

**DRAFT PICCOLO-B (for babies): Additional Considerations for Observations
with Infants 4-9 Months Old**

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Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes (PICCOLO)
(Roggman, Cook, Innocenti, Jump Norman, & Christiansen, 2013)

Affection

| | | <i>Description</i> | <i>Item Notes</i> | <i>Additional Considerations for Infants 4-9 months</i> |
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| 1 | Speaks in a warm tone of voice | Parent’s voice is positive in tone, and may show enthusiasm or tenderness. A parent who speaks little but very warmly should be coded highly. | Flat and toneless or sarcastic and demanding voices are not warm. Score as 0 unless there were some moments of warmth. Warmth may sound like <i>motherese</i> (e.g., exaggerated intonation, high pitch), though not always. Enjoyment and interest may also sound warm. The parent’s voice cannot be harsh and warm at the same time. Sometimes a parent is warm at the beginning but the warmth fades, so the last part of the observation is important to consider. For a score of 2, the parent’s voice should be mostly warm throughout. | Parent addresses infant in a voice that gets his/her attention by using a variety of high and low pitches or soft to loud tones that show enthusiasm or tenderness. |
| 2 | Smiles at child | Parent directs smiles toward child, but they do not need to be looking at each other when smile occurs. Includes small smiles. | For a score of 2, the parent should smile about once per minute and needs to be looking at or clearly facing the child. Smiling should be about the child. Ignore smiles to the camera or to another child or adult or smiling about something funny in a book or toy. Also ignore smiles that seem to be from nervous laughter or self-consciousness. The child does NOT have to be looking at the parent. | Parent smiles appropriately at infant, especially when child is engaged, but when infant is distressed may offer small sympathetic or reassuring smiles. |
| 3 | Praises child | Parent says something positive about child characteristics or about what child is doing. A “thank you” can be coded as praise. | Praise is always in a positive tone, in response to child behavior, and <i>after</i> rather than <i>during</i> the child’s behavior. Praise is typically in response to the child’s accomplishment or compliance. It includes <i>yeah</i> and <i>all right</i> if the words are a clear, positive response to something the child has done. Consider cultural context and slang (e.g., <i>sweet</i> , <i>cool</i>). Sometimes praise can also be coded as “positive expressions” or “shows emotional support” but not always, so | Parent may also express any positively toned vocalization that is contingent on infant behavior. Cheering or clapping counts for any age. |

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| | | | consider guidelines carefully. Consider missed opportunities: The parent frequently asks the child to do something but never or rarely praises the child when he or she complies. | |
| 4 | Is physically close to child | Parent is within easy arm’s reach of child, comfortably able to soothe or help. Consider context: expect more closeness for book reading than for playing house. | The parent should be close enough to the child to easily soothe, show affection, or give or get help or reassurance. The parent should be no more than an arm’s length away. The parent should not be avoiding physical proximity or contact. Look at the parent’s body posture: leaning toward the child, showing physical affection, or repositioning to remain close. | Also include gentle touching and holding infant in comfortable position. |
| 5 | Uses positive expressions | Parent says positive things, or uses words like “honey,” “kiddo,” or an affectionate nickname. NOTE: emphasis on verbal expressions | Consider other terms such as <i>son</i> , <i>buddy</i> , and <i>mijo</i> . Consider the cultural and language context (e.g., diminutives in Spanish). Other positive expressions include <i>I love you</i> , <i>You are so silly</i> , <i>You are my baboo</i> , and <i>Are you my little girl?</i> Compliments that are not praise for specific behaviors (e.g., <i>You are pretty like your mommy</i>) can also be considered positive expressions. A shortened form of a name (e.g., “Ty” for Tyler) may be used as a positive expression but is weaker than a more affectionate nickname. Terms that are more strongly positive or affectionate carry more weight for scoring this item. | |
| 6 | Is engaged in interacting with child | Parent is actively involved together <i>with</i> child, not just with activities or with another adult. | This item is not scoring <i>parallel play</i> , when parent and child are each playing but doing their own thing next to each other. The parent and child need to be playing together and focused on the same activity with the parent being neither directive nor passive. For younger children, the parent is typically engaging with the same toy as the child, but with more verbal children, the parent may just be talking about the toy or the child’s behavior. For a score of 2, the parent is involved most of the time. | Parent may blend play activities with caregiving routines and shares looks, smiles, touch, and conversations while engaged with infant. |
| 7 | Shows emotional warmth | Parent shows enjoyment, fondness, or other positive emotion about the child and directed to child. NOTE: includes verbal but emphasis on nonverbal | Consider the overall feeling—the parent is having a good time with the child, is positive and interested throughout, and is not bored or wondering how much longer he or she has to play with the child. Physical affection shows warmth. Consider the parent’s interest along with warmth, but if the parent is showing some interest but his or her overall emotion is flat, score as 0 unless positive interest is truly directed toward the child and the child is clearly aware of the interest. | |

