**NOTE:** This word document contains three parent/guardian letters customized for different age groups. Please choose the version that is most appropriate, edit as needed and then print the letter for the children in your care to take home to their families.

Dear Families of Infants 0-6 Months:

Before young children begin to count the Cheerios on their trays or put blocks in the shape sorter, they are learning important early math concepts from their everyday interactions with caregivers. When caregivers incorporate language about math concepts into these interactions from the start, the roots of math concepts begin to grow and provide a solid foundation for learning math skills in the preschool years.

Today, we talked about **FULL** and **EMPTY** as we played. You can reinforce this lesson at home when you are playing with your baby. It’s never too early to begin play routines like clean-up time. Start playtime by placing your baby on his/her tummy on a blanket. Bring out a low basket or an open bin with just a couple of infant toys inside. Show the basket/bin to the baby and say: “The basket is **FULL** of toys. Hmmm…which ones will we play with today?” Then slowly take each toy out of the bin and place it on the floor in front of your baby. Say: “Now the bin is **EMPTY**. No more toys in the bin.” Turn the bin upside-down to emphasize the concept.

When your baby begins to lose interest in playtime, say: “Playtime is all done.” Pick up each toy and place it in the bin/basket, saying: “Bye, bye (toy’s name)” in a singsong voice. Once the toys are picked up, show your baby the bin/basket again and say: “The bin is **FULL** of toys now. All of the toys are going bye-bye. Playtime is all done.”

Dear Families of Infants 6-12 Months:

Before young children begin to count the Cheerios on their trays or put blocks in the shape sorter, they are learning important early math concepts from their everyday interactions with caregivers. When caregivers incorporate language about math concepts into these interactions from the start, the roots of math concepts begin to grow and provide a solid foundation for learning math skills in the preschool years.

Today, we talked about **FULL** and **EMPTY** while we played indoors. You can reinforce this lesson when you are playing together at home. If you haven’t started a clean-up routine with your baby, it’s important to begin at this age. To start playtime, sit down across from your baby with a low basket or an open bin with toys or everyday items inside. Show the basket/bin to the baby and say: “The basket is **FULL** of toys. Hmmm…which ones will we play with today?” Encourage your baby to take the toys out of the bin. Talk about each toy or item that the child takes out of the bin by commenting on colors, shapes, function, etc. If your baby wants to dump the whole bin, that’s okay too.

Once the bin is **EMPTY**, say: “Now the bin is **EMPTY**. No more toys in the bin.” Turn the bin upside-down to emphasize the concept. When your baby begins to lose interest in playing with these toys, or playtime is over, say: “Playtime is all done.” Encourage your baby to help you pick up each toy and place it in the bin/basket, saying: “Bye, bye (toy’s name)” in a singsong voice. Once the toys are picked up, show your baby the bin/basket again and say: “The bin is **FULL** of toys now. All of the toys are going bye-bye. Playtime is all done.”

Dear Families of Infants 12-18 Months:

Before young children begin to count the Cheerios on their trays or put blocks in the shape sorter, they are learning important early math concepts from their everyday interactions with caregivers. When caregivers incorporate language about math concepts into these interactions from the start, the roots of math concepts begin to grow and provide a solid foundation for learning math skills in the preschool years.

Infants at this age are fill-and-dump masters! They LOVE to **EMPTY** EVERYTHING and then put the items back in again. Provide many different sizes and types of containers and many different sizes and types of child-safe objects—from toys to real objects—and follow your baby’s lead. Be sure to comment when the bin is **FULL**—especially right before the child is about to **EMPTY** that bin onto the floor. Then emphasize **EMPTY** by holding up the **EMPTY** bin and shaking it so that nothing is left to fall out.

When your baby begins to lose interest in playing with these toys, or playtime is over, say: “Playtime is all done.” Encourage your baby to help you pick up each toy and place it in the bin/basket, saying: “Bye, bye (toy’s name)” in a singsong voice. Once the toys are picked up, show your baby the bin/basket again and say: “The bin is **FULL** of toys now. All of the toys are going bye-bye. Playtime is all done.” Celebrate your hard work cleaning up together with a high-five or a hug!