



Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers

By Janet Gonzalez-Mena, Dianne Widmeyer Eyer

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This text is a very practical introduction to the principles and practices of caregiving for infants and toddlers. It combines a child-centered philosophy with problem-solving strategies, and provides a thorough discussion of gender role stereotyping and multicultural issues in childcare. The philosophy of caregiving that underlies this book comes from Magda Gerber and Tom Forrest, M.D., as well as the earlier work of Emmi Pikler. These pioneers of the field stressed the need to integrate (1) knowledge of play as curriculum, (2) concepts of child development with caregiving, (3) the physical and social environment, and (4) adult relations.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Janet Gonzalez-Mena started her early childhood career in a cooperative preschool as a parent volunteer back in 1966. She then became a Head Start volunteer and ended up as a teacher in a preschool for Spanish-speaking children and their families in 1970's. She has also helped open several pilot programs including a therapeutic child care program and a home-based bilingual preschool program. When Magda Gerber came into her life in the mid-1970's, Janet signed up for an internship with her at the Children's Health Council in Menlo Park, California. As a result of that experience, later, when she became a child care director, she was able to incorporate much of what she learned into her work and was influential in expanding that program to include an infant center. Training and teaching adults has always been sideline, even when she was working with children and families. She worked as a Head Start trainer and as adjunct faculty in 4 community colleges plus the University of California Santa Cruz credential extension program. She taught for 15 years as full time faculty at Napa Valley College in the Child and Family Studies Program. Since 1991, she has been part of the faculty for WestEd's Program for Infant-Toddler Caregivers (PITC) Training of Trainer Institutes. Janet has been writing along with teaching for all these years and is author of numerous articles and 13 books related to early childhood, including *Foundations of Early Childhood Education*; *Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers* (with co-author Dianne Eyer); and *Diversity in Early Care and Education: Honoring Differences* (Formerly *Multicultural Issues in Child Care*). She wrote *Dragon Mom* about herself as parent to help early childhood professionals alleviate guilt when their parenting doesn't live up to their high standards. Her latest passion is understanding more about the Pikler Institute in Budapest, Hungary, where Magda Gerber came from. It took her 30 years to get there after she first heard of it, but her first trip to it in November of 2003 merely whetted her appetite. She has made two more since and is planning for another one. She is fascinated by the approach and is convinced that this residential nursery is a model for the world. She is continuing to learn more about how this approach can be used to improve infant-toddler care and education programs in the United States. She is also working with a group in Mexico to explore how the approach might fit into their models of residential care for infants and toddlers. Janet has a Master of Arts Degree in Human Development from Pacific Oaks in Pasadena, California.

Tenured Professor of Early Childhood Education / Child Development at Canada College since 1970, Department Coordinator since 1978 (and author of 30 courses within the ECE/CD Department). Dianne has served on various college committees during the last few years including the Articulation Self Study Committee and the Chairperson for the College Council from 2002 to 2004. She received specialized diversity training under Title V in 2002. In the late 1990's she was a presenter at the Annual Conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children in Atlanta, GA and Washington D.C. respectively. She is the co-author of *Infants, Toddlers and Caregivers*, sixth edition, McGraw-Hill, released in 2004. Her community experiences include: Task Force member for the Advancing Careers in Child Development Project (Pacific Oaks College, Pasadena CA); San Mateo County Consortium for Quality Programs; SMC Partnership Council; and membership in SMAEYC. She has been responsible for several grants within the ECE/CD Department including: Foster Care Education, SAFE START/Violence Intervention in ECE (Centers for Disease Control); and the Family Support Program (a PSP and The Council collaboration). She is currently coordinating a grant with First 5 San Mateo County to recruit and retain quality ECE/CD teachers and providers in the field. She is also a Professional Growth Advisor for the Child Development Permit.

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