UNIT 11 PLAY ACTIVITIES FOR FOSTERING DEVELOPMENT

Structure

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11.1 INTRODUCTION

All of us interact with children and observe others relating to them. One learns how to pick up infants, play with them and talk to them. We usually change our style of talking when conversing with children. We bring ourselves to their eye level and speak in simple sentences. However, caregiving is a complex task and one must have the appropriate knowledge and skills to be able to foster the child's development. One must know the milestones of development and the abilities of children at different ages, so that one can plan age-appropriate play activities for them. Such knowledge is helpful for the parents as well as for the worker in a preschool or a creche. For the latter, such an understanding is particularly important because she is substituting home care for a large part during the day and has a responsibility towards the children and the parents. If some aspects of care, such as stimulating experiences or immunization, are neglected at home, then the worker must compensate for them. If the worker is a sensitive person, the parents will feel confident about leaving their child with her.

The first part of this Unit describes the skills and the attitudes that a person working with children of any age group must have. It will help you to identify the attitudes and skills you have and will also make you aware of the ones you need to develop. The discussion in this section holds true for caregiving to children of all age groups and is not specific for infants only.

The second part of the Unit focuses on the play activities for children up to one year of age. The type of play activities will vary with the age of the infants.

Objectives

After studying this Unit, you should be able to

- describe the attitudes which will enable the caregivers to take proper care of children
- state the skills that caregivers need to have
- select play material for infants
- plan and conduct play activities for infants
- make some simple play material for infants.
11.2 ATTITUDES OF THE CAREGIVER

A well-rounded personality is essential for proper caregiving. One needs to be sensitive and confident as well as flexible and child-centred. Let us read how these attitudes help in caregiving.

11.2.1 Sensitivity

A sensitive caregiver is aware of the needs of children and understands why a child is behaving in a particular way. She realizes, for example, that the child is irritable, hungry, in pain or feeling neglected. She understands that if the usually active four-year-old is listless, there is a reason for it. In other words, she is responsive to the children's feelings and the cues they give. By attuning to the child, the caregiver can take advantage of those moments when the child is alert, responsive and sociable and provide learning experiences. This leads us to the next point.

A sensitive caregiver knows that each child is unique and has a distinct personality and must not be compared with others. She accepts children as they are and gives equal attention to all. When the worker is looking after many children, it is possible that she may like some more than others. But these preferences must not affect her behaviour. She should not neglect the more difficult children. Each child must get an equal opportunity for learning and interacting with her.

A sensitivity towards children enables the caregiver to feel with the children and understand their pain and pleasure. In other words, she has empathy. This is especially important because it makes the children feel that the caregiver understands them and likes them. Children can sense feelings of warmth by the way the caregiver holds them, responds to and communicates with them. The caregiver's actions and behaviour should communicate her acceptance of children. If they do not feel secure with her, she will not be able to help in their development effectively.

Individual differences in development lead to different skills among children. This has implications for organizing play activities. Ideally, the caregiver has to plan activities that are suitable for each child. This may become difficult in a large group of children, but with imagination and forethought, the caregiver can so devise play activities that each child's needs are met. We will come back to this aspect in Block 7.

11.2.2 Self-confidence

Imagine a person who does not have confidence in herself and panics in a crisis. How well do you think she will be able to look after children? Only if the person is relaxed and free of anxieties will she be able to devote attention to her work and to children. She will be able to handle problems effectively and take appropriate decisions. A confident caregiver interacts with children in a relaxed manner, hugs them spontaneously and spends time with them. Her confidence in handling situations and her sense of security is communicated to the children through her behaviour. In such a setting, children eagerly explore their surroundings.

11.2.3 Flexibility

Flexibility means being open to suggestions, spontaneous, and willing to change one's plan of work and style of care to suit children's interests and needs.

Children have their preferences, likes and dislikes. It is possible that they do not like the play activity that the worker has planned for them and want to do something else. She must not be upset by this, but rather try to find out what interests the children. The preschoolers will enthusiastically voice what they want to do. The worker must be open to their suggestions.

In other words, while there should be a structure to what a caregiver will do with children, within this structure there must be openness. The main aim should be to...
allow freedom to children to explore their environment and express themselves. It requires careful planning to keep a structure to one's plan of the day and yet be flexible. We will discuss this principle of planning in greater detail in Block 7.

