

# Little Voices for Healthy Choices

## The Quality of Touch

### Experiences

These experiences are done with one infant/child per adult. Be sure to use a mat or soft floor covering when appropriate.

#### Experience One:

Pretend you are making some bread and you are kneading the dough. With the child lying in front of you, begin to gently squeeze their different body parts (shoulders, arms, legs) from head to toe.

Next, "sprinkle some flour" (pretend) all over them, using your fingertips to gently draw attention to their bodies and many parts.

Finally, "brush" their body with long fluid "swipes," to "remove" the flour.

#### Experience Two:

Gently rock the child, placing your hand on his or her stomach. This movement should be very subtle and focused on bringing a child's awareness to the core of their body.

Begin to slowly increase the motion. If the child seems resistant, you may want to remain with this range of movement. If they are receptive, rock them over to either side of their body, pausing and allowing them to feel their sides.

#### Experience Three:

Gently/slowly roll the child on the floor, moving one direction and then the other. Be sure that the child's head is relaxed and placed softly against the floor so you will not bump it. Their arms should be above their head or along the side of their bodies while they are rolling.

### **Impact**

Tactile (touch) experiences can be a good addition to dramatic play and literacy activities.

Different kinds of tactile experiences can help in the development of the nervous system. They can contribute to a child's growing sense of body awareness and can help a child to learn to differentiate between the qualities of touch and movement. The experiences also reinforce steady beat and highlight the mind/body connection.

