

Let's Play!

A Relationship-Based Curriculum for Family Child Care

Month Six: Building Theme Two: Our Environment



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In Month Six, children are invited to further explore their environment by looking closely at the homes, buildings and structures they see in their neighborhood and to explore the process of construction (and demolition) in their own way. Neighborhood walks play a key role in helping children learn about their surrounding environment and offer children natural opportunities to identify buildings, structures or neighborhood locales that interest them. In addition, families are invited to share their knowledge of buildings, construction or real estate as well as any real items related to their work that children could safely explore as they play.

As children explore the concept of a “home” be sensitive to the possibility that not all children in the program may have a stable dwelling place or live with their own families. In addition, allow children to explore homes for animals as well as people if that better reflects their interests and adjust materials and props as needed to support meaningful exploration.

In Month Six there is an increased focus on block building as well as creating ramps, bridges and tunnels. Through these activities, children will have many opportunities to learn first-hand about engineering and construction as they experiment and problem-solve to achieve their desired outcomes. Block building typically follows a natural progression from carrying to stacking to creating bridges and enclosures. As children gain more experience with blocks, they may begin to create more complex structures that represent actual buildings. Recognizing where children are in the stages of block building can help providers gauge the level of support needed for children to master one stage and to inspire children to develop additional skills. See [Stages of Block Play](#) for more information. As always it is important to respect children’s interests and to follow their lead. If children are not interested in the suggested play prompts, observe and join in their play instead and look for opportunities to help them expand their play as desired.

Theme Two: Our Environment continues to offer sample weekly planners for the first and third weeks. Blank planners are included for the alternate weeks. The blank planner can be used to repeat high interest activities, to try different suggested activities from a previous week or to develop additional activities based on children’s interests. Depending upon children’s interests, providers could use the blank planners to further expand the curriculum for a full 12 months. For extended day and year programs, additional choice time and gross motor activities should be included each afternoon.

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Let's Play! Scope and Sequence

Theme One: Our Community	Theme Two: Our Environment	Theme Three: Our Impact
Month One: Our FCC Home <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Building Relationships ● Hellos and Goodbyes ● Caregiving 	Month Four: Listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sounds All Around Us ● Music and Rhythm 	Month Eight: Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Caring for Ourselves ● Caring for Others
Month Two: Self <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our Bodies ● Our Feelings 	Month Five: Investigating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Making Music ● Observe and Test Ideas 	Month Nine: Grow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Things That Grow ● How Things Grow
Month Three: Us <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our Families ● Our Group 	Month Six: Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Home, buildings, and neighborhoods ● Buildings and Construction 	Month Ten: Change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Things That Change ● How I Can Make Things Change
	Month Seven: Moving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transportation ● Noticing Things That Move 	

Week One: Homes, Buildings, and Neighborhoods – Sample Weekly Planner

Theme Two: Our Environment / Month Six: Building

<p>Preparation/ Changes to Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have families who speak languages other than the one spoken in the program, ask them how to spell and pronounce a greeting word along with the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4, in their home language for a morning meeting song. Create a chart of the words for easy reference with phonetic spelling. • Print and laminate photos of the outside or inside of the provider's home/family child care program. Use them to create 2-, 4- or 6-piece puzzles. Glue to cardboard if desired to make pieces easier to manipulate. • Print and laminate photos of other homes, buildings, construction sites or other items children show interest in on walks. • Create sorting boards by using colorful tape to create two to three columns on a piece of cardboard or cardstock. Laminate if desired. • Invite families to share photos of their own home/building/neighborhood. • Invite families to share calendar pages or other images of local or famous buildings children may have visited. • Invite families to share their knowledge about buildings, construction or real estate. Invite them to share real items related to these fields of work (ex. tools, hats, gear, blueprints, etc.) • Ask families to donate any clean, spare white socks they might have for a "snowball" activity. 									
<p>Opening Activities 20-60 minutes</p>	<p>Arrival Activities Pick two or three materials each day that reflect the children in your program as well as their interests and ages. <i>Note:</i> check size of items to avoid a <i>choking hazard</i>. Allow children to explore other materials as desired. Support them in putting materials away before choosing additional materials to reduce clutter.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>• Foam/vinyl blocks</td> <td>• Doll house and toy people</td> <td>• 2 x 2 blocks</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Duplos</td> <td>• Road foam floor tiles and cars</td> <td>• Colander with pipe cleaners and large beads</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Toy hammer and peg board</td> <td>• 2-6 piece puzzles of provider's building and other familiar buildings, structures, or signs</td> <td>• Spray bottle filled with water and water color, paper or coffee filters</td> </tr> </table> <p><i>*Note: Glue stick caps can be a choking hazard to younger children therefore they should be removed prior to use.</i></p>	• Foam/vinyl blocks	• Doll house and toy people	• 2 x 2 blocks	• Duplos	• Road foam floor tiles and cars	• Colander with pipe cleaners and large beads	• Toy hammer and peg board	• 2-6 piece puzzles of provider's building and other familiar buildings, structures, or signs	• Spray bottle filled with water and water color, paper or coffee filters
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<p>Morning Meeting No more than 5-10 minutes, including transitions</p>	<p>Song Hello Song (with children’s home languages) or another greeting song relevant for your children.</p> <p>Invitations to Explore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow children to move around and provide an alternative activity for those who are not yet ready to participate. • Allow children to move around and provide an alternative activity for those who are not yet ready to participate. • Over the course of the week, highlight different interest areas and show children sample materials from each. • Describe small group activities for the day and show materials as needed. • Tell children where each member of the teaching team will begin Choice Time. On the visual schedule, attach photos of the Interest Areas that are available or “open” each day. Let children choose where they want to play and accompany them to interest areas. • Infants/toddlers: Invite them to join the meeting and offer a lap to sit on or a space next to a member of the teaching team to support their participation.
<p>AM Choice Time 60 minutes</p> <p>Pick 3 interest areas for AM and 3 different interest areas for PM. Allow children to explore other areas or materials based on their interests or needs.</p> <p>Art/Writing</p> <p>Blocks/Construction</p> <p>Dramatic Play</p> <p>Library</p> <p>Math/ Manipulatives</p> <p>Sand/Water/Sensory</p>	<p>Choice Time Tips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose materials that reflect the children in your program as well as their interests and abilities. • Include some materials or activities that support the weekly focus. • See Interest Areas (see Appendix) for a list of suggested materials. Rotate materials regularly. <i>Note: check size of items to avoid a choking hazard.</i> • Add photos of the children to different interest areas for children to incorporate into their play. • Give children the opportunity to follow their own interests and explore materials freely. Allow children to explore other materials as desired. • Support them in putting materials away before choosing additional materials to reduce clutter. • Support children’s exploration by sitting alongside them and joining in conversations about what they are doing. Follow children’s lead and share ideas for expanding their play if needed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Look for opportunities to connect children’s play to the weekly focus and to their own lives. ○ Encourage children to problem-solve as needed. ○ Consider inviting children to think of additional roles to expand play as they act out scenarios. <p>Art/Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add cardstock/cardboard, painters’ tape, tempera paint, and paint rollers or paint brushes. Invite children to place the painter’s tape on the cardstock, paint over the tape and on the cardstock. Once dry, children can remove the tape and observe the patterns they created. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For infants and toddlers, offer dark construction paper, painters’ tape, drip proof paint cups, paintbrush, water, so they can paint with water. • Select a few items for printmaking on a tray. Tape a large piece of paper to the table and create stamp pads by moistening some folded paper towels, placing them in foam trays or other shallow containers and adding nontoxic tempera paint. To explore shapes, choose different sized items with the same shape or offer items with different shapes, such as circle shaped lids, cardboard tubes, thread spools, biscuit cutters, plastic cups; square and rectangular shaped containers, interlocking blocks, square nesting cups, etc. Look for additional shapes in shape sorter sets, cookie cutters, or in other learning materials. Sponges can also be cut into different

