

# FAMILY RESOURCE

## C O N N E C T I O N

A publication created by and for New Horizon Child Care • [www.newhorizonchildcare.com](http://www.newhorizonchildcare.com) • Phone: 763-557-1111



Baby sign language has become a popular phenomenon to parents around the world in recent years. Research has proven that teaching babies to sign increases their IQ and enables them to talk at an earlier age than those who do not. Sign language helps to tear down the barriers of silence and opens new worlds of communication between a parent and a child.



### DRINK/BOTTLE

Description: Thumb to mouth, tilting up

Memory Aid: Mimics a drinking motion

Possible Situations: To request a bottle or to request juice or water.

## Look Who's Communicating...

**New Horizon Child Care is proud to announce a new addition to our infant curriculum: infant sign language**

Why are songs like "The Itsy Bitsy Spider" and "The Wheels on the Bus" so popular among young children? Besides the sing-songy silly sounds, the words are accompanied by dynamic hand and body motion. This motion not only makes the experience more memorable, but it actually gives young children the ability to participate before they can sing the words to the song. Similarly, learning sign language empowers hearing babies to express their needs.

Infant developmental research indicates that babies have control over their hands long before they develop the fine motor skills required for speech. By teaching infants as early as eight months old to sign, more and more parents, grandparents, and caregivers are experiencing the many benefits of this method of early communication. Sign language is currently being used with great success in a rapidly growing number of child care programs. New Horizon Child Care, however, is the very first child care company in Minnesota to incorporate sign language into its curriculum.

Research indicates there are significant benefits of signing for both babies and their caregivers in a child care environment. Some of these specific benefits include:

- Reduced noise levels in the classrooms.
- Minimized stress and frustration for infants and child care providers.
- Significant reduction in the number of biting problems.

Studies have found that not only do signing children tend to learn to speak sooner, but by age two they have a vocabulary of fifty more real words, on average, than non-signing children. By age three, children exposed to signing have language skills approaching that expected of four-year-olds. In the same way crawling seems to stimulate a child's interest in walking, signing seems to provide an excellent bridge to verbal communication.

New Horizon Child Care has chosen the *Sign With Your Baby* complete learning kit as its first resource for incorporating sign language into the curriculum. This program trains our teachers to also speak the words out loud while teaching a sign. The combination of the spoken word along with the gesture of the sign provides the optimum setting for learning. Brain research supports this very strategy: when learning is hands-on and introduced in a variety of ways, learning makes a greater impact. Each of the words taught as a sign is actually reinforced by three methods for conveying to and from the child: **audibly**-the spoken word; **visually**-observing the gesture, facial expression, and the context; and **kinesthetically**-producing the physical gesture.

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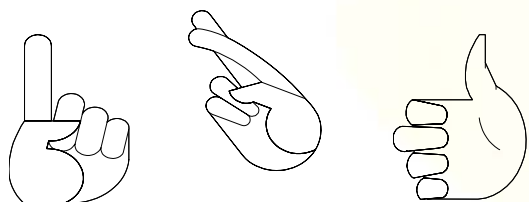
### Mission

To open "New Horizons" of self-esteem and potential for the little people entrusted to our care, their families, and our employees by providing and continuously improving the best child development on the planet!



For further information and research about sign language and the *Sign With Your Baby* complete learning kit, check out the web site at [www.sign2me.com](http://www.sign2me.com). Families are also welcome to order a kit through any New Horizon Child Care director. The cost is \$49.99. Please allow approximately two weeks for delivery.

*"This is a time when the brain  
is growing very rapidly.  
It is too precious a time to waste."  
-Dr. Martha Bullock Lamberts (Dutcher)  
Human Development Specialist*



### **The Parent Warmline: A Practical Resource for Families**

**The Parent Warmline** at Children's Health Care, Minneapolis, is a free telephone consultation service that provides support, information, and practical advice about parenting, child development, and behavior. Parent Warmline is available to parents of young children, child care providers, family members, and interested professionals in the Twin Cities and surrounding communities. Parent Warmline addresses concerns such as toilet learning, sleep challenges, discipline, feeding, and eating difficulties. Parent Warmline is staffed by volunteer professionals in early childhood who also provide support for parental stress and direct parents to additional community resources as needed. The Parent Warmline telephone number is (612) 813-6336.

**For further information about  
the New Horizon *Creative  
Discoveries Curriculum*, check  
out our web site at  
[www.newhorizonchildcare.com](http://www.newhorizonchildcare.com).**

### **Coming Soon to a Classroom Near You... New Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum**

New Horizon Child Care is proud to announce the addition of new Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum units. Many of our very own expert preschool teachers are diligently researching and writing more in-depth units to add to our existing *Creative Discoveries Curriculum*. These units are specifically designed to further prepare the Pre-Kindergarten child for a successful kindergarten experience. Exciting new Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum units include:

- Writing Center Unit
- Whole Language/Phonics
- Safety Units: Bus Safety, Personal Safety, Bicycle/Scooter/Roller Blade Safety, and Household Safety
- All About Me (Personal Information) knowing my name, address, and phone numbers
- Following Directions

### **Dependent Care Tax Credit**

Current law allows a taxpayer to claim a dependent care credit for a portion of qualifying child or dependent care expenses paid for the purpose of allowing the taxpayer to work. Generally, to be eligible, the taxpayer must maintain a home for a dependent under age 13, or a spouse or other dependent incapable of self care. The maximum annual credit is 30% of up to \$2,400 of expenses for one qualifying individual and \$4,800 for two or more. The credit percentage is reduced in steps to 20% as AGI increases from \$10,000 to over \$28,000.

Effective for years starting after 2002, the 30% credit percentage increases to 35%, and the maximum amount of eligible expenses rises to \$3,000 for one qualifying individual and \$5,000 for two or more. Plus, the credit percentage "phase-down" to 20% will occur when AGI increase from \$15,000 to over \$43,000.

In a related provision, beginning in tax years starting after 2001, employers may claim a tax credit equal to 25% of qualified expenses for employer-provided child care resource and referral services, up to a maximum \$150,000 credit per tax year.

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