

Appropriate for :
Infants, Young Toddlers and Older Toddlers.

Class Pet



SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- Appropriate sturdy table & cage or tank, etc. for housing pet of your choice
 - Pet of your choice (bird, fish, etc. – as allowed by licensing standards)
 - Supplies for caring for pet & person(s) designated to & committed to caring for pet
- *Be sure the person caring for pet seeks good advice from knowledgeable people, so your experiences will be good ones (healthy pets, etc.).

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Choose location of pet based on age of children, but place it where children can easily see it and experience it daily with appropriate supervision. Don't put it totally out of reach & sight.

What the adult can do to support learning and development in these domains:

- Talk to and about the pet(s) with the children often. Show them how to interact with pets in gentle ways; they will follow your example.
- Teach the children how to help care for the pets and notice when a pet needs something.
- Use the pets in the room as a source of distraction at times of stress, such as upon arrival, at separation times, or during a moment of conflict. Watching a fish tank has been shown to lower blood pressure.

Examples of language that can be used between caregiver and child:

- “That’s our birdie, Polly. She likes it when you talk to her.”
- “You like watching the fish, don’t you? Me, too. It’s very soothing.”
- “Our bunny is drinking some water. He must be thirsty.”
- “Can you touch our pet hamster softly with your finger like this? How does his fur feel?”

This activity highlights support for the following *NCFELD* domain:

Cognitive Development	Approaches to Play & Learning	Language Development & Communication	Emotional and Social Development	Health & Physical Development
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