

The Project Approach to Learning at

RisingOaks
Early Learning

Saint John Paul II

Project Name: Babies

Age Group: Preschool 1 (2.5yrs – 3.5yrs)

Project Start Date: October 17, 2022

Project End Date: December 23, 2022



RisingOaks
Early Learning

Growing minds through play

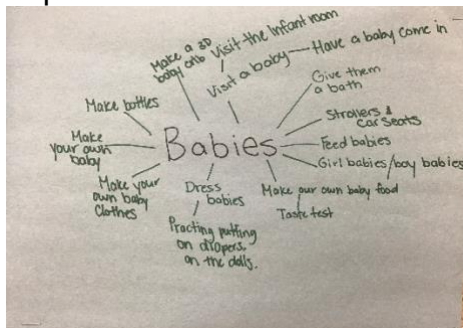
Background

We started the Baby project in October 2022 and finished it in December 2022. There were 22 children that took part in the project, who are 2.5 to 3.5 years old. The educators involved in the project were Emma Andersen RECE and Christina Byrne RECE.

Phase 1: Beginning the Project

The topic of babies really sparked when the educators introduced more babies into the classroom. The preschoolers took to those babies right away, and began doing many different activities with them. The children would feed them in the kitchen area, lay them down on blocks to rest, walk around the classroom rocking them, and so much more. Going with this interest, the educators created more and more opportunities to talk about and learn about babies. As pictured below, we created a Topical Web, with babies as the focus surrounded by possible ideas and areas to further explore with the children.

Topical Web



Questions We Had

1. What We Know?
 - You rock babies – Allie
 - You feed them milk – Ajay
 - They say “goo goo gaa gaa” – Parker
 - They drink milk – Allie
 - They wear diapers – Parker
 - In mommy’s tummy – Emma N
 - They come from the hospital – Parker
 - They sleep in a cradle – Parker
2. What We Want To Know?
 - Where they come from? – Emma M
 - How they talk? – Rhys
 - Where they sleep? – Carleigh
 - What kind of shoes they wear? – Emma M
 - Do they need help falling asleep? – Parker

3. Who Can We Ask?

- Mommies – Emma N
- Judy, Tami, Connie and Jen – Parker
- Daddies – Anya
- Christina and Emma – Parker
- Doctor - Ajay

Children's Initial Knowledge

The children had previous knowledge on babies. The preschoolers discussed that they need to eat like them, while wondering if they eat the same foods like cookies, chicken and milk. The preschoolers would play with the baby dolls and carry them around, feed them, and play with them. Our goal was to expand on their existing knowledge of babies, and provide new experiences and activities to further that learning.

Educator Expectations

As we dive deeper into the topic of babies the educators expected that the preschoolers would engage in many different experiences with babies, and expand the children's knowledge surrounding all things baby.

Definitions

Childs Definition of a Baby:

- Is little - Anya
- They cry - Hezi
- They wear diapers - Aeddan
- A boy and a girl baby - Parker
- They grow - Ajay

Googles Definition of a Baby:

- A very young child, especially one newly or recently born.

Phase 2: Developing the Project

Throughout our project we did many different activities that represent our learning from this baby project. We used our knowledge of different aspects and learning to create different baby-focused activities. We learned that babies wear onesies, so we created onesies. We learned that babies use bottles to drink milk so we created bottles, and so much more!

Baby Bottles

The preschoolers made baby bottles as part of our baby project. We started with our bottles, glue and different cut out shapes. The preschoolers used their fine motor skills to pick up the glue stick, dipped it into the glue than spread it along the paper. The preschoolers then used their pincer grasp to pick up the different shapes and placed them on the bottles, as seen in the photos below. "a baby!" said Carleigh with excitement, "the baby drinks bottles" said Carleigh. Emma than asked what goes into a

baby bottle? “milk” replied Lucas. “Babies drink milk, and hold the bottle with their hands,” said Darrell. “A bottle! milk goes in the bottle” said Rileigh with excitement. The educators then placed some bottles in the classroom for the children to explore and use on their babies!



