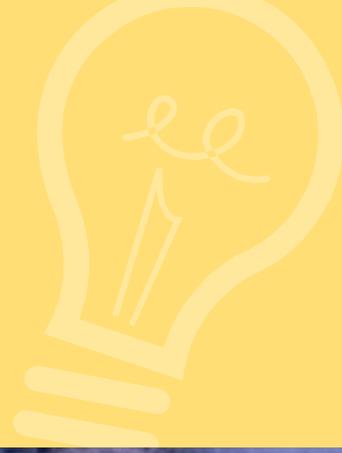
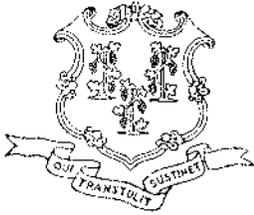


# Connecticut's Guidelines for the Development of Infant & Toddler Early Learning



A Handbook  
For Caregivers of  
Young Children

Developed by the Connecticut Department of Social Services



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT  
06106

M. JODI RELL  
GOVERNOR

Dear Infant and Toddler Caregiver:

I am pleased to present to you **Connecticut's new Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning**. Through the work of a distinguished group of early care and education colleagues, our state has developed this comprehensive and innovative document. The Guidelines are designed to inform and support infant and toddler primary caregivers, whether they are parents or child care providers.

As a caregiver, you know that children start learning before they attend school. In fact, the first three years of life are crucial when it comes to the development of a child's brain. That is why it is so important to support infants and toddlers and their families in the early stages of development. Parents need information and resources to access appropriate pre- and post-natal care, as well as care at birth and throughout childhood. Caregivers need the most up-to-date information and insightful guidance to help infants and toddlers learn.

Study after study on early childhood development affirms that children who participate in quality early childhood programs are more likely to perform better academically, become high school graduates, become employed and earn higher incomes. This is a positive investment and a vital gain not only for the children and their families, but for the future of our state.

The birth-to-third birthday period is an especially important time of growth and development, and the foundation for all future learning. I expect that **Connecticut's Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning** will become an essential tool and component of our statewide infant and toddler comprehensive system.

I would like to extend my thanks to the many individuals and organizations contributing to this important initiative. Special thanks to Anna Figueroa, early childhood consultant, for principal authorship; and the Department of Social Services for sponsoring and underwriting the initiative. The Guidelines project is a true labor of love, and your efforts will mean a great deal to children, families and the State of Connecticut in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. Jodi Rell".

M. Jodi Rell  
Governor

# Credits

## *Connecticut's Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning*

Created for and funded by the Connecticut Department of Social Services

Under the auspices of the *ZERO TO THREE Infant Toddler Initiative*

Written and developed by Anna Figueroa, Early Childhood Consultant



# Process

A workgroup of early childhood experts was convened to provide assistance and guidance during the writing and review process of **Connecticut's Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning**. Workgroup members reviewed numerous similar documents assessing content and format. This resulting document incorporates information gathered from many of these sources, including:

- Infant and toddler standards and guidelines from other states: Arkansas, California, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan and Washington;
- Early *Head Start* Programs - Performance Measures for Programs Serving Infants and Toddlers;
- *Birth to Three* and *Parents As Teachers*;
- Connecticut Department of Education Preschool Framework - Goals and Benchmarks;
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Guidelines;
- NAEYC Position Statement - *Early Learning Standards: Creating the Conditions for Success*;
- National *ZERO TO THREE*;
- University of Connecticut Infant & Toddler Guidelines.

The information in **Connecticut's Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning** is also based on current research and best practices. The objective of this document is to reach, inform, and support infant and toddler primary caregivers.

The first draft of the document was issued in January 2005 and made accessible via the Internet for review and comment. Statewide forums were held in March - April 2005. Participation was broad and inclusive. Nearly 100 individuals in varying capacities from the public and private sectors participated and provided invaluable contributions to the document through their candid feedback.

The final phase in the development process was a pilot. The pilot phase explored the use of the draft document within various settings: center-based, family child care and Kith and Kin. Pilots ran from June – December 2006. Lessons learned not only shaped continued refinement of the document but also gave great insight into the various ways different audiences used and benefited from its recommendations. All providers planned continued use of the document.

Information gathered from both the statewide forums and the pilot phase is being utilized to design a dissemination plan, as well as a training and support model for **Connecticut's Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning**.

# Acknowledgements

## *Early Learning Guidelines Workgroup*

**Dana Abbott**, Ph.D. A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disability, University of Connecticut

**Joyleen Albarracin**, Windham Even Start/Home Based Coordinator

**Judith August**, School Psychologist, Darcey School Early Childhood Center, Cheshire Public Schools

**Mary Ann Dayton-Fitzgerald**, Supervisor, *Early Childhood Intervention Program*, CT Department of Children and Families

**Anna Figueroa**, Early Childhood Consultant

**Linda Goodman**, Director, *CT Birth to Three System*, Department of Mental Retardation

**Pam Langer**, M.A., PATNC State System Leader/ConnPAT

**Sherry Linton**, Coordinator, Family Development Center, Manchester Memorial Hospital

**Charlotte Madison**, Executive Director (retired), School of Family Studies, Child Development Laboratories, University of Connecticut

**Denise Merrill**, Director, Training Resource Academy of the Child Health and Development Institute

**Anne Newkirk**, Program Coordinator, Training Program in Child Development

**Donna Notti**, *Birth to Three* Coordinator, Cheshire Public Schools

**Peter Palermo**, Program Manager, Child Care Team, Connecticut Department of Social Services

**Elizabeth Shack**, Early Learning Opportunities Act Education Coordinator, New Haven Public Schools

**Maria Synodi**, Education Consultant, Bureau of Early Childhood, Career, and Adult Education

**Grace Whitney**, Ph.D., Director, *Head Start Collaborative*, Connecticut Department of Social Services

**Carmelita Valencia-Daye**, Associate Professor, Early Childhood Education Program, Gateway Community College

**Libby Zimmerman**, Ph.D. LICSW, Infant/Toddler Mental Health Consultant, *Focus*, Cambridge, MA

## *Pilot Sites*

**All Our Kin, Inc.** New Haven, CT— Family Child Care Settings

**Mt. Olive**, Hartford, CT— Center-Based Care Setting

**Kith and Kin Settings**— Windham, CT At the homes of:

Veronica Rojas, Grandmother

Irene Salazar, Mother, Aunt, Cousin

Mirella Vigil, Grandmother

## *Pilot Coaches*

**Paula Simpson**, *All Our Kin*

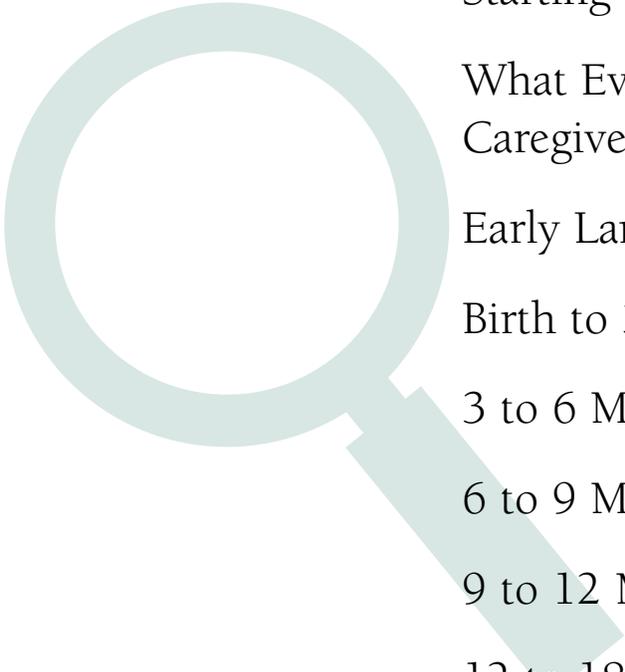
**Janna Wagner**, *All Our Kin*

**Sandra Fowler**, Hartford Association for the Education of Young Children

**Joyleen Albarracin**, Windham Even Start/Home Based Coordinator



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**Beginning at birth, the early years of a child's life are learning years.** During these years, the learning that takes place provides the foundation for all learning that follows. As a primary caregiver, you and the interaction you have with a baby are a vital part of this foundation. The caring, nurturing relationship you develop with a baby will have a lasting impact on that child's life.

