

# Cribside Communication

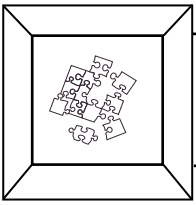
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## ? INQUIRY QUESTIONS

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- What are babies' states of awareness?
- What feelings might a baby be expressing in each state?
- How might a parent feel when his or her baby is in each state?
- How can modulating the baby's state of awareness make parenting easier?
- How can parents manage a crying or fussy baby?

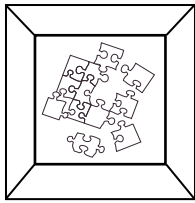




# Conceptual Overview

## LISTEN TOPIC 1

1. **Babies communicate through states of awareness.** From birth, babies send messages to their caregivers just by being asleep, alert, fussy, or drowsy. Each state says something about how the baby is feeling. Each state draws a particular feeling from the parents. It is important to help parents identify these feelings within themselves while also understanding their baby's needs. This is the beginning of empathy.
2. **Babies are able to help direct their care.** A "competent infant" is an infant who can modulate her own levels of alertness. The competent infant defines needs, directs and regulates care, and maintains maternal attachment through states of awareness. That is, a baby can voluntarily choose to brighten and pay attention to a person or a sound or can doze off in the middle of a busy day and sleep deeply through the noise. In this way, a baby can direct a parent by saying, "I'm interested," or "I'm sleepy."
3. **Babies communicate with their feelings.** It is important that parents learn to separate their feelings from the baby's. For example, a crying baby might make a parent feel inadequate and angry. Yet, the baby is merely saying, "I am wet and cold." When the parents can correctly "hear" this message, they can be effective in helping their baby and can also feel good about themselves. Parents will want to remember that their baby's feelings are mostly simple and biologically based.
4. **Parents who take time to listen to their baby's feelings and recognize their baby's states respond in a more appropriate way.** Answering hunger cries or cries of need for diaper changes should be done quickly in a responsive way. Quiet alert interest is a time for quiet learning. Parents can expand their baby's horizons with gentle play. Active alert is a time for exercise, laughter, and movement. Fussy is a time for parents to help their baby settle down or modulate his state. As parents interpret and meet these state signals, they will be helping their baby learn to regulate herself. Regulation is one of the first forms of quiet discipline.



# Tools for Presentation

## Terms to Understand

- **Active alert**  
a state of awareness when a baby or toddler is fully active and will enjoy exercise or motion play, but also can easily become overstimulated
- **“Competent Infant”**  
a baby who can direct a parent by giving clear signals about needs and desires
- **Fussy**  
a state of awareness when baby shows agitation and needs help getting to the next state of awareness, often from overstimulation, hunger, or exhaustion
- **Modulate**  
gently regulate or adjust a baby’s state or emotional behavior
- **Mutual regulation**  
when one person’s state is changed by the state of another
- **Quiet alert**  
a state of awareness when baby is focused, interested, and ready for learning
- **Quiet discipline**  
starting at birth, a gentle but clear way of helping a baby regulate behavior
- **Regulate**  
balance or adjust
- **Self-quieter**  
a baby who is put down in a drowsy state and allowed to fall asleep independently
- **States of awareness**  
the degree of awareness or alertness to the environment, ranging from sleep to high agitation

### Suggested Activities

- *PIPE Activity Cards:*  
14, 43, 55, 57, 89, 109, 114

### Other Materials & Supplies

- Pictures of babies in different states of awareness
- Two toy telephones
- Slips of paper with a state of awareness written on each
- Art supplies to make posters

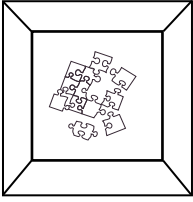
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# Master Pages in *Parent Handouts* Notebook