Giving Baby a Bath

The preschoolers gave the babies in our classroom a bath. Emma got a sensory bin full of water and soap ready and had the children place the babies in the bath. “They are having a bath,” explained Lucas as he is using the cloth to clean the baby’s body. “I need to clean my baby, wash, wash, wash,” said Parker as she is wiping her babies face. “The babies are dirty,” said Rhys. “They need a bath because they play,” explained Jackson. “Mommy and daddy give me a bath at home,” said Darrell. “I have a bath at home too, daddy helps me,” explained Rileigh with excitement. The children used clothes and eyedroppers to clean the babies, as seen in the photos below. When the babies were all cleaned, we dried them using towels and started to play with them again. The children used their sensory skills to clean the babies using water, as well as their pincer grasp to grasp onto the syringe tubes and squeeze the water in and out of it.



Making Baby Clothes

The preschoolers decorated onesies for our baby project. The children were able to choose the colour they wanted to decorate using loose parts. "I want the yellow one," Allie said excitedly. "I want the orange one!" Jackson said. "I like the buttons. Lots of buttons!" Raleigh said. We used our pincer grasp to hold onto the sticks as we dipped them into the glue than transferred the glue onto the paper. We then used our pincer grasp again to pick up the loose parts and place them onto the glue on the paper, as seen in the photos below. As we are going through our class project on babies, the preschoolers are learning more and more about babies. The infant room let us borrow a onesie so we could look at it! "I see buttons on the bottom," Lucas said, pointing to the snaps. Many of the preschoolers said they used to wear onesies, and some said they still do! It is exciting to learn about the things that can change as the children grow from infants to preschoolers!



Labelling Parts of a Baby

The preschoolers look at an image of an infant, and started to discuss the different parts of the body they recognized. They labelled the arms, legs, hands, feet, head, face and more. The preschoolers then discussed the connections between what they saw on the infant, and what they see on their own bodies. This led to discussion on how similar babies and preschoolers are, and have all the same body parts, just different size. We discussed how babies are small and they will grow up to be big like us preschoolers, and then keep growing to be big like mommies and daddies and teachers.

Building a Baby Swing

The preschoolers made a swing for their babies! First, we used the class iPad to google what baby swings look like. "I've seen those at the park!" Lucas said. We took a box, and first traced out where we wanted to cut the holes. The preschoolers took turns with the scissors to carefully cut through the cardboard, as seen in the photos below. Once the holes were made, we decided where we wanted to hang the swing. "Up there" Emma M said as she pointed at the ceiling. "That's too high!" Darrell said. We decided to hang it from the climber. We picked the perfect spot on the climber, and went to work. Emma hung the strings up, and the preschoolers put the babies inside the swing. They stood behind and gave some big pushes, as seen in the photo below. "I like going on swings!" Jackson said excitedly. The preschoolers took turns using their big muscles to push the babies. We talked about the way's babies can still use similar things to what the preschoolers use, such as the swings at the park.



Taste Testing Baby Food

The preschoolers made homemade baby food. What do babies eat? We wondered. "Baby food!" Allie said. We discussed what baby food is, and why babies need it. "Little babies don't have teeth, but I have teeth," Rileigh said. We first went to the kitchen and asked Judy for some carrots. She had already peeled them for us and set them aside. We brought all the materials to our classroom, and got started. Emma cut the carrots with a big knife, as we decided that the big knives were not safe for preschoolers. Once the carrots were cut, the preschoolers took turns putting them into the pot of water, as seen in the photos below. Once all the carrots were in the water cut up, we took the pot to the kitchen to cook. After sleep time we got the carrots from the kitchen, and they had lots of time to cool down. We put the carrots in a big bowl, and got the big masher from the kitchen. All the preschoolers had a turn to mash the carrots, as seen in the photo below. "We need to mush them so it will be like baby food," Darrell said. Once the carrots were mashed, the preschoolers got a little cup and tasted them. "I like them!" Anya said, scooping hers up. "I like them too!" Jackson said. The

preschoolers also were able to taste test some applesauce in pouches. We talked about how that is something babies can eat, that is similar to what the preschoolers eat. What a fun day taste testing!