<p>Science/Discovery</p> <p>Small Group Exploration</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Small Group takes place during Choice Time. Individual participation time will vary based on children's interests</p>	<p>shapes and can be made toddler friendly by using a glue gun to attach a cork or thread spool as a handle. Invite children to press an item into the paint and to then press it onto the paper. Allow children to explore the materials freely. Note: infants and toddlers may be more interested in exploring the paint with their hands or with spreading it around than with actually making prints. Consider using homemade finger paint (Month 2 Week 1) for younger children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add crayons, markers or pencils and paper. Invite children to draw pictures of their homes or families. Allow them to draw freely and encourage all efforts. If children ask for assistance, encourage them to try on their own and offer verbal prompts rather than drawing for them. When children can freely create, they develop skills as well as confidence. <p><i>Note: Writing and drawing may be in the form of scribbles, lines, marks on the paper, and/or letters.</i></p> <p>Blocks/Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit blocks, homemade blocks, and/or foam blocks; include a variety of shapes. • Add toy people, toy animals and toy vehicles. • Talk with children about different types of homes and invite them to create a home for people or animals. • Invite children to build new buildings or other structures that they would like to see in their neighborhood. Observe and engage children in conversations about what they are building, who might live or work in them and where they would like to see their new structures. <p>Infant and Toddlers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide infants and toddlers with age-appropriate blocks. If the infants and toddlers are more interested in knocking down structures than in building them up, offer them a separate space or time to explore blocks in their own way. Invite older children to create structures for younger children to knock down. <p>Dramatic Play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a dollhouse or other materials for children to create home-like spaces. • Add props related to places that the children show interest in while out on walks, such as stores, restaurants, etc. • Add different size boxes. Invite children to explore boxes and observe how they play. Ask children to help-problem solve if they need more materials to act out scenarios. <p>Library</p> <p>Choose books related to the topic of Homes, Buildings and Neighborhoods. Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children's interests.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Homes Around the World</i> by Clare Lewis • <i>Not a Box</i> by Antoinette Portis • See Book List for more ideas
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Math/Manipulatives

Select materials so children can explore concepts of size, shape, and quantity as well as develop fine motor skills.

- Toy hammer and peg board or pounding toy
- Shape sorters
- Puzzles with latches and locks
- Cardboard shapes with notches cut out for building
- Playdough with straws and pipe cleaners
- Assorted recycled lids, pom poms, and sorting boards

Math Invitation:

- Continue exploring different size groupings (1-4 items) and encourage children to say how many are in each group before touching the items.
- Consider showing children a small group of similar items and then cover the items with a piece of paper or cloth and invite children to say how many items they saw in the group. For children who can easily identify the different group sizes, consider creating small groups of 1-4 different items for children to compare. Invite children to use their eyes to look at two different groups and to say which one has more. Repeat with groups that have the same number of similar items so that children can notice that equal groups can be composed of items that are the same or different. Allow children to continue playing freely with materials if they are not interested in size comparisons or counting and join in or observe their play. As opportunities arise, weave in words like more, less, many, few, all or none to describe what you see.

Infants and Toddlers:

- Offer them a set of similar items that they can safely explore using all of their senses without a risk of choking, such as pop beads, links, or blocks. Join children in their play and match what they are doing. As children play weave in opportunities to use words like more, less, many, few and to use number words to identify how many items may be in a particular group of items. If children are interested, demonstrate counting by touching each item one at a time and invite children to try and do the same. Using the same materials as the children, create two groups of materials that are very different in size (one group should include twice as many items as the other group) and invite children to tell or point to which group has more. Allow children to continue to play freely.

Sand/Water/Sensory

- Add letters to a pourable material in the sensory table and supply scoops and buckets for children to explore. As children discover the letters, note what they have found. If children find the letters of their own names be sure to point this out.
- Add water to the sand table to create damp sand. Offer children sand molds, cups, shovels, spoons, bowls, etc. so that they can create various structures if desired. Add shells, stones, twigs or other natural items if desired.

Science/Discovery

- Add transparent, colored magnetic tiles to the light table and invite children to explore. For shape matching, create various shapes with the tiles and use washi tape or painters' tape to mark the outline of the shapes on top of the light table. Invite children to create their own matching shapes with the tiles.
- Add binoculars, color paddles and homemade looking tubes. Invite children to explore their indoor space as they look through each instrument.

	<p>Small Group Exploration: Science/Discovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a neighborhood. (See Interlocking Blocks Neighborhood Lesson Plan) • Create a neighborhood book to document and expand the activity. See extension activity in the Interlocking Blocks Neighborhood Lesson Plan.
<p>AM Music and Movement 10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose songs and activities to build body awareness and spatial awareness skills. End with a quiet song, fingerplay or movement activity. Adults can dance with infants/toddlers so they can participate.</p> <p>Suggested Songs: (See Song Cards)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hammer Song • Ten in the Bed <p>Activities (choose based on children’s interests):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play Simon Says using actions related to building and invite children to take turns leading (remember not to exclude children from the game if they move without hearing Simon Says) • Act out the <i>Napping House</i> or another favorite book. • Lead children in yoga poses (See Month 2 Week 1)
<p>AM Story Time and Books for the Week 5-10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose books related to the topic of Homes, Buildings and Neighborhoods. Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children’s interests.</p> <p>Suggested Books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Napping House</i> by Audrey Wood • <i>Rosie’s Walk</i> by Pat Hutchins • See Book List for more ideas
<p>Outdoor Play 60 minutes</p>	<p>Go outside daily as weather permits. Give children the opportunity to engage in self-led play as well as group activities. Allow children to explore materials freely.</p> <p>Suggested Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obstacle Course: Create outdoor obstacle courses such as, crawling through a play tunnel tube, walking along a line drawn with chalk, jumping into hula hoops placed on the ground, going around buckets or traffic cones, hopping over a jump rope, going down a slide, playing hopscotch, playing limbo with a yardstick, etc. • Neighborhood Walk: Take a walk around the FCC neighborhood. Engage the children in conversation about the different buildings they see and what details they might point out. Consider taking pictures that the children show interest in, they can later be added to the block area for further observation. • Investigation: Bring binoculars, color paddles with the group outside. Engage the children in conversation about the details they see as they look through their binoculars or paddle. Notice that these two instruments are different so the experiences for children will be different. The children can change the instruments with their peers.

	Additional Materials: Sidewalk chalk, balls, push/pull toys, child size rakes or brooms, and thick blankets for infants to move freely on.
PM Story Time 5 minutes, transitioning to nap/rest time	Choose books related to the topic of Homes, Buildings and Neighborhoods . Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children’s interests. Suggested Books: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The Snowy Day</i> by Ezra Jack Keats ● <i>My Neighborhood</i> by Maddie Frost ● See Book List for more ideas
PM Choice Time 30-60 minutes depending upon length of opening activities. <u>Note:</u> may begin while some children are still sleeping Pick 3 interest areas for AM and 3 different interest areas for PM. Allow children to explore other areas or materials based on their interests or needs Art/Writing Blocks/Construction Dramatic Play Library	Art/Writing See AM choice time for ideas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ●
	Blocks/Construction See AM choice time for ideas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ●
	Dramatic Play See AM choice time for ideas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ●
	Library See AM choice time for ideas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ●
	Math/Manipulatives See AM choice time for ideas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ●
	Sand/Water/Sensory See AM choice time for ideas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ●

<p>Math/ Manipulatives</p>	<p>Science/Discovery See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
<p>Sand/Water/ Sensory Science/Discovery</p>	<p>Small Group Exploration: Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building with Recycled Materials (see Lesson Plan)
<p>PM Music and Movement 10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose songs and activities to build body awareness and spatial awareness skills. End with a quiet song, fingerplay or movement activity. End with a quiet song, fingerplay or movement activity. Adults can dance with infants/toddlers so they can participate</p> <p>Suggested Songs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Math Fingerplay song cards, have children choose songs. • Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Turn Around <p>Activities (choose based on children’s interests):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead children in the Hokey Pokey or other group dance. • Have an indoor “snowball toss”: Roll up spare, white socks into “snowballs” and invite children to toss them into an empty laundry basket. • Play Parachute Games (see Month 3 Week 3). Add “snowball” socks to toss on the parachute.

Reflection On Weekly Planner - Week One

Success

Challenge

Next Steps

Week Two: Sample Weekly Planner

Theme Two: Our Environment / Month Six: Building

As you use this planner, feel free to repeat high interest activities, try different suggested activities from a previous week or develop additional activities based on children’s interests. Choose materials and develop small group explorations based on what you observed during the previous week: What activities were children most interested in? What types of actions were frequently repeated? What variation might encourage further exploration?