## LISTEN TOPIC 1

- # 1 ▪ Topic Animal Artwork
- # 2 ▪ Inquiry Questions  
[also see page 25]
- # 3 ▪ Communications Start at Birth  
[also see KEY page 35]
- # 4 ▪ States of Awareness
- # 5 ▪ States of Awareness Chart  
[also see page 36]
- # 6 ▪ Identify Each Baby's State  
[also see KEY page 37]
- # 7 ▪ Cribside Communication: Deciding What to Do When ...  
[also see KEY page 38]
- # 8 ▪ Responding to Baby's State
- # 9 ▪ Regulating States of Awareness  
[also see page 39]
- #10 ▪ Guidelines for Regulating States  
[also see pages 40 -41]
- #11 ▪ Tricks for Changing My Baby's State  
[also see page 42]
- #12 ▪ Cribside Communication Review  
[also see KEY page 43]





# Instructional Plan

## Outcomes

- Parents will recognize their baby's states of awareness and the feelings that babies and parents experience in each state.
- Parents will be able to respond appropriately to their baby in each state of awareness.
- Parents will develop skill in gently regulating their baby's states of awareness.

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## FOUR-STEP INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS



### PRESENTATION OF CONCEPTS

#### INTRODUCTION OF TOPIC

- **Communication between parent and baby begins at birth**  
[see *Conceptual Overview* #1 and #4].
  - Babies signal what they need through emotional expression.
  - Listening to the baby's communication is important for effective parenting.
    - Play Communication Charades.  
Discuss how parents can learn to listen to babies' actions and how babies communicate without words. Invite parents and/or other family members to play Charades in pairs, emphasizing facial expressions, sounds, body movements, and states of awareness.  
Suggested Charade topics include:
      - "Pick me up. I want to play!"
      - "I'm cold and wet. Please change my diaper."
      - "I like it when you rub me gently."
    - Show, or use as a transparency, the parent handout "Communications Start at Birth." Discuss how communication is a two-way path. Parents complete this handout by filling in the empty arrows. Use the KEY page 35 to assist them.

#### KEY CONCEPTS

- **Babies are able to help direct their care** [see *Conceptual Overview* #2].
  - Babies communicate needs through their states of awareness.
    - Use topic animal artwork to introduce the idea of "states of awareness."

- Show “States of Awareness” as a transparency, poster, or handout. Discuss how understanding “states” helps a parent recognize her baby’s need.

Use “States of Awareness Chart” [see pg. 36]. Illustrate each state, using photos from magazines, *or* use “Identify Each Baby’s State” [see KEY pg. 37].

Discuss ways each parent’s baby expresses each of the states.

- Responding appropriately to each state makes caring for a baby easier.

- Discuss how understanding “states” helps parents recognize their baby’s needs.
- Parents complete “Cribside Communication: Deciding What to Do When . . .” [see KEY pg. 38].

■ **Parents and babies experience and express different emotions during each state of the baby’s awareness** [see *Conceptual Overview #1* and *#3*].

- A parent’s feelings when her baby is in each state will influence the baby’s care.

- Review “Identify Each Baby’s State” [see KEY pg. 37].
  - Identify how the six babies on the handout feel.
  - Discuss how a parent might feel when her baby is in each state.
  - How might these feelings affect the parent’s response to her baby?

- When parents learn to listen to their baby’s feelings, empathy increases.

- Ask each parent to tell about a time when she believes she understood her baby’s feelings.
  - How did the parent respond?
  - How did the parent feel?
  - How did the baby react?
- Parents complete “Responding to Baby’s State.”

■ **A parent can begin quiet discipline by helping her baby reorganize a state of awareness** [see *Conceptual Overview #4*].

- Discuss when changing or regulating a baby’s state may be beneficial.
- Show or hand out “Regulating States of Awareness” [see pg. 39].
- Using “Guidelines for Regulating States” [see pgs. 40-41], stage a radio call-in talk show. Assign roles. A “parent” calls in and identifies the child’s age and describes her child’s state. The “talk show host” gives advice on “what to do.”

