

Chapter 2

Infant-Toddler Education

Looking back at Chapter 2 in your text, think about how Lally seeks to define and describe the term curriculum. How does it relate to the information in Chapter 2? The concept of curriculum is difficult to explain when it relates to *infant-toddler care* and education rather than to education for older children. You can see how both Lally and the authors of your text work at making these ideas clear.

Reading 2

Curriculum and Lesson Planning: A Responsive Approach

J. Ronald Lally, Ed.D., August 1997

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In the United States of America we have related to infant and toddler development in a peculiar way. We have practiced curriculum extremes. One camp feels that all infants and toddlers need are safe environments and tender loving care and that intellectual activity is unnecessary, while the other believes that infants needed to be intellectually stimulated by adult-directed developmentally appropriate activities in order for them to grow cognitively. In many other nations this is not the approach taken toward infant learning. It is understood that tender loving care is necessary, but that intellectual development must be based on an understanding of each child's innate motivation and interest in learning. In these countries curriculum focuses not on one pole or the other but on how to create a climate that supports child-initiated learning. In Italy and Germany, for example, caregivers study the children in their care and keep detailed records of children's interests and skills so that they can facilitate children's learning. They are trained to search for how to use the children's natural interests and curiosity to lead to appropriate early lessons. A good portion