11.2.4 Child-centredness

A caregiver must become child-centred. This means that her plans and activities should be centered around children's abilities, interests and needs. Being child-centered also means that the play activities planned are appropriate for children. A person who is child-centred is sensitive and flexible as well.

The caregiver should not feel hostility or depression while interacting with children. She needs to have patience. She must display positive feelings and have a cheerful outlook towards her own role. She must share children's joy in their accomplishments and listen to them, thus providing emotional and physical closeness. By respecting the children she will make them feel comfortable, confident and important.

Toys and play materials should be given to children without undue concern about breakage. You may have noticed that many parents buy expensive play material for their child but do not allow her to touch them. It would be better to buy inexpensive toys or make play material at home. During play and exploration children are bound to make the place untidy or spoil their clothes, but the caregiver must not stop their play just to avoid cleaning up later. The fun that children derive from such play should be valued more. While playing in the garden, the child is likely to want to dig with her hands. In the process she will definitely get dirty. But she will also derive pleasure out of this as well as learn from it. In other words, children should not be kept tidy at the cost of their need for exploration. They should be allowed to play as they like, as long as they do not harm themselves. Any cleaning up should be done at the end of the activity. Of course, one can ask the children to help in this task.

11.3 INTERACTING WITH PARENTS

The day care worker or preschool worker must maintain contact with the child's parents. If there is good communication between the workers and parents, they can work together as a team for the child's benefit. By learning about the child's behaviour at home the worker will be able to understand the child better. The parents are able to take better care of the child by knowing the activities of the centre.

To interact successfully with parents, the worker needs to be a good listener. The parents may want to share information about the child and discuss their parenting. The worker at such times should not give directions to parents but rather make suggestions to them. As a worker one must remember that one is only supplementing the role of the parents and not competing with them for the child's affection. Becoming possessive of the child will harm the relationship between the parents and the caregiver. You will read more about this aspect in Block 7.

The worker must also have a good relationship with other workers in the centre. Unpleasant relations among the adults disturb the child as well.

11.4 SKILLS OF THE CAREGIVER

In addition to having the right attitudes, the caregiver must also have the skills to do her tasks efficiently. Let us see the tasks that the caregiver has to perform and the skills that are needed for these. Table 11(a) helps to identify them.
### Table 11 (a): Tasks to be performed in a Child Care Centre and Skills required of a Caregiver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Tasks</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Keeping the surroundings safe and healthy</td>
<td>1) How to keep the environment safe and clean</td>
<td>1) Identifying unsafe objects and materials in the environment such as sharp things, furniture, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) First-aid</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) Preservation and storage of food and water</td>
<td>2) Selecting safe material and places for children's activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4) Basic rules of health and hygiene</td>
<td>3) Ensuring sanitary conditions in use of food and water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Physical care of children</td>
<td>1) Health and nutritional needs of children in different age group</td>
<td>1) Bathing and dressing babies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Feeding and weaning practices</td>
<td>2) Bottle feeding infants as per their individual needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) Bathing and toilet practices</td>
<td>3) Preparing weaning foods and feeding infants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4) Sleep patterns and habits of children</td>
<td>4) Measuring children's growth using growth charts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5) Appropriate clothing for children</td>
<td>5) Attending to toilet needs, responding to cues for elimination</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6) Medical referral services</td>
<td>6) Identifying sick or under nourished children</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7) Care required during diarrhoea and fevers</td>
<td>7) Selecting appropriate food for children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Meeting the stimulation and emotional needs of children</td>
<td>1) Principles of growth and development</td>
<td>1) Planning a day's programme to meet needs of children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Milestones/norms in development</td>
<td>2) Organizing activities for motor, social, emotional language and cognitive development of children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) Appropriate play and interaction activities for promoting development of children in all areas</td>
<td>3) Utilizing local resources—material and human—to enrich the programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4) Parent guidance</td>
<td>4) Identifying children with special needs using simple criteria based on development norms/ milestones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8) Immunization schedule</td>
<td>5) Organizing parent meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Maintaining Records</td>
<td>1) Significance of attendance</td>
<td>1) Keeping attendance records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Significance of health/growth records</td>
<td>2) Entering health and immunization information in records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3) Maintaining growth charts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 11.5 PLAY ACTIVITIES FOR INFANTS

Before we describe play activities, let us read about selecting play materials for children. The toys and other play material do not have to be expensive. Bottle caps, boxes, twigs, shells, pieces of paper—things considered waste—are equally interesting for children. Using material that is easily available in the house, we can make attractive play objects. Dolls, rattles, masks or puppets can be made from such material with little effort.
It is important that the play material is appropriate to the age of the child. If this is done, the play activity becomes meaningful for the child as it suits her abilities.

