

Q&A

Sharing about good professional development practices and developing your baby's brain

Q How can we incorporate sharing by educators on action research or even good practices as a continuing professional development unit?

Dr Ching-Kwan: Sharing about good practices, including action research findings, does not have to be done in formal ways only. Great ways to share include: **1)** Modelling good practices e.g. have someone observe a good teaching approach; **2)** Posting short one-page summaries of what worked well in a particular lesson or project on the centre's Facebook page or Web portal; **3)** Setting up documentation panels around the centre, including the staff planning area, to show case success stories; **4)** Making copies of journals or write-ups of good practice programmes available for reading or borrowing; **5)** Talking regularly about good practice moments, which is a sure way to build a culture of sharing that is professionally meaningful and edifying.



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DR CHING-KWAN



Ask the experts!

DR JANE CHING-KWAN chairs the Child Development Network (CDN) Professional Leadership & Development Sub-Committee. Driven by her passion for professional development in the sector, she remains an active trainer in the field for diploma and degree programmes. She was also one of the consultants for ECDA's Continuing Professional Development Framework. Dr Ching-Kwan has lectured in several countries including the USA, China, Australia and Malaysia.



MS PUSPA SIVAN has 34 years of experience in early childhood training, administration and working with parents, infants, toddlers, preschoolers and children with special needs in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and the region. Ms Sivan also serves as a consultant to international organisations and is a frequent speaker at conferences, talks and seminars.

Q As a mother of a four-month-old baby, how can I stimulate my baby's brain development? Are there any day-to-day activities I can do with my baby?

Ms Puspa: Infancy is an important period and simple day-to-day interactions during caregiving times such as diapering, showering, feeding and napping are excellent opportunities to engage and interact with your baby for brain development. You do not need to set aside a special time to stimulate your baby's brain. These caregiving times provide many opportunities for the baby to be nurtured and cared for by your touch, comfort and hugs. For brain development to take place babies need to feel loved, talked to, hugged and held.

You can talk, sing or rhyme to the child during these caregiving times.



In doing so, you are laying strong foundations for developing your baby's language, thinking and communication skills. Your four-month old baby may not respond verbally but is certainly listening and engaged. You will know that by the way the baby is focused on looking at your face, and responding with facial expressions and body movements.

Providing opportunities for sensorial experiences is another way to engage babies. Babies have an innate disposition to explore and discover and they learn best by using their senses. They use their senses to make sense of the world and gain knowledge and information. They are constantly looking, listening, feeling, smelling and touching. Provide toys and household materials such as pots and pans, and even tissue boxes and scarves for baby to play with. You can extend and expand the play by engaging and interacting with your child where necessary. ♥