Responsiveness

| | | <i>Description</i> | <i>Item Notes</i> | Additional Considerations for Infants 4-9 months |
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| 1 | Pays attention to what child is doing | Parent looks at and reacts to what child is doing by making comments, showing interest, helping, or otherwise attending to child’s actions. | The parent is paying enough attention that the parent could (if asked) describe what the child is doing during most of the observation. Consider missed opportunities: The child tries to show the parent something or calls to the parent and the parent does not look, make comments, or show much interest. Parent engagement in the activity is not required for this item if the parent watches and reacts. | Parent shows awareness of infant’s cues for attention and (e.g., body movements, gestures, vocalizations and facial expressions). Parent also may show awareness of when the infant is overstimulated or needs a break from the activities. |
| 2 | Changes pace or activity to meet child’s interests or needs | Parent tries a new activity or speeds up or slows down an activity in response to where child looks, what child reaches for, what child says, or emotions child shows. | The parent initiates the change to keep the child engaged in response to the child getting bored or frustrated. For example, the child is bored with hearing the story so the parent starts asking questions or the child is trying to do something difficult so the parent slows down and gives hints. If the child never loses interest or never tries something difficult, or the parent does not change the pace, score as 0. If the parent never adapts to the child’s pace—moves too quickly to a new activity or sticks with an activity too long—score as 0. If the child loses interest right away after the parent has changed the pace or activity, score as 1. The parent can also be scored for changing pace if he or she suggests a new activity but the child does not want to do it and the parent sticks with what the child is already doing. | Engages infant when alert, awake and ready to play. Parent ends or slows down the interaction when the infant seems overwhelmed or disengages. Parent discovers what sights, sounds, touches and movements bring infant pleasure, keep infant calm or foster infant’s attention. |
| 3 | Is flexible about child’s change of activities or interests | Parent accepts a child’s choice of a new activity or toy, shows enthusiasm about child’s choices, or allows child to play in unusual ways with or without toys. | The parent supports the child’s initiation. For example, the parent lets the child choose how or when to turn the pages in a book, lets the child explore toys, and is neither directive nor passive. If the child does not initiate anything, score as 0. If the parent is passive or uninvolved, score as 0 because he or she is not being flexible—the parent has to change something he or she is doing, not just go from nothing to nothing. | Parent accepts infant’s level of engagement or change of interest and does not persist at play when the infant loses interest or try to wake a sleeping infant or put an active and engaged infant to sleep. |
| 4 | Follows what child is trying to do | Parent both responds to and gets involved with child’s activities. | This item involves yielding to the child’s interests and motivation and doing what the child seems to want or attending to what the child seems interested in. It includes behaviors like repeating what the child says and imitating what the child does, engaging as a play partner in play the child initiates, and helping the child do | Parent takes time to assist infant in play and exploration, to follow the child’s gaze, to make toys of interest available, or to join in an activity. Notices |

