



# Infant Stimulation Program Newsletter

Community Care Connections, Inc.

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## Children & Anger Management: *Frustrating Behaviors* By: Brenda Cole, Special Educator

As our children grow and begin to interact more with those around them their behaviors can be frustrating at times. It may seem as though challenging actions like biting, kicking, and hitting are intentional or are being carried out just to frustrate us. Research, though tells us that social skills such as handling anger are learned in stages in much the same way children progress through stages as they learn to walk and talk. It may be that our behavioral expectations for our children are not in line with what they are capable of doing.

Fred Rogers, an experienced early childhood specialist and the host of Mister Roger's Neighborhood demonstrated his love for children through the development of a program that defines the stages of anger management. The program titled, "What to Do with the Mad That You Feel", was reviewed by child clinical psychologist, Jennifer Coleman, PhD, who stated that, "the most important message of the workshop is that anger in children is normal and that self-control develops in stages over time as the child develops."



In this article, we will examine the stages of anger management as outlined in this curriculum, prior to doing so it is important to know the two important components of success for any child that are woven throughout. They are that a child feels unconditionally loved and that he learns that rules and limits are a part of his everyday life. Loving parents and caregivers make appropriate rules and set consistent limits and yet when children exist in the knowledge that they are unconditionally loved they want to learn to

control their angry impulses to please those that love them.

What follows is a brief description of each of the four stages, the age you might expect a child to achieve each stage, and suggested activities for developing key behaviors.

### Stages of Anger Management

#### **Stage 1: Establishing a Sense of Self and Body Boundaries**

In order to have self-control a child needs a physical sense of where their body begins and ends. Some children who haven't clearly developed this sense may tend to bump into furniture, walk into chairs, and take things that aren't theirs, or eat off each other's plates.

Children begin to develop this sense in infancy and continue into their preschool years. Some activities that encourage the development of this sense include playing games such as "this little piggy," and pat-a-cake. For older children tracing hands, finger plays, and back rubs are great ways to help them feel where their bodies begin and end.

In today's world our children spend much of their time in infant seats as they are moved from one space to another. It is important that a child be held and cuddled lifted and moved. These interactions with others are the beginning stages of understanding where their bodies are in space.

#### **Stage 2: Managing impulses and being able to stop**

Once the child begins to gain a sense of self, then he begins to learn to control his body.

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### Special points of interest:

- *Crafts to improve fine motor skills such as hand prints and snow man circles.*
- *Butler County family rallying support for their son's sight.*
- *Guidelines to keep y our child on track developmentally.*
- *Check out local activities in Butler County for you and your family to participate in.*



## Valentine's Day Handprints By: Krissy Hahn, PT

**What you will need:** Red paint, small paint brush, pair of small hands and plenty of wipes.



**What to do:** Paint one small hand with red paint. Position the hand with fingers and thumb all together and press firmly on the paper. Clean that hand. Next paint the other hand. Again, with fingers and thumb together, place this hand diagonally across the first print so that the middle knuckle of the thumbs line up while at the same time the tips of the middle fingers line up with the tips of the opposite ring fingers—forming a heart shape!!! Clean that hand!

You can also add glitter to your make your heart sparkle!

### Children & Anger Management Continued...

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This is when a child learns what it feels like to stop. At this developmental stage children begin to develop the ability to control their impulses. They also begin to name their feelings and to use the word, "No!"

A toddler who is unable to stop himself while playing a running game or who says no to himself while continuing to do something that is "wrong" may not have good impulse control.



This stage begins to develop in toddler hood. Activities to help a toddler practice managing impulses include stop and go games, keeping toy cars and trains on a track or a road and even stacking and pouring. For a preschooler singing a song fast and then slow, connecting dots on a paper, and playing with toys that connect or snap together will help develop being able to stop.

#### **Stage 3: Finding Alternative Physical Outlets**

Once a child has some self-control he can be encouraged to work through his angry feelings in a way that doesn't hurt anyone. When we provide a child with opportunities to safely display angry feelings, beginning in the early preschool years, while also teaching the words that go with those emotions, we help that child deal with overwhelming emotions when they occur in everyday situations.

Some activities that provide physical outlets for feelings include playing with clay, throwing soft toys into baskets, drumming and other kinds of music, and running races. For older children monitored hammering and throwing at targets are advances to the already named activities.

