

LEARNING  
SEQUENCE

## 1

## When I was a baby

**THEME: Knowing me, knowing you****Core concepts**

Talking about the baby years allows students to understand how much they have grown and changed. Many schools begin students' primary school years with units of work that help them to investigate personal identity.

In this learning sequence, the students bring in pictures or mementos from when they were very young. Students love talking about their baby lives, so you may like to spread this over a few sessions.

**AusVELS**

*Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension*

At Foundation Level, students can:

- discuss physical changes as people grow and develop, and describe how their own bodies have changed over time
- begin to learn about the development of personal identity.

**Suggested success criteria**

- I have grown and learnt a lot since I was very young.
- I will keep on growing, learning and changing.

**Preparation and materials**

You will need:

- students' baby photos. If students don't have a photo, they could bring in a memento (for example, a toy, blanket or spoon)
- baby paraphernalia for a 'baby corner'
- RESOURCE: 'Letter for parents/carers – Tell me about when I was little' (available at the end of this learning sequence).



## ACTIVITIES

### A letter home – Tell me about when I was little

- ➔ Send a letter home (a sample letter is provided at the end of this learning sequence) to parents and carers. The letter provides an overview of the learning sequence and asks them to provide a photo or memento. The letter also includes questions about when the students were little.

This activity provides an opportunity to involve families. It can also reassure parents and carers about the content of your sexuality education program.

### Introducing me – When I was a baby

- ➔ Using the student's baby photos and mementos, play "Who was this as a baby?" You may like to ask:
  - What helped you to guess who is in the photo or who owns this memento? (For example, Frank still has curly hair.)
  - What tricked you when you tried to guess who is in the photo or who owns this memento? (For example, Cathy doesn't like yoghurt but she's eating some in the photo.)
- ➔ Comment:
  - Some things about us change as we grow and some things stay the same.
- ➔ Perhaps you could bring in a photo or memento too. It's good for students to remember we were all babies once, even the teacher.
- ➔ Ask the students to tell everyone something about their baby years and report on stories they learnt about themselves from their letter home. For example, you can ask:
  - Where did you like to sleep?
  - Did you have a special toy or favourite game (like peek-a-boo or banging pots)?
  - What is different about you now compared to when you were a baby?

## Welcome baby

- ➔ Ask the students to set up a baby corner of things babies might like to play with or need for comfort such as spoons, teddies, and a blanket to lie on.
- ➔ As the students judge what would be suitable for a baby, it reinforces their understanding of the baby's stage of development. Ask them: Do we need a pillow to help it sit up? Are there any tiny things the baby could choke on?
- ➔ Reflect on how the baby corner would look for different students in the class. For example, James used to love soft toys when he was a baby, so let's include soft toys; Ally used to love her dummy, so we'll make sure there is a dummy!
- ➔ Compare a baby corner to the students' classroom. You can highlight that, because the students have grown, changed and learnt so much, they need a different environment.
- ➔ Maybe there is a willing baby sister or brother who could give the baby corner a test run!

## Additional activities

### We were all babies once

- ➔ The teacher and aides could also bring photos of themselves as a baby and at different stages through their life to share with the class.

### Guess who's coming to class?

- ➔ Ask a parent to bring a young baby into the classroom.

### Baby school

- ➔ To help students appreciate their own growth and learning, ask students to imagine what the classroom would be like if they were all still babies.
- ➔ Ask students to complete the sentence: If we were all babies, we couldn't ... (sit at desks, write, play chasey etc.).



## Some ideas for READING

*The Red Woollen Blanket* (2008) by Bob Graham.

Since she was born, Julia has loved her blanket. She carries it for years until it is nothing but a small rag. She eventually grows out of the stage when she begins a new period of her life by starting school.

*Brand New Baby* (2008) by Bob Graham.

This story follows the final days of pregnancy and the arrival of a new baby brother, as seen through the eyes of two small children.

*Dr Xargle's Book of Earthlets* (2002) by Jeanne Willis and Tony Ross.

This is a story of an alien professor teaching his class about 'earthlets'. The aliens start by learning about babies and how they come in four colours, pink, brown, black and yellow. Dr Xargle also explains that these earthlets have only two eyes instead of the normal five.

### *Teacher advice*

If you have students from diverse backgrounds this is a particularly good opportunity to teach students to enjoy their curiosity in each other's difference, as well as to find what we share.

