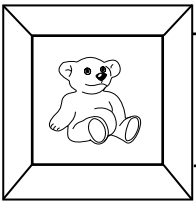


Love Is in the Palm of Your Hand

? INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What is love? What does it mean to you?
- How can the many meanings of love be layers of the same thing?
- How do you, as a parent, feel about your baby?
- When sharing emotions, what feelings does a baby first experience?
- Why is the parent–infant relationship so important?





Conceptual Overview

LOVE TOPIC 1

1. Love can be defined differently by all of us. It is the deepest and closest relationship we have in life. It is a basic need within all of us for emotional stability. Our vision and expectations of love are colored by our early experiences and by what we wish for from reading books or watching movies. Our definition of love can be someone else's fantasy. It can also change across a life span.

The most rewarding and lasting love for two adults is a relationship built over time by sharing and respecting each other's feelings. The relationship grows stronger if the two people also share personal values. Like a pebble dropped in a pool, their love grows wider and deeper the more they give and receive each other's emotion. Layers of understanding develop in the form of trust, respect, and tolerance. These layers give us feelings of safety, regulation, stability, and cooperation. When we share in this way, we feel love, and life works better.

2. Parents fall in love with their newborns in different ways. Most mothers feel physically and emotionally connected to their baby at birth. It is a powerful feeling of connectedness that gives a mother the motivation and strength to care for her new baby. This commitment to the baby will require life changes in the behavior and emotional energy of a mother. Sometimes it takes time for a mother to feel connected with her baby while she is also recovering from her pregnancy. Postpartum depression can inhibit these emotional connections and can have dire consequences if not recognized and managed.

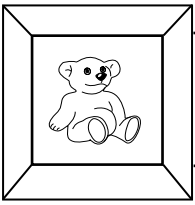
Although the mother may be the first to feel a strong connectedness to her baby, a father experiences this same love affair, especially if he can spend time caring for his infant.

3. The more parents can learn about how to interact with their baby, the stronger their commitment will be. The more parents understand about how babies communicate, the cues they use, their temperamental differences, and the developmental steps babies must go through both physically and emotionally, the easier child care becomes. Learning some specific parenting techniques will also help to build parental confidence, as well as set realistic expectations for themselves and their babies.
4. Babies learn about loving relationships from experiencing love. A newborn starts knowing only one relationship, Mom. Mother provides survival, stability, and safety. Mother is the most important person in a newborn's world. It is within the context of this relationship that the baby learns to trust others. After this, the baby is ready for another relationship. When a baby shares a positive emotional connection with two or three special people, then strong emotional growth can occur.

LOVE

TOPIC 1

5. The first relationships are crucial to all others. They set an expectation or model for behavior that the baby will take forward into the world. The ways in which parents protect, guide, and regulate emotional expression for their baby become their baby's model. Parents are setting a pattern for all future relationships, a pattern for love. This is the most important thing a father or mother will do for his or her baby.



Tools for Presentation

LOVE
TOPIC 1

Terms to Understand

- **Attachment**
generally, a special affection for and commitment to another person or thing; *specifically*, a reciprocal, enduring tie between an infant and caregiver, each of whom contributes to the quality of the relationship
- **Pride**
delight arising from accomplishment
- **Refueling**
replenishing energy, both physical and emotional
- **Regulation**
adjustment, balance, fine tuning; a way to help balance or keep operations in good order
- **Respect**
feelings of concern and honor for another; limiting one's behavior because of the needs of another individual; to consider worthy of high regard; to value
- **Separation**
the act of parting or of going different directions; making oneself distinct from another
- **Shared Positive Emotions (SPEs)**
sharing interest, joy, surprise, and contentment
- **Tolerance**
ability to be patient and fair toward someone whose thoughts and/or practices differ from one's own
- **Understanding**
gaining information and knowledge about another person and being able to appreciate how he or she is different from oneself

Suggested Activities

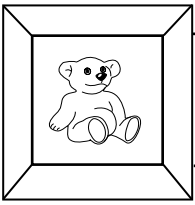
- *PIPE Activity Cards:*
1, 14, 16, 47, 53, 73, 115, 128

Other Materials & Supplies

- A gift-wrapped box or gift-bag, containing items representing aspects of love, e.g., flowers, cards, a teddy bear, a book of poems, sweets, etc.
- Magazines with lots of baby pictures; paper, glue, scissors, markers
- Poster board or 8 1/2" x 11" sheets of paper

- #86 ■ Topic Animal Artwork
- #87 ■ Inquiry Questions
[also see page 169]
- #88 ■ Layers of Love: Building and Expanding a Relationship
[also see page 166]
- #89 ■ What Love Means to Me
- #90 ■ Layers of Love for Babies
- #91 ■ Layers of Love Grow as Baby Grows
[also see page 182]
- #92 ■ Stringing Beads of Pride
[also see page 183]
- #93 ■ Practicing Positive Parenting Techniques
[also see page 184]
- #94 ■ Beads of Pride





Instructional Plan

LOVE
TOPIC 1

Outcomes

- Parents will be able to define a love relationship and comprehend that love deepens over time through mutual sharing.
- Parents will recognize that babies learn love gradually and that the love relationship that babies experience in infancy will be the model for all other love relationships.
- Parents will practice some parenting techniques that will help them in caretaking and make building relationships easier.

