

## **Key Concepts and Goals of the Parenting: The First Three Years – Incredible INFANTS**

### **Session 1 – Welcome to the Incredible INFANTS**

#### **KEY CONCEPT**

- The *Incredible* INFANTS series helps parents encourage their children's development, share experiences with other parents, and develop a network of support.

#### **Goals – By the end of this session parents will:**

1. Understand the *Incredible* INFANTS philosophy.
2. Agree upon group guidelines.
3. Experience the group as a friendly and safe environment in which they can feel comfortable sharing their experiences and learning about parenting.
4. Share their stories, expectations, and feelings about the arrival of their new baby.

### **Session 2 – Essential Beginnings**

#### **KEY CONCEPT**

- Responsive, caring adults help babies trust their new world as a safe place.

#### **Goals – By the end of this session parents will:**

1. See the group as a community of “Learning Families” that support each other as they share what they are learning and how they are growing.
2. View babies as positively motivated to get their needs met.
3. Learn that the first and most important experience for babies is to trust that their needs will be met and understand that this sense of security about getting basic needs met affects all of babies' future learning.
4. Gain ideas from the group about how to soothe babies and realize that babies are unique in how they like to be soothed.

### **Session 3 – Encouraging Your Developing Baby**

#### **KEY CONCEPTS**

- The growth and development of the baby in the first year is truly incredible.
- Parents can provide early experiences to promote healthy development.

#### **Goals – By the end of this session parents will:**

1. Learn how babies grow and develop in the first year.
2. Discuss what to do about their worries.
3. Understand that the kinds of experiences babies need for healthy brain development can occur within the context of everyday family life.
4. Learn to follow babies' lead in providing both stimulation and solitude.

## **Session 4 – Understanding Your Individual Baby**

### **KEY CONCEPT**

- Awareness of individual differences helps parents respond to their babies' unique needs.

### **Goals – By the end of this session parents will:**

1. Learn about their baby's individual differences.
2. Explore how their individual baby communicates with them.
3. Experience that they are the experts about their baby.

## **Session 5 – Nurturing Yourself and Your Family**

### **KEY CONCEPT**

- In a learning family, parents take care of themselves so they are better able to take care of their babies.

### **Goals – By the end of this session parents will:**

1. Understand that it is normal for them to feel challenged by the demands of parenthood.
2. Become more aware of how their high and low feelings affect parenting.
3. Practice simple ways to take care of themselves.
4. View other group members as important sources of support and encouragement.

## **Session 6 – Beyond Baby: Adult Relationships**

### **KEY CONCEPTS**

- It is normal for our adult relationships to change after our baby arrives.
- Being a new parent creates a need for new kinds of social activity.
- Parents can practice ways to simplify family decision-making and problem-solving.

### **Goals – By the end of this session parents will:**

1. Learn ways to simplify family problem-solving.
2. Share with other parents the changes and challenges in their adult relationships.
3. Identify what they appreciate about the adults in their lives.
4. Plan to spend some time having fun with other adults.

## **Session 7 – Toys, Play, and Parents**

### **KEY CONCEPT**

- Babies use play to get their physical needs met, to explore and learn about the world, and to connect with others.

### **Goals – By the end of this session parents will:**

1. Understand the importance of play to their babies.
2. Appreciate the variety in parents' favorite ways to play with their babies.
3. Develop criteria for evaluating toys.
4. Understand how "ordinary" play is rich nourishment for their babies' brain.

## **Session 8 – Your New Family Life**

### **KEY CONCEPTS**

- We're real, not ideal. We're a "learning family!"
- A family is a team, with members on each other's side and cheering each other on through hard moments and celebrations.
- Passive entertainment has its place, but we decide how big that place is in our family.

### **Goals – By the end of this session parents will:**

1. Recognize and appreciate their family's strengths.
2. Discuss ways to make good decisions about work, childcare, and household responsibilities.
3. Remember that regularly having fun together strengthens families.
4. Examine the pros and cons of TV viewing for themselves and their baby.

## **Session 9 – Be a Friendly Guide to Your Mobile Baby**

### **KEY CONCEPTS**

- Parents can find many ways to keep babies safe while still encouraging exploration and learning.
- The "Baby-Friendly Home" provides a safe physical environment with friendly grown-ups to guide baby through it.

### **Goals – By the end of this session parents will:**

1. Learn ways to make their homes "Baby-Friendly."
2. Think about how their child-raising practices may be affected by their own parents' methods.
3. Understand that "discipline" is about learning, not punishment.
4. Discuss their role as "friendly guide" as their baby learns about the world.

## **Session 10 – Celebrating Your Journey**

### **KEY CONCEPTS**

- In a learning family, parents and babies grow and change as they learn new things and begin putting them into practice.
- A group of new parents can act like an extended family by providing support and wisdom for its members.

### **Goals – By the end of this session parents will:**

1. Recognize the skills they have learned, the confidence they have gained, and the goals they have met as they complete the *Incredible* INFANTS series.
2. Acknowledge their accomplishments as a group.
3. Evaluate the *Incredible* INFANTS series.
4. Make plans for the future of their group.