Looking back may not be such a good experience for some of the students in your class. If you have students in your group with traumatic backgrounds, then focusing on recent growth spurts or other measurements of learning and changing can be as effective in establishing that we grow, learn and change.



## THEME: Growing and changing

### Core concepts

In this learning sequence we have fun with a 'Baby Olympics' to learn further about the ways humans develop in the short time between babyhood and starting school. A focus on physical change is one way to enhance students' sense of achievement and self-awareness.

#### AusVELS

*Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension*

At Foundation Level, students can:

- › discuss physical changes as people grow and develop, and describe how their own bodies have changed over time
- › identify new things they can do and the responsibilities associated with these.

### Suggested success criteria

- My body has grown and changed since I was a baby.
- We need food, exercise, rest and love to grow and develop.

### Preparation and materials

You will need:

- butcher's paper for body outlines (baby, child, adult)
- baby and children's wear catalogues.



## ACTIVITIES

### Baby Olympics

- ➔ Conduct a version of the Olympics that focuses on developmental milestones.
- ➔ Have fun coming up with competitions for babies, toddlers and preps.
- ➔ Use butcher's paper and pictures from baby wear/children's wear catalogues to represent competitions for each stage, or make a list such as in the table below.

Babies	Toddlers	Preps
Thumb sucking	Crawling	Running
Smiling/laughing	Feeding themselves	Singing
Cuddling	Making loud noises	Jumping
Burping	Clapping	Dancing

- ➔ A 'Prep Olympics' could focus on all the things the students can do now. This is a great chance to reinforce how much they have grown and changed.
- ➔ Discussion starters:
  - Can babies roller skate, high jump or run? What can babies do?
  - What can toddlers do?
  - How did you move when you were a baby, a toddler and now? (For example, carried, pushed in a pram, crawled etc.)
  - What games could you play then?
  - What games can you play now?



## Look at me now

- ➔ On one half of a folded piece of paper, ask the students to draw a picture of themselves as babies doing a baby activity.
- ➔ On the other half, ask them to draw a picture of themselves as students doing a prep activity.
- ➔ In pairs or small groups, ask them to discuss titles for their pictures, for example, 'I like different things now that I am older' or 'Look how I have changed' etc.
- ➔ Ask the students to title their pictures.
- ➔ Now ask them to discuss who they think has helped them to grow and change, and to complete the sentence:  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ help me to grow and change.
- ➔ Ask the students to paste their sentences onto their pictures.
- ➔ Display the students' pictures.

## Additional activity

### Display table

- ➔ Create a display showing students' shoes as the students grow; family photos showing how the whole family has grown and changed; and students' clothing in different sizes and designs.





## Some ideas for READING

*You'll Soon Grow into Them, Titch* (1992) by Pat Hutchins

As the youngest in the family, Titch is always getting hand-me-downs, until the day a new baby arrives in the house. Now it's his turn to say, 'You'll soon grow into them'.

*It's Hard to Be Five: Learning How to Work My Control Panel* (2007) by Jamie Lee Curtis.

A fun story about all the hard lessons to learn at five, such as waiting your turn and sitting still. Self-control for five year olds!

*When I'm Big* (2004) by Debi Gliori

Sometimes it's no fun being little. If you were big, you could stay up late toasting marshmallows or ride a real motorbike. There are times, though, when being little is an advantage!

*Zoom!* (2003) by Robert Munsch

This is a great story to show that children with disabilities are just like other kids. Lauretta is wilful and temperamental as she speeds around town in her new wheelchair. But she also shows she loves her family and steps in to save the day when her brother gets sick.





## THEME: Belonging

### Core concepts

Building on previous learning, this learning sequence continues to develop the understanding about personal identity, growth and change, and the things we need to sustain us (in this case adults and family). Identifying the people who love and care for them helps reinforce students' sense of belonging and security.

An increasing number of families do not live together. Family units extend to aunts, uncles, grandparents and communities of friends. Teachers are often challenged by the lack of resources to represent the diverse backgrounds of students in their classrooms. The following activities draw on the lives of the students in our classrooms, acknowledging and including all the ways that students are growing up.

#### AusVELS

##### *Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension*

At Foundation Level, students can:

- explore basic health needs that must be met to maintain or promote their health and to help them grow and develop
- identify new things they can do and the responsibilities associated with these
- begin to learn about the development of personal identity.

##### *Interpersonal Development (not organised by dimension at this level)*

In Level 1, students can:

- contribute to the development of positive social relationships in a range of contexts
- describe basic skills required to work cooperatively in groups.

