlights the inborn behaviors that enable children to orient toward adults and begin to communicate needs. At the same time, the chapter describes how, right from the beginning of life, children are “active participants in their own development, reflecting the intrinsic human drive to explore and master one’s environment” (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2000, 1). For each of the 28 foundations, a description is specified at three points of development:

- at around eight months of age,
- at around 18 months of age, and
- at around 36 months of age.

Behaviors are listed that lead to the level of competency described for each of those three age levels. The behaviors leading up to an age level reflect the ongoing change that occurs during each age period.

For most foundations, the change from one age level (from eight months to 18 months or from 18 months old to 36 months) is quite pronounced. The Foundations are designed to give a general sense of development at these three points along the developmental continuum. For each foundation at each of the three age levels, broad information on infant development summarizes children's competencies. Together, the three descriptions define the developmental progression of a foundation.

Underneath each description are examples of possible ways that children may demonstrate a foundation in a particular age range. The diversity of examples gives a sense of the variation among infants and toddlers.

A foundation for a particular child should be considered on the basis of how the child functions in different contexts—at home, in child care, and in the community. An individual child may not function like any of the examples listed under a foundation, yet she may already be able to demonstrate the level of competency described by that foundation.

The examples suggest the varieties of contexts in which children may show competencies reflected in the Foundations. Infant care teachers often think of alternative examples when they reflect on how a particular foundation applies to the young children in their care.

Section 1: Infant and Toddler Development and Learning
Overview of the California Infant/Toddler Foundations and Framework

Universal Design for Learning

The Foundations support infant/toddler programs in the effort to foster the learning and development of all young children in California, including children with disabilities or other special needs.

In some cases, infants and toddlers with disabilities or other special needs will reveal their developmental progress in alternative ways. It is important to provide opportunities for children to follow different pathways to learning. Therefore, the Foundations incorporate a concept known as Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

- Universal Design for Learning is based on the realization that children learn in different ways. In today's diverse infant/toddler programs, making the environment, play materials, activities, and experiences accessible to all children is critical to successful learning.

- Universal Design is not a single approach that will accommodate everyone; rather, it refers to providing multiple approaches to learning in order to meet the needs of diverse learners. Universal Design provides for multiple means of representation, multiple means of engagement, and multiple means of expression.

  - “Multiple means of representation” refers to providing information in a variety of ways so the learning needs of all children are met.
  - “Multiple means of expression” refers to allowing children to use alternative ways to communicate or demonstrate what they know or what they are feeling.
  - “Multiple means of engagement” refers to providing choices within the setting or program that facilitate learning by building on children's interests.

The examples in the Foundations have been worded to portray multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement. A variety of examples are provided for each foundation, and inclusive words are used to describe children's behavior. For example, rather than stating, “The child looks at an object” or, “The child listens to a person,” the more inclusive wording of “A child attends to an object” or “The child attends to a person” is used.

When reading each foundation, think about the way which a child with a disability or other special need might best acquire information and act competently.
Overview of the California Infant/Toddler Foundations and Framework

Infant/Toddler Framework Overview

The California Infant/Toddler Curriculum Framework was published by the California Department of Education in June 2012. A companion curriculum framework for the California Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations, this publication is aligned with the California Preschool Curriculum Framework in both design and function. Together these frameworks support early childhood educators working in programs serving children birth to three years of age in implementing high-quality curriculum practices that lead to acquisition of the knowledge and skills described in the foundations.

The purpose of the Infant/Toddler Framework is to provide early childhood professionals with a structure they can use to make informed decisions about curriculum practices. The Framework is based on current research on how infants and toddlers learn and develop in four domains described in the Infant/Toddler Foundations—social-emotional, language, intellectual, and perceptual and motor development. It presents principles, a planning process, and strategies to assist teachers in their efforts to support children's learning from birth to three years of age. The Infant/Toddler Framework rests on four principles:

1. The family is at the core of a young child's learning and development. In light of their central role in a child’s early experience and development, family members need to participate in all aspects of curriculum planning.
2. Infant/toddler development takes place in the context of relationships. Relationships provide children a secure emotional base from which to explore and learn. Much of the cognitive, language, social, and physical learning a child experiences occurs while interacting with an adult.
3. The young child's emotional state drives early learning and greatly influences learning in other domains. During the infancy period, children simultaneously exhibit both emotional vulnerability and learning competence. Adults planning curricula for infants and toddlers must always consider the emotional impact on the child.
4. All young children, including children with disabilities or other special needs, benefit from access to high quality infant/toddler care programs. Providing interactions, experiences, and an environment that meet the individual needs of infant/toddler children with disabilities or other special needs can enrich the experiences of all young children in the program.

