



**Title: Being a parent/carer: Important things about child development**

**Level: THIRD**

**Code: 3.15.1**

**Links to Curriculum for Excellence**

Experiences and outcomes	Benchmarks
<p>I can explain the importance and the enduring and complex responsibility of being a parent/carer, and the impact on life choices and options. HWB 3-51a</p> <p>I can explain the support and care necessary to ensure a child is nurtured through the different stages of childhood. HWB 3-51b</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explains the short and long-term impact of parenthood, for example, joy, commitment, financial implications, anxiety, physical demands.</li> <li>• Explains the meaning and importance of nurture in a child’s development.</li> <li>• Identifies local support available for parents and carers.</li> </ul>

**About this activity**

This is the first of three sessions where young people will be talking and learning about the role of parents and carers. Activities will emphasise how important parents and carers are, and identify the things they do to support their child’s development. The activities are part of our ongoing RSHP programme of learning, this time focusing on the Parenthood element. Across these activities the young people will also learn about the importance of seeking and using support and help in the challenging role of parenting/caring for children. It is important that in learning about Parenthood across Curriculum for Excellence Levels that girls/young women and boys/young men are encouraged to participate equally.

**Resources to support this activity**

- SLIDES
- Prop for group activity: When does a baby...?

## Activity

1. Introduce the activity along these lines: The class will be spending 3 sessions together exploring the important role of being a parent or carer – thinking about what things a parent/carer does for a child, what babies and children need to grow up healthy, happy and safe, and then also imagining what it would be like to be a parent/carer.
2. Acknowledge that in some families the main parent or carer will be Mum or Dad, and that in many families caring for and bringing up a child might be done by grandparents or other relatives, by Mum or Dads new partner, and that some children grow up with adoptive or foster parents. In short – any adult who is important in the child’s life can be a child’s parent or carer.
3. **Child Development:** Introduce today’s topic as being about how children grow, so that before we even think about being a parent/carer, we need to be able to understand about what a child needs, to do that the starting point today is the idea of *child development*. Share the slide.

### What is child development?

Child development is the story of growing up. It is about the changes that happen to the child’s body, the child’s brain and behaviour and the emotional changes that happen between birth and the teenage years. Child development starts with the baby who is completely dependent on parents and carers, who then in time become an independent young person. Every child is unique and individual and so how they develop will follow a path, but will be different for everyone.

4. Use the next slide to explain that there are different stages of child development, they overlap a bit, as you read check understanding, ask who has children of each of the stages in their family:

### Stages of child development

- Baby: birth to 18 months/2 years old
  - Toddler – 18 months to 3 years old
  - Early childhood – 3 to 6/7 years old
  - Primary school age 5 to 12 years old
  - Teenagers 13 to 18 years old
5. **Babies:** Acknowledge that within each stage a lot is happening – ask if anyone has experience of babies at home and from their experience what changes take place even in that first year or so? Set the group a challenge, on cards (organised randomly) they have 10 things a baby learns to do in their first year. They also have 10 time periods, they have to match each, so when does a baby....?

When does a baby...?	Answers
Love to look at people’s faces	1-4 weeks
Start to smile	4 – 6 weeks
Lift their head	1 to 3 months
Reach out for objects	3 to 5 months
Enjoy making new and different sounds	4 to 6 months
Lift objects up to suck them	By 6 months
Teething starts	6 – 9 months
Starts crawling and can lift themselves up to standing	6 – 9 months
Start walking	10 – 18 months
Respond to their own name	12 months

- 6. What do children need as they develop, so that they are healthy, happy and safe?** Divide the group/class into 5 groups. Use the slide with the 5 stages of child development. Explain that each are going to think about one of the five stages. Give each group a big sheet of paper, they should label with their 'stage'. Their task is to work together to identify all the things a child needs *at this stage* to be healthy, happy and safe. Use 3 different coloured pens/markers to identify needs in terms of each category healthy/happy/safe. After enough time ask for some feedback, as well as hearing what is needed prompt with: *Why so? Who would be responsible for making sure the child gets this need met? Explore: What is shared across the stages?*
- 7. What do children need as they develop? The experts view.** Acknowledge the great contributions, introduce the next 4 slides as presenting what experts in the field of child development would say a child needs across the stages – as you go acknowledge where the young people agree or surpass what is suggested, encourage comments, reflect on/ask the young people what this might mean at the stage of development they were looking at:

**Children need**

Security	When children feel safe from harm and secure they learn to trust other people. We make children feel safe by meeting their basic needs and by showing them that we love them and providing them with a safe space to live and play.
Stability	Children benefit from a life that is predictable and consistent. When children have stability, they are able to develop positive emotional health. We provide children with stability by having consistent relationships (with parents, grandparents, adult carers, friends and family), routines and daily structures, and a place to call home.
Happiness	Happiness is a positive emotional state of wellbeing, feeling contentment, joy and pleasure. Happiness for children can come in many forms and is supported by positive relationships, opportunities for play, having positive experiences, freedom to explore and security to be comforted in times of need.
Love	Love is the strong feeling of affection and care – including warmth, tenderness, nurturing and other positive qualities. When children feel loved, they feel valued, respected, supported and cared for. Children feel loved when they are cuddled, played with, listened to, talked to, understood and appreciated.

8. To end make the point that babies are born ready to connect to other people, they are able to communicate and thrive on interaction. This short video is a great example of connectedness (and is worth more than one view): **Baby says I love you** <https://youtu.be/87n98ayRdEg> (37 seconds)

### Additional ideas

- Dutch filmmaker Frans Hofmeester has filmed his daughter Lotte every year since birth and at 18 has made this film which shows her growing up in 5 minutes 37 seconds. If you have time worth a watch: <https://youtu.be/nPxdhnT4Ec8>
- There is a more detail available for young people to look at on an iPad/independently here: Birth to Five developmental timeline <https://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/birthtofive.aspx>

The resources to support Parenthood Education as part of this RSHP resource have drawn on the work published by the WAVE Trust called **Parenthood and Relationship Education Project: Raising the best generation of Scottish Parents**, funded by Scottish Government. The full resource is published at this link and can be used to extend learning in this area, particularly in terms of working with smaller groups of older learners: <http://wavetrust.org/prep-scotland>

### Connecting with home

*The text below could be used to communicate with home about this group of learning activities.*

Our class will be talking and learning about the role of parents and carers in the life of the child. Over 3 lessons, activities will emphasise how important parents and carers are, and identify the things they do to support their child's development. The activities are part of our ongoing RSHP programme of learning, this time focusing on the Parenthood element. Across these activities the young people will also learn about the importance of seeking and using supports and help in the challenging role of parenting/caring for children.

As a parent/carer these sites might be helpful to you:

**Communicating with Teens:** a practical guide and support to talking with your teenage child:

[https://www.relate.org.uk/relationship-help/help-family-life-and-parenting/parenting-teenagers/communicating-teens?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIw5nxveHO3AIVSbftCh2nHA7aEAMYAiAAEgK0jFD\\_BwE](https://www.relate.org.uk/relationship-help/help-family-life-and-parenting/parenting-teenagers/communicating-teens?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIw5nxveHO3AIVSbftCh2nHA7aEAMYAiAAEgK0jFD_BwE)

**Parent Line Scotland** offer a free telephone, email and online chat service with confidential help and support available for any parent or carer <https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/>

**Parentzone** provides information about schools and education: <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

### Further learning activities are available that connect to this RSHP curriculum content

- 3.15.2 Being a parent: What babies need/the best start in life
- 3.15.3 Being a parent: If I was a parent

### Practitioner Notes