You could use toy telephones to help act out the talk show scenario.

- Hand out “Tricks for Changing My Baby’s State” [see pg. 42].

Discuss how to manage a fussy or crying baby.

2

## DEMONSTRATION

In a school, tour the infant nursery. Identify each baby's state of awareness and demonstrate an appropriate response. In the home, identify the baby's states of awareness at different moments during the visit. Discuss some appropriate responses. Demonstrate how to gently change the baby's state (if appropriate) to prepare the baby for the interactive session.

3

## SUPERVISED PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION

### WHAT?

- Parent practices communicating with her baby by choosing an activity appropriate to the baby's state of awareness.

### WHY?

- The goal of this activity is to engage the parent's empathy for her baby in different states and to develop techniques for gently regulating her baby's state of awareness.

### How?

- Babies in quiet or active sleep should be allowed to complete a sleep cycle.
- For drowsy, fussy, or crying babies, use suggestions from "Tricks for Changing My Baby's State" [see pg. 42] for changing the baby's state.
- If the baby is moved to quiet or active alert, parent proceeds with activities presented in the *PIPE Activity Cards*.

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## EVALUATION

### EVALUATING THE PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION

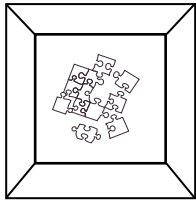
- Did the parent feel the chosen activity matched her baby's state?
- Discuss changes in her baby's state that occurred during the session:
  - How did her baby signal a change in state?
  - What response did the parent use?
  - What was her baby's response?
  - How did the parent feel when her baby's state changed?
  - How does the parent think her baby was feeling in each state?
  - In what way was communication between parent and her baby enhanced by this activity?



## TOPIC EVALUATION AND CLOSURE

- ❑ Complete “Cribside Communication Review: Matching Ideas and Definitions” [see KEY pg. 43].
- ❑ Parents demonstrate appropriate responses to various states.

Write states of awareness on separate slips of paper. Each parent draws a state and demonstrates an appropriate response to the state drawn *or* develops a poster illustrating a correct response to the state, appropriate for the age of her child.



# Topic Enhancers & Instructional Aids

## Topic Enhancers

The ideas below are optional topic extenders. Parents may like to try them (as time and interest in a concept allow), or the parenting educator may use selected activities to help a parent explore a specific concept in greater depth.

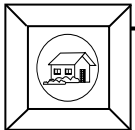


### For a parent group:

- Parents each bring in snapshots of their babies. Identify the state.
- Each parent keeps a log of her baby's differing states of awareness for several days, noting the duration of the state, the sequence of the states, and what caused changes in the baby's state.

#### Suggestions for the parent educator:

- Develop a bulletin board: "Babies' States of Awareness." Display pictures of babies in different states.
- Display "Communications Start at Birth" [see KEY pg. 35] and "Tricks for Changing My Baby's State" [see pg. 42] as posters.
- Parent educators model appropriate responses to each baby's state of awareness and techniques for gently regulating state.
- Parent educator keeps a daily log of each infant's state while in child care and shares the log with the baby's parent.

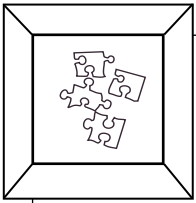


### For parents at home:

- Parent starts a picture file and collects magazine or calendar pictures of babies in different states of awareness.
- Parent makes a poster that depicts successful ways for regulating a baby's state.
- Parent makes simple picture or story books (see appendix and appendix of the *Parent Handouts* notebook for instructions).

#### Suggestions for the home visitor:

- Make, decorate, or revamp old hats to use with older babies in mirror play. Mimic different states in a playful way with the baby.
- Ask the parent to watch other parents having success or difficulty in regulating their baby's state in public (e.g., in stores or parks). Discuss at the next visit.
- Parent keeps a log of her baby's differing states of awareness for several days, noting the duration of the state, the sequence of the states, and what caused changes in the baby's state.