The usefulness of the play material increases if it can be used with children of different ages. To illustrate, bottle caps of different colours can initially be used for the one-year-old as material to pick up, hold and manipulate. Four-year-olds would enjoy sorting these caps into groups based on colour and shape. Similarly, wooden blocks can be used to make a tower, build a house or be arranged as a railway track. They can also be used to impart concepts of shape, size, number and colour. Other play materials which can be used are beads, stones, ropes, tyres and balls.

The toys should be attractive. They should be bright and should have contrast. They should be easy to manipulate and handle. Toys that can be inflated with air, balls made of cloth and paper or wooden toys with strings so that they can be pulled, puppets and dolls made from colourful rags are examples of things children find attractive.

While buying or making play material one must ensure that they are safe for children. The following criteria must be given special attention while selecting the play material.

- The toys should be big enough so that the child does not swallow them or put them in her nose or ears.
- The play objects should have rounded and smooth edges instead of being sharp.
- Since infants tend to mouth objects, the material used for making the toys should not be poisonous. The paints used for colouring the toys should be non-toxic. In case of cloth toys, the colour of the cloth should be fast. Toys made of metal should not be given to younger children.
- The toys should not break easily. They should be sturdy to stand banging, chewing and squeezing.
Let us now read about the play activities for infants below one year of age. These are based on their abilities, which increase and become more complex as they grow. The play activities described in this Unit, therefore, progress from simple to complex. The period of one year has been divided into further age groups and suitable activities for each age group have been described.

The play activities about which you will read in this Unit are simply examples of what can be organised for infants. Using these activities as guidelines, you can plan other activities. These play activities are not intended to test the infant's abilities. They will be fun for the infant only when the caregiver also enjoys them. When the caregiver is tense, she is not a good playmate.

The activities described in the sub-section that follows will help the infant to develop basic skills like coordinating the movement of the eyes and the hands, focusing the eyes and differentiating between objects. Through these activities the infant will gradually find out about the objects around her and know what she can do. The playful interactions with the caregiver during the activities will help her to form relationships. In other words, the activities will give the infant opportunities to practise the abilities she has and acquire new ones.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) Write briefly in the space provided below what you understand by the following terms.

a) Sensitivity

b) Self-confidence

c) Flexibility

d) Child-centredness

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2) What are the criteria that you will keep in mind while selecting play material for children?

11.5.1 Activities for Infants up to Six Months

The first year is a period of rapid development. Being with others and seeing and hearing them around her help the infant to learn. The play activities in this period must focus on development of sensory capacities and strengthening of motor skills.

After birth, the neonate has to adjust and adapt to her new environment and she sleeps most of the time. Hunger, pain and being wet are uncomfortable to her. The most important need of the neonate is comfort and the response to the baby's cries must be prompt so that she develops a sense of trust in the surroundings and people. Cradling, patting, cuddling, swaying and gently rocking and bouncing the baby give her pleasure and comfort. Talking and singing softly to the baby soothe her. When we hold the baby, gaze and smile at her, she receives a message of warmth and caring.

If possible ensure that the baby is nearby when you are doing some work, so that you can respond to her promptly. Many mothers tie a string to the baby's cradle and pull it from time to time as they work.

In the first month, the infant does not need toys and games. After the first month or two, she spends more time awake and is active. You can now plan some play activities for her. You know that infants track the source of sound. Try the following activity with the infant. Use objects like a spoon and a bowl, a rattle or bangles to attract her attention. You can also clap or call out to her. The baby will turn towards the sound and look at you attentively. Then move to a different position and produce the sound again. The child will turn again in the direction of the sound. Infants also track the path of an object that moves slowly in their line of vision. If you move an object slowly in front of her, she will follow it with her eyes. These activities delight the infant and she responds by smiling and gurgling. They help in developing sensory skills.