FOUR-STEP INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS

1

PRESENTATION OF CONCEPTS

INTRODUCTION OF TOPIC

■ **Love is a strong emotional commitment built by sharing emotions and experiences.**

- A loving relationship takes time and effort from two caring people.
- A loving relationship is built one step at a time [see *Conceptual Overview #1*].
 - Ask parents to define *love*.
 - How do you know if someone loves you?
 - How does love happen?

After the discussion, use “Layers of Love: Building and Expanding a Relationship” [see pg. 166] to tie the parents’ answers to the layers of love that will be discussed in this topic.

- Display a gift-wrapped box or a gift bag. Have it filled with items that might represent love, e.g., flowers, cards, a teddy bear, a book of poems, sweets, etc.

Ask: If I were to give you this gift and the gift were *a symbol of my love*, what do you think would be inside? Why would it represent *love*?

Open the box or bag and examine the items.

Discuss what each item represents.

- There are many layers to love that overlap and blend together into a strong and lasting relationship.

- This takes time and effort, but the more you give, the more you receive, if the relationship is mutual.

KEY CONCEPTS

■ A new baby is a new start on love.

- Through the baby, parents will grow emotionally and can redefine aspects of their other relationships [see *Conceptual Overview #2*].

- ☐ Use topic animal artwork to open a discussion with parents regarding how love will affect their baby.
- ☐ Hand out “What Love Means to Me.”

Have each parent write a statement in each heart. Then discuss with parents how their definitions of love will affect their babies.

Discuss: “Why is love important for babies?”

- It’s a basic need.
- It gives a baby security and confidence.
- It contributes to a baby’s resiliency.
- It affects growth and development.
- It opens the way for mastery and self-esteem.

■ Babies learn love gradually. This understanding develops in overlapping layers. For babies, these layers are:

- Trust
- Understanding
- Shared Positive Emotions
- *Interdependence*
- Respect
- Regulation
- Tolerance [see *Conceptual Overview #4* and *#5*].

- ☐ Hand out “Layers of Love for Baby.” With parents, cut out pictures of children and parents from magazines to illustrate the Layers of Love. Show different ages to illustrate how children continue to learn about love as they grow.

Paste the pictures on a poster board or individual sheets of paper and identify which layer of love each picture illustrates.

- ☐ Use “Layers of Love for Baby Grow as Baby Grows” as a guide [see pg. 182].
Have parents write baby quotes for each picture in a word bubble to describe the Layers of Love. For example, write “Dad is there for me.” in a word bubble for a picture of a dad feeding a baby.

■ Learning specific parenting techniques will help parenting go more smoothly [see *Conceptual Overview #3*].

- ☐ Hand out “Stringing Beads of Pride” [see pg. 183] and “Practicing Positive Parenting Techniques” [see pg. 184].

Discuss how the positive parenting techniques are a part of the Beads of Pride.

2

DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrate the Stringing Beads of Pride procedure. Use *PIPE Activity Cards* or a favorite toy. With each demonstration focus on one or two of the techniques from “Practicing Positive Parenting Techniques” that will be helpful for the parent [see pg. 184].

3

SUPERVISED PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION

WHAT?

- Parent practices the PIPE interactive process using “Stringing Beads of Pride” [see pg. 183].

WHY?

- The goal of this activity is for the parent to experience a pleasurable interaction in using one or more of the positive parenting techniques while playing with her child.

HOW?

- Help the parent select activities that will lead to a good experience for both herself and her child. In subsequent interactive sessions, she can choose to focus on certain techniques from “Practicing Positive Parenting Techniques” [see pg. 184].
- Parent selects three age-appropriate activities to do and uses one or more of these activities as she follows the sequence in “Stringing Beads of Pride” [see pg. 183].

4

EVALUATION

EVALUATING THE PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION

- ❑ Discuss the interactive experience:
 - Discuss how the parent felt about the interactive session.
 - What did she enjoy?
 - What does she think her child enjoyed?
 - What positive parenting technique did she use?

TOPIC EVALUATION AND CLOSURE

- ❑ Repeatedly using The Beads of Pride helps children learn love gradually and builds feelings of pride and self-esteem.