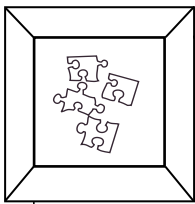


# KEY: Communications Start at Birth

Touch, Talk,  
Facial Expressions  
Gestures



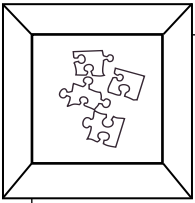
Facial Expressions,  
Sounds  
Body Language



# States of Awareness Chart

The first developmental step for an infant is to achieve a predictable pattern of eating, socializing, exercising, fussing, and sleeping. This gives a baby a sense of physical and mental balance. It gives parents a guide for the baby's needs and feelings. These same states of awareness occur in older babies and in adults. They carry the same message for others.

STATES	BABY'S ACTIVITY	BABY'S RESPONSE	APPROPRIATE CARE
QUIET SLEEP	The baby's eyes are closed, breathing smooth, body limp. The baby occasionally sucks or changes position.	The baby is hard to awaken. The baby may startle to noise or touch, but quickly returns to sleep.	Put the baby down. Leave the baby alone. Be sure the baby gets a full sleep cycle.
ACTIVE SLEEP (REM)	The baby moves often and smiles; eyelids flutter or open in a glazed stare; the baby may cry out or make sounds; the baby's breathing is irregular.	The baby awakens easily and is sensitive to noise, touch, and smell. The baby will self-settle if left alone. Babies cycle from quiet to active sleep several times per hour.	Active sleep is important for a restful sleep. Don't interrupt it. Leave the baby alone to return to a quiet, deeper sleep.
DROWSY	The baby seems sleepy or hard to awaken. The baby is relaxed. His or her eyes are staring and heavy lidded. Sucking movements and delayed responses are common. The baby fusses to rapid stimulation.	Responses are variable. The baby seems dull and heavy, smiles and cuddles, and may fall back to sleep. The baby often moves toward an awake state, but slowly.	Give the baby something to suck on. Sucking organizes a baby's brain. Put the baby down to move into sleep independently. Or, to awaken a drowsy baby, gently wash face and move arms and legs. Uncover, change diaper, and talk to the baby.
QUIET ALERT	Eyes are open and bright. The baby is quiet and attentive. The baby responds to people and things and also is vocal and focused.	The baby seems interested and will join into an interaction. The baby is enjoying people and objects. The baby appears to be processing and learning.	This is when babies learn best. Position the baby to be facing you. Gently sing, move your face, talk, or touch the baby. Use eye contact. Wait for the baby to respond and join into an interaction.
ACTIVE ALERT	The baby's body is active; arms, legs and head are mobile. Eyes are excited, scanning. The baby is vocal and often shows pleasure. The baby can be active and vocal by self or with others.	The baby is excited, less focused, and may appear playful, <i>but</i> out of control, unable to change state or settle self. The baby is more reactive than responsive.	Playful active games are fun but tiring. They often lead to overstimulation. The baby needs help to reorganize state. Talk, reduce stimulation, and use rhythm to help the baby calm down.
FUSSY	Movements are jerky; the baby is fussing or whimpering. Eyes are blinking often or looking away. Arms and feet are flailing or pushing away. The baby may try to self-quiet by sucking.	The baby is out of balance, hungry, tired, overstimulated. Fussing will increase. The baby is seeking help from parents or comfort objects to find physical or emotional balance.	The baby is asking for help. Is he or she hungry, tired, frightened, cold, hot, or overstimulated? Parents need to take charge and fix the baby's problem.
CRYING	The baby's eyes are tightly closed; body is rigid and arching; skin color changes, face grimaces; breathing is rapid or in gasps.  If unattended, the baby may vomit or have a coughing bout or bowel movement.	The baby turns away, arches back, and stiffens. The baby's eyes are often closed. Responses vary by temperament. Some babies quiet quickly; some cry harder. Crying is a sign of overload. The baby has lost control and needs help to return to another state.	Often a baby needs to be put down or take "time out." Many self-quiet if left alone. Others need to be consoled to gain control. Most infants cry hard several times a day. They can be left up to 5 minutes to self-quiet. One- and two-year-olds' tantrums fit this state.