In addition to rapid physical growth, babies grow and develop in all other areas. Socially, babies begin forming attachments to others. Emotionally, babies express many feelings and learn that they can be comforted. Cognitively, they learn how things work within their world. A baby will also develop new ways to communicate with you and other significant people.

Although skills are acquired in a predictable pattern, it's important to remember that they are not achieved at the same time by all children. There is a *range* of normal development. As you observe a baby, it's important to have an idea of what skills the baby is working on. You will be better able to support the baby's healthy growth and development and next developmental milestones. In a very real sense, you become the baby's learning partner.

Like most caregivers, you probably have questions about how a baby grows and develops. You want to know what you can do to encourage this development. That's what this manual is all about. It will help you understand what skills to look for as a baby grows and develops, how to interact with a baby and how to plan a supportive environment. Whether you are the baby's caregiver or parent, this manual will provide you with important information and strategies to support infant and toddler growth and development - in a variety of settings.

## The manual is organized into age ranges:

- The baby's first year is divided into 3 month segments: birth - 3 months, 3 - 6 months, 6 - 9 months and 9 - 12 months. This is necessary in order to address rapid growth and to highlight the important milestones that occur within the first year of life.
- The child's next year is divided into two, 6 month segments: 12 - 18 months and 18 - 24 months.
- The focus then turns to the year between 2 and 3 years of age when physical growth changes begin to slow down.

Each age range is also divided into the four areas of infant and toddler growth and development:

1. Personal and Social
2. Physical
3. Cognitive
4. Language Development and Communication.

In each age range and area of development, you will find what to look for as a baby grows and develops. The sections are titled:



**As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See...** outlines age-related development and acquisition of skills.



**A Supportive Environment Includes...** provides information on how to provide a supportive setting.



**Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development...** demonstrates how to support a baby's development, including the best ways to interact with the baby.



**Did You Know...** highlights current research or other important facts.

At the end of each age-range section, you will find **suggested activities** that support healthy growth and development and a **close up look at interactions** between a caregiver and a baby.

Remember that good health and physical development also depend on a healthy diet of balanced meals and nutritious food, as well as adequate sleep, regular medical check-ups, immunizations, and dental care. For more information on meeting these needs, see **Caring for Connecticut's Children, Volume 1**.

# Guiding Principles

Connecticut's **Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning** is based on guiding principles consistent with those outlined in **The Connecticut Framework—Preschool Curricular Goals and Benchmarks**, and the State Board of Education Position Statement on Infants, Toddlers and their Families. Guiding principles are:

- **Early learning and development are multidimensional, and developmental domains (or areas of development) are highly interrelated.**

Development in one domain influences development in other domains. For example, children's communication skills affect their ability to engage in social interactions. Therefore, developmental domains cannot be considered in isolation from each other. The dynamic interaction of all areas of development must be considered.

- **Young children are capable and competent.**

All children are capable of positive developmental outcomes. Therefore, there should be appropriate expectations for all young children, regardless of their backgrounds and experience.

Infants and toddlers with disabilities should receive specialized, high quality intervention services. Their individual needs should be supported to ensure positive developmental outcomes.

- **There are individual differences in rates of development among children.**

Each child is unique in the rate of growth and the development of skills and competencies. Some children may have a developmental delay or disability that may require program staff members to adapt expectations for them or adapt experiences so that these children can be successful in achieving a particular developmental outcome. Additionally, each child is raised in a cultural context that may affect the approach that the caregiver uses with each child.

- **Young children learn through active exploration of their environment through child-initiated and adult-selected activities.**

The early childhood environment should provide ample opportunities for children to explore materials and engage in concrete activities, and to interact with peers and adults in order to construct their own understanding about the world around them. Therefore there should be a balance of child-initiated and adult-initiated activities so as to maximize children's learning.

- **Knowledge of child growth and development is essential to providing quality educational experiences for children.**

Early childhood caregivers should have realistic expectations regarding child growth and development and a solid understanding of what children need to know and be able to do as they grow and develop.

- **Families are the primary caregivers and educators of their young children.**

Early childhood caregivers should work collaboratively with families to ensure that children are offered optimal learning experiences. Programs must provide families with the information they need to support children's learning and development. Programs should also create opportunities to learn about each family's expectations for their child, as well as cultural differences and values.

# Rethinking the Brain\*

## Old Thinking...

How a brain develops depends on the **genes** you are born with.

The **experiences** you have before age three have a **limited impact** on later development.

A **secure relationship** with a primary caregiver creates a favorable **context** for early development and learning.

Brain development is **linear**; the brain's capacity to learn and change grows steadily as an infant progresses toward adulthood.

A toddler's brain is much **less active** than the brain of a college student.

## New Thinking...

How a brain develops hinges on a complex **interplay** between the **genes** you're born with and the **experiences** you have.

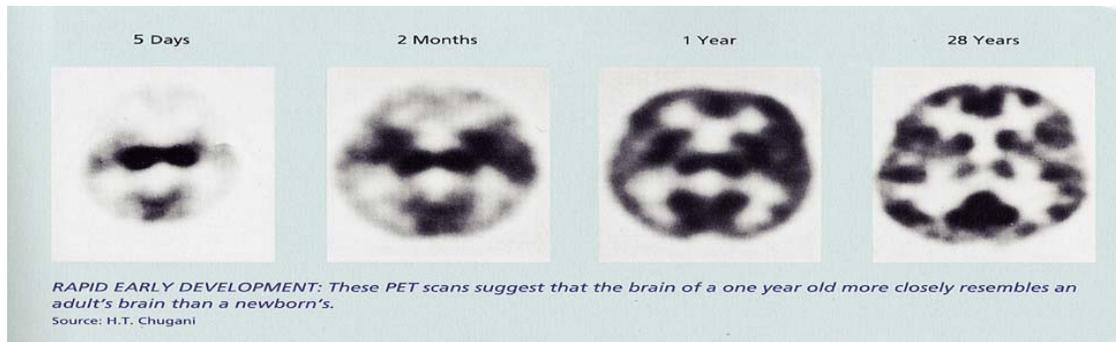
Early **experiences** have a **decisive impact** on the architecture of the brain, and on the nature and extent of adult capacities.

**Early interactions** don't just create a context, they also **directly affect** the way the **brain is "wired."**

Brain development is **non-linear**: there are prime times for acquiring different kinds of knowledge and skills.

By the time children reach age three, their brains are as **twice** as active as those of adults. Activity levels drop during adolescence.

Rapid Early Development: These PET scans suggest that the brain of a one year old more closely resembles an adult's brain than a newborn's.



\*The information on this page has been reproduced from [Rethinking the Brain](#) by Rima Shore, page 21. It is intended to set the stage for the information that follows regarding how to support the healthy growth and development of all infants and toddlers.

