

# NEXT

An NAEYC  
Professional  
Development  
Resource

## young children

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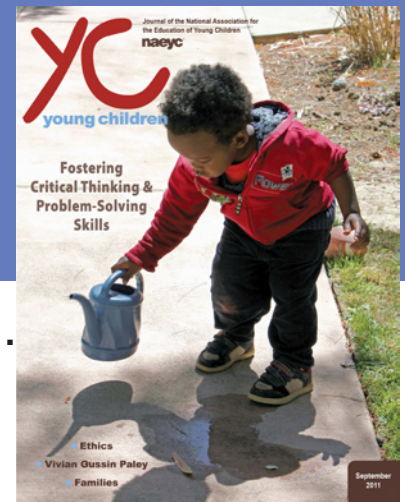
### Using NEXT for Young Children

*NEXT for Young Children* suggests ways to build on the content of selected articles from *Young Children*, the award-winning, peer-reviewed professional journal published bimonthly by NAEYC. The training outlines for these articles can be used in a variety of ways: teacher educators can use them in their classes; staff development specialists can use them to design trainings; and center directors and school principals can use them to plan staff meetings or training sessions. Early childhood education students and practitioners may also wish to use them alone or with colleagues or peers.

Each training outline includes the following features:

1. **Key Messages**—important content points.
2. **Glossary**—definitions of key terms.
3. **Self-study**—questions to build on the content of the article and reflect on current practices.
4. **Discuss with one or more colleagues/peers**—discussion prompts related to personal experiences, current practices, and connections between research and practice.
5. **Action steps**—opportunities to apply and document application of new knowledge and skills.
6. **Continue learning**—suggested resources for increasing knowledge and skills.

In addition, each outline indicates the NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs and NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards that are most closely related to the content (see the box on the right at the top of each outline).



*Young Children* • September 2011  
Vol. 66 • No. 5

### A few notes

- All page numbers refer to *Young Children*, Volume 66, Number 5, unless otherwise noted.
- No permission is needed to make copies of NAEYC-copyrighted *Young Children* articles and *NEXT for Young Children* as long as they bear a credit line and are distributed at no cost.
- In group sessions, facilitators can ask participants to do activities in pairs, small groups, or as classroom teams, depending on the setting. Volunteers can record and disseminate the ideas generated in the sessions.
- Visit NAEYC's website for additional professional development materials at [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).

### *NEXT for Young Children* contents

**Moving Bodies, Building Minds: Foster Preschoolers' Critical Thinking and Problem Solving through Movement** ([click to view](#))

by Michelle L. Marigliano and Michele J. Russo • Study guide by Michelle L. Marigliano

**Rocking and Rolling: Supporting Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families. Creating Healthy Attachments to the Babies in Your Care** ([click to view](#))

Article and study guide by Linda Groves Gillespie and Amy Hunter

This article shares strategies about how early childhood educators can create movement experiences to foster young children's critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Fun and safe creative dance experiences enhance preschool children's vocabulary, working memory, and their ability to note relationships, including similarities and differences.

*The content of this article is most closely related to NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs 1 and 5, and NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards 2 and 3.*

**This training outline is primarily for educators who work with children ages 3 to 5.**

### Key Messages

- ➔ Most young children are, by nature, extremely physical. They delight in exploring the world with their bodies and expressing their ideas and feelings through movement.
- ➔ Children can discover ideas first through movement, then express them through language; or they might articulate ideas first through language and then express those same concepts through movement. This bodily kinesthetic and linguistic connection encourages children to recall and use descriptive language and discover new types of movement.
- ➔ Teachers can encourage children's learning by engaging them in interesting problems to solve through movement and expand on these experiences by asking open-ended questions.

### Glossary

**Critical thinking**—the ability to carefully and rigorously reflect on past experiences and to use working memory to note relationships and make comparisons based on a set of criteria.

**Working memory**—the ability to hold information in one's mind over a period of many seconds.

**Locomotor movements**—actions that involve traveling from one point to another, such as rolling, crawling, walking, and running.

**Nonlocomotor movements**—actions that happen in place, such as twisting, bending, stretching, and bouncing.

### Self-study

Respond to the following questions in the space provided.

#### In your view

1. Write down three new things that you learned about creative movement and children's critical thinking and problem-solving skills by reading this article. If possible, compare your choices with others who have read it.

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2. What research findings cited by the author(s) did you find most interesting? Why were they of particular interest to you?

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3. How does the content of this article relate to the curriculum, Common Core State Standards, state and local early learning standards, content standards, or other requirements applicable to your setting?

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**Reflect and revisit your practice**

1. Which ideas in this article affirm your work with or on behalf of young children and families?

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2. What ideas and research findings in this article raise questions about your practice? What new approaches might you try?

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3. What kinds of supports do you and your colleagues need to try out these new ideas (such as assistance from a colleague and/or additional resources for your setting)?