'Looking' is one of the interests of this age. Her hands become one of the first objects that the baby explores. She stares at her hands, first for short periods and then for longer. By three months she may be gazing at her hands for five to ten minutes at a time. If you hang mobiles from her cradle, she will look at them as they move. Mobiles that make pleasant sounds attract the baby's attention. In fact, any brightly coloured and safe object can be placed where the child can see it. You know that in the early months toys are best placed at a distance of one foot from the infant's face because this is the distance where the child can see objects most clearly. Mobiles should not be hung directly over the baby's cradle since she cannot hold her head in the midline yet. Lying on her back, the baby tends to look to her right or left for most of the time and the mobiles should be placed accordingly.

Massaging the infants with oil is a traditional practice in almost all parts of our country. This promotes physical development and provides an opportunity for interaction. While massaging the mother sings to the infant and bounces her gently. The child responds by expressing delight at her attention. Gradually, the infant looks forward to her daily bath and massage.

You know the infant reaches for objects by three months of age. She grasps the pillow or her brother's shirt as he holds her or her mother's hair and then releases them. She reaches for the toy hanging from the crib and may pull it hard. Toys should be suspended within reach of the infant using a semi-rigid material so that she can pull them easily. They should be strongly tied so that they do not come off in her grasp and should be made of soft material so that they do not hurt her. As the infant
grasps objects, her eye-hand coordination improves. By this age, she can also balance
her head and hold it in the midline. Letting the baby lie on her stomach for five to
ten minutes fosters head control. Since she can now look overhead, the mobiles must
be moved to the centre of the crib.

Around four months the infant will try to turn on her side to reach for the toys. An
interesting development around four months is the baby’s response to tickling. It
brings forth chuckles from the baby and delights the caregiver as well.

Around five months the child begins to kick. Her leg muscles are stronger now. If
you hold her legs together and prevent them from moving, the baby will protest and
kick hard to release them. A simple game for the five month old infant can be played
this way. Put a soft toy near her feet. When she feels the toy she will kick it again and
again, enjoying herself. This activity can be repeated and becomes a game. Between
five and six months of age, the infant can also turn from her back to the stomach.
Since the baby can now turn over easily, watch out as she lies on the cot. She may
fall. When leaving the baby alone for a while, leave her in the cradle or on the floor.

Let the infant be with others and see and hear them. Talk, laugh, play and sing with
her as much as possible. It is also important to respond to the sounds that she makes.
These would be in the form of gurgling and cooing. You will find that when you
imitate these sounds, the baby produces more of them. If you make a funny face or an
unusual sound while looking at her, she will smile back and gurgle.

The six-month-old is interested in objects. Provide her a variety of things that she can
squeeze, pick up, press and hold. The child explores objects with her hands, feet,
mouth and body. It is important to hold the baby in a vertical position next to your
shoulder for some part of the day. She will be able to see many more things in this
way. When you go out to see the neighbours, take the baby with you—the infant will
also like the social experience.

Around six months the infant is able to sit with support and balance herself better.
Help her to sit, supporting her with pillows and cushions. Play activities that allow
movement can now be planned. One common game is seating the child on your knees and bouncing her as you hold her in a sitting position. You could also support the baby on your feet as you sit on the chair and play gently. All of us have played such games with infants. Can you think of some more?

The infant enjoys soothing music. There is a variety of lullabies and rhymes that are sung to children. Are you aware of some of the rhymes and songs sung in your part of the country? Lullabies help the infant to perceive sounds and rhythms and help in developing language.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) List the activities that you would plan for infants in each of the following age groups.
   i) newborn baby
   ii) 1-3 months old infant
   iii) 3-6 months old infant

2) State the reasons for the following:
   i) Holding the baby up vertically for some part of the day.
   ii) An infant of around five months of age should be placed on floor level rather than on a bed when alone.
11.5.2 Activities for Infants between Seven Months and One Year

In these six months, the infant becomes better at using her hands, i.e., she can now manipulate (move) objects using her hands. She also understands some words and can follow simple instructions. Since the infant is more active, you can add variety and range to the play activities. Now the infant wants special attention from the mother with whom she has formed an attachment.

By six months the child is able to sit by herself. You would have seen that the mother lets the baby play on her own while she does her housework. Between her chores she will come and take a look at the baby, talking to her during these reassuring 'peeks'.