Download the CA Infant/Toddler Learning & Development Foundations at:
http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/Cd/re/itfoundations.asp

and find the CA Infant/Toddler Curriculum Framework here:
Overview of the Infant/Toddler Developmental Domains

Social-Emotional Development Domain

The social-emotional development domain covers the following foundations:

- **Interactions with Adults**: The child’s developing ability to respond to social cues from adults and engage in back-and-forth social exchanges with adults
- **Relationships with Adults**: The child’s development of close relationships with adults who provide consistent nurturance
- **Interactions with Peers**: The child’s developing ability to respond to social overtures from peers, engage in back-and-forth interaction with other children, and, ultimately, to engage in cooperative play with other children
- **Relationships with Peers**: The child’s development of relationships with certain peers through interactions over time
- **Identity of Self in Relation to Others**: The child’s developing concept of self as an individual who operates within social relationships
- **Recognition of Ability**: The child’s developing understanding of the ability to take action to influence the immediate social and physical environments
- **Expression of Emotion**: The child’s developing ability to communicate various emotions through facial expressions, movements, gestures, sounds, or words
- **Empathy**: The child’s developing ability to share in the emotional experiences of others
- **Emotion Regulation**: The child’s developing ability to manage or regulate emotional responses with and without assistance from adults
- **Impulse Control**: The child’s developing capacity to wait for needs to be met, to inhibit behavior, and to act according to social expectations, including safety rules
- **Social Understanding**: The child’s developing understanding of the responses, communication, emotional expressions, and actions of other people

The many competencies covered by the social-emotional development foundations underscore the prominence of this domain during the first three years of life. The emotional security that infants seek to develop with others and their ability to interact effectively with both adults and other children support their learning and development in all domains.

Language Development Domain

The language development foundations cover the following competencies:

- **Receptive Language**: The child's developing ability to understand words and increasingly complex utterances
- **Expressive Language**: The child’s developing ability to produce the sounds of language, and speak with an increasingly expansive vocabulary and use increasingly complex utterances
- **Communication Skills and Knowledge**: The child’s developing ability to communicate nonverbally and verbally
- **Interest in Print**: The child’s developing interest in engaging with print in books and in the environment
Many early childhood experts consider language development to be one of the greatest accomplishments in the first three years of life. There are many specific milestones and dimensions of language development, such as phonology and syntax. The foundations provide a level of detail that is accessible to families and infant care teachers seeking to enhance children's early language development and communication.

**Cognitive Development Domain**

The following foundations make up the cognitive development domain:

- **Cause-and-Effect:** The child's developing understanding that one event or action brings about another
- **Spatial Relationships:** The child's developing understanding of how things move and fit in space
- **Problem Solving:** The child's developing ability to engage in a purposeful effort to reach a goal or to determine how something works
- **Imitation:** The child's developing capacity to mirror, repeat, and practice the actions of others, either immediately or at a later time
- **Memory:** The child's developing ability to store and later retrieve information
- **Number Sense:** The child's developing understanding of number or quantity
- **Classification:** The child's developing ability to group, sort, categorize, and form expectations based on the attributes of objects and people
- **Symbolic Play:** The child's developing ability to use actions, objects, or ideas to represent other actions, objects, or ideas
- **Attention Maintenance:** The child's developing ability to attend to people and things while interacting with others or exploring the environment and play materials
- **Understanding of Personal Care Routines:** The child's developing ability to understand personal care routines and participate in them

As this list suggests, the foundations for the cognitive development domain cover a broad range of knowledge and skills. For infants and toddlers, these various competencies are interwoven and develop together. As children move out of the birth-to-three period, some of the cognitive competencies become differentiated and can be aligned with traditional preschool content domains such as mathematics and science. In effect, infants' and toddlers' playful exploration and experimentation in the cognitive domain represent early mathematical and scientific reasoning and problem solving.