LOVE TOPIC 1

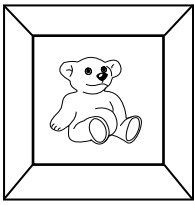
Discuss how the Layers of Love for Babies relate to the Beads of Pride. Using the “Beads of Pride” worksheet, the parent can write in each bead the layer of love she thinks her child will be learning.

OR

- ☐ Parent writes a poem, short story, or drama illustrating how her baby learns about love by being “in the palm of her hand.”

OR

- ☐ Parent discusses and gives examples of how positive parenting techniques could be used in other interactions with her child.



Topic Enhancers & Instructional Aids

Topic Enhancers

The ideas below are optional topic extenders. Parents may like to try them (as time and interest in a concept allow), or the parenting educator may use selected activities to help a parent explore a specific concept in greater depth.

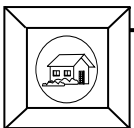


For a parent group:

- Parents could create a personalized privacy partition to use during interactive sessions by decorating half of a dishwasher/dryer box. Boxes can be folded and stored between sessions.

Suggestions for the parent educator:

- Develop and display posters in the childcare center that illustrate each layer of love (e.g., “Understanding Your Baby Means . . .,” or “A Baby Learns Trust by”)
- Parent educators model and explain to parents techniques that will enhance their learning about relationships. Show how these are used in caring for and relating to babies throughout the day.
- Acknowledge interactions you observe when a parent is expanding her love relationship with her child, especially any positive behaviors that she has not demonstrated previously.
- Display articles, pamphlets, and information sheets on parent-child relationships.
- Develop a bulletin board: Use the baby pictures representing Layers of Love created during the activities in this topic related to the second key concept.

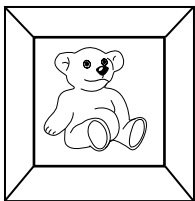


For parents at home:

- Parent keeps a journal — “My Baby and Me.”
- Parent writes in a journal about experiences she has with her baby, the rewarding moments, the frustrating times, how she felt, how she thinks her baby felt.
- Encourage the parent to identify these experiences in terms of *understanding*, *respect*, *toleration*, *trust*, etc.

Suggestions for the home visitor:

Acknowledge interactions you observe when the parent is expanding her love relationship with her child, especially any positive behaviors that she has not demonstrated previously.



Layers of Love Grow as Baby Grows

For the baby, learning about the layers of love is developmental. It is built over time through shared experience and through brain maturation. These layers overlap and are experienced a little at a time. They may be understood differently by the baby at different developmental levels.

TRUST: *"Mom is there for me."*

Learned from consistent, responsive caregiving, which the baby then expects and counts on.

UNDERSTANDING: *"Oh! I get it!"*

Learned from sharing experiences. Each sharing adds to our understanding of one another. These experiences will be different for each relationship.

SHARED POSITIVE EMOTIONS: *"Smiling gets you everything."*

Learned from experimenting with emotional expressions, such as smiles, laughs, coos, screeches, growls, coughs, and watching how parents respond. Babies and toddlers love fun and will continue what makes parents happy.

INTERDEPENDENCE: *"I've picked out my special people, my loved ones."*

Learned from having consistent, loving people around. As babies mature, they become able to pick out their special people and show their attachment to them.

RESPECT: *"I'm separate, I'm me! Help me problem solve. Let me grow."*

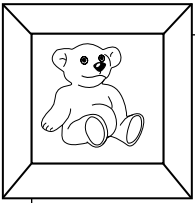
Learned from being allowed autonomy, having parents who allow exploring and problem solving. Like adults, babies and toddlers need feelings of independence and mastery.

REGULATION: *"Whoa! There are rules to this relationship stuff!"*

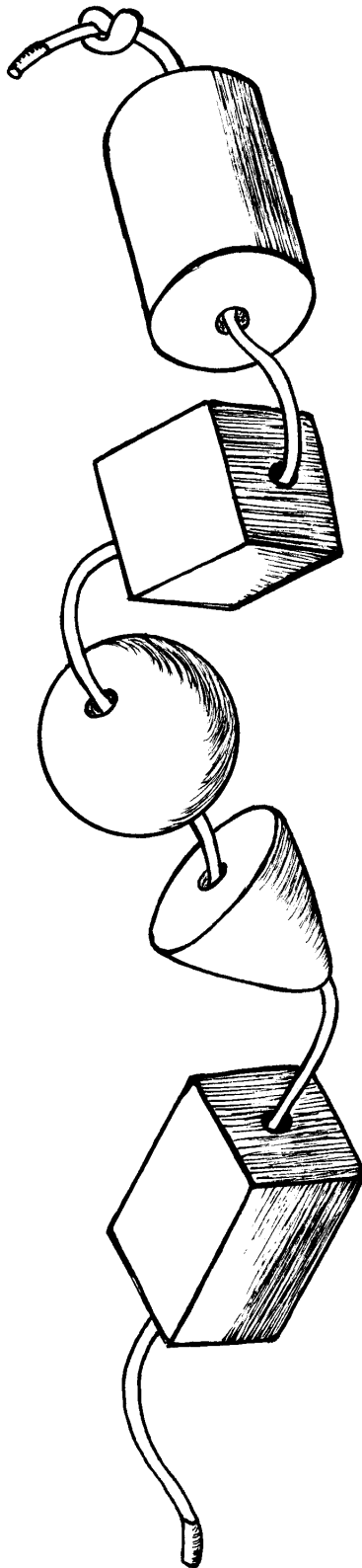
Learned by having gentle guidance and limits from other humans. Regulation helps babies balance emotions and behavior that are out-of-control. Parents who model emotional control are effective regulators for babies and toddlers.

