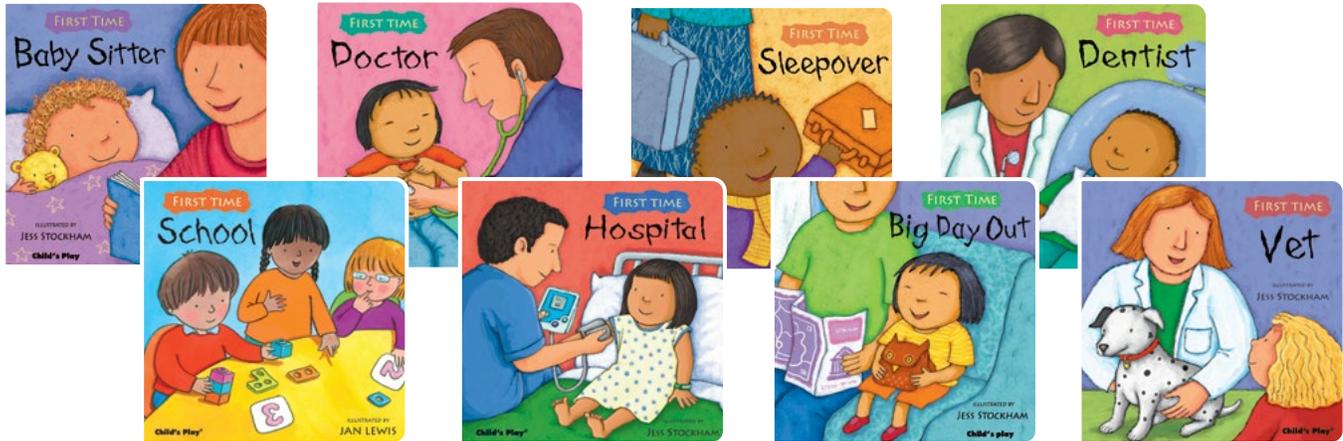


New Experiences Book Set

Promoting a Sense of Self through new experiences and activities



Young children can experience strong emotions like shyness, anxiety and fear when they are trying something new for the first time. When the parent or caregiver offers support and encouragement, they can start to cope and manage the new situation much better.

Consider these easy ways to help children feel important, understood, confident and successful when they are exposed to a new experience.

Strategies for Success

1. Comfort and soothe crying children by singing a favorite song, along with smiling and talking to them.
2. If the children are uncomfortable, then consider how they must feel and talk about it in simple terms.
3. Provide family photos to carry around or post them on a wall at their eye level so that they can see them and feel assured that they are close by.
4. Keep an eye on them when they are experiencing something new by staying calm and reassuring them that you can help.
5. Explain that you understand how they feel and communicate this understanding in a gentle way.
6. Mirror their facial expressions by smiling back at them while having a soothing tone in your voice. Be aware of their feelings - they might not be able to say how they feel but you can tell a lot by their facial expressions.
7. It is important for the caregiver or parent to use facial expressions while reading books and stories. These expressions will help them understand their own emotions as they develop.
8. Let young children know that you enjoy being with them by using their name during interactions and experiences throughout the day. Make statements like "I love watching you shake that rattle." Including their intentions by putting their actions into words for them will let them know that you are watching, observing and approving of their movements.
9. Keeping their daily routines in mind will keep them happy and reassured that all is fine.

How to Help Your Child It is important to acknowledge your child's worries and not to force him/her into situations that could be scary. Gently encourage your child to be brave. When in a new situation, give your child time to adjust. Stay with your child for a while and gently encourage him/her to explore and play with the other children. After a while, you can move away for a short time, but make sure your child knows you are there and will come back before they get upset. Try not to comfort your child too much because this will teach that it is a scary situation, thereby rewarding their shyness. Instead, reward brave behavior and tell him/her what was done well (for example, playing with another child or making eye contact).

Take Photos and Find Pictures in Magazines When a young child is having a new experience, consider taking photographs to document the event. The next time that this experience takes place, there will be photos to remind him/her not be scared. It is sometimes scary when your child is meeting new people or family members for the first time. It is easy to keep pictures of these individuals on a wall or in a crib where they can be seen frequently. These pictures will help your child to adjust more quickly.