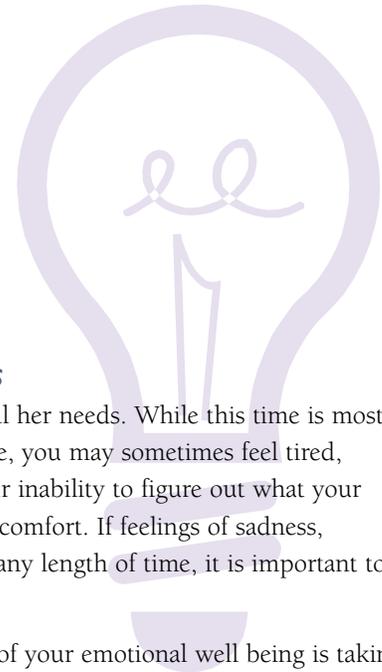
# Starting With YOU

As an early childhood caregiver, **caring for a baby is one of the most important things you will ever do.**

In order to do this to the best of your ability, it is important to take care of yourself as well. This means ensuring you are physically and emotionally healthy.

During the hours a baby is in your care, you are responsible for meeting that baby's needs. The baby relies on you (as on his or her parents) to interpret communications and provide nurturing and responsive care. In addition, you are responsible for communicating with parents, other teachers and support staff, and meeting many other expectations within your setting. The pressures from these demands can sometimes be overwhelming and frustrating.

Caring for young children is a high-energy job and taking care of your emotional and physical needs is essential. Finding ways to relieve stress is important. Be sure to use the supports that are available to you such as your center director, educational, health or mental health consultants. Attend training sessions that are offered and use them as opportunities to gain knowledge that supports your practice, and to network with other early childhood professionals. Start a monthly meeting with other professionals outside of your agency to serve as a time to share strategies and resources and support each other during challenging times. Finally, know when to ask for a break. Sometimes a few minutes away from your daily demands or a social time outside of work can refresh you and help you be ready to provide the best care possible.



## *A special note to parents*

A baby counts on you to meet all her needs. While this time is most often an exciting and happy time, you may sometimes feel tired, frustrated or even sad about your inability to figure out what your baby needs and how to provide comfort. If feelings of sadness, frustration or fatigue persist for any length of time, it is important to talk to your doctor.

Just as important as taking care of your emotional well being is taking care of yourself physically. Eating right, exercising, and getting adequate sleep are important so that you have the energy needed to care for your baby who requires your attention around the clock. For those mothers who are breast feeding, it is important to remember that eating balanced meals is critical as you are the sole nourishment for your newborn.

As you are growing in your new parenting role, you may find it valuable and comforting to talk with and learn from other parents. Finding out about a parenting program or play groups where both you and your baby can socialize with others may be of interest to you.

Early childhood caregivers and parents may find the 2-1-1 Infoline a valuable telephone resource for information regarding community services. By calling 2-1-1, you'll be connected to Child Care, Child Development (*Birth to Three*), *Husky*, and *Care 4 Kids*. You can also access the Infoline Website on the Internet at [www.infoline.org](http://www.infoline.org). Information and resources available to you at this Website cover topics such as:

- |                     |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Counseling          | Basic Needs (food, shelter) |
| Parenting Programs  | Financial Assistance        |
| Health Care         | Elder Care                  |
| Child Care Services | Disability Services         |
| Substance Abuse     | Emergency Shelter           |
| Crisis Intervention | HIV/AIDS Testing            |
| Domestic Violence   | Suicide Prevention          |
| Legal Assistance    | Home Care                   |
| Transportation      | Energy Assistance           |

# What Every Early Childhood Caregiver Should Know About Caring for Babies and Toddlers

Every baby is unique and has unique ways of communicating his or her needs. Babies develop trust and emotional security when their needs are met promptly and in a positive, caring manner. As you build a warm and trusting relationship with each baby in your care, be sure to learn all you can about individual sleeping and eating patterns, ways of communicating needs, ways in which each baby is comforted (holding, cuddling, singing, rocking), and their tolerance of sound, light and other stimulation within the environment. Take special note of each baby's interests, likes and dislikes and use this knowledge to assess how best to meet each baby's needs in a consistent and predictable manner. Give the baby your full attention, especially during caregiving routines such as diapering, feeding and going to sleep.



## How can you form a strong attachment with a baby?

You begin by responding in a loving, gentle, consistent manner to the baby's needs, including physical, emotional and intellectual needs. You engage in many positive interactions with the baby such as:

- Responding quickly to crying and trying to soothe the baby right away.
- Always smiling back at the baby when the baby smiles at you.
- Enjoying the baby in your care. Show your delight in seeing and spending time with the infant.
- Cuddling and rocking the baby.
- Always holding babies when they are drinking from a bottle.
- Gently tickling and laughing with the baby.
- By helping the baby learn that he can trust in you.

## Why is a strong attachment important?

It helps the baby/child to:

- Feel safe and secure.
- Feel good about themselves.
- Trust in their world.
- Learn self importance and ability to count on others.
- Learn how to regulate and communicate emotions.

When children achieve these *milestones*, they develop healthy self-images, they're eager to explore, and they develop into socially competent and confident individuals.



## How do you know when you have succeeded in developing a strong attachment with a child?

You'll recognize success when the child:

- Smiles with pleasure when you greet her warmly or admire her accomplishments.
- Reaches out to you to be picked up.
- Calls out to you to get your attention.
- Relaxes and molds comfortably to your body when you hold her.
- Leans into your body when you read to him.
- Accepts your gentle touches and warm gestures of intimacy.
- Climbs on you, clings to you, or even sucks on your knuckles to regain emotional balance.
- Looks up occasionally to check for your presence when playing across the room.
- Becomes stressed when he notices you are not in the room.
- Runs to you, her safe base, to “refuel”, then returns to play.
- Turns to you for help in stressful situations.
- Takes your hand in new or unfamiliar circumstances.
- Calms down at your reassuring touch and words.
- Is cooperative and compliant with your request and directions.
- Works longer at challenging tasks when you are near.
- Looks into your eyes when you crouch down to talk to him.
- Talks to you truthfully about the bad as well as the good.

(Honig 58)

**Remember: A child's very first relationships form the foundation for future relationships.**

## Relationship Between Caregivers and Parents

Both parents and caregivers want children to develop a sense of security in the child care setting. This is developed through the partnership that caregivers and parents build based on mutual respect, understanding, acceptance and agreement. It begins by having clear expectations and open lines of communication in both verbal and nonverbal ways. It continues by having shared goals for the child and respect for different approaches to getting there. Written policies, daily conversations and individual visits are ways of sharing information. When the partnership is successful, caregivers are more responsive to the children and feel a greater commitment to quality care, parents feel less stressed about their child's out-of-home care and children develop attachments to those who care for them. All of this ensures that children will develop to their greatest potential.

# The Progression of Early Language Development

*“Although experiences during the early years may vary tremendously, the foundation for learning language is the same for every child. Whether a child is learning one language or more than one, to foster language learning from the earliest ages, infant/toddler care should emphasize warm, nurturing, one-on-one conversation that is responsive to the child’s attempts to communicate.”*

(Lally, Mangione, and Greenwald 31)

**Early vocalization** begins around the age of 1 or 2 months with *cooing* (making repetitive vowel sounds), *babbling* (vowel-consonant combination around the ages of 6 or 7 months), and *jargon* (stringing together sets of different syllables, often with sentence-like inflections, between the ages of 6 and 12 months).

**Recognizing language sounds** contributes to the young infant’s babbling. He will begin taking on some of the intonational patterns of the language he is hearing.

**Gestures** develop around 9 or 10 months. Gestures along with sounds are a common way for mobile infants to ask a caregiver for things. Sign language is a form of early communication which can be used with infants and toddlers to support their desire to communicate before they have all the words to do so.

**First words** appear around the age of 12 or 13 months. A word is defined as any sound or set of sounds that is used consistently to refer to some thing, action, or quality. For a child, a word can be any sound. Often, words are used only in one or two specific situations and in the presence of many cues.