# KEY: Identify Each Baby's State



1. QUIET SLEEP



2. ACTIVE ALERT



3. DROWSY



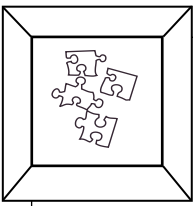
4. CRYING



5. FUSSY



6. QUIET ALERT

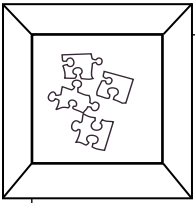


## KEY: Cribside Communication

### *Deciding What to Do When . . .*

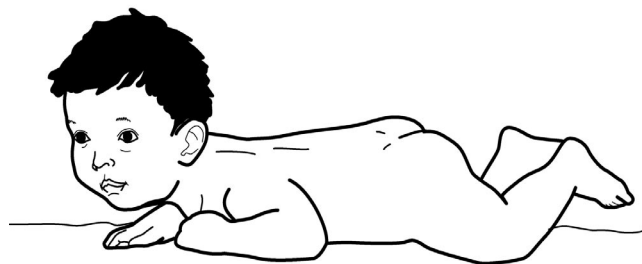
Directions: Match what the baby is doing with the best idea of how to respond.

- C** 1. Your baby is wide-eyed and looking around.     **A.** *Put your baby down in a quiet, flat place. Check the room temperature and her covers. Leave the room.*
- A** 2. Your child falls asleep during your family's dinner time.     **B.** *Baby is hungry — feed her.*
- E** 3. Your baby is crying, flailing his arms and legs, coughing, and gasping.     **C.** *Smile at him and unwrap the blankets. Place him on your lap facing you. Talk, touch, and play mouth games.*
- B** 4. Your baby is active, moving — turning her head reaching with her mouth, and making quick, smacking noises.     **D.** *Check list of needs: Is she hungry, tired, cold, hot, overstimulated, or bored? Fix the problem before her fussy state becomes a crying state.*
- F** 5. Your baby has slept two hours and is moving around in his crib, fluttering his eyes, and squeaking.     **E.** *Pick your baby up. Hold him tightly and move quietly. Talk softly. Fix the problem; then calm and soothe him before putting him down.*
- D** 6. Your baby frets, turns her head, kicks, arches back, and pushes away.     **F.** *Leave him alone to either wake up and call you or to return to a deeper sleep.*
- G** 7. Your baby is cooing, smiling, and gently kicking.     **G.** *Pick your baby up. Imitate sounds he makes. Play imitation games with him, quietly facing one another.*
- J** 8. Your baby is having a tantrum. He is lying on the floor, kicking, and screaming.     **H.** *Stop feeding. Figure it out: Is it the taste? Is lunchtime over? Is it naptime? ... playtime?*
- I** 9. Your baby screeches and bangs on the table.     **I.** *Take your baby outside for a walk.*
- H** 10. Your baby pushes food away, arches her back, turns her head, and sighs.     **J.** *Walk away and ignore her behavior.*

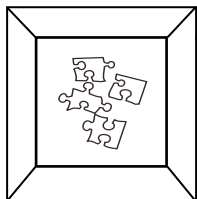


## Regulating States of Awareness

- Regulating means rebalancing or adjusting. Most babies move from one state to another without help, according to their internal needs.
- Sometimes babies cannot change state easily. If they are overtired, overstimulated, or too hungry, they become disorganized and off-balance.
- Parents may need to help a baby rebalance, stop fussing, eat slowly, or focus his or her attention.
- Parents can help babies regulate states of awareness by sharing their own states and feelings. Parents can calm a fussy baby or engage a drowsy baby. Face, voice, body, and movement will signal the parent's feelings to the baby.
- State regulation is the first step in managing behavior. Parents help babies learn self-regulation when they help them adjust or regain balance from a fussy state to a calm state.
- Regulation is quiet discipline.