<p>Preparation/ Changes to Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
<p>Opening Activities 20-60 minutes</p>	<p>Arrival Activities Pick two or three materials each day that reflect the children in your program as well as their interests and ages. <i>Note:</i> check size of items to avoid a choking hazard. Allow children to explore other materials as desired. Support them in putting materials away before choosing additional materials to reduce clutter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
<p>Morning Meeting No more than 5-10 minutes, including transitions</p>	<p>Song</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p>Invitations to Explore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow children to move around and provide an alternative activity for those who are not yet ready to participate. • Over the course of the week, highlight different interest areas and show children sample materials from each. • Describe small group activities for the day and show materials as needed. • Tell children where each member of the teaching team will begin Choice Time. On the visual schedule, attach photos of the Interest Areas that are available or “open” each day. Let children choose where they want to play and accompany them to interest areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Infants/toddlers: Invite them to join the meeting and offer a lap to sit on or a space next to a member of the teaching team to support their participation.
<p>AM Choice Time 60 minutes</p> <p>Pick 3 interest areas for AM and 3 different interest areas for PM. Allow children to explore other areas or materials based on their interests or needs.</p> <p>Art/Writing</p> <p>Blocks/Construction</p> <p>Dramatic Play</p> <p>Library</p> <p>Math/Manipulatives</p> <p>Sand/Water/Sensory</p> <p>Science/Discovery</p> <p>Small Group Exploration</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Small Group takes place during Choice Time. Individual participation time will vary based on children’s interests</p>	<p>Choice Time Tips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Choose materials that reflect the children in your program as well as their interests and abilities. ● Include some materials or activities that support the weekly focus. ● See Interest Areas (Appendix) for a list of suggested materials. Rotate materials regularly. <i>Note: check size of items to avoid a choking hazard.</i> ● Add photos of the children to different interest areas for children to incorporate into their play. ● Give children the opportunity to follow their own interests and explore materials freely. Allow children to explore other materials as desired. ● Support them in putting materials away before choosing additional materials to reduce clutter. ● Support children’s exploration by sitting alongside them and joining in conversations about what they are doing. Follow children’s lead and share ideas for expanding their play if needed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Look for opportunities to connect children’s play to the weekly focus and to their own lives. ○ Encourage children to problem-solve as needed. ○ Consider inviting children to think of additional roles to expand play as they act out scenarios. <hr/> <p>Art/Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ● ● <hr/> <p>Blocks/Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unit blocks, homemade blocks, and/or foam blocks ● ● <p>Infant and Toddlers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide infants and toddlers with age-appropriate blocks. If the infants and toddlers are more interested in knocking down structures than in building them up, offer them a separate space or time to explore blocks in their own way. Invite older children to create structures for younger children to knock down. <hr/> <p>Dramatic Play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ●

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<p>Library Choose books related to the weekly focus. Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children’s interests. See Book List for more ideas</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
	<p>Math/Manipulatives Select materials so children can explore various math concepts as well as develop fine motor skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
	<p>Sand/Water/Sensory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
	<p>Science/Discovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
	<p>AM Small Group Exploration Plan hands-on activities related to the weekly focus that allow children to be creative and explore their own ideas. Let children know that they can all have a chance to participate. Allow children to opt out of an activity and offer another opportunity to try it later on.</p>

	<p>Give children enough time to thoroughly enjoy the experience so that they don't feel rushed. Adapt activities as needed to include infants and toddlers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
<p>AM Music and Movement 10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose songs and activities to build a sense of community and to develop fine and gross motor skills. End with a quiet song, fingerplay, or movement activity. Adults can dance with infants/toddlers so they can participate.</p> <p>Suggested Songs (See Song Cards)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Activities (choose based on children's interests)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
<p>AM Story Time and Books for the Week 5-10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose books related to the weekly focus. Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children's interests. See Book List for more ideas</p> <p>Suggested Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
<p>Outdoor Play 60 minutes</p>	<p>Go outside daily as weather permits. Give children the opportunity to engage in self-led play as well as group activities. Allow children to explore materials freely.</p> <p>Suggested Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>Additional Materials: balls, push/pull toys, ride-on toys, blankets for infants to lie on</p>

<p>PM Story Time 5 minutes, transitioning to nap/rest time</p>	<p>Choose books related to the weekly focus. Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children’s interests. See Book List for more ideas</p> <p>Suggested Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
<p>PM Choice Time 30-60 minutes depending on length of opening activities <i>Note:</i> may begin when some children are sleeping</p> <p>Pick 3 interest areas for AM and 3 different interest areas for PM. Allow children to explore other areas or materials based on their interests or needs</p> <p>Art/Writing</p> <p>Blocks/Construction</p> <p>Dramatic Play</p> <p>Library</p> <p>Math/Manipulatives</p> <p>Sand/Water/Sensory</p> <p>Science/Discovery</p> <p>Small Group Exploration</p>	<p>Art/Writing See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
	<p>Blocks/Construction See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
	<p>Dramatic Play See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
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	<p>Sand/Water/Sensory See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
	<p>Science/Discovery See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
	<p>Small Group Exploration:</p>

	<p>Plan hands-on activities related to the weekly focus that allow children to be creative and explore their own ideas. Let children know that they can all have a chance to participate. Allow children to opt out of an activity and offer another opportunity to try it later on. Give children enough time to thoroughly enjoy the experience so that they don't feel rushed. Adapt activities as needed to include infants and toddlers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
<p>PM Music and Movement 10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose songs and activities to build a sense of community and to develop fine and gross motor skills. End with a quiet song, fingerplay, or movement activity. Adults can dance with infants/toddlers so they can participate.</p> <p>Suggested Songs: (See Song Cards)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Activities (choose based on children's interests):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •

Reflection On Weekly Planner - Week Two

Success

Challenge

Next Steps

Week Three: Building and Construction – Sample Weekly Planner

Theme Two: Our Environment / Month Six: Building

<p>Preparation/ Changes to Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print and laminate photos of homes, buildings, construction sites or other items children show interest in on walks. Use them to create 2-, 4- or 6-piece puzzles. • Print and laminate images of signs that are commonly found around construction or building sites. • Invite families to share calendar pages or other images of local or famous buildings children may have visited. • Invite families to bring in photos, souvenirs or other items representing homes, buildings or structures that children may be familiar with. <i>Note: Please make sure that any items shared are not precious and would be suitable for young children to handle. Let families know that you cannot be responsible for keeping these items intact.</i> • Invite families to share their knowledge about buildings, construction or real estate. Invite them to share real items related to these fields of work (ex. tools, hats, gear, blueprints, floorplans, etc.)
<p>Opening Activities 20-60 minutes</p>	<p>Arrival Activities Pick two or three materials each day that reflect the children in your program as well as their interests and ages. <i>Note: check size of items to avoid a choking hazard.</i> Allow children to explore other materials as desired. Support them in putting materials away before choosing additional materials to reduce clutter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Push and pull toys • Toy tolls • Blocks and cars • Nesting cups • Gears and connectors • Interlocking blocks • Butcher paper or other large paper taped to cover table, dot markers • Laminated pictures of buildings, toy people and vehicles • Playdough and sticks <p><i>*Note: Glue stick caps can be a choking hazard to younger children therefore they should be removed prior to use.</i></p>
<p>Morning Meeting No more than 5-10 minutes, including transitions</p>	<p>Song (see Song Cards) Hello Song (with children’s home languages) or another greeting song relevant for your children.</p> <p>Invitations to Explore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow children to move around and provide an alternative activity for those who are not yet ready to participate. • Over the course of the week, highlight different interest areas and show children sample materials from each.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe small group activities for the day and show materials as needed. • Tell children where each member of the teaching team will begin Choice Time. On the visual schedule, attach photos of the Interest Areas that are available or “open” each day. Let children choose where they want to play and accompany them to interest areas. • Infants/toddlers: Invite them to join the meeting and offer a lap to sit on or a space next to a member of the teaching team to support their participation.
<p>AM Choice Time 60 minutes</p> <p>Pick 3 interest areas for AM and 3 different interest areas for PM. Allow children to explore other areas or materials based on their interests or needs.</p> <p>Art/Writing</p> <p>Blocks/Construction</p> <p>Dramatic Play</p> <p>Library</p> <p>Math/Manipulatives</p> <p>Sand/Water/Sensory</p> <p>Science/Discovery</p> <p>Small Group Exploration <i>Note:</i> Small Group takes place during Choice Time. Individual participation time will vary based on children’s interests</p>	<p>Choice Time Tips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose materials that reflect the children in your program as well as their interests and abilities. • Include some materials or activities that support the weekly focus. • See Interest Areas (see Appendix) for a list of suggested materials. Rotate materials regularly. <i>Note: check size of items to avoid a choking hazard.</i> • Add photos of the children to different interest areas for children to incorporate into their play. • Give children the opportunity to follow their own interests and explore materials freely. Allow children to explore other materials as desired. • Support them in putting materials away before choosing additional materials to reduce clutter. • Support children’s exploration by sitting alongside them and joining in conversations about what they are doing. Follow children’s lead and share ideas for expanding their play if needed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Look for opportunities to connect children’s play to the weekly focus and to their own lives. ○ Encourage children to problem-solve as needed. ○ Consider inviting children to think of additional roles to expand play as they act out scenarios. <p>Art/Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add three-dimensional building materials, such as clothespins, bottle tops, sticks, corks, thread spools, cut pieces of cardboard egg cartons, cardboard tubes, etc. along with craft sticks, pipe cleaners, scissors, glue or tape. Invite the children to build and construct using the materials. Over the course of the week, consider adding additional loose parts or other art materials such as paint, dot markers, pastels, etc. Allow children to explore freely and to return to their creations throughout the week. • Add paper cut into the shapes of common signs, popsicle sticks, crayons or other writing tools along with images of different signs that are commonly found around buildings or construction sites. Allow the children to freely create as they explore the signs. • Add paper and crayons, markers or colored pencils. Invite children to look at a replica of a building or other structure and discuss which details they notice. Provide drawing materials and invite them to draw what they see. Allow them to draw freely. <p><i>Note: Writing and drawing may be in the form of scribbles, lines, marks on the paper, and/or letters.</i></p>