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| | | | something if the child is struggling. It involves more than just talking about the toys. If the child does nothing, the parent cannot follow, so score this item as 0. If the child makes only a few initiations but the parent follows each one and gets involved, score as 2. | where child is looking and moves child closer to what they are interested in. Imitates baby |
| 5 | Responds to child's emotions | Parent reacts to child's positive or negative feelings by showing understanding or acceptance, suggesting a solution, re-engaging the child, labeling or describing the feeling, showing a similar feeling, or providing sympathy for negative feelings. | For a 2, the parent frequently matches the child's expression and intensity of feeling and is neither flat nor harsh. This might be subtle, but a child is always displaying an emotion, even if it is not strong or animated. If a child is disengaged, that is an emotion, and the parent's appropriate response would be to reengage the child in some way or to provide an opportunity for quieter play or rest. The parent may describe emotions by saying what the child likes: <i>You really like playing with cars, don't you?</i> or <i>You don't like the sound that makes, do you?</i> or <i>It feels good, huh?</i> Consider missed opportunities; for example, if the child is excited about a toy but the parent's emotional expression remains flat. | Parent anticipates and responds to the sounds, movements, gestures and facial expressions infant uses when expressing joy, distress, surprise, or any other feeling. |
| 6 | Looks at child when child talks or makes sounds | When child makes sounds, parent's eyes focus on child's face or (if eyes or child's face are not visible) parent's position and head movement face toward child. | Other than reading in the lap, the parent generally looks at the child when the child talks. The parent may turn toward the child or simply flash eyes toward the child most of the time when the child vocalizes or speaks. If the parent is already looking in the direction of the child when the child begins to vocalize, then the parent is looking at the child when the child talks or makes sounds. If parent and child are both looking at the same object and talking about it or the parent orients toward the object the child is talking about, that is joint attention and a good parenting behavior, but it does not fit this item. Consider missed opportunities: The child calls to the parent or makes sounds, and the parent does not look toward the child. | Parent looks at infant when infant vocalizes and/or gestures (e.g., arms in air to signal <i>up</i>) for communication and attention. |
| 7 | Replies to child's sounds or words | Parent repeats what child says or sounds child makes, talks about what child says or could be saying, or answers child's questions. | For a 2, the parent responds to most of the child's vocal sounds. If the child makes no sounds, score as 0. If the child makes only one or two sounds but the parent is consistently responsive, score as 2. Some replies, such as <i>uh huh</i> may seem unresponsive; if so, score lower. Consistency is more important than frequency. Consider missed opportunities: The child is talking or making sounds, and the parent says nothing or says very little. | Parent replies with vocalizations to infant's communication attempts that include any sounds—cooing, whining, laughing, babbling, etc. Includes imitation of child's sounds. |

Encouragement

| | | <i>Description</i> | <i>Item Notes</i> | Additional Considerations for Infants 4-9 months |
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| 1 | Waits for child’s response after making a suggestion | Parent pauses after saying something the child could do and waits for child to answer or do something, whether child actually responds or not. | The parent makes a suggestion for the child to do something specific and then pauses and does not do the activity or action suggested, move the child’s hands, or do anything further to interfere with what the child is doing—the opposite of intrusive play. Waiting often looks like the parent is leaning back, has dropped hands, is relaxing, and has an expression of openness and patience. The parent may repeat the suggestion after a few seconds but the tone does not feel impatient or demanding. Suggestions may be phrased as questions, such as <i>Do you want to play with the ball?</i> or <i>How about we put the blocks in the basket?</i> The parent may begin the behavior but then pause to wait for the child’s response. This item does not include questions that ask for information, such as <i>What’s that?</i> | Suggestions may be nonverbal . Parent may attempt to initiate play, such as by making a play face or doing the first step in a sequence (e.g., clapping hands), or by offering a toy, but then waits to see infant response before proceeding. Does not continue if infant does not respond or show interest. |
| 2 | Encourages child to handle toys | Parent offers toys or says positive things when child shows obvious interest in toys. (Does not include preventing children from mouthing toys.) | This item includes handing toys to the child, showing toys to the child, moving toys closer to the child, demonstrating something with the toy, highlighting toys by moving or using them, making noise with a toy to attract attention, or praising what the child does with the toys. This item could also include imitating what the child does with a toy without interfering or interrupting what the child is doing. The object does not have to be a toy. This item does not include passively watching. | Parent provides opportunities for infant to reach out for, grasp or inspect toys or safe objects. |
| 3 | Supports child in making choices | Parent allows child to choose activity or toy and gets involved with activity or toy child chooses at the time. | The parent can accept the child’s choices and get involved or can offer choices and get involved. The parent can offer genuine choices verbally, such as by asking, <i>Which one do you want?</i> or by describing choices or offering alternative suggestions that are true options. Rhetorical questions such as, <i>Do you want me to read the book?</i> , while opening the book and starting to read, do not offer a choice. The parent can offer choices nonverbally by putting more than one toy in reach. | Parent offers choices of toys and activities and bases play on infant’s positive response. May include any kind of play, but should truly offer a choice based on infant’s initiation or infant’s positive response. A choice can be a simple yes/no choice (e.g., parent holds a rattle within the infant’s reach, the infant looks away, and the parent stops |

