

Early Intervention Support Program: Empowering Families of Children Ages 6-12 Months Through OT Education

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Introduction

Early infancy is a critical period for motor, cognitive, and social-emotional development. Many parents report feeling unprepared to support their infant's growth at home, citing gaps in knowledge and confidence. Research shows that parent education and coaching improve caregiver competence, increase carryover of therapeutic strategies, and enhance infant developmental outcomes. Despite this evidence, families often receive limited guidance. This project aims to provide accessible, evidence-based resources to empower parents, strengthen caregiver engagement, and support positive developmental trajectories for infants.

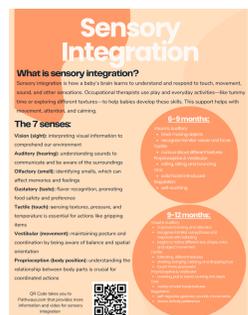
Head to Toe Therapy is an early intervention clinic serving infants and toddlers ages 0–2.5 with developmental, sensory, and motor needs. Their therapists provide family-centered services that support early development and empower caregivers in understanding their child's needs. Caregivers often want more accessible, practical education to confidently support their infant's developmental and sensory needs at home. By creating clear, parent-friendly resources, this project strengthens caregiver empowerment and enhances the outcomes central to early intervention practice.

Project Description

This project empowers parents and builds confidence in supporting their child's development at home through clear, easy-to-understand educational flyers. The resources outline what caregivers may expect and how progress typically unfolds. The project reflects the core Hawaiian values of Aloha (compassionate, family-centered support), Pono (accurate and ethical information), Kuleana (shared responsibility between therapists and families), Kōkua (helpful guidance), and Laulima (collaboration between families and therapists).

Purpose/Aims

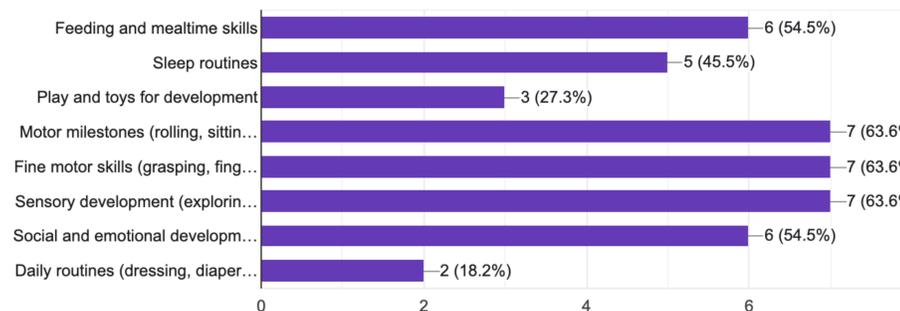
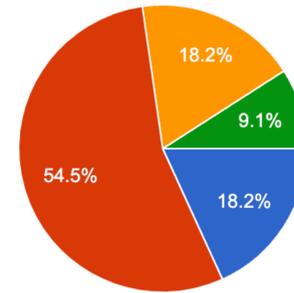
The purpose of this project is to enhance caregiver knowledge and confidence in implementing developmental and sensory strategies at home. By providing accessible, practical educational materials, the project aims to strengthen caregiver engagement, improve carryover from clinic-based therapy, and support positive developmental outcomes for infants receiving early intervention services.



Methods

A systematic, needs-driven approach guided this project. First, input from Head to Toe Therapy clinicians helped identify gaps in caregiver knowledge related to developmental and sensory needs of infants ages 6–12 months. A caregiver survey was then developed and distributed to 5 caregivers of typically developing infants and 5 caregivers of non-typically developing infants to assess confidence, challenges, and preferred educational formats.

Survey responses were analyzed for common themes, which informed the content and design of the educational flyers. Materials were refined through ongoing collaboration with clinical supervisors to ensure clarity, accuracy, and cultural responsiveness. Project development and management followed an iterative process involving consistent feedback, timeline tracking, and revision to ensure the final resources aligned with caregiver needs and early-intervention best practices.



Results/Outcomes

Survey responses from caregivers of both typically and non-typically developing infants showed a strong desire for increased education on fine motor skills, sensory development, motor milestones, and social-emotional development. Caregivers reported that they felt more confident when they had simple, accessible tools to reference at home.

Across all participants, the most preferred formats for receiving information were flyers and short demonstration videos. In response, educational flyers were created and paired with QR codes linking caregivers to a website containing video demonstrations to support home carryover.

Additionally, caregivers expressed a need for guidance on managing their own well-being while supporting an infant with developmental or sensory needs. To address this, an extra flyer was developed specifically for caregiver wellness, offering practical strategies and community resources to promote caregiver resilience and balance.

Discussion

Caregivers in this project expressed a need for more guidance on fine motor, sensory, motor milestone, and social-emotional development, showing a clear gap in accessible education. Their preference for flyers and video demonstrations indicates that simple, visual resources best support learning and home carryover. The positive response to the caregiver wellness flyer highlights the importance of supporting both infant development and caregiver well-being.

These findings show the value of providing clear, practical materials to strengthen caregiver confidence and participation in early intervention.

Limitations include a small sample size and involvement from one clinic, limiting generalizability. Time constraints also prevented long-term evaluation. Future opportunities include expanding the sample, creating more video content, and assessing long-term caregiver outcomes.