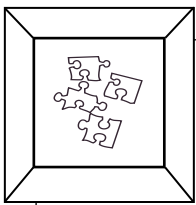




## Guidelines for Regulating States

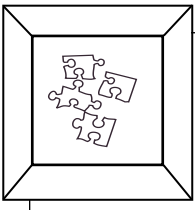
STATE	INFANT	OLDER BABY	TODDLER
<i>Quiet Sleep</i>	Leave the baby alone! A soft, steady noise such as a fan, tape of ocean sounds, or a music box will help to deepen the sleep state.	An older baby is hard to disturb. You can often move baby or change the diaper for a baby who is in deep sleep. Check the covers and clear his/her face.	Babies and toddlers grow while they are sleeping. Be sure they get plenty of uninterrupted sleep.
<i>Active Sleep</i>	Leave the baby alone. Active sleep can occur as often as every 20 minutes. If the baby is too cold or hot or in an uncomfortable, odd position, reposition, cover, and leave the baby to self-quiet.	Active sleep occurs less often. Start music box, gently pat, re-cover. Leave the room. Babies crawl to corner of crib, like toys close. Be sure his or her face is clear.	The child may waken to be sure you are there. Sometimes the child will stand in his or her sleep. Reassure the child. Put back to bed. Leave. They sometimes seem to dream during active sleep periods. This is an important way to release tension.
<i>Drowsy</i>	Sucking is an organizer for sleep. The thumb is good because the baby controls it. Drowsy can be a transition to sleep or to awaken. Parents can help either way. Comfort, encourage sucking, and leave; or gently arouse by uncovering, washing face, talking, and lifting the baby.	A baby may spend time in a drowsy state during the day. During low stimulation periods, they recoup energy by staring blankly or closing eyes often. If it's time for a nap or for bed, put the baby down before he or she gets too tired.	The child may not <i>appear</i> drowsy but is turned inward. The toddler may not respond to you. He or she may not hear you. Gently get the toddler's full attention or allow quiet time alone.
<i>Quiet Alert</i>	The baby is very focused. This is the best time for babies to learn. Sit the baby up facing you. Talk, share eye contact, move, and play mouth games.	Babies who have a parent's full attention in quiet play at some time each day are easier to care for.	Toddlers love books and songs. Listening to your voice is a better way for your child to learn than from the television.