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| | | | | offering the rattle) or a choice between toys or activities (e.g., parent holds a rattle and a ball toward infant for infant to choose). |
| 4 | Supports child in doing things on his/her own | Parent shows enthusiasm for things child tries to do without help, lets child choose how things are done, and lets child try to do things before offering help or suggestions. Parent can be engaged in activities child does “on his/her own”. | To get a score of 2, the child must try to do something on her or her own <i>and</i> parent should clearly do at least two of the following three things: 1) show enthusiasm, 2) let the child choose, and 3) let the child try without help. However, even if the parent does not offer help or does not make a suggestion, the parent should still be watching, waiting, and showing interest and positive response to what the child does on his or her own without interfering in order to get a score of 2. If the parent does any one of these things—shows enthusiasm or lets the child choose or lets the child try without help, score as 1. If the parent also interferes with the child doing things on his or her own by criticizing or not letting the child have choices, or not letting the child try to do things before offering help or suggestions, do not score as more than a 1. If the child does not try to do anything on his or her own, score as 0. | Parent encourages infant to try activities available such as setting up opportunities for infant to roll, sit, crawl or stand, reach for a rattle, pull a string toy, insert a puzzle piece, eat finger foods, or hold and turn pages in a book. |
| 5 | Verbally encourages child’s efforts | Parent shows verbal enthusiasm, offers positive comments, or makes suggestions about child’s activity. | This item includes the parent cheering the child on as the child tries to do something. Examples include: <i>Go ahead, You can do it, Try again, You are really working hard, Go for it, You can do it, You’re getting it, Keep trying, and Try it [slower, faster, softer, harder]</i> . Responses could include describing what the child is doing, such as <i>You are putting all the blocks in the box</i> or <i>You are stacking the blocks carefully</i> . This item also includes praise that is for effort: <i>There you go</i> or <i>You did it</i> . This behavior is most likely when the activity is challenging for the child. Consider missed opportunities: The child is trying hard, but the parent does not encourage before, during, or after the event. | Parent talks to infant using labels to describe child’s motivation or interest (e.g. “Oh, you want the ball!”) and encourages infant’s efforts (e.g., “You can get it!”). |
| 6 | Offers suggestions to help child | Parent gives hints or makes comments to make things easier for child without interfering with child’s play. | The suggestions have to be helpful—something that will make it easier for the child to do what the child seems to be trying to do. Examples include <i>It’s upside down, Push harder, and Turn it over</i> . This item also includes hints, such as after asking the child, “What’s that?” the parent may say, “Remember, we saw one at grandma’s house last night?” Or | May include-adapting environment by moving a toy closer, pointing to or touching an object, demonstrating what to do with a toy, or positioning the infant to make it easier to reach or see |

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| | | | if the child is counting or saying the alphabet and gets stuck, the parent may give a hint by saying the next number or letter. Consider missed opportunities: The child is struggling, but the parent offers no suggestions. | something the child is already interested in . Physical guidance to help child use a toy they are trying to use can be helpful but only if not intrusive and does not interrupt the child's play. |
| 7 | Shows enthusiasm about what child is doing | Parent makes positive statements, claps hands, or shows other clear positive response to what child is <i>doing</i> , including quiet enthusiasm such as patting child, nodding, smiling, or asking child questions about activities. | The enthusiasm needs to be about the child's behavior, not for the toys or the parent's own ideas. Notice quiet parents' enthusiasm shown by nods, interest, and questions. Consider missed opportunities: The parent does not seem enthusiastic or interested when the child is excited about the activity. | Parent responds to infant's efforts to do something by making a positive expression, either verbal or non-verbal. |

