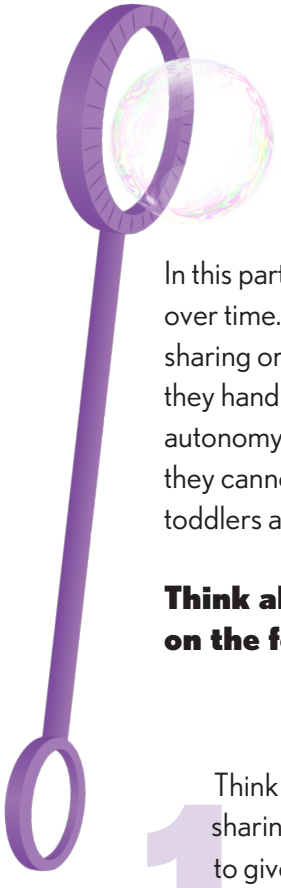

CONNECT TO THE CLASSROOM

Not Sharing Toys

In this part of the module, you learned that sharing toys is a challenging skill that young children develop over time. Sharing often means taking turns with a particular toy or activity. Babies do not have a concept of sharing or taking turns, although older babies may begin to offer toys and food to familiar caregivers. When they hand an item to you, they often expect that they can have it back. Toddlers are establishing a sense of autonomy and ownership. They may be frustrated when someone else is using a toy that they want or when they cannot have all the crayons or trains for themselves. It's important to have realistic expectations for toddlers and to gently support them in managing conflict about sharing.

Think about times when children are playing with toys in your classroom as you reflect on the following questions.

1. Think about what rules you have about sharing and why. Do you expect children to give up what they are playing with as soon as another child asks for it? Is this fair to the child using the toy?

2. Teachers sometimes use vague language when encouraging children to share or take turns. Next to each of the following statements, write a more specific version to help children know what to say and do. The first example is done for you:

   a. Instead of: "You need to share with each other." Try: "Kylie, say 'Can I have a truck?'"
   b. Instead of: "Be nice!" Try:
   c. Instead of: "Stop grabbing, John!" Try:

3. What do you do when children are physically struggling over a toy as you try to facilitate turn-taking? List at least two different strategies you learned in this course that you will try in your classroom this week to prevent or respond to conflicts about sharing.

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