

Helping Your Baby Grow

Activities for 0 to 3 Months



From birth, babies are interested in exploring your face, voice, and body. Your baby tells you a lot through body movements and sounds. Watch and listen to your baby during playtime and other daily activities. Who is this little person? Respond to sounds your baby makes, and let your baby know you are trying to understand. Through back-and-forth interactions with your baby, you become connected, or attached, to each other. Encourage family members to show love for the new baby (and each other). Your positive back and forth interactions with your baby are key to their social-emotional development.

Talk Time

Your baby can see your face, smell you, feel your skin, and hear your voice. Your baby can even sense how you are feeling. Talk, sing, look at, and smile at your baby. Say your baby's name. Watch and wait to see what your baby does. Does your baby look at your face and eyes? Is your baby listening to you? When you move, does your baby try to follow your voice with head movements? Your baby doesn't like to be far from you.

Silly Faces

At 2 weeks, your baby can see clearly 8 to 10 inches away. Hold your baby close to your face and watch what they do. If your baby opens their mouth, open your mouth. Stick out your tongue. Watch and wait a bit. Does your baby try to copy you? Your baby may not be able to copy you at first, but keep trying!

Tummy Playtime

Place your baby on their tummy on a clean blanket on the floor. Lie down next to your baby, talk, and watch what your baby does. When your baby starts to pick up their head, let them know you noticed. "You picked up your head!" Celebrating new skills with your baby as they grow builds confidence. Now your baby can look at the world in a whole new way. *Never leave your baby alone on their tummy.*

Storytime

Your baby is never too young to listen to a story or look at pictures in a book. Your baby will feel warm, safe, and calm in your arms. Reading books is an activity you and your baby can do every day as a routine, to help you get close and connect. Your baby listens to the tone of your voice and hears the words you are saying. At this age, your baby focuses best on simple black-and-white pictures or big, brightly colored pictures.

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Great Big World

Take your baby out for short walks. Let your baby see the sky and trees, listen to the birds, and feel the wind. If you can carry your baby, they can feel the warmth of your body and hear your heartbeat, and they will feel safe and secure. Your baby may cry less and calm more easily when they are physically close to you. Talk to your baby about what you can see, hear, or feel. This is how your baby learns the meaning of words.

Rock-a-Bye Baby

Gentle movement is usually calming for babies. Dancing or rocking in a chair is relaxing for both you and your baby. Listen to soft, soothing music, or sing quietly. Gently sway back and forth, holding your baby close. Whisper in your baby's ear and let them know how much you love them.

Sibling Social

Help older siblings get to know the new baby by making time for them to be together. Show big sister (or brother) how to be gentle with the baby. Tell big sister what a good job she is doing. "Wow, she really likes your smile. Look at how she's watching!" Encourage siblings to talk to the baby. Have an older brother come close and say, "Hi, I'm James. Can you see me?" Gently position your baby's body so everyone can look at each other.

Soothing Voices

Your baby recognizes your voice. Hearing familiar voices is comforting to your baby. Talk to your baby about everything. For example, while grocery shopping, talk about what you are buying. "Bananas. Let's get some bananas." Your baby also loves to hear your singing voice. You may remember some simple songs or lullabies from your childhood.

Dinnertime

Find a quiet, comfortable place to feed your baby. Hold your baby close and look into their eyes. While feeding, watch your baby closely and see what helps them calm and focus. Does your baby relax and suck better when you talk or sing to them or when you are quiet? See what works best for your baby. Pay attention to how you are feeling, too. Your baby is connected to you and can sense how you feel. When you relax, your baby relaxes.

How Are You Feeling?

Watch your baby carefully and guess how they are feeling. Is your baby hungry? Full? Uncomfortable? Is your baby happy, mad, or sad? Is your baby ready to play or getting sleepy? Talk to your baby about what you think your baby is feeling. "I saw that yawn. You look sleepy." One day soon your baby will be able to tell you! For now, your baby tells you with behaviors, body movements, cries, sounds, and facial expressions.