

Implementing *The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos* For Teachers

If this is your first time using a curriculum in your work with infants, toddlers, and twos, are you wondering what to do to get started? Have you used a different curriculum but are switching to *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos*? Are you already using *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos* but wondering if there is more you can be doing to implement it effectively? If you answered yes to any of these questions, this is the place to begin finding answers to your questions.

My program is just beginning to use *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos*. What can I do to learn more about it?

To learn more about *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos*, try the following:

- **Find out** how *The Creative Curriculum®* aligns with your state and national standards as well as your program philosophy.
- **Ask others** who are implementing *The Creative Curriculum®* about their success.
- Send an e-mail to info@teachingstrategies.com for answers to your questions.

Implementing *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos*

Your program administrator or supervisor have likely developed a plan for helping you learn about and effectively implement *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos*. Here are some ways you may be supported:

Conducting a Needs Assessment

Your program administrator or supervisor may observe how you set up your environment, plan your program, and interact with children and families using *The Implementation and Planning Tool for The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos*. This tool helps administrators, trainers, and coaches identify each teacher's level of curriculum implementation, areas of strength, and areas for growth. The information gathered helps them tailor professional development services to each teacher's skill level and individual strengths and needs.

Providing Resources

The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos is not a prepackaged, off-the-shelf, scripted curriculum. We value your ability to be creative, make decisions, and shape your program based on the needs of the children in your room. Having the appropriate resources and high-quality classroom materials will help make this happen.

Ideally, you should have your own copy of *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos* so that you can refer to it on a daily basis as you plan and implement your program. To begin familiarizing yourself with the Curriculum, start with the "Table of Contents." Find the topics that are of most importance to your work and start with those chapters. You will find a lot that immediately supports your daily work, especially your interactions with children and families.

Your program administrator or supervisor may take an inventory of the furniture, toys, and materials in your infant, toddler, or twos room to see what you currently have and what is needed. You may even be asked to participate in this task. You can refer to the “Experiences” chapters in *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos* and the “Responsive Environment” section of *The Implementation and Planning Tool* as a guide to what you should have.

Decisions will also be made about the method you will use to assess children, use observations to respond to and plan for each child, and report children’s progress using the *The Creative Curriculum® Developmental Continuum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos* ([paper version](#) or [online option](#)).

Introducing the Curriculum

Your program may decide that it helps to have an expert who really knows and understands the curriculum to introduce it to you and other teachers in your program. This can happen in one of the following ways:

- A Teaching Strategies Professional Development Network Trainer will come to your program and provide onsite training.
- A representative from your program will attend a [professional development session](#) offered at the Helen H. Taylor Center for Professional Development at the Teaching Strategies national office or Teaching Strategies national conference. The representative will then share the information with you and your colleagues.
- Your program will send you to a Teaching Strategies national conference.

Your program may also arrange for an introduction to the *The Creative Curriculum® Developmental Continuum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos*.

Setting Up the Environment

Careful arrangement of the furnishings and selection of the materials set the stage for learning. You can use the guidelines outlined in *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos*, chapter 2, “Creating a Responsive Environment,” as well as in the “Experiences” chapters to help you arrange and use the environment effectively.

Informing Families

Families want to know what their child will be learning and what their day will be like. Sharing the curriculum with them will help them understand your approach and how they might partner with you to support their child's learning.

Your program may introduce *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos* to families in a variety of ways such as

- meeting with families individually
- inviting families to visit their children’s room and talk with you
- holding a family workshop or an open house
- sharing with families how to use [ParentsCentral](#) if your program uses [CreativeCurriculum.net](#).
- providing families with resources that help them understand the Curriculum as well as how they can support at home what their children learn in your program

These resources are available in both English and Spanish:

- *Our Program for Infants, Toddlers & Twos: A Parent’s Guide, second edition*
- *Reading Right From the Start: What Parents Can Do in the First Five Years*
- *Math Right From the Start: What Parents Can Do in the First Five Years*
- *Building Your Baby’s Brain: A Parent’s Guide to the First Five Years*
- *The Creative Curriculum® LearningGames®*

Providing Ongoing Support

Attending an introductory workshop on *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos* is not enough. To achieve positive outcomes for children, you must have opportunities to reflect on your practices, receive feedback and ongoing support, and have opportunities to learn about new and innovative teaching strategies and techniques.

Your program administrator or supervisor may do one or more of the following:

- Observe your work with children and families and give feedback.
- Model effective teaching behaviors.
- Foster collegial learning through study groups, peer mentoring, and attending conferences and workshops.

In addition to the program administrator or supervisor using *The Implementation and Planning Tool* to guide your professional development, you can also use the *Tool* to reflect on your teaching practices and make suggestions about the design and delivery of professional development services. For example, you can use the *Tool* at the beginning of the year to consider the overall physical environment, the materials and equipment you choose, and how to build partnerships with each family. As the year progresses, it will help you think about how you are guiding children’s learning and behavior, how you observe, the experiences you provide, the routines you conduct, how you plan for each child and the group, and how you continue to strengthen partnerships with families.

Offering Opportunities for More In-Depth Learning and Reflection

Once you understand the basics of getting started with *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos*, you must continue learning and refining your teaching skills. With experience and reflection, you can make informed decisions about how to meet the needs of children and families.

Ideally, your program will provide you with targeted, ongoing training and technical assistance. For example, your program may

- continue to provide workshops on the components of the Curriculum, the five routines, and the eight experiences as needed
- provide workshops on language and literacy development, toddler behavior and development, and including children with disabilities using resources published by Teaching Strategies
- contact the Teaching Strategies national office to arrange onsite professional development on topics such as supporting dual-language learners, building effective partnerships with families, using *The Creative Curriculum® LearningGames®* with families, or other topics identified as interests or needs

- send you to additional professional development sessions offered at the Helen H. Taylor Center for Professional Development at the Teaching Strategies national office and Teaching Strategies national conferences