TOLERATION: *"My parents have needs too. I guess I'll put up with them."*

Learned by experiencing patient, responsive caregiving, a parent's temperament, and the limits parents set to meet their own needs.



STRINGING BEADS OF PRIDE



1. Approach.

Assess the child's mood and attention span. Select appropriate toys or activities.

2. Get the child's attention.

Move close to the child. Establish eye contact. Introduce toys or an activity. Start or model play.

3. Follow the child's lead.

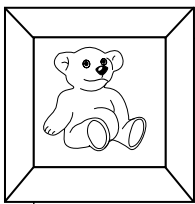
Let the child respond to toys his or her own way. Follow the child's lead. Continue what the child seems to enjoy. Share interest, excitement, and joy.

4. Extend and expand the play.

Take turns; imitate the child. Let the child problem solve. Help when frustrated or stuck. Encourage the child with each step of the task. Change the play slightly or add something new. Don't correct or scold; ignore mistakes.

5. Wait for the child to show pride.

Let the child bring the activity to a close. If the child masters a task, wait for the child to look at you. Congratulate the child's action with joy and love. Let the child choose a new activity or repeat this one. Stop if the child is tired, hungry, or no longer interested.



Practicing Positive Parenting Techniques

Learn more about your child. Watching your child and understanding her actions and moods is a key to successful parenting. You will continually learn new things about your child as you do activities together.

Plan ahead. Pick out your activities and equipment and have an area ready for your child; this lets your child know that this time together is important.

Listen to your child. Does your child like this activity? Does your child want to do it again or is your child ready for a quiet activity now? What is your child saying to you?

Model. Demonstrate for your child how to use a new toy or play a new game. You can interest your child in new things by showing him or her what you would do with it.

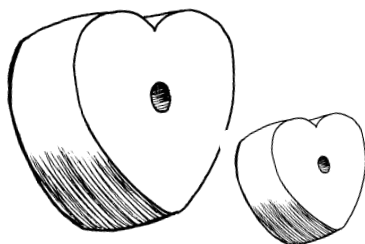
Allow for differences. Your child is a very special person and different from you and everyone else. It is important to be sensitive to these differences; for example, your child may like to do the same activity over and over, while someone else's child will only do it a few moments before moving to something new. Allow your child to explore toys and be different from you.

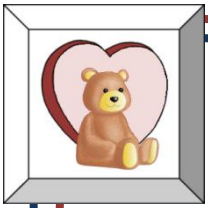
Share positive emotions. Smiling and giggling with your toddler or sharing in a quiet cuddle time are the things that make your relationship strong. It tells your child, "I'm glad I'm your Mom/Dad."

Regulate and provide structure. When it is time for you and your child to play, tell him or her what you are going to be doing. This enhances your child's awareness. Soon your child will know the routine and be looking forward to spending this special time with you.

