

HFA Best Practice Standard	Baby TALK
<p>EVIDENCE-INFORMED PARENTING MATERIALS: The information that sites staff share with families must be evidence-informed, meaning that the information is based on scientific knowledge or research. Strategies employed may also be grounded in scientific research (e.g., strive to strengthen the parent-child relationship, which research has shown to be a key factor in healthy development). The reason there is a focus on the use of evidence-informed materials is to ensure that families are receiving well-founded, factual, relevant, and credible information versus materials that are opinion-based or outdated and no longer accurate. Sites may choose to use a formal parenting curriculum that is designed for home visiting or parent support, or sites may identify other evidence-based sources of parenting materials.</p>	<p>Baby TALK has been evaluated by the Office of Headstart and was found to be evidence-based Click here for profile.</p>
<p>Intent: The key to successful use of handouts and activities is tied most closely to how the materials are used with families versus what materials are used. Sites use materials that are culturally respectful, supported by research, and in response to parent and child needs versus the primary focus of each home visit as they represent just one piece of a comprehensive approach to working with families. The primary focus of each visit is on the relationship between parents and child. Over-reliance on parenting materials distracts from this primary focus and from the ability to be fully observant, attuned, and responsive to these relationship dynamics.</p>	<p>Critical Concepts: “Tell me about your baby” Coming Alongside Collaboration Systems Building</p> <p>Encounter Protocols: Baby TALK encounters should always be free to “go where parents and children are already,” discussing matters of immediate importance and concern. The Encounter Protocols provide a structure for using our time in a way that enables us to incorporate those issues with relationship-building techniques, which move us ahead in our work with the family.</p> <p>The Baby TALK Critical Concepts and Encounter Protocols drive “how” professionals are with families, including the use of observational strategies. Before considering curriculum, training attends to understanding and practicing strength-based observational strategies.</p> <p>Baby TALK curriculum is written for both reflections with families and for activities that are focused on wondering and allowing interactions to play out.</p> <p>Baby TALK is flexible in order for professionals to individualize for each family.</p>

Parenting materials and evidence-informed curriculum contain a variety of components which include:

- information on how to promote nurturing parent-child relationships (e.g., makes parents unique to this baby, supports the development of empathy, focuses on experience versus what is “right or wrong,” anchors baby’s current behavior to future development, builds parental self-esteem, encourages parents to have fun playing with their baby, etc.)
- child development information and how to share this in a strength-based manner (e.g., build on parental competencies, engage parents’ critical thinking skills, identify emerging skills, address language use and literacy, include all developmental domains, incorporate the use of developmental screens, etc.)
- content that is developmental in nature
- strategies that strengthen families and their relationships
- health and safety information such as safer sleep, breastfeeding, pre-and postnatal health care, well-child care, dental and oral health, and lead exposure

[Baby TALK Curriculum Glossary](#)