Teaching

| | | <i>Description</i> | <i>Item Notes</i> | Additional Considerations for Infants 4-9 months |
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| 1 | Explains reasons for something to child | Parent says something that could answer a "why" question, whether child asks a question or not. | The parent's reasons generally have a causal structure and explain how things happen or why they happen, or what happens to something. Some parents use the words <i>so</i> or <i>because</i> or <i>if...then</i> . Examples include: <i>Put the lid on so it won't spill</i> or <i>It can spill if the lid isn't tight because it can come out through the gap between the bottle and the lid</i> or <i>We have to cook the food so we can eat it</i> or <i>If you don't cook the food, then it will make us sick</i> . Explaining how things happen can be a description of a process, such as <i>The snow is on the ground in the winter, but when spring comes it starts to warm up and melt into water for the flowers</i> . This is a less frequent behavior, so one extended or complex explanation can be scored as a 2. | Parent explains actions during play or daily routines such as diaper changes (e.g., "I have to change your diaper because you are so wet!"). |

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| 2 | Suggests activities to extend what child is doing | Parent says something child could do to add to what child is already doing, but does not interrupt child’s interests, actions, or play. | Suggestions must build on what the child is already doing by stating what the child can do to add to how the child is already playing, expand on the play, or make the play more complex. Suggestions to extend play must both build on what the child is doing and add to it in some way. | Parent helps infant extend a game like peek-a-boo (e.g., by showing the infant how to move from covering her face with a hand to pulling of a cloth off her face) or helps infant add new actions with objects (e.g., stacking 2 blocks instead of just banging them) or discover new actions that can make things happen (e.g., turning different knobs on a busy box) or extend motor skills (e.g., assists infant in moving from prone to sitting during play). |
| 3 | Repeats or expands words | Parent says the same words or makes the same sounds the child makes or repeats what child says while adding something that adds to the idea. | The parent repeats the child’s exact words or repeats the child’s sounds, or expands by adding words or sounds to what the child says. If the child says, “Doggie,” the parent may say, “That’s right; it’s a doggie.” Or expand with more complexity, such as saying, “Yeah, it’s a big brown doggie sitting by his dog house.” | Parent repeats infant’s early words, sounds or vocal inflections and voices meaning to them (e.g., if infant says <i>ba</i> , the parent may say, “Ball,” or put it in a sentence, “That’s right, it’s a ball!”) or simply reacts by expanding on the child’s sounds in a conversational style (e.g., in response to babbling, “That’s right, that’s exactly what happened.”) |
| 4 | Labels objects or actions for child | Parent names what child is doing, playing with, or looking at. | Nouns and verbs are labels for objects and actions: <i>It’s a stove, and you can cook with it.</i> When the parent says things like, “The book has a hole,” the parent is labeling both the book and the hole. Labels often occur naturally as part of conversation and can be easy to miss. The parent points to pictures in the book: <i>See here, she is spinning the web,</i> labeling both action (<i>spinning</i>) and object (<i>web</i>); <i>That’s a stethoscope,</i> labeling an object (<i>stethoscope</i>); <i>You’re giving more medicine to the bear,</i> labeling both action (<i>giving</i>) and objects (<i>medicine, bear</i>). Consider diversity of materials and actions available to label. | Parent labels familiar object names (e.g. “book”) or actions (e.g., “Should we read the book?”) With younger infants, labels are often in the form of questions, “Is that a doggie?” |
| 5 | Engages in | Parent plays make believe in any way – for example, | Pretending can occur by taking on a role (fighting in rough and tumble play, being the patient in doctor play), using an object | Early pretending may include playfully pretending to eat the |