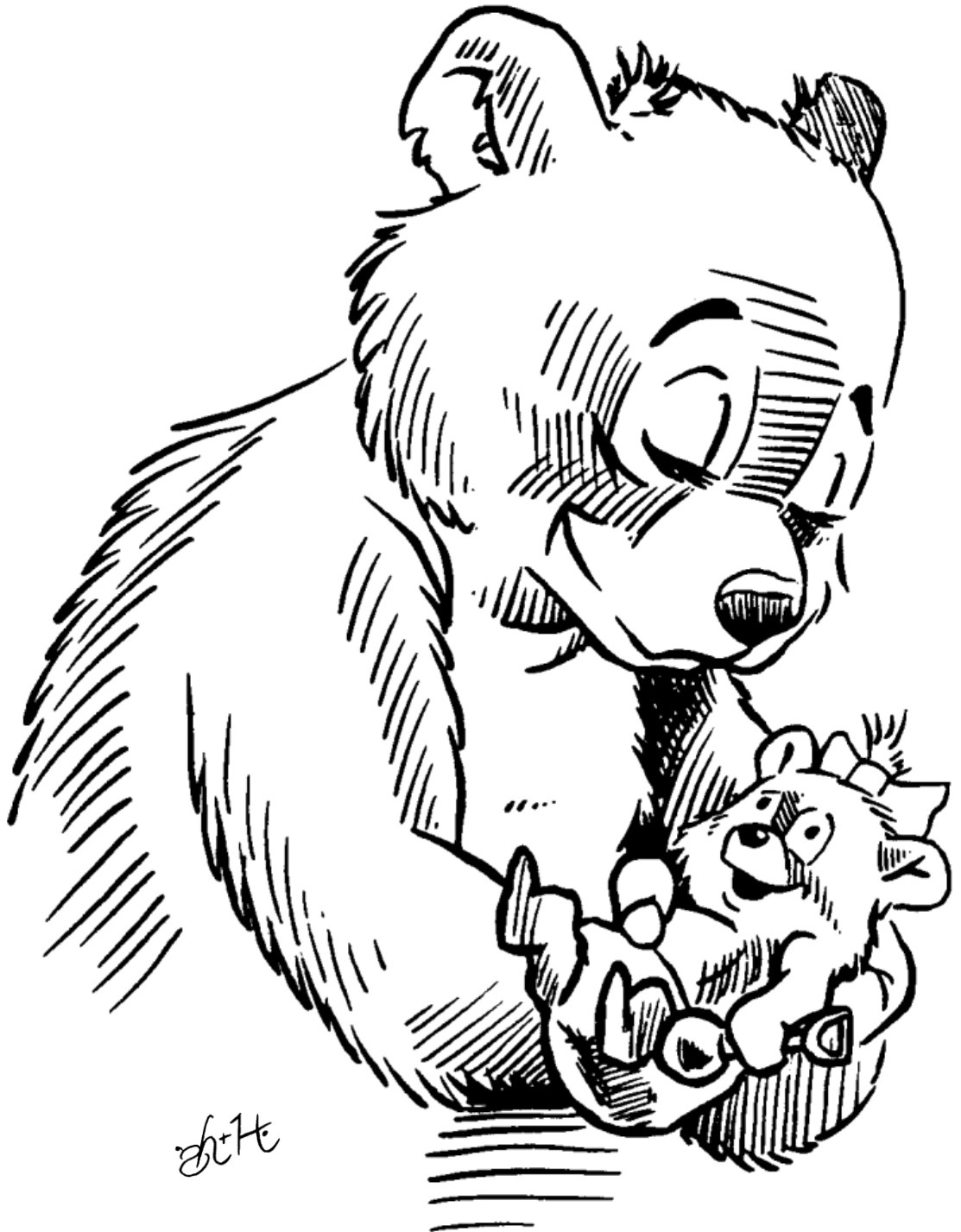
Provide a safe base. Part of providing a safe base is helping your child when he or she is frustrated or distressed. Another part of providing a safe base is making a safe place for your child to explore and play.

Comfort and stabilize. Watch for signs of overstimulation or boredom in your child. Stay ahead of this by slowing the pace of your activity or changing the tasks. If your child becomes anxious, he or she may need you to stop and share closeness and love for a few minutes.