Blocks/Construction

- Unit blocks, homemade blocks, and/or foam blocks; include a variety of shapes.
- Add toy people, vehicles, animals, traffic signs and/or signs made in the art area. As children add signs or labels to the block area, explore their understanding of the meaning of the signs and labels.
- Engage children in conversation about what construction looks like. What are some tools and or other materials needed during construction? Consider introducing when and why demolition occurs. This is a great opportunity to include infants and toddlers to join in on constructing and knocking down the blocks. During clean up you can model “unbuilding” with the blocks, by taking them down one at a time, which is a safer way to demolish large block structures. Observe and talk with children about how they are using the blocks in construction and demolition.
- Consider including pictures of famous NYC buildings and buildings observed during the neighborhood walk. Talk to children about the structures they see in the picture and what makes them similar or different from each other. Invite children to build based on what they see in the picture but allow them to use the blocks as desired.

Infant and Toddlers:

- Provide infants and toddlers with age-appropriate blocks. If the infants and toddlers are more interested in knocking down structures than in building them up, offer them a separate space or time to explore blocks in their own way. Invite older children to create structures for younger children to knock down.

Dramatic Play

- Add construction worker’s gear and materials such as a toy toolbox, pretend tool kit, tool belt or apron, construction hats, blueprints, etc. Consider including some real tools which would be safe for children to manipulate, such as small wrenches, a level, a plastic drill without drill bits, etc. Invite children to pretend to be construction workers who are building a new building. Converse with children about what they are building.
- Add different size boxes. Invite children to explore boxes and observe how they play. As children build with the boxes or use them in different ways, ask them to help-problem solve if they need more materials to act out scenarios.
- If you have a large box, consider engaging children in a discussion about what kind of structure they could create with the box and have them draw or indicate where they might want doors, windows, etc. Safely cut out any desired openings as children observe and continue to engage them in the design process.

Library

Choose books related to the topic of **Building and Construction**. Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children’s interests.

Examples:

- *Whose Tools?* by Tony Buzzeo
- *Shapes, Shapes, Shapes* by Tana Hoban
- **See Book List for more ideas**

Math/Manipulatives

Select materials so children can explore concepts of size, shape, and quantity as well as develop fine motor skills.

- Links
- Shape sorters
- Puzzles with common street signs or construction vehicles
- Large nuts and bolts
- Shape set
- Table top blocks, level, measuring tape or ruler

Math Invitation:

- Invite children to explore the shape sorter/shape set with you. As they explore the shapes, invite a child to show you a shape they like and to say the name of the shape. Encourage other children to find a matching shape and to share how they know it is the same. Encourage children to find other matching shapes, such as circles, squares, triangles and rectangles. Invite children to look around the room to find other matching shapes.
- As children explore, select a less familiar shape and invite children to look closely at it and to share what they notice about it. Use your finger to trace around the shape as children describe what they see. Invite children to look at other shapes in the shape set or to look around the room to find the same shape. As children find matches, invite them to share how they know the shapes are the same.

Infants and toddlers

- Look for opportunities to describe shapes as you engage in daily routines and play. Consider creating small collections of objects with the same shape for them to explore, such as a basket with assorted items shaped like a circle and another basket with assorted items shaped like a square.

Sand/Water/Sensory

- Building with bubbles: Add a small amount of water to the water table along with some dish soap or tear free shampoo. Offer children handheld egg beaters, wire whisks or wooden spoons to use to make a layer of bubbles. Add interlocking blocks and invite children to create structures with the blocks and the bubbles. As the children are building and exploring, engage them in conversation about how they are using the materials. Add more bubbles as needed.
- Offer dry sand with toy construction or other vehicles and small blocks, sticks or rocks.

Science/Discovery

- Add assorted colored magnetic tiles, geometric shapes and/or plastic cups and invite children to build structures on the light table.
- Offer a collection of large metal washers, nuts, bolts, flat bottom screws, etc. and large magnets or a magnet wand. Consider adding some wooden or other non-metallic items to support further exploration. *Note: check size of items to avoid a choking hazard.*

	<p>Small Group Exploration: Blocks/Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Ramps. Invite children to help create ramps to use for their vehicles. Offer materials such as pieces of cardboard, wood planks, sturdy cardboard tubes, sections of PVC piping or rain gutter (check with your local hardware store to see if they have spare sections to donate) and explore how they use these materials to make ramps. Invite children to roll vehicles down the ramp and to experiment with making ramps with different lengths and heights. What happens if they roll vehicles down different sized ramps at the same time? Is one faster than the other? Do the vehicles go the same distance? If vehicles fall off of the ramp, how can they change it? What else could they try rolling down the ramp? • Create Bridges and Tunnels. Invite children to explore how they can use blocks or other props to create bridges and tunnels for their vehicles.
<p>AM Music and Movement 10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose songs and activities to build body awareness and spatial awareness skills. End with a quiet song, fingerplay or movement activity. End with a quiet song, fingerplay or movement activity. Adults can dance with infants/toddlers so they can participate.</p> <p>Suggested Songs: (See Song Cards)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did You Ever See a Builder? • Up to the Ceiling Down to the Floor <p>Activities (choose based on children’s interests):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead children in building themed yoga poses (See Lesson Plan). • Invite children to use musical instruments or other objects to create construction sound music. • Show children images of different construction machines and invite them to move like the machine, such as rolling like a cement mixer, jumping like a jackhammer, scooping like an excavator, reaching up high like a crane, etc. If desired play songs about construction machines.
<p>AM Story Time and Books for the Week 5-10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose books related to the topic of Buildings and Construction. Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children’s interests.</p> <p>Suggested Books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bigger! Bigger!</i> by Leslie Patricelli • <i>Construction</i> by Sally Sutton • See Book List for more ideas

<p>Outdoor Play 60 minutes</p>	<p>Go outside daily as weather permits. Give children the opportunity to engage in self-led play as well as group activities. Allow children to explore materials freely.</p> <p>Suggested Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction: bring pretend or real tools and other dramatic play props outside along with toy construction vehicles. Invite children to create their own construction site or to “fix” things. • Parachute play: Bring the parachute outside and engage the children in conversation about what they would like to do with the parachute. Consider inviting different children in taking the lead as to what to try next with the parachute. • Neighborhoods walk: Take a walk around the neighborhood. Engage the children in conversation about the construction they see taking place around them. Consider taking pictures of buildings and construction sites that the children express interest in. The pictures can be added to the block area to explore at a later date. <p>Additional Materials: Sidewalk chalk, balls, push/pull toys, child size rakes or brooms, and thick blankets for infants to move freely on.</p>
<p>PM Story Time 5 minutes, transitioning to nap/rest time</p>	<p>Choose books related to the topic of Building and Construction. Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children’s interests.</p> <p>Suggested Books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CRASH! BOOM! A Math Tale</i> by Robbie H. Harris • <i>Dreaming Up: A Celebration of Building</i> by Christy Hale • See Book List for more ideas
<p>PM Choice Time 30-60 minute, depending on length of opening activities <i>Note:</i> may begin when some children are sleeping</p> <p>Pick 3 interest areas for AM and 3 different interest areas for PM. Allow children to explore other areas or materials based on their interests or needs)</p> <p>Art/Writing</p>	<p>Art/Writing See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Blocks/Construction See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Dramatic Play See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Library See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •

