

## Tips for Singing With Your Baby or Toddler

- **Physically connect with your child.** Holding your baby close in your arms (or in your lap) or making eye contact are all ways to physically connect with your baby while you are singing. This physical contact builds trust and attachment between you and your baby and increases the enjoyment he or she experiences in singing activities.
- **Sing slowly.** Sing the songs slowly to allow your child to hear the words and melody. When adults sing too fast, it is hard for children to hear and learn each word, making it more difficult for them to join in the singing.
- **Repeat the same songs often.** Repeating the songs you sing with your children increases their familiarity with the songs and makes it easier for them to learn the words and sing along.
- **Sing as a transition.** Singing during times when you have to move from one place or task to another can make the transition less stressful and more playful. Transitions can then become a playful time that you and your children look forward to, rather than a time of day that everyone dreads.
- **Sing to calm down.** Singing is a valuable strategy for preparing for rest times and calming unsettling feelings. Sing songs softly and slowly. Gentle rocking, back rubbing, or snuggling can add to the soothing experience.
- **Keep songs simple.** Choose songs that are repetitive and have simple melodies. If songs have many verses, sing one or two repeatedly (rather than singing all the verses) so that children can learn and get used to a limited number of words. Likewise, keep hand motions or gestures simple so children can copy them. Using a limited number of gestures and motions makes it easier for children to remember and copy them.
- **Share the songs you sing with other family members.** If there are particular songs that your child enjoys singing, be sure to let babysitters, grandparents, siblings, and other caregivers know which songs the child prefers. This enables family members to sing the child's favorite songs as well as increases the child's familiarity and enjoyment with those songs.

