

# December 2006 PCAPE Newsletter

## Season's Greetings!

My holiday season has been a different one with the deaths of my grandmother in August, my mother-in law in October and my husband's uncle 2 days before Christmas. While they all lived long lives, they are missed at this time of family gatherings and celebrations.

We do have much to celebrate with the birth of my niece, Kate, in August. She is such a strong, active, alert baby at 4 months old. She has excellent head control, sits like a frog, smiles, "talks", and is intently watching her older sisters and brothers preparing to take on their world of active play. What a contrast to so many infants I see at 6 months or older who have not yet progressed to this developmental level.

This slowness in acquiring developmental skills is why I feel that it is so important as childbirth and parent educators to teach expectant and new parents the importance of "tummy time". I have been demonstrating how to play on the floor with baby on the tummy while explaining the reasons to develop skeletal and eye muscle strength, for head control and eye coordination. How many of you see infants with delays in developmental milestones because parents and/or caregivers are not placing infants on their tummies while awake and supervised?

In my classes beginning in January 2007, I am adding practice by the dads to my lesson plan for baby care class. The demonstration/return demonstration teaching method works well to teach and begin acquisition of this parenting skill. The expectant mothers will learn from observation, demonstration and discussion.

### **Suggested Teaching Aides:**

Cut out, mount and laminate photos of parents and infants interacting with baby on her/his abdomen. Include both head down and head raised positions.

With parent's permission, take photos of practice during class time. Enlarge.

Use newborn teaching dolls for prenatal classes.

Parents practice with their own babies for postnatal infant care classes.

Select scenes your available DVD and VHS teaching resources that demonstrate "tummy time" parent/infant play.

This **Teaching Tip** is my gift to you. Please share it with other educators. I encourage you especially to consider adding "tummy time" to your classes.