**Perceptual and Motor Development Domain**

Infants' and toddlers' perceptual and motor competencies are receiving increasing attention in research and practice. The perceptual and motor development foundations are defined as follows:

- **Perceptual Development:** The child's developing ability to become aware of the immediate social and physical environments through the senses
- **Gross Motor:** The child's developing ability to move and coordinate large muscles
- **Fine Motor:** The child's developing ability to move and coordinate small muscles

Infant/toddler programs can foster children's perceptual and motor learning and development through environments that offer safe and appropriate physical challenges.

FACILITY SKETCH (Floor Plan) - Family Child Care Home

Applicants are required to provide a sketch of the floor plan of the home or facility and outside yard. The floor sketch must label rooms such as the kitchen, bath, living room, etc. Please identify areas which will be “off limits” to children. Door and window exits from the rooms must be shown in case of an emergency (see Emergency Disaster Plan). Show room sizes (e.g. 8.5 x 12). Keep close to scale.

Use the space below. See back for yard sketch.

FACILITY NAME:  ADDRESS:
FACILITY SKETCH (Yard) - Family Child Care Home

The yard sketch should show all buildings in the yard including the home (with no detail), garage and storage building. Include walks, driveways, play area, fences, gates. Please identify areas which will be “off limits” to children. Show any potential hazardous areas such as pools, garbage storage, animal pens, etc. Show the overall yard size. Try to keep the sizes close to scale. Use the space below.

FACILITY NAME:  
ADDRESS:
Resources

The *California Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Competencies* describe the knowledge, skills and dispositions that everyone who is responsible for the care and education of young children need in order to provide high quality care and education to young children and their families. You can download a copy of the competencies at: [http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/ececompetencies2011.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/ececompetencies2011.pdf)


The purpose of the *California Infant/Toddler Curriculum Framework* is to provide early childhood professionals with a structure they can use to make informed decisions about curriculum practices. This document can be found at: [http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/Cd/re/documents/itcurriculumframework.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/Cd/re/documents/itcurriculumframework.pdf)

The *California Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Program Guidelines* contain recommendations for setting up environments, providing infants a secure base for learning and exploration, selecting appropriate materials, and planning and implementing learning opportunities. The Infant/Toddler Guidelines can be found at: [http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/itguidelines.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/itguidelines.pdf)

Recognizing that many children receive their early care and education in home-based settings, the CDE developed *Guidelines for Early Learning in Child Care Home Settings* specifically for family child care and exempt-care providers: [http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/elguidelineshome.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/elguidelineshome.pdf)

This document addresses the specific concerns that home-based providers face every day as they strive to nurture and teach the children in their care. Additionally, it addresses the reality that many family child care and license-exempt providers serve infants and toddlers in mixed aged groupings with older children.

The Infant/Toddler Desired Results Developmental Profile is an observational assessment instrument that allows educators to document individual children's developmental progress and can be found at: [http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/documents/drdp2015infanttoddler.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/documents/drdp2015infanttoddler.pdf)

CompSAT provides you with practical self-reflection and assessment tools so that you can assess your knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the 12 California Early Childhood Educator Competencies. [http://ececompsat.org/competencies/cdl/cdl.html](http://ececompsat.org/competencies/cdl/cdl.html)

The Program for Infant/Toddler Care is a comprehensive approach to professional development that provides infant/toddler professionals with opportunities to become informed about the infant/toddler learning and development foundations and other components of California's infant/toddler system. For more information, please visit: [https://www.pitc.org/pub/pitc_docs/home.csp](https://www.pitc.org/pub/pitc_docs/home.csp)

For more information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) see: [http://www.pacer.org/publications/adaqa/childcare.asp](http://www.pacer.org/publications/adaqa/childcare.asp) and [https://www.ada.gov/childqanda.htm](https://www.ada.gov/childqanda.htm)
Resources

Websites
Additional resources with activities and about environments for infants and toddlers:


http://www.redleafpress.org/Building-Brains-600-Activity-Ideas-for-Young-Children-P792.aspx


http://www.redleafpress.org/Brain-Insight-Cards-set-of-6-P1005.aspx

http://www.redleafpress.org/Brain-Insight-Card-Set-Spanish-P1669.aspx