

# THERAPY FOR BABIES AND TODDLERS



## Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Did you know that therapy isn't just for adults or big kids? Babies and toddlers sometimes need help too! Therapy for young children is called infant and early childhood mental health services. These services help your child—and you—feel more connected and supported. The **Early Connections team** offers therapy that helps children and parents learn and grow together.

## What are Some Good Questions to Ask the Therapist?

It's okay to have lots of questions! You can ask things like:

- Do you have experience with children of my child's age?
- What happens in therapy sessions?
- How long will therapy last? How many sessions will there be?
- What goals will we work on together?
- How does play help my child grow and cope?



## Why might a baby or toddler need therapy?

All children have ups and downs as they grow. But sometimes, extra help can make a big difference.

Therapy can help if your child:

- Has trouble eating or sleeping
- Cries or fusses a lot and is hard to calm
- Gets scared easily
- Hits, bites, or throws things at people
- Has big tantrums or melts down often
- Gets very upset when you leave
- Has a hard time interacting (talking or playing) with others
- Feels very anxious (nervous or worried) about the doctor or medical visits

Therapy can also help parents and caregivers who are:

- Not sure how to help their child
- Not sure how to talk to their child about stressful things that have happened
- Stressed or worried about how their child is behaving
- Having a hard time with routines like sleep or daycare drop-off
- Wanting to feel closer or more connected to their child

## What does therapy for little ones look like?

### 1. Getting to Know You

First, the therapist:

- Meets you and your child
- Asks about your daily life
- Asks about the experiences your family has had
- Watches how your child plays and reacts
- Talks to you about what's going well and what's hard.

Together, you'll make a plan that feels right for your family.

### 2. Learning and Guidance

Your therapist can share tips about how to:

- Set sleep and feeding routines
- Calm your child when upset
- Handle stressful times
- Build strong family connections

You can ask questions and talk through ideas with your therapist.

### 3. Therapy Together

Therapy usually includes both you and your child. Sometimes other family members join too.

- For toddlers, sessions often look like play! The therapist may help you and your child play through challenges. For example, you can pretend to go to the doctor or talk about going between two homes.
- For babies, your therapist:
  - Helps you notice your baby's cues (how they show what they need or feel).
  - Gives tips to help you feel more confident and connected with your baby.

Playing and talking together helps you and your child:

- Communicate (talk to each other) better
- Build a strong bond
- Feel more confident to handle tough moments

### 4. Extra Support

Your therapist can also connect you to other helpful programs. For example, early intervention, preschool, or family support services.

## Where can I Learn More About Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Services?

The websites below share more information and resources about therapy for young children. Read them to learn more.



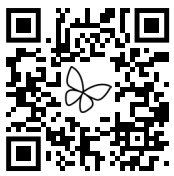
#### Child-Parent Psychotherapy (ages 0 to 5):

Source: *Child-Parent Psychotherapy*  
[childparentpsychotherapy.com/for-families](http://childparentpsychotherapy.com/for-families)



#### Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (ages 2 to 7):

Source: *PCIT*  
[pcit.org/resources-for-parents](http://pcit.org/resources-for-parents)



#### Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) Blog:

Source: *CHLA*  
[chla.org/blog/advice-experts/what-infant-mental-health-your-questions-answered](http://chla.org/blog/advice-experts/what-infant-mental-health-your-questions-answered)

### Remember

You are your child's most important teacher and comfort. Therapy can help you and your little one grow closer, have more fun together, and feel calm and confident as you face life's ups and downs.



### STEIN TIKUN OLAM EARLY CONNECTIONS PROGRAM CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL LOS ANGELES

4650 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90027 • [CHLA.org](http://CHLA.org)

Scan the QR code on the left for more resources from CHLA experts.