3-D Baby Crib

What do babies sleep in asked Christina. "A little baby cradle." said Parker. That's right said Christina, we are going to make a crib for our babies to sleep in. We used all of the paper towel holders that the families brought in to create our baby crib. "the crib could be used for baby Noah" said Rhys. Noah is our special guest who will come on Thursday. Before we started to make our crib, we went over some safety rules since we had to use a hot glue gun. We talked about how we can't touch the hot glue gun, since it will be very hot and we don't want to get hurt. We started off by creating the base for our crib, we need four legs for our base said Christina. The preschoolers then added the four legs to the base of the crib, using the hot glue gun. We also added some more paper towel roles to the bottom the base to keep it from breaking when we add our babies in. The next day we finished our crib by painting it! The children used their fine motor skills to hold onto the paint brush as they moved the paint along the crib. The preschoolers put the babies in the crib once it was all dry, and even noticed how it looks like some of their beds at home too! As pictured below, Lucas and Rileigh attaching the legs to the bottom of the crib, holding them as the hot glue bonds the pieces together. Before painting the crib Jackson tests the crib by gently placing babies in for a nap.



How Did Questions Change or Become Redirected by Field Work/Interviews?

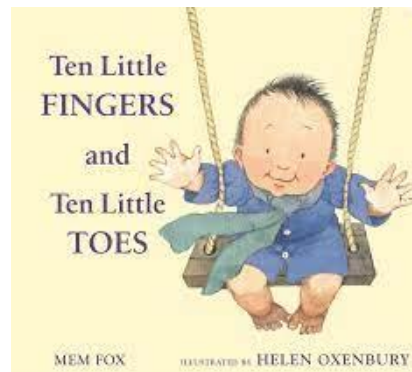
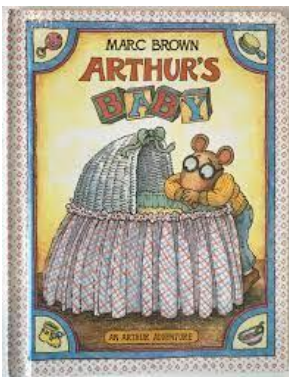
The preschoolers kept to their questions, and continued to ask the same questions until they got answered. Some of these answers led to new questions and new things they wanted to know about.

What Experts Were Interviewed?

While going through this baby project, there were many Individuals that were consulted on their expertise. We conducted surveys from parents to gain some of their knowledge on their personal experiences with babies. Parents were able to share information with their children, and other preschoolers with facts from when they had their babies. The preschooler also asked questions to the Infant staff. As the Infant staff was able to answer those questions, the preschoolers were able to further their knowledge of babies. Finally, Baby Noah and his mommy Sara came to our classroom, and all the preschoolers were able to ask any and all questions to Sara to complete their curiosities.

What Print, Online or Human Resources were Valuable?

Throughout this project, there were many resources that the preschoolers found useful. We were able to connect with parents about their experiences if they have a baby at home currently, and when their preschoolers were a baby. We were also able to find and read many different stories about babies, and all the different ways babies learn, that can be similar and different to the way the preschoolers learn. The preschoolers enjoyed the books, "Arthur's Baby" by Marc Brown, "The New Baby (Little Critter)" by Mercer Mayer and "Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes" by Mem Fox, as seen in the photos below. The preschoolers also got a chance to see into the infant room at SJP and see all the different materials, furniture and cribs in there, that we discussed comparing to what is in the preschool classroom.



Parental Involvement

We posted this survey for parents to fill out:

1. Do you have a baby at home?
 - 14 Parents answered No.
 - 1 Parent answered Yes.

2. How many children do you have?

- 5 Parents answered One.
- 6 Parents answered Two.
- 3 Parents answered Three.
- 1 Parent answered Four.