Love Is in the Palm of Your Hand

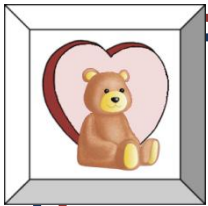




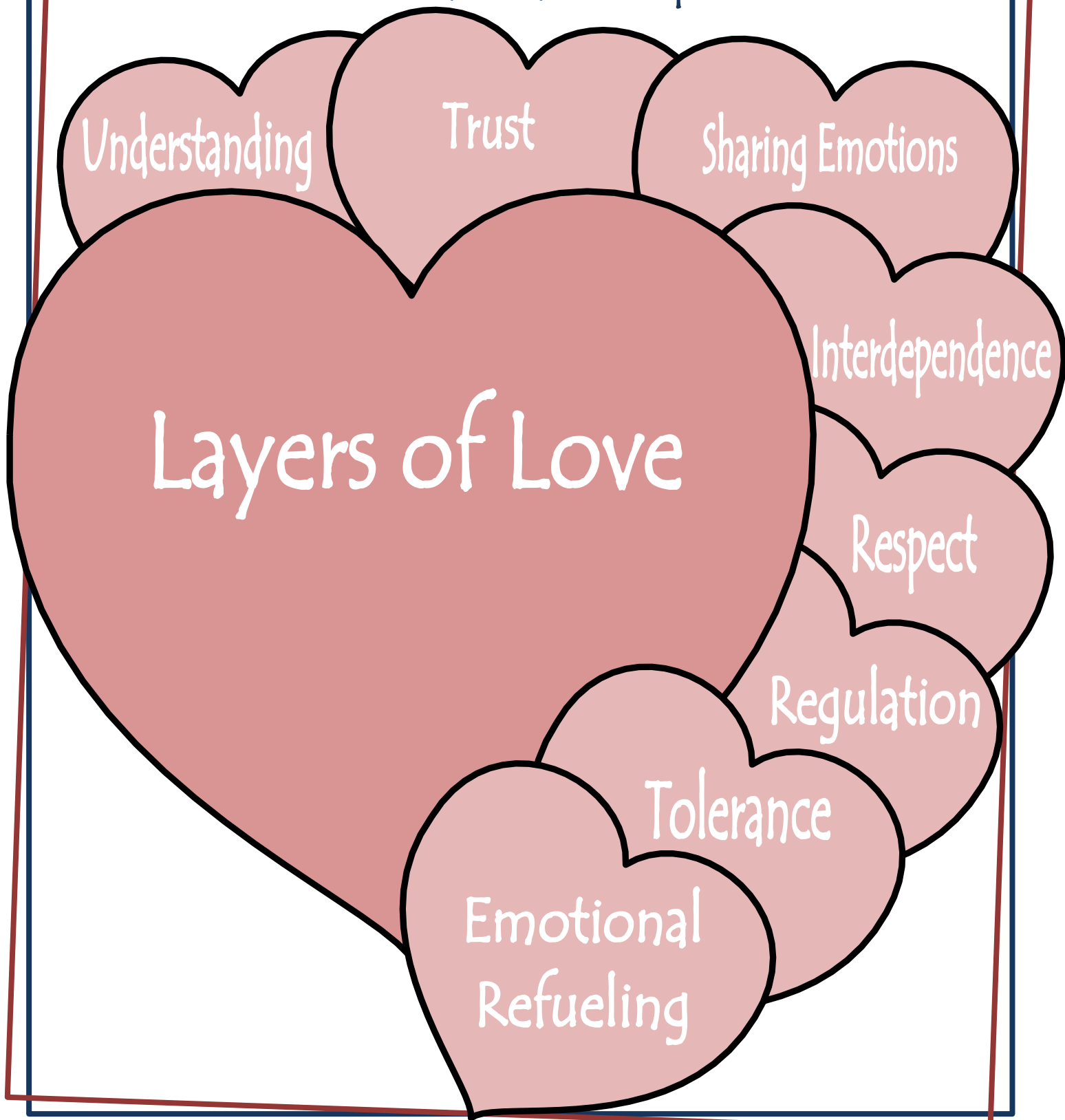
Topic 1: Love Is in the Palm of Your Hand