**Holophrases** are common between the ages of 12 and 18 months. A holophrase is a combination of a gesture and a single word that creates a two-word meaning.

**Telegraphic speech** refers to the earliest sentences created by young children. Sentences usually include key nouns and verbs but generally omit all other words thus creating a short and choppy sentence.

**Phonological development** is a complex process that depends on the child’s ability to attend to sound sequences, produce sounds, and combine them into understandable words and phrases. The young child needs to acquire the rules by which sounds are combined in the language. Over time, the child’s pronunciation of words will become more and more adult like.

- The early phase is partly influenced by the small number of sounds the child can pronounce. The easiest sound sequences start with consonants, end with vowels, and include repeated syllables, as in “mama”, “dada”, “bye-bye”, and “nigh-nigh.”
- The appearance of phonological strategies occurs around the middle of the second year.

At first children produce minimal words where they focus on the stressed syllable and try to pronounce its consonant-vowel combination (“du” or “ju” for “juice”).

Then they add ending consonants (“jus”), adjust vowel length (“beee” for “please”), and add unstressed syllables (“mae-do” for “tomato”).

Lastly they produce the full word with a correct stress pattern. They may still need time to refine the sounds (“timemba” for “remember,” or “pagetti” for “spaghetti”).

(Taken from Connecticut Charts-A-Course Core Area of Knowledge Curriculum. *Core Area C: Advancing Children’s Physical and Intellectual Development*. Language Acquisition of Infants and Toddlers)

Please refer to the age ranges in this guide for more examples of language milestones and remember the interconnectedness of all areas of development.

## Did You Know:

- **Language acquisition is the most complex accomplishment of early childhood.**
- **Young children understand before they can speak.**

Children's receptive language develops before their expressive language.

- **The speed with which children develop language, and language styles, varies among children:**

**Differences in rate:** Some children begin using individual words at 8 months, others not until 18 months. Some do not use two-word sentences until 3 years old or later.

**Differences in style:** Katherine Nelson (1973) proposed two styles of early language:

**Expressive style** (holistic style) is characterized by low rates of noun-like terms and high use of personal-social words and phrases. Early words are linked to social relationships rather than to objects.

**Referential style** is characterized by early vocabulary made up of names and descriptions for things or people.

## Possible warning signs:

For babies:

- A general lack of interest in social contact.
- Not attending to the caregiver's speech.
- Babbling that continues beyond 8 or 9 months.
- At 8 or 9 months, the older infant does not follow the direction of an adult's line of vision or pointing.
- At 11 or 12 months, the older infant does not show and point to objects, or engage in or initiate ritualized games with caregivers.
- No words are used between the ages of 10 and 14 months.

For toddlers:

- Vocabularies that are not steadily increasing.
- Continual grammatical errors.
- Difficulty combining different kinds of information in a single sentence.
- Difficulty talking about the future.
- Misunderstanding questions and/or often misunderstood themselves.
- Using short, simple sentences and having difficulty maintaining a conversation.
- Playing alone and exhibiting fewer social forms of play.

(Taken from Connecticut Charts-A-Course Core Area of Knowledge Curriculum. *Core Area C: Advancing Children's Physical and Intellectual Development*. Language Acquisition of Infants and Toddlers)

## Supporting Children who Experience More Than One Language

“Whether children will eventually speak one language, two languages, or more, their earliest lessons take place in the universal language of human interaction.”

(Lally, Mangione, and Greenwald 32)

- Second language acquisition occurs through either:
  - **Simultaneous Acquisition** - acquiring both languages at the same time, or
  - **Sequential Acquisition** - acquiring a second language after mastering the first language.
- Children learn a second language in different ways depending upon their culture, individual personality and exposure to the language.
- Children most easily master content material when they are taught in a familiar language.

When nurturing and communicating with babies and toddlers who experience more than one language, remember the importance of:

- **Enhancing the child's comfort and self-awareness with continuity between the home and child care setting.**  
Providing some periods of exposure to the child's home language within the care setting (for example, helping to soothe a child that is experiencing distress by singing a familiar song) supports the child's feelings of emotional security.  
Babies should be provided with predictable routines that emphasize continuity between home and the care setting.
- **Encouraging caregivers to speak the language they speak most naturally.**  
“When caregivers speak their own native language, they can use the full range of rhythm and tone of voice to convey both *meaning* and *attitude* through their utterances. Native speakers also provide the best language models for children's language learning. It is advisable to have caregivers speak their best language, as long as communication with the rest of the staff can be maintained.” (34)  
When possible, provide exposure to authentic language models for children whose home language is different from the language of the broader community.
- **Communicating in the language of the broader community, especially in settings in which there is great diversity in the home languages of the children.**  
Communicating with a child in the language of the broader community is desirable. But one must remember the importance of supporting the child's efforts to communicate in the language with which he or she is most familiar. (33)





*Birth To  
3 Months*





### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### Social

##### *A baby:*

- May smile (reflexive at first).
- Will smile at people who smile at her by the age of 3 months.
- Begins to make eye contact.
- Watches and listens to people and things around him.
- Is soothed by your face.
- Watches people (the first sign of socialization).
- Feels better when held and cuddled.
- Uses crying as a way to tell you what she needs.
- Likes being held.
- Likes sound and touch.

From the time they are born, babies will tell you how they feel and what they need by making sounds and moving their bodies. Although a baby's cry does not sound different in the first few weeks, they soon use different cries to let you know they are tired, hungry or bored.

#### Feelings and Self-Awareness

##### *A baby:*

- Shows if they are happy or unhappy.
- May cry, turn away, or tense her body when tired.
- Does not yet separate himself from the world.
- May be startled by bright lights or loud noises.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A lot of one-on-one time spent holding, cuddling, talking, singing, rocking, etc.
- Time with the caregiver (a baby will prefer faces, especially her caregiver's, most of all).
- A safe and comfortable space for the baby, separate from and out-of-reach of older infants or toddlers.
- Musical toys.
- Color pictures at eye level.
- Teething rings.
- Toys safe to suck on.
- Squeeze toys to suck, reach, or grab.



For more information about creating a safe environment where a baby's needs can be easily met, see [Caring for Connecticut's Children, Volume 1](#) for specific information on promoting health and safety. This booklet is available on the Child Health and Development Website: [www.CHDI.org](http://www.CHDI.org).



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Immediately respond to her cries. As she becomes confident and develops trust that you will meet her needs, she will cry less.
- Call a baby by his name.
- Put her in a safe spot where she can be part of everything but not be overstimulated.
- Allow for quiet, alone time.
- Help him develop social behaviors by responding to him when he is alert.
- Respond to her messages (efforts to communicate) and try to find her real needs. Remember that crying is not always due to hunger.
- Always hold and engage in interaction when feeding him.
- Allow for adult-supported, baby-to-baby contact when possible.
- Hold, cuddle, smile, talk to and laugh with her.
- Talk, hum, sing and read to the baby often, especially during daily routines such as feeding and diaper changing.
- Tell him about everything that is going on around him. Note the sights and sounds he likes. These might be things that will help him when he is unhappy.
- Copy and respond to her sounds.
- Show your love, happiness and special bond to him.
- Carry the baby to different areas in the room and talk about what you both see so she can learn about what is around her.



### Did You Know:

- Responding to a baby makes her feel important and lets her know that you understand her. This builds her confidence and makes her want to communicate more.
- Babies can be calmed by rocking, patting, singing, swaddling, and letting them suck on a hand or pacifier.
- Babies are born with little to no self-control. They have little control over how they feel or what they do. Developing self-control begins in a baby's earliest months and continues across the first three years of his life and beyond. With help from parents and caregivers, babies can begin to learn how to handle their feelings and actions.



### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See: Large Muscle Development



#### A baby:

- Will lift her head for a short time. Continue to support her head. A baby's most important physical task is head control.
- Can turn his head to clear his nose for breathing and turning toward sounds.
- Has reflexive arm and leg movements, which are not under her control.

### Small Muscle Development

#### A baby:

- Often clenches his hands, making a fist.
- Grasps things placed in her hands due to reflexive action. By the end of this period, a baby will use her hands one at a time and on purpose to bat at and grasp objects.
- Looks at things, especially faces and begins to follow them with his eyes.
- Brings things to her mouth.
- Follows moving things with his eyes by 3 months and likes watching his own hands as he moves them through the air.
- Gets comfort from sucking, which has now become voluntary. Let a baby use her thumb, fist, or pacifier to meet these natural sucking needs.
- Responds to sound (see The Progression of Early Language Development page 10) and touch. A newborn's sensitivity to touch is well developed.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Avoidance of sudden noises, bright lights or changes in position. These can be very startling.
- Putting the baby to sleep on his back to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Use a firm, tight-fitting mattress in his crib. Remove all soft items. Slats on a crib or playpen must be 2-3/8 inches apart or less to prevent strangling. Never use a waterbed, sheepskin or pillow. Remove a hanging mobile once he can reach it with his hands. Always keep one hand on the baby when you are diapering him.
- A mat, rug, or blanket to lie in a safe space with room to move around. Offer this for short periods of time several times a day.
- Only a few toys as the baby's environment is stimulating enough.
- Bright colors and contrasting colors (e.g. black and white).
- Soft toys that a baby can grasp. She may not be able to let go of hard toys or rattles and can bang herself in the face.
- Mobiles on the crib, musical toys, colored pictures at the baby's eye level.

***Avoid leaving a baby in a swing or car seat for too long. This keeps him away from your much-needed loving touch.***

### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Talk with parents and use what you have seen to determine the baby's needs.
- Provide a feeling of security when necessary. Wrap the baby in a blanket and place him in a small, enclosed space (your arms, a bouncy seat, crib, etc.). Swaddle the baby to help calm and comfort him.
- Provide peace and quiet and a small amount of stimulation. Familiar people (parents, caregivers, other children) provide enough stimulation.
- Hold or place the baby 9 - 12 inches from your face; helping to keep you within her sight.
- Don't worry if a baby's eyes wander independently or if he looks at you out of the corner of his eye in the early months. This is normal. (Brain Wonders)
- Hug and rock the baby in your arms. Gently stroke her head and skin. Remember to watch for cues about what kinds of touch and how much touch she likes. Be aware that babies do feel pain and will cry in response to it.
- Holding, talking or softly singing or humming while he is breast feeding (or bottle feeding) helps create a warm, responsive and secure environment for him.
- By 2 months the baby enjoys looking at you. Be expressive. Widen your eyes, move your mouth, and slowly move your head from side-to-side so he can follow your face. (Brain Wonders) Encourage her to follow an object with her eyes (e.g. a stuffed animal) at 10 inches from her face.



### Did You Know: Baby's Amazing Reflexes



Reflex	Description	Disappearance
Walking/Stepping	When Baby is held upright under her arms, with her head supported, she will lift one foot after another in a walking/stepping motion, provided her feet are barely touching a flat surface.	2 months
Moro/Startle Reflex	While lying on her back, if Baby is startled by a loud noise, or if her head suddenly drops slightly, she will arch her back, hold back her head, extend her arms and legs and then draw them in toward her body.	2-3 months
Rooting	When Baby's cheek is stroked near the corner of her mouth, she will turn her head toward the touch, open her mouth and make sucking movements.	4 months
Palmar Grasp	When Baby's palm is stroked with a finger, she will immediately grasp the finger tightly.	4-6 months
Tonic Neck Reflex	When Baby's head is turned to one side while lying on her back, her body will assume a fencing posture, with one arm flexed and the other arm extended on the side toward which her head is facing.	5-7 months
Babinsky Reflex	When the sole of Baby's foot is stroked, her toes will first fan out, then curl inward.	8-12 months
Eye Blink	Baby immediately closes her eyelids whenever a bright light or a puff of air comes near her eyes.	Permanent

(Taken from Growing Child 0-24 Months by Nancy Kleckner, page 4)

### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### A *baby*:

- Begins to follow things or faces with her eyes as they move.
- Responds to faces or things he sees and looks at faces.
- Sucks and gums things that come near his mouth.
- Shows reflexes that are the beginnings of sensory skills, which in turn help in the development of intellectual skills.
- Enjoys looking at black and white and high-contrast colors.
- Begins to bring her fist to her mouth, a first sign of coordination of movements.
- Begins to do more than one thing at a time (looking and hearing, seeing and sucking) by the end of this period.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A limited variety of soft, washable, colorful toys to look at or suck on (be sure there are no small parts that could be swallowed). These toys help create an interesting yet safe environment for a baby.
- Space for him to move freely. Time should be limited in equipment that restricts movement (e.g. swings, car seats, etc., especially when the baby is not in the car).
- Opportunities to look at things in the world around her, including your warm smiling face, supports visual development. (Brain Wonders)
- Taking the baby to different rooms and placing him in different positions.
- High contrast colors and patterns like bull's eyes, stripes, and checkers.
- A quilt or blanket of assorted colors and textures for a baby to lie on.



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Give her the freedom to develop at her own rate.
- Offer faces to look at (especially that of the primary caregiver), as well as opportunities to see, touch and mouth things.
- While awake, give him time on his back so he can have a broader view of the world, hear with both ears, and use his hands. Remember time on his tummy is also important.
- Pay attention to her moods, and respond to her cries and sounds.
- Share books, stories and music as part of quiet cuddling time. This can be a great way for caregivers and babies to connect.
- Help the baby find his fist or thumb for comfort.
- Hold brightly colored objects within her reach and encourage her batting, grasping and handling motions.



### Did You Know:

- At birth, a baby's brain has all the cells it will ever need.
- Studies show that a nurturing touch actually helps many babies gain weight and develop healthy relationships with caregivers. (Brain Wonders)
- When you gently hold a baby in the warmth of your arms, you have the opportunity to support healthy development, not only through your touch, but also through your gazing into his eyes, talking or vocalizing. Think of the actions that take place when you hold an infant as "sensory nourishment" or food for the brain. (Brain Wonders)
- Be aware that her senses are the doors to her mind. Stimulation of all her senses will make her more aware of her surroundings and will allow her to make distinctions in her ever-expanding world. (Parents As Teachers)
- Brain development begins before birth. Amazingly, it is in process within a week of conception. While most of the newborn's brain cells are formed during the prenatal period, the brain is not completely developed at birth. Most of the neuron connections and strengthening of those connections take place after birth. The way the brain cells connect and develop will be influenced by the newborn's experiences with child care providers and the environment. (Brain Wonders)



### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### A baby:

- Can hear a variety of sounds and is amazed by the sounds of language.
- Will turn her head in the general direction of sounds heard.
- Communicates through crying to let you know what he needs. A baby cries to let you know he is hungry, upset, cold, bored, tired, uncomfortable, or over stimulated.
- Responds to voices. Newborns not only hear your voice, but show they like listening to it by turning their heads toward your voice.
- Is sensitive to noise levels.
- Begins cooing toward the end of this period.
- Makes sounds with her saliva.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Gentle conversation, soft music and other pleasant sounds.
- Quiet times, even during a baby's awake periods.
- A variety of things to hear, see, and feel. Describe them as she looks at or touches them.