3. How much did your child weigh at birth?

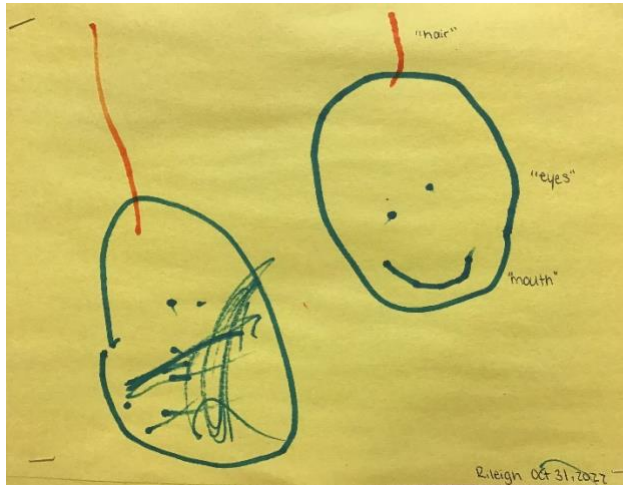
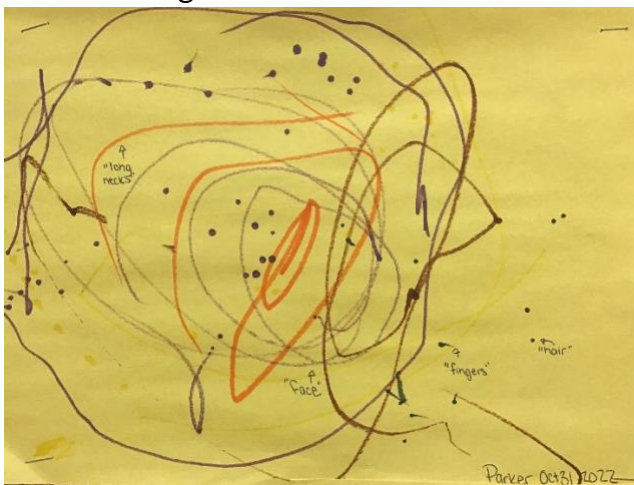
- 6 Lbs. - Ajay
- 6 Lbs. 8 oz - Allie
- 5 Lbs. 7.5 oz - Eric
- 5 Lbs. 6 oz -Kobe
- 8 Lbs. 9 oz -Miles
- 7 Lbs. 11 oz -Parker
- 7 Lbs. 9 oz - Rhys
- 7 Lbs. 13 oz -Lucas
- 8 Lbs. 9 oz - Emma N
- 7 Lbs. 11 oz - Darrell
- 7 Lbs. 4 oz - Aeddan
- 6 Lbs. 7 oz - Violet
- 7 Lbs. 3 oz -Rileigh
- 8 Lbs. 4 oz - Carleigh

First and Second Drawings

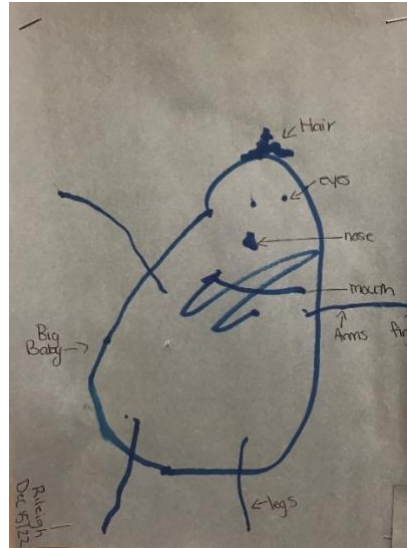
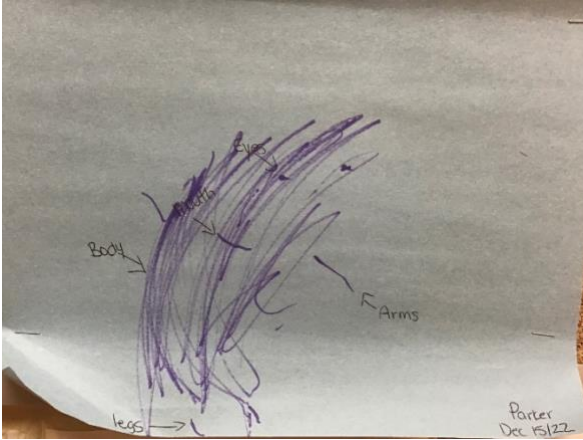
The preschoolers took some time to create drawings of babies at the beginning of this project, as well as at the end. The first drawings the preschoolers did not have an abundance of information on babies. They knew what they saw from the baby dolls in our classroom, whatever experiences they had at home, and seeing the infant room within our center. The second drawings represented the different aspects we learned about babies within our classroom. We discussed that all babies have similarities, yet are also unique. No two babies are the same. We also discussed the different parts of the babies, and that is evident in their drawings, as you can see in the photos below, more specific body parts were identified.



First Drawings:



Second Drawings:



Vocabulary List

- Baby
- Bottle
- Milk
- Crawl
- Crib
- Soother
- Mommy's Tummy
- Umbilical Cord
- Belly Button
- Sonogram
- Onesie
- Diapers
- Wipes
- Weight
- Height

How Did Children Represent Their Learning?