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| | pretend play with child | by “eating” pretend food. | to represent something else (pretending a block is a car by moving it on the floor and making car sounds), pretending something is real (eating the pizza, saying the food is hot, making animal sounds for little plastic animals, making car sounds for cars, or making dolls talk), or pretending to be the characters in a book (animating voice and facial expression while reading). The parent needs to be actually pretending, such as by making a statement “as if” the pretending is real, not just narrating the child’s pretending. For example, not just saying, “You can pretend to make supper,” but “Please make me supper.” Not just, “Put the groceries in the cart” but “What else do we need to buy?” It is not enough for parent to describe the child’s pretending; the parent must be pretending too in some way. | baby, ‘gonna get you’ games with self or objects (e.g., ‘here comes the bear to get you’), playing peekaboo or hide and seek with objects (e.g., saying “Where did the doggie go?”). Sometimes a parent may pretend to be the baby—for example by pretending to drink from the bottle—to make the baby laugh. |
| 6 | Does activities in a sequence of steps | Parent demonstrates or describes the order of steps or does an activity in a way that a definite order of steps is clear even if parent does not say exactly what the steps are. Book reading counts only if parent makes the steps explicit by exaggerating or explaining the steps of reading. | Steps need to occur close together with clear linkage and not be broken up with other activities in between. The step-by-step sequence should be something you could describe easily in words: “First, the child gives the parent the thing to buy. Then, the parent scans it. Then, the child gives her the next thing, and she scans it. They do that for each thing, and then she tells him how much he owes.” A sequence of steps often gets repeated, described in words, or explicitly demonstrated in steps. If there is no description or repetition, the demonstration should be of something that could not be done in another sequence (e.g., take the lid off the pot, put something in the pot, stir it, and put the lid back on). Game-like routines like peekaboo typically follow a specific sequence of steps. If a parent says something like “We have to put these toys away first before we can get the other toys out,” and then does that, it counts as a sequence of steps. Include counting and the order of book reading <i>only</i> when the parent is explicitly teaching how to count or how to look at a book. | Parent assists infant with sequencing through game-like routines (e.g., peekaboo, or “gonna get you games”), action songs (e.g., “Pat-A-Cake”), sequential tasks (e.g., filling containers and dumping them) or implementing a predictable steps within a daily routine (e.g., changing diaper before going down to sleep). The sequence should be clear and consistent. Repeated sequences are usually clearer. Consider whether the infant could anticipate the next step in a sequence. |
| 7 | Talks to child about the characteristics of objects | Parent uses words or phrases that describe features such as color, shape, texture, movement, function, or other characteristics. | Characteristics of objects are described primarily by adjectives. Statements about function, such as <i>Books are for reading</i> or <i>This is for listening to the heartbeat</i> are also about the characteristics of objects. When the parent says, “Dogs say woof,” it is a functional characteristic of an object (but not explaining). Both variability and frequency are important. | |

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| | | | <p>Saying <i>red</i> lots of times is not as clear as saying <i>big, red, and round</i>. This item includes referring to the number of objects: <i>There are two lions</i>. When the parent says the food they have just pretended to cook is hot, it can be both pretending and talking about characteristics of objects. When the parent talks about pictures in a book, the words may both label and talk about characteristics of objects (simply reading the words in a book does not count). Listen carefully because toys may bring out words about colors and shapes, but the words can also be used to describe the objects. For example, if a parent says, “Here’s a square. Can you put it in the box?” the parent has labeled the objects, but the words were not used as descriptions. If the parent says, “It’s a square block, and it goes in the square hole,” then the parent is describing characteristics of the objects. Complexity and variety (color, shape, texture, function) count more.</p> | |
| 8 | Asks child for information | <p>Parent asks any kind of question or says, “tell me,” “show me,” or other command that may require a yes/no response, short answer, or longer answer—whether or not child replies. Does not include questions to direct attention (“see?”) or suggest activities (“wanna open the bag?”)</p> | <p>Questions must be asked in a way likely to elicit communication from the child, not just imitation. The parent must wait for an answer and appear to clearly expect an answer from the child. Questions that are truly asking for information are often repeated if the child does not reply right away. These questions do not include rhetorical questions, suggestions phrased as questions, or confirmation questions such as <i>Do you want to stir the pot?</i> or <i>It’s a big spoon, isn’t it?</i> Count either many simple questions, such as <i>What’s that?</i> or a few open-ended questions, such as <i>Tell me about what you are building with these blocks</i>, followed by encouraging prompts, such as <i>And what else?</i></p> | <p>Parent asks questions with pacing, timing and pauses long enough to allow a younger infant to respond vocally, verbally and/or nonverbally (e.g., nodding head, looking in direction of object asked about or pointing), even if the infant does not respond. This should be an actual request for communication (e.g., “Do you want up?”) and waiting long enough for child to communicate in some way (e.g., reach or otherwise indicate wanting up).</p> |