

Toddler – Curriculum

How do you provide care for your youngest while nurturing their growth and development?

The answer is often found in the curriculum. The curriculum you choose, and the quality of how you implement that curriculum, affects the quality of care for toddlers. Choosing a curriculum that fits the needs of your toddlers, their families is a very important decision.

Research based and child focused, the High Scope Toddler Curriculum uses a carefully designed process of learning through discovery, called active participatory learning. During active learning, caregivers encourage toddlers to discover the world around them by exploring and playing. Learning and development are anchored by long-term, trusting relationships with caregivers, who are close at hand to support children as they play.

Curriculum Components

The High Scope Toddler Curriculum is a part of High Scope's complete, research-based system of early childhood education and care. Components include:

- Proven teaching practices to support children's growth and learning (active learning)
- Curriculum content for toddlers (ages 18 months – 3 years)
- Assessment tools to evaluate and plan for children's learning and measure program quality
- Comprehensive training to help caregivers implement the program effectively

Six main curriculum content areas.

1. Approaches to Learning
2. Social & Emotional Development
3. Physical Development & Health
4. Communication, Language, & Literacy
5. Cognitive Development
6. Creative Arts

Within these areas are 42 key developmental indicators (KDIs). Each KDI is a statement that identifies an observable behavior reflecting a child's knowledge and skills in these six areas. These indicators are listed below.

Daily Schedules

Caregivers maintain the overall routine as consistently as possible, while flexing it to accommodate individual children's natural rhythms and temperaments. Our daily routine that works best for our setting, schedule, and children, the segments described below are always included during the day.

Parts of the Daily Schedule

Each child's individual schedule is anchored around a primary caregiver who strives to understand the child's individual temperament and assists with smooth transitions between segments.

Arrivals and Departures — Caregivers work with parents to ensure that arrivals and departures are pleasant and reassuring for children. These times allow children to extend the bonds of trust they have with their parents to the caregivers in the program.

Choice Time— During this part of the daily routine, caregivers are attentive and offer emotional and physical support to children as the children play and explore their environment at their own pace. Caregivers adapt their responses to children's ideas, engage in give-and-take communication with the children, imitate children's actions, support children's play with other children, and assist children in problem solving.

Group Times— In small groups of toddlers, caregivers provide a set of materials for children to explore in a common activity. In these group times children remain in close contact with the caregiver while having a shared experience with other children. Although the adults introduce the activities, children remain free to make choices about materials and how to use them. Adults follow the children's cues (e.g., deciding how long the activity lasts, based on children's interest levels).

Outside Time— This segment of the day allows toddlers to explore the outdoor world. Using strategies like those used at choice time, adults support children's exploration and interests, providing open-ended materials and a variety of experiences. Toddlers will use the open area of the play space for a wide range of physical movements, simple games, and problem solving as they pursue their interests.

Caregiving Routines— In addition to strengthening bonds with children during meals, rest, and bodily care routines, caregivers also use these care giving routines as opportunities to share control by finding ways for the children to play an active role. Frequency of naps is based around each child's individual needs. Adults also accommodate children's individual styles of waking up. Similarly, adults take cues from children about feedings and diaper changes.

Transitions — The timing of transitions is flexible, based on children's needs and engagement in their play, and the shift in events or activities should be kept low-key and comfortable. Caregivers organize the parts of the day in a logical fashion, just as one would do in one's personal routine.

Team Planning Time— This time happens every day in our program. It can occur during children's naptime. The teaching team meets to discuss their observations of children's developing abilities and interests, focusing on these observations as they plan activities and review materials in the classroom.

Toddler Key Developmental Indicators (KDIs)

A. Approaches to Learning

1. **Initiative:** Children express initiative.
2. **Problem solving:** Children solve problems encountered in exploration and play.
3. **Self-help:** Children do things for themselves.

B. Social and Emotional Development

4. **Distinguishing self and others:** Children distinguish themselves from others.
5. **Attachment:** Children form an attachment to a primary caregiver.
6. **Relationships with adults:** Children build relationships with other adults.
7. **Relationships with peers:** Children build relationships with peers.
8. **Emotions:** Children express emotions.
9. **Empathy:** Children show empathy toward the feelings and needs of others.
10. **Playing with others:** Children play with others.
11. **Group participation:** Children participate in group routines.

C. Physical Development and Health

12. **Moving parts of the body:** Children move parts of the body (turning head, grasping, kicking).
13. **Moving the whole body:** Children move the whole body (rolling, crawling, cruising, walking, running, balancing).
14. **Moving with objects:** Children move with objects.
15. **Steady beat:** Children feel and experience steady beat.

D. Communication, Language, and Literacy

16. **Listening and responding:** Children listen and respond.
17. **Nonverbal communication:** Children communicate nonverbally.
18. **Two-way communication:** Children participate in two-way communication.
19. **Speaking:** Children speak.
20. **Exploring print:** Children explore picture books and magazines.
21. **Enjoying language:** Children enjoy stories, rhymes, and songs.

E. Cognitive Development

22. **Exploring objects:** Children explore objects with their hands, feet, mouth, eyes, ears, and nose.
23. **Object permanence:** Children discover object permanence.
24. **Exploring same and different:** Children explore and notice how things are the same or different.
25. **Exploring more:** Children experience "more."
26. **One-to-one correspondence:** Children experience one-to-one correspondence.
27. **Number:** Children experience the number of things.
28. **Locating objects:** Children explore and notice the location of objects.

29. **Filling and emptying:** Children fill and empty, put in and take out.
30. **Taking apart and putting together:** Children take things apart and fit them together.
31. **Seeing from different viewpoints:** Children observe people and things from various perspectives.
32. **Anticipating events:** Children anticipate familiar events.
33. **Time intervals:** Children notice the beginning and ending of time intervals.
34. **Speed:** Children experience "fast" and "slow."
35. **Cause and effect:** Children repeat an action to make something happen again, experience cause and effect.

F. Creative Arts

36. **Imitating and pretending:** Children imitate and pretend.
37. **Exploring art materials:** Children explore building and art materials.
38. **Identifying visual images:** Children respond to and identify pictures and photographs.
39. **Listening to music:** Children listen to music.
40. **Responding to music:** Children respond to music.
41. **Sounds:** Children explore and imitate sounds.
42. **Vocal pitch:** Children explore vocal pitch sounds.