The preschoolers used their learning in many ways. They would discuss with each other the babies they have at home, or the babies that are in some of the preschooler's mommies' tummies. They also used their learning while they were playing with the materials in the classroom. The preschoolers learned how babies need to be held, what they eat, if they walk or crawl, how they need help with getting dressed and so much more. This learning was evident in the way the preschoolers played with the babies in our classroom. They started holding them in a different way, they were gentle when they moved with them, they sat them up and gave them a bottle, or a small spoon pretending to feed them. The preschoolers enjoyed books that had babies, conversations about the babies within our classroom, and in the infant room at SJP.

Phase 3: Concluding the Project

Guest – Sara and Baby Noah

To create a close for the project, the preschoolers had a visit from Baby Noah! The children all sat together while we had Noah come and sit with us with his mommy. Noah and his mommy sat down with us, and began to answer some of the children's questions. "Where do babies come from?" Asked Emma M. "Your mommy's tummy," said Sara. "How do they talk?" asked Rhys. "With the help of his mommy, we practice him saying certain words like mama, but he won't talk for a few more months," said Sara. "Where do they sleep?" asked Carleigh. "Usually babies sleep in their cribs, but Noah is still too little so he sleeps in a bassinet with me," said Sara. "What kind of shoes do they wear?" asked Emma M. "Babies can wear any type of shoes, but Noah doesn't like to wear shoes he just kicks them off so I just put socks on him" said Sara. "Do babies need help falling asleep?" asked Parker. "Some babies do, I feed him and rock him to sleep since he is still little" said Sara. Sara also showed us what was in her diaper bag. We asked the children what we think Sara keeps in her diaper bag. "Wipes," said Rhys. "Diapers," said Parker. "Cream," said Carleigh. The children then got to hold Noah's hand, and see him up close, the children were all very excited and proud to hold his hand, as seen in the photos below. As the preschoolers spent time with baby Noah, they were able to ask all the questions they were wondering about. As our baby project ended, we were able to answer all the different questions and wonders we had at the beginning of our project. The preschoolers were very excited to meet baby Noah, and learn all about him, while getting a chance to help with different things that baby Noah needed. A special thank you to baby Noah and his mommy Sara for coming in to spend time with us.



What Did Children Learn from This Project

The preschoolers learned many new things while working our way through this project. They learned that babies are very similar to preschoolers in ways where they need comfort, food, drinks, help with different activities and so on. The preschoolers also learned what it would be like to take care of a real baby, and the importance of being quiet, calm and kind towards little babies. The preschoolers also learned new skills that will continue to develop as they grow, such as, being courteous to others,

helping others when they need it, and learning how to support one another with many different environments.

Did We Answer All Our Questions?

These are the questions we had:

- Where they come from? – Emma M
- How they talk? – Rhys
- Where they sleep? – Carleigh
- What kind of shoes they wear? - Emma M
- Do they need help falling asleep? – Parker

We learned the answer to all of our questions throughout our time learning about babies, but the preschoolers specifically asked these questions during the visit from baby Noah and his mommy Sara. Sara explained that babies come from mommies' tummies, they need help learning how to talk by the way we talk to them, they sleep in a bassinet next to mommies and daddies' beds, they sometimes wear shoes, and sometimes need help falling asleep. Throughout our activities we learned lots about babies that answered our question as well, such as building a crib like babies sleep in, making the clothes they wear, and so much more. All of our questions were answered!

Teacher Reflections

Emma RECE – Throughout this project, as an educator I learned that children have a nurturing nature from such a young age. When we had baby Noah come for a visit, we discussed how we have to be gentle and kind towards him, because we don't want to scare or hurt him, and the preschooler took to that right away. It was interesting to see the different ways that children react with the dolls, and the way they perform the similar acts, but in a gentle way to baby Noah. I believe the whole class benefited from this project, but I believe the few children who have baby siblings coming soon especially benefitted. They learned different ways that they can interact with their new siblings, in ways that will be helpful and kind.

Christina RECE – all throughout the project, I saw a more nurturing and loving side of the children that I have never seen. The preschoolers were able to learn about how babies eat, what they eat, how they learn to walk and how they learn to talk. The children were able to ask Sara questions about baby Noah and see him in person as well. The preschoolers explored how to be gentle, and kind towards babies and others. It was a great experience for the children to expand their knowledge on babies and to help further enhance how to be gentle, kind and how to interact with babies and their peers. The children benefited from this project because it gave them new skills they can use in their everyday lives.