**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 **IN** and **OUT** as we explored outside. You can reinforce this lesson at home. Sit down on a blanket on the ground, with your baby in your lap. Show your baby the buckets filled with sticks, rocks or leaves. As you take a rock **OUT** of the bucket, say: “(Mommy/Daddy) takes the rock **OUT** of the bucket.” Encourage your baby to touch, reach for and explore the rock with his/her eyes and hands. Put the rock back **IN** the bucket and say: “(Mommy/Daddy) puts the rock **IN** the bucket.” Repeat the game with sticks and leaves. MAKE SURE OBJECTS DO NOT PRESENT CHOKING HAZARDS.

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 **IN** and **OUT** as we explored outside. You can reinforce this lesson at home. Sit down with your baby, either in your lap to support your baby in sitting up or across from your baby, if he/she can sit independently. Place a bucket of rocks, sticks and leaves in front of your baby. Help your baby take the items **OUT** of the bucket. As your baby takes an item out, say: “(Child’s name), take the (name the item) **OUT**!” Or just “(Name of item) **OUT**!”

Encourage your baby to take lots of items **OUT** of the bin and clap and celebrate each item that your baby takes **OUT**. After you have had fun exploring the different items in the bucket, put the items **IN** the bucket together. Show your baby how to put an item **IN** the bucket as you say: “Put **IN**” each time. Then encourage your baby to put (name of item) **IN**, saying: “(Child’s name) puts the (name of item) **IN**” each time. Remember to clap, high-five or celebrate each time your baby drops an item in the bucket.

Infants this age may just enjoy dumping the items **OUT** and putting the items back **IN** over and over. This is a wonderful opportunity for your baby to hear you say “**IN**” and “**OUT**” many times during this play interaction.

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.

Today, we talked about **IN** and **OUT** as we explored outside. You can reinforce this lesson at home. Sit down across from your baby with outdoor items such as rocks, sticks and leaves sorted and placed in three sand buckets. Encourage your baby to take the outdoor items **OUT** of the buckets. As your baby takes an outdoor item out, say: “(Child’s name) took (name of item) **OUT**!” Or just “(Name of item) **OUT**!” Encourage your baby to take lots of outdoor items **OUT** of the bucket and clap and celebrate each time your baby takes one of the items **OUT**.

Infants at this age may enjoy dumping the whole bucket **OUT** at one time. Enjoy the fun crashing sound that the dumping makes as you say: “All of the rocks, sticks and leaves are **OUT**! (Child’s name) dumped all of the rocks, sticks and leaves **OUT**!” Show your baby how to put the rocks, sticks and leaves into separate buckets, sorting them as you go. As you sort, say: “Put **IN**” each time. Then encourage your baby to sort outdoor items **IN**, saying: “(Child’s name) put (name of item) **IN**” each time. Remember to clap, high-five or celebrate each time your baby drops an outdoor item into one of the buckets.