<p>Blocks/Construction</p> <p>Dramatic Play</p> <p>Library</p> <p>Math/Manipulatives</p> <p>Sand/Water/Sensory</p> <p>Science/Discovery</p> <p>Small Group Exploration</p>	<p>Math/Manipulatives See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Sand/Water/Sensory See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Science/Discovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Small Group Exploration: Math/Manipulatives/Blocks/Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building With Blocks (See Lesson Plan
<p>PM Music and Movement 10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose songs and activities to build body awareness and spatial awareness skills. End with a quiet song, fingerplay or movement activity. End with a quiet song, fingerplay or movement activity. Adults can dance with infants/toddlers so they can participate.</p> <p>Suggested Songs: (see Song Cards)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hammer Song • This is the Way <p>Activities (choose based on children’s interests):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play London Bridge is Falling Down (see Song Cards). Have an adult and child raise arms up high and hold each other’s hands to form the bridge. Invite children to walk under the bridge one at a time while the group sings the song. On the verse “my fair lady” lower arms to capture a child in a gentle hug. Note: some children will not want to be caught and others might want to go through at the same time as their peers. • Dance to favorite music with scarves, shakers or other props. • Play a construction related children’s song, such as the Construction Site Song by the Kiboomers or a similar song and invite children to move like different construction vehicles.

Reflection On Weekly Planner - Week Three

Success

Challenge

Next Steps

Week Four: Sample Weekly Planner

Theme Two: Our Environment / Month Six: Building

As you use this planner, feel free to repeat high interest activities, try different suggested activities from a previous week or develop additional activities based on children’s interests. Choose materials and develop small group explorations based on what you observed during the previous week: What activities were children most interested in? What types of actions were frequently repeated? What variation might encourage further exploration?

<p>Preparation/ Changes to Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
<p>Opening Activities 20-60 minutes</p>	<p>Arrival Activities Pick two or three materials each day that reflect the children in your program as well as their interests and ages. <i>Note: check size of items to avoid a choking hazard.</i> Allow children to explore other materials as desired. Support them in putting materials away before choosing additional materials to reduce clutter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
<p>Morning Meeting No more than 5-10 minutes, including transitions</p>	<p>Song</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p>Invitations to Explore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow children to move around and provide an alternative activity for those who are not yet ready to participate. • Over the course of the week, highlight different interest areas and show children sample materials from each. • Describe small group activities for the day and show materials as needed • Tell children where each member of the teaching team will begin Choice Time. On the visual schedule, attach photos of the Interest Areas that are available or “open” each day. Let children choose where they want to play and accompany them to interest areas. • Infants/toddlers: Invite them to join the meeting and offer a lap to sit on or a space next to a member of the teaching team to support their participation.

<p>AM Choice Time 60 minutes</p> <p>Pick 3 interest areas for AM and 3 different interest areas for PM. Allow children to explore other areas or materials based on their interests or needs.</p> <p>Art/Writing Blocks/Construction Dramatic Play</p> <p>Library</p>	<p>Choice Time Tips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose materials that reflect the children in your program as well as their interests and abilities. • Include some materials or activities that support the weekly focus. • See Interest Areas (Appendix) for a list of suggested materials. Rotate materials regularly. <i>Note: check size of items to avoid a choking hazard.</i> • Add photos of the children to different interest areas for children to incorporate into their play. • Give children the opportunity to follow their own interests and explore materials freely. Allow children to explore other materials as desired. • Support them in putting materials away before choosing additional materials to reduce clutter. • Support children’s exploration by sitting alongside them and joining in conversations about what they are doing. Follow children’s lead and share ideas for expanding their play if needed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Look for opportunities to connect children’s play to the weekly focus and to their own lives. ○ Encourage children to problem-solve as needed. ○ Consider inviting children to think of additional roles to expand play as they act out scenarios.
<p>Math/Manipulatives</p> <p>Sand/Water/Sensory</p>	<p>Art/Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
<p>Science/Discovery</p> <p>Small Group Exploration <i>Note:</i> Small Group takes place during Choice Time. Individual participation time will vary based on children’s interests</p>	<p>Blocks/Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit blocks, homemade blocks, and/or foam blocks • • <p>Infant and Toddlers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide infants and toddlers with age appropriate blocks. If the infants and toddlers are more interested in knocking down structures than in building them up, offer them a separate space or time to explore blocks in their own way. Invite older children to create structures for younger children to knock down.
	<p>Dramatic Play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

	<p>Library Choose books related to the weekly focus. Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children’s interests. See Book List for more ideas</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
	<p>Math/Manipulatives Select materials so children can explore various math concepts as well as develop fine motor skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
	<p>Sand/Water/Sensory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
	<p>Science/Discovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
	<p>AM Small Group Exploration Plan hands-on activities related to the weekly focus that allow children to be creative and explore their own ideas. Let children know that they can all have a chance to participate. Allow children to opt out of an activity and offer another opportunity to try it later on. Give children enough time to thoroughly enjoy the experience so that they don’t feel rushed. Adapt activities as needed to include infants and toddlers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
<p>AM Music and Movement 10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose songs and activities to build a sense of community and to develop fine and gross motor skills. End with a quiet song, fingerplay, or movement activity. Adults can dance with infants/toddlers so they can participate.</p> <p>Suggested Songs:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Activities (choose based on children’s interests):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
<p>AM Story Time and Books for the Week 5-10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose books related to the weekly focus. Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children’s interests. See Book List for more ideas</p> <p>Suggested Books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
<p>Outdoor Play 60 minutes</p>	<p>Go outside daily as weather permits. Give children the opportunity to engage in self-led play as well as group activities. Allow children to explore materials freely.</p> <p>Suggested Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Additional Materials: bubbles, sidewalk chalk, balls, push/pull toys, ride-on toys, blankets for infants to lie on.</p>
<p>PM Story Time 5 minutes, transitioning to nap/rest time</p>	<p>Choose books related to the weekly focus. Offer additional books that reflect the children in your program as well as those based on children’s interests. See Book List for more ideas</p> <p>Suggested Books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
<p>PM Choice Time 30-60 minutes, depending upon length of opening activities.</p>	<p>Art/Writing See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •

<p><u>Note</u>: may begin while some children are sleeping.</p> <p>Pick 3 interest areas for AM and 3 different interest areas for PM. Allow children to explore other areas or materials based on their interests or needs</p> <p>Art/Writing</p> <p>Blocks/Construction</p> <p>Dramatic Play</p> <p>Library</p> <p>Math/Manipulatives</p> <p>Sand/Water/Sensory Science/Discovery</p> <p>Small Group Exploration</p>	<p>Blocks/Construction See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
	<p>Dramatic Play See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
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	<p>Math/Manipulatives See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
	<p>Sand/Water/Sensory See AM choice time for ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
	<p>Science/Discovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
	<p>PM Small Group Exploration</p> <p>Plan hands-on activities related to the weekly focus that allow children to be creative and explore their own ideas. Let children know that they can all have a chance to participate. Allow children to opt out of an activity and offer another opportunity to try it later on. Give children enough time to thoroughly enjoy the experience so that they don't feel rushed. Adapt activities as needed to include infants and toddlers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

<p>PM Music and Movement 10 minutes</p>	<p>Choose songs and activities to build a sense of community and to develop fine and gross motor skills. End with a quiet song, fingerplay, or movement activity. Adults can dance with infants/toddlers so they can participate.</p> <p>Suggested Songs: (See Song Cards)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• <p>Activities (choose based on children's interests):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">••
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Reflection On Weekly Planner - Week Four

Success

Challenge

Next Steps

Suggested Books for Month Six

ELOF Goal: Approaches To Learning

***Building A House* by Byron Barton**-There are lots of different materials and tools used to build a house. Do you recognize any of them?

***Dreaming Up: A Celebration of Building* by Christy Hale**-What are the different materials we can use to build our own structures? See the children in this book use their materials. Do they look familiar?

