

# 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 them during playtime and other daily activities. Who is this little person? Respond to sounds your baby makes, and let them 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. They can even sense how you are feeling. Talk, sing, look at, and smile at your baby. Say their name. Watch and wait to see what your baby does. Do they look at your face and eyes? Is your baby listening to you? When you move, do they 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 them 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? They 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 them, talk, and watch what your baby does. When they start 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 they 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. They 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, they focus 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 them 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. They 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 they learn 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 of you. Listen to soft, soothing music, or sing quietly. Gently sway back and forth, holding your baby close. Whisper in their 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 them. 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 them close and look into their eyes. While feeding, watch your baby closely and see what helps them calm and focus. Do they 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, they relax.

**How Are You Feeling?**

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