THE GROWING BRAIN
Supporting Brain Growth and Development

A child's brain undergoes an amazing period of development from birth to three—producing more than a million neural connections each second (zerotothree.org). These connections lay the foundation for pathways that help children process and understand the world around them. Research shows that a child's experiences—positive or negative, nurtured or neglected—directly affect how the brain develops throughout their lifetime (azpbs.org). A child's brain develops at a rapid rate between the ages of birth to five, with 90% of the brain developed by age 5 (azpbs.org). These connections help to lay the foundation for future learning and development through early experiences and relationships with adult caregivers. Beginning in infancy, children initiate interactions with their caregivers, looking at how their caregivers respond and how consistent these responses are. Children learn through repetition, consistency and positive daily interactions with the adults in their lives. There are many activities caregivers can do with children to promote positive brain development, and to engage with children to have healthy interactions throughout the day.

Activities to do with Infants:
- Visual stimulation (Not overstimulate)
- Appropriate facial expressions
- Communication
- Singing/Music/Sounds
- Reading
- Cuddle
- Eye contact throughout daily routines (diapering, feeding, etc.)
- Things to touch and explore

Cross reaching for toys and objects
Activities to do with Toddlers:
- Language-repeating/ expanding on what is said
- Set appropriate limits and consequences
- Model patience and appropriate responses
- Explorative play
- Gross motor- body movement; dump and fill
- Music and movement
- Model taking turns (reasonable expectations)
- Positive redirection
- Independent actions

Activities to do with Young Children (Preschool and Older):
- Provide adequate time for free-play
- Appropriate expectations
- Help label feelings/Model appropriate language
- Model healthy coping skills
- Comfort and validate feelings
- Allow independence
- Consistency and routine
- Predictability
- Understand their feelings
- Opportunity to use 5 senses (awareness of sensitivity)

Sources:
www.zerotothree.org
www.azpbs.org

Cheryl's Corner of Caring

“Education begins the moment we see children as innately wise and capable beings. Only then can we play along in their world.”
MEET CENTENNIAL’S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION TEAM

Launched Zoom Secure Telehealth Services!
Our ECMH team is excited to announce that consultation services are now available using Zoom Secure Telehealth Services. These services are available to client families, schools, childcare centers and community partners with group and individual meetings available. All services will be provided using this private, secure video platform, and can be accessed using most electronic devices. For more information or to set up a consultation appointment, please contact our ECMH team or your local Centennial Mental Health Center office.

Amy Nation, MA, IMH-E® Infant Family Specialist
Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist
821 E Railroad Ave
Fort Morgan, CO 80701
Phone (970) 867-4924 Ext.2231
Cell (970) 571-2174
amyn@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-5
Covers the following counties:
Logan, Morgan

For additional support during the COVID-19 Pandemic you can call Centennial's Community Support Line.
You can do this by calling your nearest Centennial office:
Akron - 970.345.2254
Burlington - 719.346.8183
Cheyenne Wells - 719.346.8183
Elizabeth - 303.646.4519
Fort Morgan - 970.867.4924
Holyoke - 970.520.4214
Julesburg - 970.474.3769
Limon - 719.775.2313
Sterling - 970.522.4392
Wray - 970.332.3133
Yuma - 970.848.5412

Erin Pounds, MS, IMH-E® Infant Family Specialist
Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist
821 E Railroad Ave
Fort Morgan, CO 80701
Phone (970) 867-4924 Ext.1152
Cell (970) 520-3320
erinp@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-8
Covers the following counties:
Morgan, Washington & Yuma

Cheryl Bills, BSSW, MS
Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist
211 W Main St
Sterling, CO 80751
Phone (970) 522-4549 Ext.291
Cell (970) 762-8044
cherylbi@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-5
Covers the following counties:
Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick

Danielle Storevik, MA
Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist
650 E Walnut
Elizabeth, CO 80107
Phone (303) 646-4519
Cell (970) 571-4224
danielles@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-8
Covers the following counties:
Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson, Lincoln & Yuma

Contact your local Centennial Mental Health Center for assistance with any Early Childhood need.

WWW.CENTENNIALMHC.ORG

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