

KDS Family and Consumer Science Students Learn about Being Parents

The FACS students had the learning experience of being real life parents during the last semester of the school year. Students in the third period class took home computer babies for their Child Development and Parenting unit. They were assigned to care for their babies for three days. Some students took the babies home over the weekend, but some students thought it would be easier to care for the baby during the school week.



Dililiah Devor and Kaeliene Esslinger are shown here with their babies they took care of for 3 days.

FACS teacher Liz Clark explained how the program works. The FACS babies are programmed to cry on the same time schedules as a newborn through a six month old. There are 15 different settings from easy to hard. The babies cry to be fed, to be burped, to have a clean diaper, and just because they want attention. Once a baby starts to cry, the student has two minutes to respond before the computer records the lack of attention.

The babies can take anywhere from 5 to 15 minutes to feed and have to be held and rocked the whole time. Also, if the baby is handled roughly or its neck is not supported, the baby will scream until it is rocked and comforted.

The computer records how long the baby cries, how long it took the student to respond to the baby each time, and any rough handling.

This project was an eye-opening experience for most of the students in this class. "The baby cried all night, ate all day, and burned up the nerves of the students in the class the whole time they were doing it," said one student. All of the students realized how much work is involved with having a newborn baby and that they need to be older and more mature before they start a family.