***I Spy Little Book* by Jean Marzollo**-Use your investigative skills to find items in this little I spy book.

***Not a Box* by Antoinette Portis**-How many things can a box be? Find out what Rabbit thinks his box is. What would you imagine your box to be?

***What To Do With a Box* by Jane Yolen**-Two children use their imagination to turn their box into different buildings and places. How would you transform a box with your imagination and some supplies?

ELOF Goal: Cognition

***All the Buildings in New York I've Drawn So Far* by James Gulliver**-A collection of drawings of some of the most interesting buildings in New York. Can you recognize any of these?

***CRASH! BOOM! A Math Tale* by Robbie H. Harris**-Elephant uses his problem-solving skills to stop his blocks from "CRASH! BOOM!"

***Homes Around the World* by Clare Lewis**-Homes around the world could be very different. Let's compare the different types of homes in this book. How are they the same and different from our homes?

***Quinto's Neighborhood* by Ina Cumpiano**-Who are the people in your neighborhood? What kind of work do they do? These are the people in Quinto's neighborhood.

***Shapes, Shapes, Shapes* by Tana Hoban**-There are shapes all around us. They are used to construct houses, buildings and other structures too.

***What Happens Next?* By Cheryl Christian**-A sequencing book where children can make guesses about what they think will happen next and actively get involved by lifting the flap to see if their guess matches.

ELOF Goal: Language and Literacy

***Construction* by Sally Sutton**-What does it take to construct a library building? Can you use your body to show how you would help the builders?

***Demolition* by Sally Sutton**-Their demolishing a building! Watch and listen as the building comes down.

***The Napping House* by Audrey Wood**-Who is taking a nap with granny in the napping house? Find out what happens next when the wakeful flea decides to bite the mouse!

***The Ultimate Book of Cities* by Anne-Sophie Baumann**-Pull the tabs, lift the flaps to get an inside view of what is happening in the city!

***Whose Tools?* by Tony Buzzeo**-There are lots of different people that come together to build a house. Do you recognize all the tools they use?

ELOF Goal: Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

***Bigger! Bigger!* by Leslie Patricelli**-A little girl uses her imagination as she builds with blocks and watches her buildings get bigger and bigger!

***Call me Tree/Llamame Arbol* by Maya Christina Gonzalez** -Bilingual English/Spanish book showing children doing yoga poses.

***Pete the Cat: Construction Destruction* by James Dean**-The playground at Pete's school needs some repairs. What will Pete do to fix things?

***Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins**-Rosie is going on a neighborhood walk. How is her neighborhood different from yours? And who is that following her around?

***The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats**-It's snowing outside! And Peter is going for a walk. How does the snow make the neighborhood look different?

ELOF Goal: Social/Emotional Development

***Daniel's Good Day* by Micha Archer**-While Daniel walks to grandma's house, Daniel wants to know what makes a good day for his neighbors. What makes a good day for you?

***Froggy Builds a Treehouse* by Jonathan London**-Froggy built a treehouse, but will he let his sister and his other friends that are girls join him there?

***My Neighborhood* by Maddie Frost**- Look at how the people in our neighborhood help each other to keep things clean and safe.

***The Mixed Up Truck* by Stephen Savage**-It's the cement truck's first day at work. He keeps mistaking other white powders for cement. What does he end up making instead of a building? Sometimes we make mistakes and get mixed up!

***Two Homes* by Claire Masurel**-Alex shares his experiences when he's with Daddy, and when he's with Mommy. Sometimes parents live in two different homes.

Month Six Song Cards

<p>Hello Song (with children's home languages)</p> <p>Hola <i>child's name</i>, hola <i>child's name</i>! Someone in the room is singing Hola <i>child's name</i>! Uno, dos, tres, cuatro Who are we singing for? Elisabeth, that's you!</p> <p><i>Repeat song for each child, using words from their home language. Create a chart with the greeting words and numbers in each language (add phonetic spelling if desired) for easy reference. Include the teaching staff as well if they speak different languages.</i></p>	<p>The Hammer Song (Choose a name that reflects the diversity within your program.)</p> <p><u>Johnny</u> (or other name) works with 1 hammer, 1 hammer, 1 hammer. <u>Johnny</u> works with 1 hammer. (<i>Hammer one fist lightly on leg</i>) Then <u>he</u> works with 2. _____ works with 2 hammers, 2 hammers, 2 hammers. _____ works with 2 hammers. (<i>Hammer both fists on legs</i>) Then _____ works with 3. 3 hammers (<i>Hammer both fists on legs and one foot on the floor</i>) 4 hammers (<i>Hammer both fists on legs and both feet on floor</i>) 5 hammers (<i>Hammer both fists on legs, both feet on the floor, and nod head down and up</i>) Then _____ goes to sleep. (<i>Rest head on joined palms pretending to go to sleep</i>)</p>
<p>Ten In a Bed</p> <p>There were 10 in the bed, (<i>Hold up 10 fingers</i>) And the little one said, "Roll over! Roll over!" (<i>Roll arms like in Wheels on the Bus</i>) So they all rolled over and 1 fell out. There were 9 in the bed (<i>Hold up 9 fingers</i>) "Roll over! Roll over!" (<i>Roll arms like in Wheels on the Bus</i>) So they all rolled over and 1 fell out. (<i>Repeat until there is 1 left</i>) There was 1 in the bed, (<i>Hold up 1 finger</i>) And the little one said, "Good night!" (<i>Pretend to fall asleep</i>)</p>	<p>Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Turn Around</p> <p>Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around. (<i>Turn around</i>) Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground. (<i>Touch the ground</i>) Teddy bear, teddy bear, tie your shoes. (<i>Pretend to tie shoes</i>) Teddy bear, teddy bear, I love you! (<i>Blow a kiss</i>)</p> <p>Teddy bear, teddy bear, climb the stairs. (<i>Pretend to climb stairs</i>) Teddy bear, teddy bear, comb your hair. (<i>Pretend to comb hair</i>) Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn out the light. (<i>Pretend to turn off light</i>) Teddy bear, teddy bear, say goodnight. (<i>Pretend to go to sleep</i>)</p>

<p>Did You Ever See a Builder? (Sung to <i>Did You Ever See a Lassie?</i> melody)</p> <p>Did you ever see a builder, a builder, a builder? Did you ever see a builder hammer this way and that? Hammer this way and that way, hammer this way and that way. Did you ever see a builder hammer this way and that? (Add other verses: saw, drill, etc.)</p>	<p>Up to the Ceiling Down to the Floor</p> <p>Up to the ceiling. (<i>Raise arms up high</i>) Down to the floor. (<i>Lower arms</i>) Left to the window. (<i>Point left to window</i>) Right to the door. (<i>Point right to door</i>) This is my right hand - raise it high. (<i>Raise right hand and keep it raised</i>) This is my left hand- reach to the sky. (<i>Raise left hand, reaching both hands up</i>) Right hand, left hand, (<i>Lower arms and make fists</i>) Twirl them around. (<i>Roll arms like in Wheels on the Bus</i>) Left hand, right hand, Pound, pound, pound. (<i>Make fists and tap one fist on top of the other</i>)</p>
<p>London Bridge Is Falling Down</p> <p><i>Stand facing a partner, hold hands and raise arms up high to form a bridge. When you sing "My fair lady, lower arms to gently capture/hug whoever is under the bridge. Switch partners if children want to form part of the bridge.</i></p> <p>London Bridge is falling down, Falling down, falling down. London Bridge is falling down, My fair lady.</p> <p>Build it up with iron bars, iron bars, iron bars...</p> <p>Iron bars will bend and break, bend and break, bend and break...</p> <p>Build it up with silver and gold, silver and gold, silver and gold..</p> <p>London Bridge is falling down...</p>	<p>This is the Way (<i>to the tune of Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush</i>)</p> <p>This is the way we pound the nails, Pound the nails, Pound the nails. This is the way we pound the nails, So early in the morning.</p> <p><i>Repeat with other building actions and ask children for suggestions.</i></p>

Lesson Plans

Interlocking Blocks Neighborhoods

Objective

Children will make connections between life experiences and their imaginative play while building neighborhoods with interlocking blocks.

ELOF Goals

IT-ATL 7. Child shows interest in and curiosity about objects, materials, or events.

IT-C 12. Child uses objects or symbols to represent something else.

P-LC 2. Child understands and responds to increasingly complex communication and language from others.