#### **Stage 4: Channeling Angry Feelings**

In the older preschool years children are finally ready to begin channeling their angry feelings into constructive outlets. As their ability to name their emotions develops children can be encouraged to draw or paint their feelings. Make believe play and naming emotions described in books are also great ways to develop this skill. Structuring this type of play into a child's daily routine will help them to understand and cope with strong emotions when they arise.

#### **Positive Messages**

We mentioned earlier that children have a strong desire to please the loving adults who provide their daily needs. Have you noticed the look of a joy on a small child's face when their loving caretaker applauds a successful action such as stacking blocks or learning a new rhyme? Each time we show our pleasure the child immediately repeats the actions hoping to see the same response from his caregiver. This applies also to the child who is learning to manage his anger and behaviors. When we notice our child trying hard to not hit or bite or saying "I'm mad" rather than screaming we should let the child know that we recognize that effort. Telling the child, "I see that you are trying hard not to grab the toy that you want and that you are waiting your turn," sends a strong message of your approval and equally strong feelings of self worth for your child and a high probability of a repetition of this effort later. Using these positive messages rather than resorting to negative consequences such as spanking may seem tedious and ineffective at first but when used consistently they send a strong message of our love and concern for our children. This in turn will result in a child who strives to please others out of love and desire to please rather than fear of punishment.

Does this description sound too simplistic to you or as it might apply to someone else's child but not to yours? There are other conditions that can cause negative behaviors in children and many ways to address them. If you are concerned that your child's behavior is abnormal seeking help early is an important step in getting on track to a positive future.



## Let's Help Cody Receive the Gift of Sight!

### A LITTLE ABOUT CODY

Hello, my name is Jessica. My son, Cody, is an energetic, typical 2 year old little boy. He loves music and jumping on his trampoline. He enjoys swimming and riding on the quad with his Dad, Josh. The only thing that sets him apart from other 2 year olds is his lack of sight. Cody was born blind, a condition called optic-nerve hypoplasia (ONH). Cody has therapists that come to the house weekly to work with him.

Recently our family has been informed of a new stem-cell treatment being done in China. They are using umbilical cord stem cells on children with ONH and are having great success in restoring their vision! Several other children with ONH have received the stem cell treatments, and they have had nothing but positive results. We are very excited and looking forward to taking that trip for Cody to receive the stem cell treatments. The only thing holding us back right now is the cost. The total trip (which includes 3 weeks of the actual stem cell treatment, therapy, the trip cost, etc.) is going to cost about \$50,000. We've been asked why not wait until this treatment is available in the US? Cody needs this now, the younger the child receiving the treatment, the better the results seem to be. Medical experts estimate the earliest this will be available in the US is 7-10 years. We don't have that amount of time. We are thankful he is as young as he is to be receiving these treatments. I want to be able to tell Cody that we did everything we possibly could for him. We've been told Cody will be blind his entire life, and there was nothing we could do. We know now that doesn't have to be true. There is something we can do. If it means traveling half way around the world for our son to see, we'll be there! That is, as soon as we raise the money! Thank you so much for taking the time to read about our beautiful little boy!

If you would like more information on how to help support Cody on this life-changing trip, you can reach Jessica at

[www.webstarts.com/codyfend](http://www.webstarts.com/codyfend) or at [Jam29Isabel\\_sru@yahoo.com](mailto:Jam29Isabel_sru@yahoo.com).

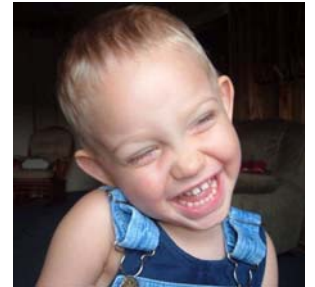
We as a family are working hard to raise money for Cody's trip, but we need help! Every little bit inches us closer to our son being able to see! We are accepting donations at any National City Bank in the name of The Cody Fend Fund, or send it to:

The Cody Fend Fund  
P.O. Box 107  
East Butler, Pa 16029

Thank you so very much!

Sunday February 24th there will be a Spaghetti dinner at Scottsdale Elks from 11:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m. 50/50 raffle tickets will be sold.

On March 16th there will be a Lucky Target Shoot at Conway Sportsman Club located in Harmony. Sign-up is at 4:30 p.m. and starts at 5:00 p.m.



