

Understanding Fetal Development



For use with the RealCare™
Fetal Development Kit and
Pregnancy Torso

Realityworks®
Live it. Learn it.™
...an employee-owned company

Table of Contents

Lesson Structure	4
Curriculum Structure	5
Lesson One – Fetal Development.....	6
Lesson Two – Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts Lesson Objectives	34
Lesson Three – Exploration of Pregnancy and Childbirth-Related Careers	39

Lesson Five – Fetal Development

LEARN: Infant Development by Trimester

Purpose:

These activities make participants be more realistic about physical and mental development after birth. After birth, an infant grows and starts to learn how to use its arms, legs, and other parts of the body. An infant reaches many physical milestones during the first three years. Not all infants reach all milestones at the same time. Every infant is different. Many young people have unrealistic expectations about what very young infants are able to do. For example, many think that a newborn infant is able to smile, coo, and laugh right away. It takes one or two months for these behaviors to emerge.

Unrealistic expectations about infant behavior have led to frustrated parents and child abuse in some cases. The infant development milestone activities listed in this section can help participants gain a more realistic outlook on the development of infants and young children.

Activity 1 – Trimester Development Mix-up

20 minutes

Materials:

- *Trimester Characteristics* handout
- *Trimester Development* handout
- Scissors
- Fetal Development Kit models for months 3, 6 and 9
- Pregnancy Torso

Facilitation Steps:

1. Display the Fetal Development Kit models for the third, sixth, and ninth months. Then display the Pregnancy Torso so students can use each of these as a good visual aid as you discuss each trimester.
2. Print/photocopy and cut out each developmental characteristic on the dotted lines on the *Trimester Characteristics* sheet.
3. Write the words First Trimester, Second Trimester, and Third Trimester on a marker board or chalk board.
4. Mix up the developmental characteristics in a hat or other container and have each participant take turns drawing one and deciding which trimester it belongs in.
5. Write the characteristic on the board under the trimester the participant chose, or tape the papers on the board and move as needed.
6. After all the characteristics have been assigned, hand out the Trimester Development sheet and discuss each trimester. Change the lists so they are correct as you discuss each characteristic.
7. Discussion: Does one trimester have more characteristics than another? Which one? Which trimester is the most important? All three are equally important, but major organs and systems form mostly in the first trimester.

Trimester Characteristics

The sperm joins the egg in the fallopian tube.	Able to feel pain.
Cells rapidly divide. The embryo floats toward the uterus.	Vocal cords are used to cry silently.
Embryo implants itself in the wall of the uterus.	Muscles get longer and are easier to move.
Backbone, spine, spinal cord, brain and nervous system form.	Mother feels kicking and movement inside her. Fetus is cushioned in liquid called amniotic fluid.
Lungs, intestines, and beginnings of urinary system start to develop.	Adult taste buds are formed.
Heart starts beating.	Eyebrows, eyelashes, and hair start to grow.
Placenta starts working.	Fetus is able to grasp things with hands. Kicking continues.
Spine and spinal cord grow quickly.	Fetus can hear voices and recognizes mother's voice.
Facial features become visible.	Fingernails and fingerprints appear.
Muscle system is formed.	Sex organs are formed.
Movement begins.	Fetus starts growing quickly in size.
Embryo is about a 1/2 inch long.	Fetus is covered with downy hair called lanugo.
Arms, legs, fingers and toes form.	Fetus inhales amniotic fluid to practice breathing.
Brain waves can be measured.	Skin is covered by a waxy substance called vernix.
Heart is almost completely developed.	Nourishment from the mother through the umbilical cord continues.
Baby teeth form in the gums.	Fetus sleeps most of the day.
Brain is physically fully formed.	Fetus gains the most weight and grows longer.