P-ATL 13. Child uses imagination in play and interactions with others.

Materials and Instructions Musical Instruments:

Photos taken during neighborhood walks featuring houses, buildings and roads (or other images of familiar buildings for children to refer to as they build). See **Weekly Planner** and **book list** for ideas; masking tape; interlocking blocks

Ahead of Time:

Either print photos taken of the neighborhood featuring houses, buildings and roads or collect books with images for children to refer to as they build. You may opt to do both for variety if possible. Create roads on a tabletop or designated area of the floor using masking tape.

During the Small Group:

1. Invite the children to join you at the table or designated location. Introduce the photos to the children, allowing them the opportunity to explore the photos. You can elicit feedback by using open-ended questioning, such as:
 - "What do you notice about these photos?"
 - "How are the buildings/homes the same or different from each other?"
 - "How many buildings do you see here?" "How are they different/same?"
2. Support older **infants and toddlers** by using descriptive language to label actions or items that are in each photo.
 - "That's a car."
 - "The children on the school bus are going to school."
 - "Look at the yellow house!"
3. Invite the children to create their own neighborhoods by adding buildings and homes at the edges of the roads using the interlocking blocks. Consider taping photos of buildings onto the blocks.
4. Engage the children in conversation about their creations.
 - "What kind of homes or buildings did you add to your neighborhood?"

"Who lives there?"

Creating an Inclusive Environment

- Include text in children's home languages.
- Use large, laminated photos so children can bend and manipulate the photos easily.

Extension Activities

- Take photos of the children creating their neighborhoods. Document their comments as they work. Create a book for your library with the photos and comments the children made and add photos you have taken during your neighborhood walks. Have the children come up with a title for their "neighborhood book."
- Keep the book in a place where all children can access it to look at on their own. Invite families to look at the book with their children when families are in your home.
- Consider making an additional copy for children to borrow so they can share it with family members at home.

Observations and Planning

- ⊘ How did children interact with the photos?
- ⊘ What was a common theme that emerged as you were working with the children?
- ⊘ How did the children respond when you wrote down what they said? Did they show interest in what you were writing?
- ⊘ Did the children explore the book once it was available to them? If so, what were some of the reactions to the pictures?
- ⊘ Did the child turn the pages of the book or point to words on the page?

Building with Recycled Materials

Objective

Children will create structures using recycled materials.

ELOF Goals

IT-ATL 3. Child maintains focus and sustains attention with support.

IT-ATL 8. Child uses creativity to increase understanding and learning.

P-ATL 7. Child persists in tasks.

P-ATL 10. Child demonstrates initiative and independence.

Materials

Recycled materials, such as (but not limited to), paper towel rolls, boxes, milk containers, lids, craft sticks, cork, pvc pipes, wood shapes or scraps, wood glue, cardboard, and paint. Have images of familiar buildings and/or books about different types of buildings available for children to refer to as desired (see **Weekly Planner** and **book list** for ideas).

Note: Your local hardware stores may be willing to donate wood pieces and pvc pipes, be sure to sand down any materials with sharp or rough edges before giving children access to these materials.

Ahead of Time

Prepare and sort materials ahead of time so that the children can manipulate materials independently. Have enough of each material so children do not have to share.

During Small Group

1. Invite the children to join you at the table or other designated location. Introduce the materials that are available for the children to explore. Allow them to explore without guidance or prompting. Have children freely explore the materials before giving them access to the glue or paint. Encourage them to use their imaginations to build and rebuild as they explore different ways to stack or organize the materials. Support their exploration by using descriptive language to narrate their actions and asking open-ended questioning, such as:

"I see you put the (_____) next to the (_____)."

"What do you think will happen if you _____?"

"I notice you're trying to balance the (_____) on top of the (_____), but it keeps falling off. I wonder what else you could try?"

2. As the week progresses, offer children pictures of familiar homes and buildings in the neighborhood, as well as other buildings that children may be familiar with. If possible, add books from the **book list** that feature different types of homes/buildings that the children may not be familiar with yet, but are interested in. Invite them to share what they notice about the buildings--their shapes, their sizes, etc. Add wood glue and paint. Allow children to be creative and explore their own ideas. **Focus on the process and not the final product:** Allow the children to explore the materials at their own pace. Encourage problem-solving by asking open-ended questions, such as:
 - "How else could you use these materials to build?"*
 - "What other materials might you need to build your structure?"*
 - "What materials might you need as a foundation for your structure?"*
3. Over the course of the week take photos of children as they explore the materials and write down what they say, using their exact words to document the learning process. Create a wall display at children's eye level, photo album or book to share with the children and families.

Creating an Inclusive Environment

- Allow children to be active observers: some children may want to stand and observe the activities before joining in.
- Invite families to write/label buildings or landmarks in their home language.

Infants and Toddlers

- Start with two or three types of items they can easily manipulate. Be sure to have more than one of each so they don't have to share.
- Support older **infants and toddlers** by using descriptive language to label actions or items.
 - "Taniesha stacked up 3 boxes then knocked them down."*
 - "Mei put the big box on top of the small box."*
- **Infants and Toddlers** can glue items they can easily manipulate onto cardboard by dipping the item onto a shallow plate of glue then onto their cardboard. Adults can assist as needed. Allow children to place their items wherever they prefer. **Focus on the process and not the final product.**

Extension Activities

- Introduce books that include pictures of different buildings around New York City and around the world. See **Weekly Planner** and **book list** for ideas.
- Invite families to bring in souvenirs or images of places they may have visited that include structures. These items can be used as visual prompts while children are creating their structures.
 - **Note:** Please make sure that any items shared are not precious and would be suitable for young children to handle as you cannot be responsible for keeping these items intact.
- Consider adding in additional materials to expand the children's imagination.

- Invite families to share their knowledge about buildings, construction or real estate. Invite them to share items related to their work in any of these fields.

Observations and Planning

- What did the children find most interesting? What was least interesting for them?
- What adaptations, if any, were needed?
- Were there recurring words or topics of interest that arose during children's exploration?
- How might you expand on this activity next time?

Building with Blocks

Objective

Children will read a story about block building and then develop their math skills while building with blocks.

ELOF Goals

Goal IT-C 2. Child uses a variety of strategies in solving problems.

Goal IT-C 8. Child develops sense of number and quantity.

P-MATH 4: Child compares numbers.

P-MATH 8. Child measures objects by their various attributes using standard and non-standard measurement. Uses differences in attributes to make comparisons.

Materials

Unit blocks, cardboard blocks or other large size building blocks (homemade blocks or small boxes); soft blocks or foam blocks for **infants and toddlers**. Have enough materials so children do not have to share. Add books about block building and construction to the Block Area (see **Weekly Planner** and **Book List** for suggestions).

Ahead of Time:

1. Prepare a batch of cloud dough to use as a sample (4 cups flour: ½ cup vegetable oil)
2. Divide flour evenly into plastic cups. Fill a small bowl with vegetable oil.
3. If desired, use photos or drawings to create a child friendly version of the recipe.

During Small Group

1. Invite the children to join you in the block area. Read the book or do a puppet show with the children and discuss what happened as the characters tried to build with the blocks. Place the book along with other relevant books in the block area for children to refer to if desired and invite children to freely explore how they can use the blocks to build.
2. Observe how children are using the blocks and use descriptive language to narrate their play:
"Ingrid used two tall blocks and then put a short block on top."
"D'Angelo stacked two small blocks and one long block."
"Manuela stacked up four blocks and knocked them down! Crash! Boom!"
3. As children use the blocks, gently draw their attention to the shape of the blocks and encourage them to compare the different sides (faces) of the blocks- are they the same or different? Use your finger to trace the sides of a block and invite children to help identify the shapes that they see on each face of the block. Use vocabulary such as *bigger, smaller, narrow, wide, short, tall, long, high and low* to support children in making comparisons.