***The mother, father, or primary caregiver is the most important part of the environment for the infant's language development.***



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Listen and respond to her. Enjoy the sounds she makes.
- Talk and sing to him. This helps him become familiar with your voice.
- Pretend she is telling you something when she coos and gurgles. Expand on what she "says," and answer her "questions." Respond by imitating her sounds. (Brain Wonders)
- Try to interpret his cries. Try to figure out what he is telling you.
- Your response tells the baby she is important and she can trust in you to meet her needs. Your repeated response and actions over time will help her learn ways to calm herself down. (Brain Wonders)
- Talk to him, especially during care-giving times. Tell him what is happening as it happens and what will happen next. Pause and allow time for his response.
- She may tell you that she needs to take a break from the "conversation" by looking away. Give her a break and then begin the "conversation" again.
- At this point he is most attracted to the sound, pitch and rhythm of your voice, the music of language. Softly sing to him.
- When you talk, get close to her and make eye contact. This helps her connect the sound of your voice with your face.



### Did You Know:

- Before they are born, babies can hear the rhythms and tones of their mother's and father's voices.
- Studies show (and caregivers report) that even very young babies can recognize their caregiver's voice. As early as the first few days of life, many newborns will turn toward the sound of a familiar caregiver's voice.
- You *cannot* spoil a newborn by holding, touching, caressing, comforting and meeting her needs. In fact the best evidence says that babies who receive a lot of loving attention in these early months become more independent, resourceful, and less demanding toddlers. (Brain Wonders)
- Newborns who are breast-fed receive antibodies from their mother's milk. These antibodies help the newborn develop a stronger immune system resulting in fewer ear infections, allergies, respiratory and stomach illnesses. (Brain Wonders)
- A newborn has vision at birth but it is the least mature of the senses. The newborn's eyes can track or follow movement, but only within a distance between 9 and 12 inches from the infant's face. The newborn's eyes cannot focus as well as those of an adult. As a result, objects and people look a bit fuzzy during the first few months of life. (Brain Wonders)



### Activities that Support Healthy Growth and Development:



#### Developing Trust

Feeling your touch, hearing your voice and enjoying the comfort of physical closeness all help a baby develop trust.

#### What You Need

Soft Music

#### What to Do

- Gently move a newborn's arm and legs. Or, tickle her lightly under the chin or on the tummy. When she starts to control her head, lie on the floor with her on your stomach and with her head on your chest. Let her reach for your nose or grab your hair. Talk to her and name each thing that she touches.
- Place the baby on your belly. Some research has shown that such contact releases chemicals called endorphins that help the baby feel comforted. In addition, such contact builds stomach and back muscle strength that is essential as he learns to crawl.
- Sing and cuddle. Hold her snuggled in your arms or lying face up on your lap with her head on your knees. Make sure the head of the newborn is well-supported. Sing a favorite lullaby.
- Include happy rituals in the baby's schedule. For example, at bedtime sing the same song every night, rock him, or rub his tummy.
- Pick up a crying infant promptly. Try to learn what is wrong. Is she hungry? Wet? Bored? Too hot? Crying is a baby's way of communicating. By comforting her, you send the message that language has a purpose and that someone wants to understand her.



### Close-up



It's 10:00a.m. at Baby Loves Child Care. The older babies (crawlers) are having a snack and Jasmine is giving 8-week-old Aisha a bottle. She cuddles Aisha closely while sitting in the rocking chair. While Aisha is sucking on a bottle, Jasmine gazes at her and softly sings to her, "You're such a lucky girl. Your mommy loves you so much. Jasmine loves you too. You were hungry." Jasmine pauses between sentences to let Aisha respond by gurgling. When Aisha starts getting fussy, Jasmine stops, raises Aisha to her shoulder, nestling Aisha's head against her neck, and gently burping her while continuing to talk to her.

During this feeding time with Jasmine, Aisha learns about: responding to being held and touched; comfort from another's voice as Jasmine cuddles her and speaks to her; making eye contact with Jasmine; developing trust that Jasmine will meet her needs in the future; communicating her needs to Jasmine; watching Jasmine's face for cues; and doing more than one thing at a time. Most importantly, Aisha learns that interactions with human beings are positive and pleasant, which will help her learn to approach interactions with peers and other adults in a positive way.

# Birth To 3 Months

## Parent Pull-Out

### Congratulations! You have finally brought your long-awaited new baby home!



This will be a busy time of change for you and your family, and for the new member of your family. If this is your first baby, you may not be ready for how much time one small infant can take up. One feeding may last almost until the next one, the laundry for a small person adds up quickly, and the lack of sleep takes its toll on everyone. So much is happening in these first three months: your infant is learning how to survive outside of the womb and relies upon others for everything. He will cry and turn his head and body to let you know what he needs but at first all those cries sound alike. By the end of this time period, you will be able to tell if he is hungry, tired, wet, soiled or maybe even bored. What a great accomplishment for all of you!

### What To Look For And Do:

- Your baby can be calmed by being held close, swaddled and listening to you talk or sing.
- Your baby will tire of things quickly so move her around or change how you hold her.
- Your baby likes to watch things that have contrast (black and white), colorful books and, most of all, loves looking at your face.
- Your baby needs to be on his back when he is sleeping so be sure you give tummy time for short periods when he is awake.
- Your baby cannot be spoiled so be sure to pick her up when she cries and avoid having her over stimulated by noises, people, or activity.



Your baby's favorite things: you - your face and your voice - toys/pictures with contrast - music - soft things to hold and mouth - soothing movements.

### Do You Have Questions About Your Child's Development?



#### Help Me Grow

#### Child Development Infoline Can Help!

##### What is Help Me Grow?

A free, statewide program that connects children and families to available community services and resources. By calling *Help Me Grow* and speaking with a care coordinator, you can work together to answer questions about your child.

#### Help Me Grow finds services and support for:

- Health
- Behavior
- Parenting
- Development
- Learning

#### Who can call Help Me Grow?

- Parents
- Child Care Providers
- Caregivers

#### Ages & Stages

##### What is Ages & Stages?

The Ages & Stages Child Monitoring Program helps you follow your child's development from four months to five years of age. When you sign up for this free program, *Help Me Grow/Child Development Infoline* will mail you a questionnaire every few months until your child's fifth birthday. A care coordinator will then contact you by mail or phone about your completed Ages & Stages questionnaire.

Find out how *Help Me Grow*, a program of the Children's Trust Fund, can help.

Call 1.800.505.7000



### Parents, Did You Know?

#### Parents as Teachers (PAT) programs

provide home visits and more to parents of children before birth and up to kindergarten entry. The information they offer helps both parents and children gain knowledge and build skills. To find out about training for home visitors or caregivers email: [connpat@earthlink.net](mailto:connpat@earthlink.net).



To find a program call 2-1-1 (InfoLine).

To find out more about PAT go to

[www.parentsasteachers.org](http://www.parentsasteachers.org).





