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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

" Supportive Care for Infants and Toddlers with Special Health Needs

attempts to prove that children with special health needs need a lot of love and reassurance from their teachers and family members to recover from their experiences. Illness and hospitalization can disrupt an infant's routines and physical, cognitive and social development. If a toddler is hospitalized, it can threaten their developing autonomy. Some children may become more aggressive, to regain control. Some may seem to give up. These children must be supported by parents and teachers and helped to regain some of their control. Pain is also an important issue to discuss with a hospitalized toddler. The child needs to be taught that it is not his fault that he is sick or in pain and that it is okay to express it when he is hurting. Teachers and family members must help the infant or child to cope with her illness. Infants and toddlers who have been hospitalized may need extra time and encouragement to meet their developmental milestones. They may also regress to an earlier stage of development. It is the teacher's job to reassure parents that this isn't permanent and with encouragement, their child will regain these skills. Promoting active and medical play in the classroom is also a good way for children to express their frustration or other feelings about their experience. Hospitalization or a long illness is difficult for the child, but it is also difficult for the family and friends. Parents may not know where to ask for help in caring for their child and they also need reassurance from their child's teacher on how the child is coping in the classroom. It is important for the entire family to be involved in the recuperation of the recovering infant or toddler. It is also important for siblings of the child and for the child's classmates to be reassured that they are still loved and that they have not done anything wrong, as they will often feel neglected or

rejected, due to the extra care that the recovering child needs. Infants and toddlers recovering from hospitalization need a lot of love and care from their family and from their teachers to move past their experience and it is a difficult time for everyone involved, but if everyone works together, the child's recovery will be a success.