## Snow man Circles *Becky Taylor, Special Educator*

### You'll need

- \*3 sizes of white construction paper circles for each child.
- \*Scraps of fabric for mittens and hats
- \*Pompoms for hats
- \*Glitter
- \*Glue

### Directions

Show children a sample. Give each child a sheet of paper and put 3 circles of glue on, allowing the child to place their circles independently, forming the snow man. Talk about winter

weather and cold hands. Put the glue on, allowing the child to position the mittens. Talk about keeping your head warm. Put glue on, allowing the child to add the hat. Decorate with glitter to make it fancy. The idea is to promote independent work, provoke thoughts on keeping the body warm, and various motor skills to accomplish the task.

Craft idea taken from [www.theideabox.com](http://www.theideabox.com)





## Pennsylvania State Standards for Early Childhood, *What your baby should be doing!* By: Adrienne McKinney, Special Educator

Parents are always asking “What should my child be doing now,” “What is the next step in my child’s development,” “What age should my child be this,” and many more questions concerning their child’s development. So I have compiled a list from the Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood that will include the following: what your child should be doing around the age range given, what you as a parent can do to help your child, and some simple toys to promote that development. Just keep in mind while reading this list that each and every child develops at their own pace and has their own style of mastering a skill. The domains focused on are Cognitive, Social, Emotional, and Personal development.

### BIRTH – 3 MONTHS

#### **What your child should be doing:**

- Follow a toy with eyes
- Look at a familiar face or object
- Turn head or move the body to the sound of a voice or toy
- Learn to sleep through noise when living in an active household

#### **What you can do as a parent:**

- Play tracking games by taking a brightly colored toy and slowly move it back and forth for the child to follow
- Maintain regular eye contact and present infants with interesting things to look at.
- Shake rattles or call the child’s name in different directions and areas for the child to search for the sound
- Allow the environment to be active while infants sleep

#### **Toys to promote development:**

- Small rattles
- Brightly colored objects
- Mobiles
- Interactive games like “This Little Piggy” and “Patty Cake”

### 3 – 9 MONTHS

#### **What your child should be doing:**

- Search for toy under blanket
- Smile and “talk” to self when looking in a mirror
- Repeat any action or vocalization when an adult gives positive attention

#### **What you can do as a parent:**

- Allow your infant repeated opportunities to retrieve toys/objects after observing them being placed under a blanket
- Provide your child with a safe mirror (locker mirror) to admire himself for short periods of time
- Respond immediately, consistently, and appropriately to your infant’s behavior

#### **Toys to promote development:**

- Small light-weight blanket
- Locker mirror
- Music

### 9 – 18 MONTHS

#### **What your child should be doing:**

- Find a toy that has been hidden or rolled out of view
- Place objects in an open container or remove objects
- Bang blocks together
- Play simple games like rolling a ball back and forth

#### **What you can do as a parent:**

- Play hiding games such as “Peek-a-boo;” reveal hidden toys
- Provide toys and activities that encourage young toddlers to solve problems
- Give your child small blocks or rattles to bang together or against a surface



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- Allow your young toddler to participate in simple back and forth interaction/play

**Toys to promote development:**

- Shape sorters
- Balls
- Light weight toys
- Ring stackers



**18 – 24 MONTHS**

**What your child should be doing:**

- Experiment with more complex cause-and-effect play
- Move, dance, clap, or sway to music; learn about feelings through songs, poems, and stories
- Indicate a need to wash hands or a need for a tissue
- Choose when offered a choice of snack, clothing, or activity

**What you can do as a parent:**

- Provide toys that give your toddler opportunities to have effects on objects
- Make songs personal by using your toddlers' name and by singing about daily events
- State that hands are dirty and assist your toddler in accessing soap and water, give your toddler tissues and allow them to practice alone and then assist
- Provide limited choices of items such as songs to sing, games to play, snacks to eat, and what clothes to wear

**Toys to promote development:**

- Use wind up toys or start musical instruments as well as household objects such as a remote control
- Music; learn about feelings through songs, poems, and stories
- Safe soap, take caution with the temperature of water, and provide tissues
- Ask, show pictures, or the actual item of the choices that you are going to give your toddler each day

**24 – 36 MONTHS**

**What your child should be doing:**

- Hold a toy tightly and say “Mine” when a peer approaches
- Say “No” when told it is time to clean up toys
- Picks out one item from a small group of items when requested
- Start to use drawing materials, finger-paints, and play dough with greater control