Take on the Town Get your child familiar with your town by pointing out the supermarket, fire station, gas station, and other places of interest. As you pass each place, discuss what goes on at these neighborhood locations. Who works here? What do we do when we visit them? What can we find inside the store? Take photos or cut out pictures of familiar places and put them on index cards along with a name. The next time you are out and about with your child, refer to these "neighborhood" cards. For example, if you stop by a Veterinarian, ask him/her to find the matching "neighborhood" card and ask open-ended questions about why we go there.

Act It Out Have available a doctors play kit, a towel or a sheet for draping over a table, cotton balls, tongue depressor, cotton swabs, bandages, and other items associated with a doctors office. Allow the children to use puppets, stuffed animals or dolls as patients when they go visit the doctor, dentist, vet, or hospital. This activity will allow young children to engage in real-life experiences as they use the props and expand their understanding about their world. Pretending allows for creativity and expands children's vocabulary. They learn to work with others to solve problems and recall and recreate the experiences. To play the role of a doctor or a nurse, children need to remember what tools the doctor used, how to examine patients, and what the doctor says. This activity will help children learn to cooperate with others and to share ideas.

Learning Props The following are suggested learning props to enhance each of the books in this series. Each of these categories can facilitate caregiver and child interactions, peer play and grow the imagination of all children. Pretend play promotes language and social emotional development. These role playing props are an effective way for children to make sense of their world and they will learn to play with others and teach children about empathy and understanding of different perspectives.

Babysitter Learning Props

- Favorite Books
- Blanket
- Clock
- Picture of Mommy and Daddy
- Teddy Bear
- Toy Cell Phone
- Pillow
- Flash Light
- Crayons and Paper

Sleepover Learning Props

- Favorite Books
- Favorite Blanket
- Favorite Toys
- Picture of Parents/Guardians
- Teddy Bear or Stuffed Animal
- Pretend Snacks
- Crayons and Paper
- Night Light
- Bath Toys
- Pajamas

Dentist Learning Props

- Mirror
- Towel for Face and Neck
- Cotton Balls
- Tongue Depressor
- Mask
- Thermometers
- Teeth
- Picture of Smiles with Teeth Showing
- Toy Glasses
- Apron

School Learning Props

- Books
- Dry Erase Boards/Markers
- Eraser
- Clock
- School Bell
- Pointer
- Crayons
- Paper
- Hall Passes
- Stamp Pad
- Report Cards
- Worksheets
- Award Stickers
- Globe
- Weather Map
- Calendar
- Measuring Tape
- Counters
- ABC Letters
- Money and Coins

Big Day Out Learning Props

- Maps
- Favorite Stuffed Animal
- Watch
- Tickets
- Books
- Music
- Hat
- Globe
- Picnic with Food and Snacks
- Toy Cell Phone
- Suitcase
- Pictures of Transportation Vehicles
- Pictures of Places Around the World

Hospital/Doctor Office Learning Props

- Stuffed Animals
- Bandages
- Clip Board with paper and pen
- Medicine Bottles
- Gauze
- Chairs for Waiting Room
- Lab Coats
- Weighing Scales
- Droppers
- Tongue Depressors
- Eyeglasses
- Toy Scalpel
- Safety Scissors
- Ear Scope
- Stethoscopes
- Shots
- Thermometers
- Blood Pressure Cuff
- Books for the Waiting Room
- Masks
- Table
- Bed (Cot) with Blanket
- Tweezers
- Forceps
- Name Tag
- Bedpan
- Cell Phone

Vet/Pet Hospital Learning Props

- Pet Cages
- Toy Reptiles
- Syringe
- Small Weighing Scales
- Comb
- Wash Bin
- Soap
- Towel
- Thermometer
- Reflex Hammer
- Safety Scissors
- Food Bowl
- Collar for Dog
- Stuffed Animals
- Medicine
- Measuring tape
- Brush
- Hair Dryer
- Shampoo
- Sponge
- Stethoscope
- Tongs
- Blood Pressure Meter
- Ear Examiner
- Clip Board and Paper
- Leash for Animals