### Suggested success criteria

- When I was a baby, I needed someone to care for me.
- Now that I am older, there are a lot more things I can do for myself but I also need someone who cares for me.
- Everybody needs someone that cares for them, whatever age they are.

## Preparation and materials

You will need:

- the students to bring in family photos (make sure the photos have names on the back)
- felt cutouts or paper cutouts of human shapes (adult size and child size)
- a felt or cloth backing board.

## ACTIVITIES

### Simon says

This is a game designed to create awareness of similarities and differences between students.

- ➔ Ask everyone to stand.
- ➔ Say to the students: Simon says if you ...
  - have a dog as a pet, put a hand on your head
  - have a cat as a pet, touch your nose
  - have a sister, hop on one leg
  - have two kids living at your house, take two steps forward
  - walk to school, jump up and down
  - come to school by car, sit down
  - travel to school by bus, wave an arm in the air
  - share a bedroom with someone, turn in a circle
  - have a baby living with you, cover your ears
  - and so on.
- ➔ Point out ways in which the students are the same and ways in which they are different.

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The Simon Says activity was developed from the Northern Ireland Curriculum 'Living, Learning, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding: Foundation stage, Unit 6: You and me'. These lesson plans are available for download at: <[www.nicurriculum.org.uk/](http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/)>. The website contains many teaching ideas and is worth a visit.

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## Family circles – the people in my family

- ➔ Create your own felt or paper cutouts so that students can assemble any number of children, adults and pets to describe their family.
- ➔ The students assemble their family on a cloth backboard or by pasting onto a cardboard display.

By having multiple adult figures available you will ensure the students can represent all kinds of families, including single-parent families and same-sex parents.

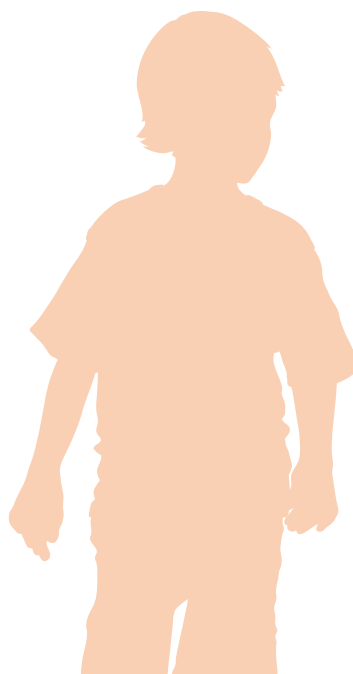
- ➔ You might also like to draw a large chalk circle on the carpet so students can show their families' spread around the globe, across the country, or in different streets.

This allows students to include family members who may not live under the one roof. This can be for reasons such as sheer size (cousins, aunts and so on) or immigration or divorce. A family is not defined by a single address. A family constitutes qualities such as care, love and looking after one another.

- ➔ Ask the students to tell their family story to the class. Alternatively, they can work in pairs. Ask them to:
  - name the figures and describe their relationship
  - talk about things they like to do together, such as family gatherings and celebrations.
- ➔ Key message: Our families often look different but they are usually the people who look after, care for and love each other. We all need someone to care for us, especially when we are babies and children.

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This activity has been reproduced with the permission of Jan Whitman, teacher, Spensley Street Primary School, Melbourne, Australia.





## Some ideas for READING

*You and Me: Our Place* (2007) by Leonie Norrington and Dee Huxley.

Every morning Uncle Tobias goes fishing. Sometimes he is joined by two little boys. Together they spend the day moving from the beach to the bridge and the mangroves on the outskirts of the city. The story is set in Darwin but it could be in any regional coastal town in the north of Australia where Indigenous people live.

*We Belong Together: a Book about Adoption and Families* (2007) and *The Family Book* (2003) by Todd Parr.

Todd Parr's books make an effort to represent all sorts of families in a fun, simple, colourful way. His books include adopted families, stepfamilies, one-parent families and families with two parents of the same sex, as well as the traditional nuclear family.

*A Day with Dad* (2008) by Bo R. Holmberg.

Tim's dad lives in another town and Tim lives with his mum. This book is a positive, happy story of the day Tim's dad comes to visit.

*My Two Grannies* (2007) by Floella Benjamin.

Alvina has two grannies, one from Trinidad, the other from England. When Alvina's parents go away on holiday, both the grannies move in to Alvina's house to look after her, but have different ways of doing things. This story looks at the different traditions that Alvina inherits from her two grannies.