**What you can do as a parent:**

- Encourage peer-to-peer play – intervene only when necessary
- Remind your older toddler about rules and physically assist as necessary. Remind your older toddler of the consequences of breaking the rules and explain the rules and the reasons behind the rules
- Ask your older toddler to follow two step directions – simple then more complex
- Let your toddler use the art materials in their own way, provide meaningful learning experiences

**Toys to promote development:**

- Participate in circle games, play with dolls, possibly provide duplicate toys
- Give prior warning about upcoming transitions (example: “In three minutes we are going to clean up your toys together.”)
- Give two step directions – give assistance when needed
- Large pieces of plain paper, already printed pictures from a coloring book or website, paints, markers, crayons, play dough; any safe art supply. Begin to experiment with safety scissors

For more information and standards from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, please visit their website and also you may order a book of your own (one copy is free of charge): [www.pde.state.pa.us/early\\_childhood/cwp/view.asp?Q=101699&A=179](http://www.pde.state.pa.us/early_childhood/cwp/view.asp?Q=101699&A=179).

Your child learns through play, experience, and modeling. Be a great model for your child and expose them to many opportunities...create lasting memories and most importantly have FUN! You do not need expensive fancy toys to promote learning – most of the materials you have right in your home (pots and pans make great drums, whisks and spoons make many different sounds on different surfaces, spices to smell, and non-perishable items like rice can be placed in a sealed bottle that make wonderful noise makers...WOW we haven't even left the kitchen yet!)

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### Staff Spotlight

This month I would like to recognize an extraordinary staff in the Infant Program. Rebecca Traggiai is a Physical Therapist who has been employed with CCC for 7 1/2 years. She has dedicated many hours to the children that she serves. She not only provides home visits to children in the program, but spends additional time researching and writing letters to help families receive adaptive equipment that they need. Becki was a key player in starting the Mobility and Positioning clinic for the agency. She has helped obtain new updated equipment and categorize and enforce a lending library so clients can benefit from the resources that we have been given. The management team would like to thank her for all of her hard work and dedication to Early Intervention, she truly makes a difference in the lives of the ones that she serves!

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We're on the web!

[www.communitycareconnect.org](http://www.communitycareconnect.org)

If you feel that an ISP staff has done something extraordinary, and you would like to recognize them in future newsletters. Please submit a short paragraph to Melanie Mitro for publication.

## What's Going on in Butler County?

**Parent Support Group**~ Wednesday February 27, 2008 from 6:30 pm-8:30 pm at Community Care Connections. The topic of discussion will be presented by the Speech-Language Pathologists on the Basics of Language Development. Light refreshments and child care will be provided. Please RSVP to Melanie Mitro at 724-283-3198.

**Positioning and Mobility Clinic**~ Do you or someone you know currently use adaptive equipment? Do you need any adjustments made to your equipment or are you looking for new updated equipment? If so, please call Community Care Connections, Inc to schedule an appointment with Chesapeake Rehab for an evaluation. The next clinic will be held on Wednesday March 12, 2008 at Community Care Connections, Inc. You do not have to receive services from our agency to attend this clinic. Appointments are required.

**Infant Massage Training**~ The foundation for Infant Massage and Family Bonding is providing a Certified Infant Massage and Bonding class to any parent or professional interested in infant massage. This intensive 3 day workshop will promote healthy bonding through nurturing touch at all stages of parenting. The training will be held at Community Care Connections, Inc on September 5, 6, & 7, 2008. Please contact Melanie Mitro @ 724-283-3198 or visit

[www.InfantMassageFoundation.com](http://www.InfantMassageFoundation.com) for more information.

**Mental Health Association of Butler County**~ Is conducting a series of workshops for parents on guiding their children through the school system, with an emphasis on special needs. Lonni DiPaolo, educational advocate is presented on IEP's February 19, 2008 @ 7:00 p.m. The workshop will be held at the MHA office, 140 N. Elm Street in Butler.

**2nd Annual Safety Walk @ Bicycle Derby**~ May 10, 2008 from 12 noon to 4:00 p.m. at the park. The Deal Shelter will include Safe Kids Safety Programs and helmet checking.

**Safe Kids Week is April 26-May 4, 2008.**~ They are celebrating the 20th anniversary of working together to reduce unintentional injuries and deaths. There will be a new safety game for tweens called "Geer Up Games". More information to follow.