## Guidelines for Regulating States, cont.

STATE	INFANT	OLDER BABY	TODDLER
<i>Active Alert</i>	<p>The baby is focused and fully active. This is a time for exercises, motion play, and enjoyment.</p> <p><u>Caution: Watch for signs of overstimulation.</u></p>	<p>Older babies love active play. But, a high activity level can be difficult to stop. The baby may need help from parents to move back to a quiet alert state.</p>	<p>A child may easily become excited and may be highly absorbed in active games. He or she may not hear or respond easily to his or her environment. The child needs help to attend to safety precautions and parent's requests.</p>
<i>Fussy</i>	<p>The baby is fretful, but without crying hard. Respond to the baby's needs. Help the baby move to another state of awareness. Seek less stimulation. Find quiet interest, or put the baby down. Be soft, gentle, and sure of yourself.</p>	<p>The baby may show his or her exhaustion by being angry rather than fussy. The baby may have low tolerance for the parent's timeline. Change the environment. Assess the baby's need for a snack or a nap. The parent should stay calm and quiet and fill the baby's needs.</p>	<p>Overtired, hungry, confused toddlers may act naughty. Parents need to change the overall mood. Fix the bigger problem, i.e., hungry, tired, scared.</p>
<i>Crying</i>	<p>Consolability is related to temperament. Each parent needs to experiment and listen to his or her baby. These actions may help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduce stimulation.</li> <li>▪ Help the baby "find" his or her thumb.</li> <li>▪ Talk softly.</li> <li>▪ Lay a quiet, firm hand on side or back.</li> <li>▪ Wrap the baby.</li> <li>▪ Cuddle the baby.</li> <li>▪ Steadily rock the baby.</li> <li>▪ Find another person to help with the baby.</li> </ul>	<p>Assess the reason for the distress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Help fix the situation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Change the baby's diaper.</li> <li>- Adjust the bed covers.</li> <li>- Get a drink for the baby.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Then set limits.</li> <li>▪ Leave the baby to cry (5 minutes only).</li> <li>▪ Return — fix — leave.</li> </ul>	<p>The child needs attention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Give hugs and eye contact.</li> <li>▪ Listen to the problem.</li> <li>▪ Respond with love.</li> <li>▪ Set quiet limits to regulate the problem.</li> <li>▪ Do not face anger with anger.</li> <li>▪ Ignore tantrums, but think about bigger needs (i.e., overtired, hungry, confused, scared).</li> </ul>



# Tricks for Changing My Baby's State

## ■ To awaken a drowsy baby ...

- Undress the baby.
- Sit him or her up.
- Wash the baby's face and hands.

## ■ To extend a time before feeding ...

- Do something interesting.
- Change locations.
- Play imitation games.

## ■ To settle down an active baby ...

- Go for a walk.
- Read a book.
- Use gentle exercises.

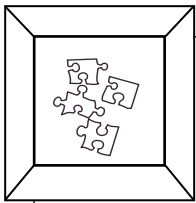
## ■ To quiet a tired, fussy baby ...

- Give a warm bath.
- Hold closely; talk softly.
- Put the baby down in a quiet place.

## ■ To regulate a crying baby ...

- First, ask "Why are you crying?"
- Fix the problem: hunger, diaper, hurt.
- If the baby is frustrated, divert.
- If the baby is angry, let cry — 5 minutes maximum — then comfort.
- If the baby is exhausted, hold him or her close and rock, or lie down and cuddle the baby close to your body; use deep breaths and a low voice. Coo, stroke the baby, and relax.
- Remember, your baby reflects your feelings. If you are exhausted, find someone else to help with the baby.





# KEY: "Cribside Communication" Review

## *Matching Ideas and Definitions*

Directions: Match the terms with the explanations in the right-hand column.

- |          |                        |   |
|----------|------------------------|---|
| <u>F</u> | 1. COMPETENT INFANT    | <u>A.</u> <i>state of awareness when the baby is focused and ready for learning.</i>                  |
| <u>H</u> | 2. ACTIVE SLEEP        | <u>B.</u> <i>when parents help babies adjust or regulate their states of awareness</i>                |
| <u>A</u> | 3. QUIET ALERT         | <u>C.</u> <i>levels of alertness determined by the baby's internal needs</i>                          |
| <u>E</u> | 4. SELF-QUIETER        | <u>D.</u> <i>helping babies learn to self-regulate</i>  |
| <u>C</u> | 5. STATES OF AWARENESS | <u>E.</u> <i>a baby who can fall asleep independently</i>   |
| <u>B</u> | 6. REBALANCING         | <u>F.</u> <i>a baby who can modulate his or her own levels of alertness</i>                           |
| <u>D</u> | 7. QUIET DISCIPLINE    | <u>G.</u> <i>when a person's state is changed by another person</i>                                   |
| <u>G</u> | 8. MUTUAL REGULATION   | <u>H.</u> <i>when baby is asleep but also moving, making sounds, or fluttering his or her eyelids</i> |



