Handout 4.3:
Responsive Routines Inventory

Responsive daily routines	What I do now/ My plans
Implement a flexible routine (eating, sleeping, inside-outside) so that toddlers learn to predict	
Provide a daily routine that follows each infant's and toddler's need for feeding and sleeping	
Use routines as opportunities for emotional interaction and learning	
Provide primary caregiving	
Provide responsive routines for infant feeding and toddler eating	**What I do now/My plans**
Provide a private place for family members to feed an infant, if the family desires	

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Responsive Routines Inventory

Provide responsive routines for infant feeding and toddler eating	What I do now/My plans
Welcome families to eat with their children	
Respect the mother's wish to breast-feed and adapt routines appropriately	
Provide a system for documenting families' wishes on issues related to weaning from the breast or bottle and then respect those wishes	
Ask families about their cultural and family preferences for the child's eating habits, needs, and food preferences	
Provide daily information to the family about how, when, and what the child ate	
Sit with toddlers for eating rather than hovering above or running around waiting on them	

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Responsive Routines Inventory

Provide responsive routines for infant feeding and toddler eating	What I do now/My plans
Respond to infants' and toddlers' non-verbal, as well as verbal, requests and comments while feeding and/or eating with the children	
Hold infants gently for bottle-feeding. Babies need to be held for feeding to ensure safety and to meet their emotional needs. Talk softly, hum, sing or be quiet according to the infant's cues	
Speak in a soft, encouraging, and positive way to the children during feeding and eating activities	
Respond when infants and toddlers indicate that they are hungry or want more food and respect them when they indicate that they are satisfied or want to stop eating	
Provide opportunities for toddlers to begin to serve themselves, pour milk out of a small pitcher, and clean the table with a sponge. Accept accidents and sensual explorations of food as part of the learning process	
Use feeding time for infants as an opportunity for emotional connections between the adult and child	

Responsive Routines Inventory

Provide responsive routines for infant feeding and toddler eating	What I do now/My plans
Use eating time for toddlers as an opportunity for emotional connections between adults and children and between/among children	
Observe children during feeding and eating times. Are children enjoying the experience?	

Provide responsive routines for diapering and toilet learning	What I do now/My plans
Provide pictures of family members or other interesting pictures on the wall at the baby's eye level in the diapering area	
Make diapering a special time for adults to be emotionally present with children, following their cues	
Use encouraging and positive words at all times	
Use talk such as "first" and "next" and words that are comforting	

Responsive Routines Inventory

Provide responsive routines for diapering and toilet learning	What I do now/My plans
Use talk such as "first" and "next" and words that are comforting	
Encourage children to participate in the routine (stand and pull up their own pants, etc.)	
Coordinate toilet learning with the family to provide continuity for the child from home to program	
Never force toddlers to use or stay on the toilet.	
Use diapering/toileting times as opportunities for emotional connections between adults and children.	

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Responsive Routines Inventory

Provide responsive routines for sleeping/resting	What I do now/My plans
Gently rock or pat infants who need help to get to sleep. Watch and listen for them to signal when they want to be picked up from a crib and respond positively and quickly to their signals	
Provide toddlers with a cot that is labeled with her/his first name and a special symbol or picture. Sheets, pillows and blankets are labeled in the same way	
Plan and implement a transition time from play to sleep with a predictable sequence for toddlers. To build positive relationships read stories, talk gently, and/or pat a child gently to sleep according to the child's needs. Toddlers may pick a special book or have their own stuffed toy or blanket if needed	
If toddlers have a difficult time sleeping, they may need additional patting, songs, books read, a lovie, or earphones with very soft music playing	
Allow toddlers to sleep/rest only as long as they need. A quiet activity is planned for those who wake up	

Responsive Routines Inventory

Provide responsive routines for sleeping/resting	What I do now/My plans
Help toddlers transition from nap to wake-time by holding and rocking them or rubbing their backs as they start to wake	
For toddlers, prepare the nap area before lunch, so that if they become tired or fall asleep during lunch, the teacher can help them transition to nap time	
Use sleeping/resting times as opportunities for emotional connections between adults and children and for social interactions with peers	

Provide responsive greeting and goodbye times	What I do now/My plans
Greet each infant and toddler and his/her family member(s) warmly in the morning to assist in the transition from home to the child care center/home and to give family members a chance to communicate needs, priorities and concerns	
Help each child say goodbye to family member(s) and move to an activity	

Responsive Routines Inventory

Provide responsive routines for greetings and goodbye times	What I do now/My plans
For a child having difficulty with separation, plan staff assignments to allow the child's primary teacher appropriate time to help the child become more comfortable when arriving or leaving. Comfort the child and tell him/her when the family member will return—after lunch, after nap, etc.	
Greet family members warmly when they pick up the child. This helps children transition from child care to family at the end of the day and is an opportunity to describe the child's day. Give each infant and toddler a special goodbye	
Use transition routines as opportunities to build emotional connections between the child and his/her family, the teacher and child, and between and among peers	

Adapted with permission from Wittmer & Petersen (2006)

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