*3 to 6  
Months*



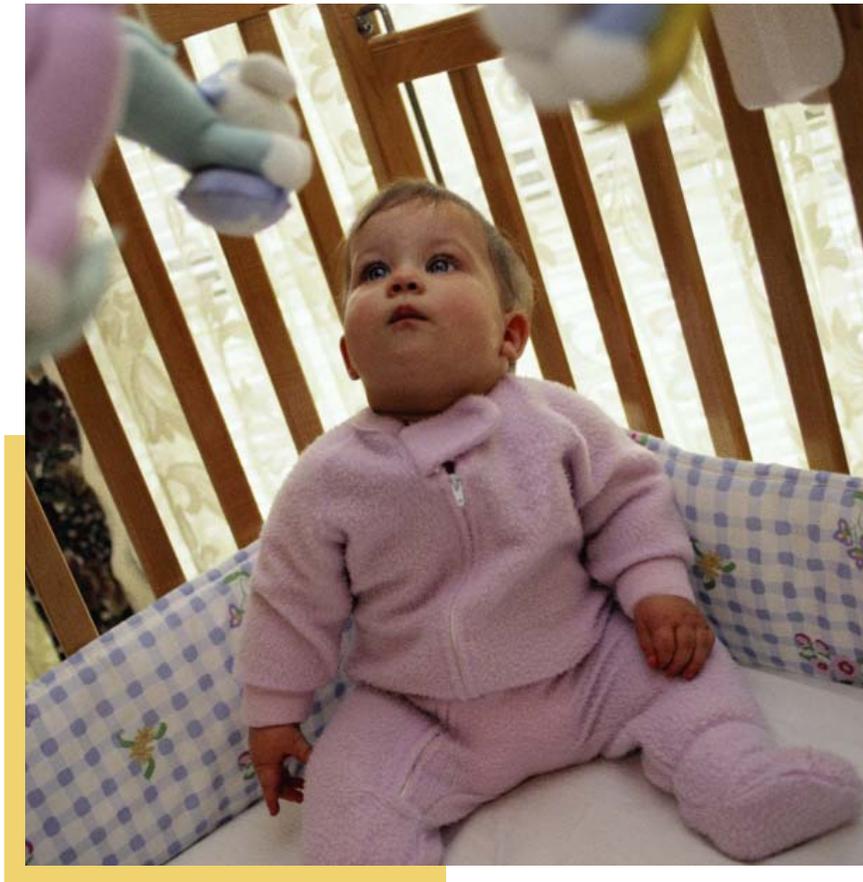
### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### Social

##### *A baby:*



- Begins to recognize you!
- Identifies and responds to your voice. She may smile, make sounds and/or move her arms and legs, and wiggle her body.
- Responds differently to different people.
- Laughs and giggles.
- Is becoming very interactive. He may babble, then wait for a response from you.
- Wants to explore food and begins feeding herself finger foods by six months.



#### Feelings and Self-Awareness

##### *A baby:*

- Displays a wider variety of feelings and uses his voice to express them.
- Coos and babbles in response to interaction and to express feelings.
- Begins to realize her hands and feet belong to her and begins to explore them, as well as exploring her face, eyes, and mouth.
- Is learning to fall asleep on his own.
- Reacts when she hears her own name.

#### A Supportive Environment Includes:



- **You** are the most important thing in a baby's environment right now.
- Enabling the baby to see your face and your expressions. He will be watching you so make eye contact and smile a lot. This tells him you are interested in him.
- Keeping the environment natural. A baby will be interested in things we think of as ordinary. Remember she is new to this world and everything she experiences is new.
- Providing touch experiences. Place him on different surfaces such as a soft blanket, a rough blanket, or a cool mat. Watch for distress and stop if he is unhappy.
- Letting the baby reach out and touch objects of different textures – sticky, smooth, bumpy, cold, etc.
- Playing peek-a-boo and using soft puppets to interact with the baby.

### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Respond quickly, warmly and attentively as the baby is forming a very important attachment to you.
- Let her know she can count on you to meet her needs. Read her cues and respond quickly to help comfort her when she cries.
- Stay calm when he loses control, helping him to feel safe. As he begins to calm, he will feel more in control.
- Hold her when she needs to be held. She may let you know she needs to be held by crying, fussing, reaching or gazing toward you.
- Ask his parents about comfort items and use them to help comfort him.
- When holding is not possible, reach out and touch the infant with your “eyes” and “voice.”
- Recognize, name, and respect her feelings and talk about what she seems to be “saying”.
- Watch for the kinds of touch he likes and dislikes. Does he smile and continue to touch or does he fuss and pull away? Stop what he seems to dislike.
- Engage frequently in back and forth interactions.
- Coo, smile and stick out your tongue. These actions help teach her about the back and forth of conversation.
- Bring him to various places within your setting so that he has different things to look at.
- Delight in her accomplishments, including her actions and the sounds she makes.



### *Did You Know:*

- The father's (or other significant male's) presence is important in the child's life. The quality of their interaction enhances the life of the child. Fathers help to shape the attitudes, values, and skills of their children.

### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See: Large Muscle Development



#### *A baby:*

- Begins to gain voluntary control of his arms and legs and is beginning to lose reflexive behaviors.
- Is gaining control of her head, beginning to control and lift it when held in a standing position.
- Will slowly push up and arch his back while on his stomach by using arm muscles and moving his legs. He is strengthening the arm, leg, head, neck, and body muscles that will some day help him roll over, sit, and stand in a position for walking.
- Reaches, grasps, and bats objects.
- Lifts her head and chest using her arms for support. She enjoys kicking and stretching her arms and legs.
- May be able to roll over in both directions and begins to sit with help by 4 to 6 months.
- Will move in a variety of directions providing the experience she needs to learn how to balance and gain control over her body. This includes moving side-to-side as when swaying; moving up and down as when bounced; and moving back and forth as when walking. All of these movements occur automatically when a baby is in your arms. (Brain Wonders)

### Small Muscle Development

#### *A baby:*

- Is reaching out for things with his arms. He is more actively touching and exploring things. The grasp reflex no longer takes over his hands all the time.
- May reach toward something and miss.
- Is getting better at scanning, following and focusing on things around her. She can see in color; see more clearly; understand depth and adjust to different distances.

### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A large, secure and safe play area; large enough for you and the baby, including free open space for him to roll, scoot and wiggle his arms and legs.
- A variety of washable things within reach for her to look at and reach out for. Rolling or moving can be encouraged by placing an interesting toy close by.
- A rug, mat or soft surface (blanket) for the baby to lie on.
- Use a swing only to help the baby calm down, and only when you are there to talk to him. Do not leave him alone in a swing.
- Avoid placing the baby in restrictive equipment (car seats, swings, strap-in seats, jolly jumpers, walkers, and bouncers, etc.) for too long.





### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Watch closely. Sit on the floor with her often.
- Respond when she calls for you.
- Prop him up against firm pillows and let him strengthen his upper and lower body.
- Be careful not to distract her with noise, TV or too much talking unless necessary.
- Allow a baby freedom to explore through looking, sucking, stretching and reaching. Allow him to move and develop his skills naturally.
- Delight in her ability to move and explore her world in new ways.
- Keep the baby's sleep routine as consistent as possible. Find ways to help sooth the baby when going to sleep, i.e.: a quiet time with a bottle, time rocking the baby in your arms, singing or humming to him... Be sure the sleeping area is darkened and quiet.
- **A baby should be put to sleep on his back, not on his stomach.**
- When awake, place her in different positions: back, stomach, and sitting with support. Each position gives her a different view and a chance to explore in different ways.

### Did You Know:



- A baby's physical, cognitive, social and language development are closely intertwined (integrated). Without opportunities to use her body freely, she will not be able to learn about space, movement, and the effects her actions have on objects and people around her. (Parents As Teachers)
- Any signs of stiffness or tight muscles, extreme floppiness, favoring of one arm, leg or body side, poor head control at 3 months, inability to roll over by 5 months or sit with support by six months should be discussed with parents and pediatrician or family doctor. (Brain Wonders)
- Holding a baby to stand will not make him walk faster or better.



### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### A baby:



- Explores everything with his mouth. Be sure toys are clean and that items that he can choke on are out of reach. Avoid things that are less than two inches around (or fit inside a toilet paper tube), have small removable parts, or sharp edges.
- Responds to what she sees and pays attention to what she is viewing for longer periods of time. She is alert for more of her awake time.
- Looks from one thing to another.
- Is beginning to hold things on his own and play with them a little. He grasps items of interest and looks closely at them. It is through touch that he begins to know the limits of his body.
- Shows signs of remembering.
- Looks for the source when she hears a noise.
- Looks and sucks at the same time but needs to stop sucking to listen.
- Shows interest in back and forth pretend games.
- Brings things to his mouth to explore.
- Stops crying when you approach.
- Uses her whole body and senses to play with toys and other safe things. She plays by herself, with a primary caregiver, and at times with or near other babies.

### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Objects of interest including: humans, other infants, bright toys, soft balls, rattles, and squeeze toys.
- Rubber rings, soft dolls and soft books with pictures.
- Inflatable toys with bells or colored balls inside to watch and kick.
- A floor gym with a variety of objects attached to reach, bat, and kick.
- Things that can be grasped easily.
- A changing environment (a walk to another room or a walk outside). Talk about what you both see.

### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:



- Watch carefully to see what he is looking at and what he finds interesting. This will help you know what he likes and what toys you should give him.
- Play pretend games with her: For example, you say, "baa" and wait for the baby to try to make the sound. She is learning to become a conversation partner through this play.
- Encourage exploration and natural curiosity by providing a variety of things of different textures, shapes and sizes. Give him the chance to take the lead.
- Develop predictable routines, familiar songs and personal games.
- Share in the joy of music together.
- Encourage him to follow the slow movement of a toy with his eyes and to reach for it. Respond enthusiastically to his efforts.
- Respond to her sounds with a voice full of happiness and love.



### Did You Know:

- When infants play, they engage in looking, listening, touching, tasting and moving with the objects and people in their environments. Play provides them with the experience of connecting what they see with what they hear, taste or touch. Play helps infants develop sensory connections that provide input into the brain and influence their cognitive, physical, motor, social, and emotional development. (Brain Wonders)



### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### A baby:

- Is beginning to listen carefully.
- Coos, whimpers, gurgles and makes many other sounds. Vowel and consonant sounds will be held longer and increase in quantity, slowly changing to true babbling at around 5 months.
- Listens to sounds she makes with her mouth.
- Cries less often and vocalizes to initiate social contact.
- “Talks” to himself and others through various sounds. You may begin to notice him making sounds or bubbles with his mouth. These are ways in which a baby experiments with new sounds and are important motor practice for later speech. Making these sounds is enjoyable for a baby. Go ahead and make them back to him.
- Uses vocal and non-vocal communication to let you know her interests and to help you understand what she wants.
- Develops a sense of communication as you copy the faces and sounds he is making.
- Repeatedly produces strings of one syllable at a time, such as “ba”, “ma” by the age of 6 months. Babies babbling will also mimic the tone of conversational speech, rising and falling in rhythm with their vocal expressions. They are becoming true conversational partners. For babbling to develop further, she must be able to hear the language that surrounds her. If a baby’s hearing is impaired (e.g., by ear infections) or if she is deaf, her vocalizations will be delayed or even absent. (Brain Wonders)



### Did You Know:

- Even very young babies are able to focus and attend to pictures in a book, although they don’t know what the pictures actually mean. Picture recognition is an important first step and an emerging literacy skill. (Brain Wonders)
- Why do babies chew on books? Babies learn about their world using all of their senses. Mouthing things is a favorite way for them to explore. When a baby chews on a book, she is learning about the physical characteristics of books, an important early literacy skill.
- Research suggests a link between verbal intelligence and the number of words a baby hears in conversation with a partner in the first two years of life. While you do not want to talk constantly to your baby, you do want to be sensitive to his cues expressing desire to interact with you. This could be gazing into your eyes, turning in the direction of your voice, or looking in your direction as you enter his view. These are all great opportunities to engage the baby in conversation.
- Talking to babies is critical for reinforcing the connection in their brains that allows them to perceive and produce the sounds of your language. (Brain Wonders)

### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- YOU. You are still more important than any toy for language development.
- Toys that let infants make various sounds such as bells, rattles, and squeak toys.
- Playing carefully chosen music at different times of the day. Think about a variety of styles, rhythms, tempos and beats. Keep the volume low. A baby’s hearing can be damaged by loud noises. Do not provide music as continuous background noise.



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Talk to him, especially during care-giving routines and provide “warnings” of what’s to come, what’s going to happen next, or what he is about to experience.
- Respond to cooing and babbling to encourage and support her vocalizations. Engage in back and forth vocalizations with her.
- Listen carefully and copy the sounds he makes.
- Use reciprocal language play to show the baby that you hear her and allow her to experience the turn-taking that is an important part of developing language skills. (Brain Wonders)
- Recite nursery rhymes, hum or sing songs while changing his diaper, rocking or feeding him. He especially enjoys the sound of your voice even if you do not consider yourself a good singer.
- Use her name often in a loving tone of voice.





### Close-up

Marsha provides care for four-month-old, Jared who loves his rattle. "Let's watch it fly," Marsha suggests. She moves the rattle through the air where Jared can see it. Jared's little arms and legs go like egg-beaters! When Marsha hands the toy to Jared, he grabs it and begins to mouth it. Jared then moves his hand back and forth and delights in the soft, tinkling noise. Soon Jared gets tired and turns his head away. Marsha takes the rattle and continues to shake it in front of Jared's face. Jared closes his eyes and begins to cry. "Okay, I get it. Time for a break," says Marsha. She picks up Jared and cuddles him.

During this playtime with his caregiver, Jared learns about:

- **sounds of words** and the **rhythm of language** as his caregiver talks to him;
- **communication** as he and his caregiver have in a back-and-forth "conversation" and as his caregiver reads and responds to his cues;
- **his own self-worth** as he sees how much pleasure his caregiver gets from playing with him;
- **imitation** and **cause and effect** when he shakes the rattle like caregiver and hears the noise;
- **eye-hand coordination** as he reaches and grasps the rattle;
- **objects** when he hears the rattle's sounds, sees its colors, feels its texture, and even smells and tastes it.

### Activities that Support Healthy Growth and Development



- To entertain a baby, sing an action song. For example:  
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!  
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!  
If you're happy and you know it and you really want to show it,  
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!  
If you don't know lullabies or rhymes, make up your own!
- Dance with the baby. To soothe him when he is upset, put his head on your shoulder and hum softly or listen to recorded music as you glide around the room. To amuse him when he is cheerful, try a bouncy tune.
- Talk to her often. Answer her coos and gurgles. Repeat the "ga-ga's" she makes and smile back. Sometimes, you can supply the language for her: For example, when the baby stretches her arm toward her bottle and says "ga-ga-ga", say, "Oh, you're ready for some more milk? Here's your milk. Is it good?"
- Lay him on his back and hold brightly colored toys over his chest within his reach. He will love reaching up and pulling them close to him.
- Play with her in front of the mirror: Call her by name, point to her facial features (eyes, ears, mouth, nose, hair) and name them.
- Gently tickle him and laugh together with him.
- Go to the library or search Internet resources for additional ideas.

# 3 To 6 Months

## Parent Pull-Out



Your infant is quickly becoming a baby! He is responding to your voice and you can tell what his different cries mean. He is much more interested in his world and loves being moved from place to place so he can look at new things. Your baby also has more and more control of his body so be sure he has plenty of time and space to wiggle. He is awake more and may even start to sleep on his own.

### What To Look For And Do:

- Your baby still needs you to calm her at times (she still cannot be spoiled) but sometimes she just wants to be held and talked or sung to. She may even respond to you in a “conversation” by babbling or even giggling.
- Your baby will still want to be moved around and have different things to look at. Watch him as he watches things (like his hands and feet) and people around him.
- Your baby is also paying more attention to sounds so keep playing music and singing nursery rhymes, and don't forget to “dance.”
- Your baby's sense of touch is developing so have her touch different textures and offer things to suck on and finger.



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- Health
- Behavior
- Parenting
- Development
- Learning

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- Parents
- Child Care Providers
- Caregivers

#### