



## Creative Environments for Infants and Toddlers

**Module:** II  
**Topic:** Environments  
**Type:** Brainstorm  
**Group Size:** Small Groups  
**Time:** 45 minutes

**Purpose:**

To identify key environmental concepts for group-care environments.

**What you will need:**

Participant Materials	Trainer Materials	Equipment
<p><b>The following handouts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>:: Creating Environments for Group Care of Infants and Toddlers</li> </ul> <p><b>The following materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>:: Large Poster Board</li> <li>:: Color Construction Paper</li> <li>:: Markers</li> <li>:: Glue</li> <li>:: Scissors</li> <li>:: Rulers</li> <li>:: Pencils</li> <li>:: a variety of miscellaneous craft materials (cotton balls, corrugated paper, vinyl or other material scraps, ribbons, pipe cleaners, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>:: Infant/Toddler Caregiving: A Guide to Setting Up Environments</li> <li>:: Chart Paper and Markers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>:: Easel for Chart</li> </ul>

**Directions:**

1. This is a good introductory activity for the Environments lesson, especially if it's done after lunch at a full-day training. The creative aspects of the activity gets everyone involved and stimulates discussion among small groups.
2. Small groups should be identified prior to the lunch break if possible. Otherwise, after identifying small groups, provide each group with one copy of the handout. Review the directions on the handout and invite the groups to take whatever they need from the materials when their group is ready to begin construction.
3. It's important to keep everyone on track. Let groups know when 10 minutes have passed, again after 20 and 25 minutes. Remind each group to add to their list of key environmental concepts anything they thought of as they worked on their construction.
4. After 30 minutes, ask each group to share their creative representation along with the key concepts they identified. List out these key concepts on chart paper as they are identified.
5. After each group has a chance to present, add any key concepts that may not have been mentioned by the small groups that are included in PITC's *A Guide To Setting Up Environments, Section One: Creating Environments for Infants and Toddlers - Key Concepts*.

These include:

- a) Ensure safety
- b) Promote health
- c) Provide comfort
- d) Be convenient
- e) Be child-sized
- f) Maximize flexibility
- g) Encourage movement
- h) Allow for choice

## PITC ACTIVITIES

### Variations:

:: Activity could be extended by providing catalogs for the participants where they can choose items that would represent the different key experiences in an infant/toddler environment.

:: Trainer could add a scenario relating to diverse cultures or abilities. This would provide an opportunity for the participants to set up an environment that will be support all children.

### Links to Head Start Program Performance Standards:

:: 1304.53(a)(1)-(9) Facilities, Equipment and Materials

:: 1304.53(a)(10)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (viii), (ix), (x), (xi), (xiv), (xvi)

:: 1304.53(b)(1), (i), (ii), (iii), v, (vi), (vii),

:: 1304.53(b)(3)

:: 1304.21(a)(1)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv) Education and Early Childhood Development

:: 1304.22(d)(1) & (2), (e)(3)-(7) Child Health and Safety

### Activity Developed by:

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### Source Material:

Lally, J.R., & Stewart, J. (Eds.). (1990). *Infant/toddler caregiving: A guide to setting up environments*. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education.



Creating Environments for Group Care of Infants and Toddlers  
(30 minutes are available for this activity)

A variety of materials are available for each group of participants to creatively express themselves in describing their “dream” infant/toddler environment.

BEFORE beginning to create, each team should discuss and record below the following information:

- Identify the ages and number of children and the number of adults who will use the environment. Include the location (home or center) and approximate square footage of the space.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- List the key environmental concepts you will incorporate into your design (for example, “safety”

AFTER you’ve completed your creative representation of the environment:

- List any additional key elements you may have included as the creation was in progress.

Identify a reporter for your group to summarize your design concepts for the larger group.