Give the infant toys and objects to manipulate. Things that make a sound as the infant plays with them, interest her. You may have been involved in a game where the baby repeatedly drops a toy as you give it back to her. This activity interests her greatly.

You do not have to buy expensive play material for the infant. Provide a collection of used household things like reels, plastic containers and cardboard boxes. Rubber balls are good and can be rolled without much effort by the infant. Stuffed toys can be made at home from material considered waste.

The nine-month-old infant is able to follow simple instructions. You can involve her in some of your activities as you are working. For example, while you are chopping vegetables the infant will enjoy handing them to you. You can play games of giving and taking objects. She will reach for the toy you offer her and hold it in her hand. As you take it away, she will again try to take it from you. As the infant manipulates play material, she sees the relationship between cause and effect — between her actions and the effect they have on objects.

Once the infant begins to crawl, she enjoys moving from one place to another. Allow crawling, standing and chasing activities. Do not enclose her in a chair or a crib for the sake of safety as that would come in the way of activity and satisfaction of curiosity. If you sit at a distance and call her, she will move towards you. Delighted, the infant will continue the game tirelessly. Look at the pleasure on her face as she does so! She enjoys chasing an older sibling around the house. Playing 'peek-a-boo' and other games of hide and seek during the later years, follow from such activities. The baby begins to participate in hide-and-seek games towards the end of the first year. As you hide behind something and call out to the child, she will look for you and gurgle and laugh as she finds you. These games promote social interaction as well as help in her mental development.
Crawling increases the infant's range of physical exploration dramatically. Support the infant's need for exploration by greater exposure to the outside world. Take her along to the nearby market, to the neighbours house or to the park. Let her watch people and things. She will respond to your simple questions using gestures. In a market there are many new things but there is noise and confusion as well. The baby may become fearful and begin to cry and may need to be reassured.

Around nine months, the baby begins to pull herself up to a standing position while holding on to something. Help her to stand and take a few steps. You know the infant begins to babble in this period. If you imitate her she will repeat that sound again and continue with this game enthusiastically. You can name different parts of the body and play games with the infant's toes, fingers, hands and feet. When you tickle the baby during such games, she wriggles and laughs. Repeat some actions and games every day so that the child can link up words with actions. There is a rich variety of such infant games in our country. Are you aware of any?

Once the infant begins to crawl, and then walk, you will have to make sure that dangerous things are out of her reach. Glass bottles, medicines, knives and sharp objects must be kept away. This does not mean that there should be no materials for the child to play with. The play objects should be unbreakable, preferably made of cloth, wood or rubber and be safe for the infant.

Lullabies and rhymes are more interesting to the infant than earlier as she can understand a few words now. She participates by imitating your actions. The baby also enjoys a simple story. She does not understand it totally but she shows delight at changes in facial expressions and modulation of voice during the narration. Repeating a story or a lullaby daily will familiarise her with words and help in language development.

The activities mentioned here would promote development of sensory and motor abilities and language. They would also help her in forming an idea about what she can do. The interaction with caregivers during these activities will develop in the child a sense of security and trust. By twelve to thirteen months of age, an active infant would be able to walk, indicate her simple needs, say a few words and recognize familiar people. The infant grows and develops best in a warm, tolerant and supportive environment. Along with providing activities and material for play, the caregiver has to keep in mind the fact that the child needs peace and quiet as well and should not be over-stimulated with a flood of activities and materials.

11.6 THINGS TO MAKE

Let us explore the possibilities of making play objects at home. What kind of materials are likely to be available in the house? They would be newspapers, paper bags, pieces of cloth, used wool, used diaries, notebooks, containers like soap cases, tooth-paste boxes, plastic bottles, ........................................ .etc.

Add other things to this list that you think you will be able to use. For the infant under one year of age you will need mobiles, toys that make a sound and toys that are soft and easy to hold.

Mobiles

Take old magazines, books or newspapers, greeting cards and cut out colourful pictures from them. Paste the pictures on a thick piece of paper such as cardboard or a greeting card. Pierce one end and attach a string to it. You have a mobile ready to be hung.
An assortment of articles that make tinkling sounds like bangles, shells, small bells and bottle caps can be strung together. When you hang these, they will move with the breeze and attract the infant's attention.