4. Involve children in conversations about which types of blocks they use and how they are using them in various ways (ex. banging them together, carrying them, lining them up, stacking them, knocking them down, etc.).
5. Invite children to count how many blocks they use. Model using your finger to point at each block while you count together and state the total number when done (ex. "1, 2, 3, 4, 5 blocks. You have 5 blocks.") Invite children to practice counting on their own. Observe how children are attempting to count and how they verbally count.
6. Celebrate their attempts and provide additional support as needed.
7. Invite children to explore different ways to build towers. Encourage them to continue building if their structures fall down or are knocked over. Offer assistance as needed but try not to build for the children. For **infants and toddlers**, see note below.
8. Invite children to see how high they can build their towers. Can they build a tower as tall as they are?
9. Invite more experienced builders to compare the size of their towers. How are they the same or different? Which ones are sturdy/wobbly? How many blocks are in each tower? How could they make their towers taller? Sturdier?
"I see that Yuri and Dani both used five blocks, but Yuri's tower is higher. I wonder why?"
"I notice that when you put the _____ on top of the _____ it fell off. What else could you try to keep it from falling next time?"
"You used wide blocks on the bottom of your tower and narrow ones on top. You made a sturdy base."
10. Compare the blocks you have available with those used in the picture book you read. Are the blocks similar or different? See if any children wish to create something similar with their own blocks. If not, allow children to explore their own interests as they build and encourage them to creatively problem-solve as they build.
"So, you like that structure in the book. Let's see which blocks we could use to make something similar."
"What do you think will happen if you _____?"

Infants and Toddlers

- Provide infants and toddlers with age-appropriate blocks. If the infants and toddlers are more interested in knocking down structures than in building them up, offer them a separate space or time to explore blocks in their own way.
- Offer to build a tower with them and let them knock it down. This tends to be a very enjoyable experience for them, especially if you act surprised each time, they knock the tower down!
- Invite older children to create structures for younger children to knock down. Be certain the older children understand that the goal of the "game" is for the infant/toddler to knock it down.

Creating an Inclusive Environment

- Allow children to be active observers, some children may want to observe before joining in.
- Some children may not like the sound of blocks falling down and may prefer building out rather than up. Use similar math vocabulary and problem-solving strategies to support their exploration.
- Encourage children with sound sensitivities to use their hands to cover their ears before the blocks are knocked over. Consider building on a rug in these instances for a muffled sound.

Extension Activities

- Place books in the block area that depict pictures of different buildings around New York City and around the world.
- Add photos or other items that can be used as visual prompts while children are creating their structures.
- Consider adding in additional materials to expand the children's imagination.
- Invite families to share their knowledge about buildings, construction or real estate. Invite them to share items related to their work.

Observations and Planning

- Were the children actively engaged in this activity and for how long?
- What did the children find most interesting? What was least interesting for them?
- What adaptations, if any, were needed?
- Were there recurring words or topics of interest that arose during children's exploration?
- How might you expand on this activity next time?

Reference: Haynes-Berry, M. & Grandau, L. 2019. *Where's the Math? Books, Games & Routines to Spark Children's Thinking*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Yoga Poses: Neighborhood/Buildings

Here is an additional set of poses for young children that can help them to stretch and relax as they connect to the focus on neighborhoods, buildings and construction. These poses can be done a few at a time or in a full sequence depending upon children's interests and abilities. There are many books and websites with more details about how to do yoga poses with children. Creating a poster or set of yoga cards can be helpful so that children have a visual reference.

Building pose (Mountain pose): Stand tall, feet hip width apart, keeping arms straight at your sides. Breathe in and out, feeling the ground underneath your feet. Can you stand strong and steady like a building?

Skyscraper pose (Extended mountain pose): While in building/mountain pose, reach arms overhead with palms touching and look up to the sky. Can you stand as tall as a skyscraper? Breathe in and out.

Tree pose: From skyscraper/extended mountain pose, turn right foot out so knee is to the side and slide foot up the left leg to the calf or knee. Keep arms overhead or hold out to the side for balance. Look straight ahead. Lower foot as needed to keep balance. Breathe in and out. Repeat on the other side. What kind of a tree do you want to be - tall, wide, straight or swaying from side to side?

Tabletop pose: Come to all fours, with hands under shoulders and knees under hips. Keep back straight and feet flat on the floor. Breathe in and out. Can you keep your back flat like a tabletop?

Plank pose: From tabletop pose, keep arms straight under shoulders and tuck toes under. Step back to straighten legs. Try to keep back flat to form a straight line from head to heels. Breathe in and out. Can you hold yourself as steady and strong as a piece of wood?

Bridge or ramp pose: Lay down with your back on the floor. Bend knees and keep feet flat on the floor. Rest arms alongside your body. Tuck chin into chest and breath in as you lift up buttocks and back to create a bridge or ramp. Can you lift your back high enough for a car to pass underneath? Breathe in and out. Exhale as you slowly lower back to the floor.

Floor pose: Lay flat on ground, arms outstretched by your side, palms up. Rest with legs straight and feet relaxed. Close your eyes and breathe in and out deeply as you feel your body sink into the floor.

Family Bingo!

Bringing the Program Home

The DECE invites you to encourage families to extend learning activities done in the program at home. These should be opportunities for families to engage in meaningful play-based interactions and enrichment opportunities that connect to or build on program activities.

The opportunities should include a variety of options and choices. One suggestion is to employ a bingo card-like format with 9 to 16 squares, each with a suggested activity that ties to your current explorations or other activities or themes in the program. Rather than requiring families to complete any of these activities, playfully encourage them. For example, you may invite families to do a bingo challenge, and circle each completed activity in colorful marker. They can see how many they can complete together with their child each week or month! Providers and families are invited to add their own ideas to the blank squares based on children's interests, activities in the program, and cultural resources. Families can also be invited to add their own activities.

Bingo cards should be translated into families' preferred languages using the resources of your network, the DOE or, where necessary and helpful, Google Translate.

All families should also be encouraged to talk, read or tell stories, and sing with their children daily in their home language and/or English, and be provided with supportive and positive information about the benefits of these activities for all young children. Please talk with your network Education Specialist if you are interested in appropriate materials to share with families. Where possible, we encourage providers and/or networks to create lending libraries from which families can borrow age-appropriate books to read to or look at with their children at home.

Note that, as per the 3K for All Policy Handbook (p. 189), worksheets are considered inappropriate assignments in 3K and PreK. If you would like additional support or suggestions regarding how to extend learning to home in your particular program or community, please speak with your Network Education Specialist.

Here are some additional and alternative resources you may wish to share with families, that also include suggested activities:

- [All the Way to K and Beyond](#)
- [Talking is Teaching](#)

Family Bingo! - February

We invite you to pick activities to do together with your child or children. The goal is for children and caregivers to spend a few minutes together with limited distractions, having fun, learning, and delighting in each other. How many can you do together this month? Which one will you start with today? This month's topic is homes, buildings, and neighborhoods.

Let's take a walk and see what kinds of buildings we see. What are your favorite buildings in our neighborhood? What do you like about them?	Let's see what materials we have around our home that we can build with. Paper cups? Cardboard boxes from tissues, packages, or jewelry? Let's see what we can make with the materials. How tall can we stack them? What do the materials feel like?	Let's look at our building from outside. What are all the words we can think of to describe our building? Tell me about the color, size, shapes you see, letters, words or numbers, materials used, and anything else you can think of. I'll write down (or draw pictures of) the words you use!	Of all the places you've visited, where would you want to live? What would your dream house have in it?
Let's see how many windows and doors we can find in our home. Let's keep track of how many we find with tally marks.	Let's talk about all the places in the neighborhood you like to go. Tell me about what you like to do there. Is there any place you <i>don't</i> like to go? Why not?	Let's find a comfortable place to sit in the neighborhood. We're going to get really still and quiet, and then listen for all the sounds we can hear. What do <i>you</i> hear? What do you hear that sounds far away? What do you hear that is nearby?	Let's bring some crayons to a favorite place to sit in our neighborhood and draw what we see. It's okay if our drawings look a little different (or a lot different!) from the real world.
Let's go on a search around a park! Can you find: a playground? 4 rocks? 1 white rock? A stick longer than your arm? 3 lamp posts? 1 blade of grass? A sewer grates?	Let's count how many trees are on our block! Can you collect a leaf from each tree? Let's lay them all out and see how they are similar and different from one another	Let's try the yoga pose cards we got from your program! We can do the poses together. I'll help you.	Let's make some ramps! What can we use? Consider trying a variety of materials, including books, blocks, and cardboard. What can we roll down our ramp? Vehicles, balls, empty plastic bottles?
Let's use some big cardboard boxes to make something! (If we don't have any, we can ask for discards from neighborhood stores) Should we cut windows and doors to make a house for a stuffed animal? We can use the box to play peekaboo too!	Let's make something else out of a box, using scissors, markers, paper, and other materials. Should we make a garage for cars? A hospital for sick animals?		