



Title: Being a parent/carer
Part 1: Important things about child development

Level: THIRD/FOURTH

Links to Curriculum for Excellence

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

The learning intentions and success criteria are met with delivery of all parts of this topic.

Learning Intentions

- Young people understand the role and challenges of being a parent/carer.
- Young people understand the importance of nurture in a child’s development.
- Young people learn about the importance of finding and seeking help and support as a parent.

Success Criteria

- I can discuss the skills and qualities of a parent/carer.
- I can talk about what a parent/carer does to make sure their child is healthy, happy and safe.
- I can discuss some of the challenges of being a parent/carer and how to seek help and support.
- I talk about the kind of parent or carer I would be.

Resources to support this activity

- PowerPoint slides
- Prop for group activity: When does a baby...?
- Baby says I love you <https://youtu.be/87n98ayRdEg> (37 seconds)

Whenever you use content on a platform like YouTube please cue the film you intend to play in advance, check it is the film you want to view, and skip adverts.

NOTE: When discussing family and home life the teacher/educator will have some knowledge of the personal circumstances of children. Sensitivity may need to be shown to children who are currently experiencing some stress or distress at home.

Activity

1. Introduce the activity along these lines: The class/group 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.

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 dad’s new partner, and that some children grow up with adoptive or foster parents. In short – any adult who is important in the child’s family life can have a role as carer.

2. **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 2-slide explanation.

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 the path will be different for everyone.

3. **Babies/when does a baby...?:** Acknowledge that within each stage a lot is happening, but let’s start with babies – 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 (prop provided, organise these 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...? Share and discuss, emphasising the speed of development but the dependency of the child on the parent/carer.

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

4. **Stages of child development.** Use the next slide to explain that the young people have just thought about babies, but there are in fact 5 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 and what is their experience?

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. **What do children need as they develop, so that they are healthy, happy and safe?** Divide the young people into 5 groups. Using 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?* Sit all the posters together to create a timeline.
6. **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.

7. To end make the point that babies *are born ready to connect to other people*, they need interaction and will thrive with it. 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>

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.

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:

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:

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

Practitioner Notes