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**Discuss with one or more colleagues/peers**

Discuss the following questions with at least one colleague/peer. Record the key points of your discussion in the space provided.

**Consider current practice**

1. Reflect on your experiences with movement as a child. What physical activities did you enjoy the most? The least? How do you think those experiences shape your approach to teaching movement activities now?

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2. Think about the last time you engaged children in a movement experience. How did the children respond? How do you think the children would respond to the strategies the author described in the article? Share ideas with your peers about how you could use the engage, expand, and empower strategy during movement activities with children. If time permits, role play strategies with your peers—each of you taking a turn as the teacher and child.

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3. In addition to the time devoted to music and movement, how can the daily curriculum include creative movement experiences to support children's critical thinking and problem-solving skills?

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**Connect research and practice**

1. Why are creative movement experiences ideal for helping children develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills?

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2. What does research say about the benefits of linking language and movement experiences?

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3. How do children benefit from being encouraged to explore rather than imitate movements?

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4. What does research indicate about the adaptability of movement experiences for children with different abilities, interests, and backgrounds?

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**Action steps**

Try out these ideas over the next 2 to 4 weeks. Document and discuss your experiences with others.

**Implement and document**

- 1. Observe and record.** At various times throughout the day, document in a journal when, where, and how children are using their bodies to explore movement and/or expressing ideas and feelings through movement. While children are engaged in movement, observe whether they are displaying some of the dance elements from the National Dance Education Organization's dance standards listed on page 47 of the article, such as knowledge of personal space.
- 2. Reflect, plan, and implement.** Reflect on your journal entries to develop movement activities for the large group. Create and use with the children a Dance Word Bank (see page 46 of the article for instructions) based on movement and language skills children display as well as their emerging skills. For example, include actions in the Ways to Move column that they have learned and are still learning. In addition, identify several books that reflect the children's interests in order to inspire their creative movement. While reading the books, invite children to identify and explore a movement concept described in the text and/or displayed through the images/illustrations in the book. Add the new vocabulary and movement ideas to the Dance Word Bank and continue to use it in the daily curriculum.

**3. Involve families.** Help the children create a movement activity they can teach their families. Work with the children to create an invitation to the event, and send the invitation home with each child. Take photographs of children and their families throughout the movement activity. After the event, post the photos on a board near the entrance so that all can reflect on the experience and/or use the photographs to help the children create a book about what they and their families learned.

**Discuss experiences and outcomes**

Summarize your experiences and outcomes in the space provided, and then discuss them with at least one colleague/peer.

1. What did you do that was successful?

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2. What challenges did you face? How did you address the challenges?

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3. Have you noticed changes in your program as a result of the new strategies? Did anything surprise you?

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4. How can you build on your progress?

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**Continue learning**

Consult these resources to further build knowledge and skills related to the content of this article.

Dow, C.B. 2006. *Dance, Turn, Hop, Learn: Enriching Movement Activities for Preschoolers*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

Dow, C.B. 2010. "Young Children and Movement: The Power of Creative Dance." *Young Children* 65 (2): 30–35.

Feierbend, J.M., & J. Kahn. 2003. *The Book of Movement Exploration: Can You Move Like This?* First Steps in Music series. Chicago: Gia.

Kaufmann, K. 2006. *Inclusive Creative Movement and Dance*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Lobo, Y.B., & A. Winsler. 2006. "The Effects of a Creative Dance and Movement Program on the Social Competence of Head Start Preschoolers." *Social Development* 15 (3): 501–19.

National Dance Education Organization. 2005. *Standards for Dance in Early Childhood*. Silver Spring, MD: Author. [www.ndeo.org](http://www.ndeo.org).

Pica, R. 2008–2011. Learning by Leaps and Bounds. *Young Children* column. [www.naeyc.org/yc/columns/leapsandbounds](http://www.naeyc.org/yc/columns/leapsandbounds).

Smith, K. 2002. "Dancing in the Forest: Narrative Writing through Dance." *Young Children* 57 (2): 90–94.

This column explains the importance of very young children’s attachments to caregivers. The authors share strategies for how infant/toddler teachers can create healthy attachments with the children in their care as well as support the attachments those children have with their families.

The content of this article is most closely related to NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs 1 and 4, and NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards 1, 2, and 3. This training outline is primarily for educators who work with infants and toddlers.

Key Messages

- Healthy, secure attachments are critical for young children: they promote young children’s healthy social and emotional development, help them feel more confident to explore their environment, and positively influence their later development.
Teachers of infants and toddlers can build healthy attachments with each child by providing consistent, sensitive care—reading and responding to each baby’s cues.
Teachers can support infants’ and toddlers’ healthy attachments with their parents by developing positive, supportive relationships with parents and encouraging them to observe, recognize, and respond to their baby’s cues.