Paper chains made from coloured paper are attractive. Cut out many small strips of paper. Take one and paste its two ends together to make a ring. Pass the second strip through this ring and then paste the two ends. Do the same with other strips. In this way you will have a long colourful chain. You can hang toys from a wooden rod or an old coat hanger.

Toys that make a sound

Take any container—a cardboard or a plastic box, small plastic bottle, matchbox, a small polythene or cloth bag—and fill some pebbles, seeds or buttons in them. Seal the box tightly so that it does not open when in the infant's hands. To make a rattle, pierce a hole and put a stick through the box. Fix the stick well so that it does not come out.

Let us make a drum for the infant. Take a small tin and pierce the lid and the base. Pass a thick thread through it and tie knot at either end so that it does not come through. Put two or three beads on the outer end of the thread. When you shake the tin from side to side, the beads will hit the tin and make a sound.

Toys to hold

Stuffed toys can be made thus: take some cloth and cut out two pieces—square or round in shape. Stitch the two together leaving a small opening to stuff cotton, rags or seeds. Then close this opening. Paste buttons, beads or pieces of cloth to make faces of animals, birds or people. You can also paint or embroider the cloth.
Check Your Progress Exercise 3

1) List three toys or play materials that you would use with an infant between 8 and 12 months of age and state why you chose them.

i) ........................................................................................................................................

ii) ........................................................................................................................................

iii) ........................................................................................................................................

11.7 SUMMING UP

In this Unit you read that the caregiver's personality determines how successful she will be in interacting with children. It is important to have the appropriate knowledge, attitudes and skills for proper caregiving. The caregiver must be sensitive, aware of the needs of children and responsive to their moods. She must realize that each child is unique. This would help her to plan appropriate play activities for children. She must be confident and must be able to take effective and appropriate decisions. A flexible approach and receptivity to suggestions goes a long way in making the play activities successful. The caregiver must have a child-centred approach. In addition, the creche or the preschool worker also needs to develop and maintain a good rapport with the parents. The caregiver also needs to know the essential aspects of health care and the milestones of development.

This Unit also describes the kind of play material and activities appropriate for infants. The play material must be attractive, safe, appropriate for the age of the child and economical. The activities described in this Unit are based on the abilities of the infant at a particular age. The neonate needs to be held, comforted and soothed as she is adjusting to the new environment. Gradually, the caregiver can plan activities to help in sensory and motor development. As the infant begins to crawl, a wide variety of material and experiences can be provided to her. The aim of these play activities should be to foster the overall development of the child.
Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) a) The term 'sensitivity' means that caregiver is aware of the needs of children and responds to their moods and feelings. She has empathy. She knows that each child is unique and has her own preferences, likes and dislikes.

b) A confident caregiver is relaxed, free of anxieties and able to devote attention to children. She will also be able to handle problems effectively and take appropriate decisions. Her confidence and sense of security will be communicated to the children through her behaviour.

c) Flexibility means being open to suggestions, spontaneous and willing to change one's plan and style of care to suit the needs and interests of children. The caregiver need not always go by a fixed rule. She should respond to children spontaneously. There should be a structure to what the caregiver will do, but within this structure there should be flexibility.

d) Being child-centred means planning activities to suit the child's needs. A person who is child-centred is sensitive and flexible.

2) The toys and other play material need not be expensive. Material easily available in the house can be used. Play material should be selected according to the abilities of the child. Safety of toys should be ensured. The toys should be attractive to children.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) a) The neonate does not need toys and games. Cradling, patting, cuddling, swaying and gently rocking and bouncing her, gives her pleasure and comfort. The caregiver needs to give her prompt attention.

b) Activities for 1 to 3 month old infants
   - tracking sound source
   - tracking a moving object
   - massaging the infant
   - singing and talking to the infant

c) Activities for 3 to 6 month old infants
   - keeping an object at a distance so that the infant reaches for it
   - letting the baby lie on the stomach for 5-10 minutes
   - activities that motivate her to turn on her side
   - respond to and imitate the sounds the infant makes
   - giving her a variety of toys and objects to play with and explore

2) i) because this will enable her to view the surroundings from an upright position
   ii) because she may fall from the bed as she turns over

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

1) You can choose any of the following objects:
   i) Objects to drop, lift, shake, bang, throw and hold, as the infant engages in all these activities.
   ii) Stuffed toys as they are easy to hold and attractive.
   iii) Rubber balls as they can be rolled by the baby easily.