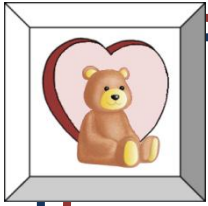
INQUIRY QUESTIONS

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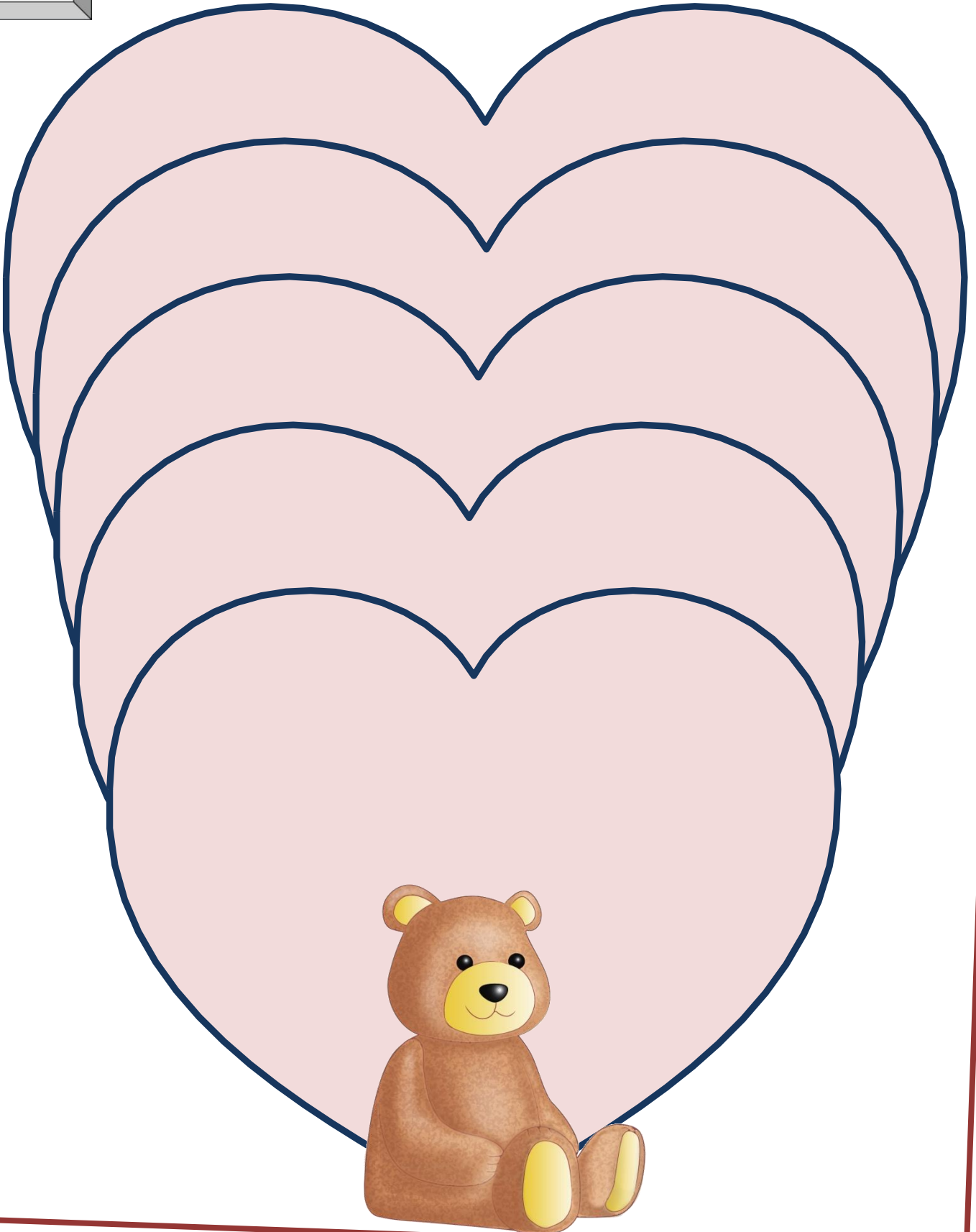


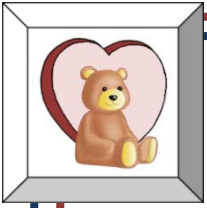
Building and Expanding a Relationship





What Love Means to Me





Layers of Love for Babies

Trust



Understanding



Shared
Positive
Emotions



Regulation



Tolerance



Interdependence



Respect





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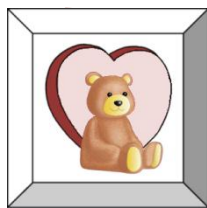
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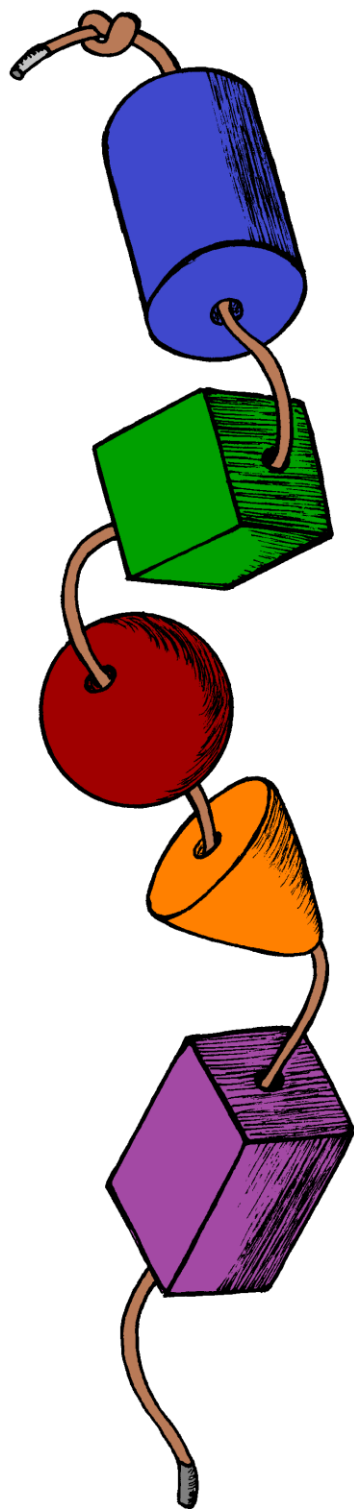
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Listen to your child. Does your child like this activity? Does your child want to do it again or is your child ready for a quiet activity now? What is your child saying to you?

Model. Demonstrate for your child how to use a new toy or play a new game. You can interest your child in new things by showing him or her what you would do with it.

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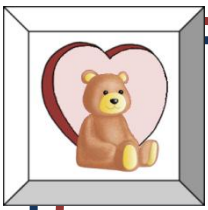
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Beads of Pride

1. Approach

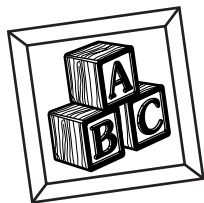
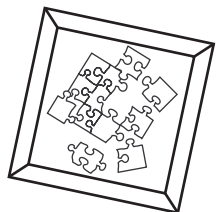
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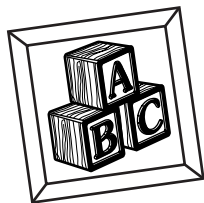
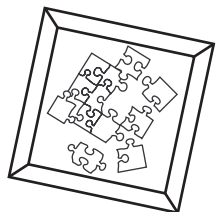
DANCE, BABY DANCE



Materials: Children's fun music

Directions: Hold baby/toddler in your arms as you dance with the music or let baby stand on your lap as you sway to the music. Toddlers may want to stand on the floor to dance. Kneel in front of older baby. Hold onto baby's hands or just let baby stand. Turn on music and move with the beat. Show your baby how to enjoy the music. Clap your hands. Swing your arms. Sway and snap your fingers. Laugh and have fun.

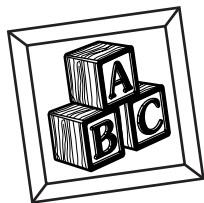
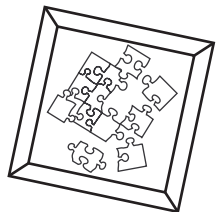
DRUMMING FUN



Materials: Pans; wooden, metal, and plastic spoons; whisk

Directions: Sit with baby on the floor. Pound on the pan with each thing and talk with baby about the different sounds each thing makes. Try beating different rhythms and see if baby will try to copy you.

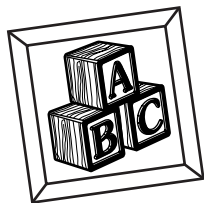
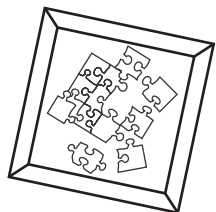
STICKY FUN – POST IT – PASS



Materials: Brightly colored small post it notes

Directions: Sit with baby/toddler and let them explore the post it notes. Stick a post it note on the baby/toddler where they can reach it. Show older babies/toddlers how to pass a post it note from hand to hand and how to stick the note on their bodies. Play post it pass by letting baby/toddler stick post it notes on you and then you stick it back on them.

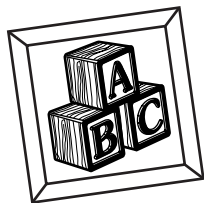
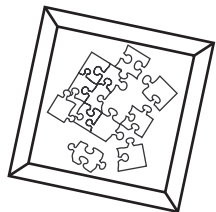
TRUCKS AND TUNNELS



Materials: Paper towel tube and toy cars and/or trucks (make sure they are not a choking hazard)

Directions: Sit on the floor with your baby/toddler. Show them the trucks, cars and the paper towel tube. Let them explore these items. Put a truck into the tube and let it coast out the other end of the tube in front of the baby. Each time the truck or car comes out show the baby how surprised you are. Laugh and giggle with your baby. Toddlers will be able to do this all by themselves after you have shown them. Toddlers will feel very powerful when you show surprise when the truck comes out the other end.

I AM A LITTLE TEAPOT



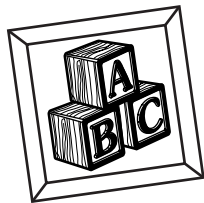
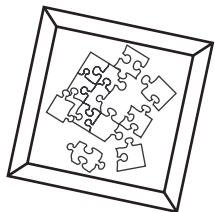
Directions: Pretend you are a teapot with one hand on the hip for the handle and one hand in the air for the spout. Bend sideways towards the hand in the air to pretend you are pouring. Toddlers can imitate the actions.

I am a little teapot short and stout
Here is my handle and here is my spout
When I get all steamed up hear me shout
Just tip me over and pour me out.

RING AROUND THE POTATO

Directions: Hold your toddler's hands and go around in a circle, then all sit down while singing the last line.

Ring around the potato,
Eating salad greens with tomato
Like gentle people eat,
Eating citrus fruits so sweet.
To the ground, to the ground
We all fall down.



THE CHICKS

Directions: Sit facing your baby/toddler as you share this rhyme.

The little chicks say, “peep, peep, peep,”
When they are hungry
(Gently tap on baby’s tummy)
When they are cold
(Pretend to shiver from the cold)
The hen looks for corn and wheat
(Make pecking motions on palm)
She gives them food
(Touch lips)
And she keeps them warm
Huddling under her wings
(Reach out and pretend to bring them in to you)
They all sleep until the next day
(Lay your head on your hands as if sleeping)