Glossary

- Attachment—a strong emotional bond that grows over time between a young child and a caring adult who is part of the child’s everyday life.
Cues—actions babies use to communicate their needs to their caregivers, for example crying, laughing, turning away, and pointing. Adults can tune in to children’s unique cues to meet their needs, helping children build trust and form healthy attachments.
Primary caregiving—an approach that ensures each child has one designated caregiver whose primary responsibilities are to care for and form a close relationship with the child and to get to know and act as the point of contact for that child’s family.

Self-study

Respond to the following questions in the space provided.

In your view

1. Write down three new things that you learned about attachment and ways to create healthy attachments with infants and toddlers from reading this article. If possible, compare your choices with others who have read it.

Five horizontal lines for writing answers to question 1.

2. How does the content of this article relate to the curriculum, state and local early learning guidelines, or other requirements applicable to your setting?

Five horizontal lines for writing answers to question 2.

**Reflect and revisit your practice**

1. Which ideas in this article affirm your work with or on behalf of young children and families?

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2. What ideas or research findings in this article raise questions about your practice? What new approaches might you try?

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3. What kinds of supports do you and your colleagues need to try out these new ideas (such as assistance from a colleague and/or additional resources for your setting)?

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**Discuss with one or more colleagues/peers**

Discuss the following questions with at least one colleague/peer. Record the key points of your discussion in the space provided.

**Consider current practice**

1. Think about your relationships with adults during your childhood. How did those relationships nourish your development? What impact might those relationships have on the way you build attachments with infants and toddlers? What impact might your experiences have on how you communicate with young children’s families?

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2. How do you read and respond to children’s unique cues? If you can’t respond to cues right away, how do you let the child know that you hear him and you are on your way?

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3. How do you currently support parent-child attachments? What new strategies did the author suggest that you want to try? How do you think families will respond? How will children benefit?

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4. The authors mention the importance of caring for yourself so you can consistently nurture infants and toddlers in your setting. What are some ways that you take care of yourself? How could you take better care of yourself?

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### Action steps

Try out these ideas over the next 2 to 4 weeks. Document and discuss your experiences with others.

#### Implement and document

- 1. Observe and document.** For several weeks, observe infants’ and toddlers’ behavior. Record in a journal their actions, cues, and responses to interactions with adults. For example, look for individual children’s cues and how you, other teachers, or the children’s parents respond. Determine how responsive adults are to each child’s needs.
- 2. Reflect and implement.** Review your journal entries to determine which infants and toddlers may need more one-on-one time with you or other teachers. Work with your colleagues to identify ways to provide more individualized attention to these children. For example, you and your colleagues could take turns observing each other interact with these children and then discuss your observations together—what everyone is doing well and how else you could connect with these children.
- 3. Share your knowledge.** If you don’t already assign a primary caregiver to every infant and toddler in your setting, discuss this approach with your colleagues and then your supervisor. For example, if you work in a center, share the article with your director and ask to discuss a primary caregiving approach at the next staff meeting. In addition, share information about the benefits of healthy attachments with families. Create a tip sheet about strategies for developing secure attachments based on the information in the article (for example, see the information that follows the heading “To create healthy attachments with young children in your care” on page 63).

**Discuss experiences and outcomes**

Summarize your experiences and outcomes in the space provided, and then discuss them with at least one colleague/peer.

1. What did you do that was successful?

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2. What challenges did you face? How did you address the challenges?

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3. Have you noticed changes in your program as a result of the new strategies? Did anything surprise you?

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4. How can you build on your progress?

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**Continue learning**

Consult these resources to further build knowledge and skills related to the content of this article.

Honig, A.S. 2002. *Secure Relationships: Nurturing Infant/Toddler Attachment in Early Care Settings*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Mercer, J. 2006. *Understanding Attachment: Parenting, Child Care, and Emotional Development*. Praeger: Westport, CT.

NAEYC. 2006–2011. Rocking and Rolling: Supporting Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families. *Young Children* column. [www.naeyc.org/yc/columns/rocking](http://www.naeyc.org/yc/columns/rocking).

Parlakian, R., & N.L. Seibel. 2002. *Building Strong Foundations: Practical Guidance for Promoting the Social-Emotional Development of Infants and Toddlers*. Washington, DC: ZERO TO THREE.

Raikes, H.H., & C.P. Edwards. 2009. *Extending the Dance in Infant & Toddler Caregiving: Enhancing Attachment & Relationships*. Baltimore: Brookes.

***NEXT for Young Children* • Vol. 66 • No. 5 • September 2011**

*Young Children* and *NEXT for Young Children* are published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), 1313 L Street, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005-4101.

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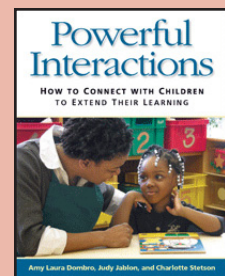
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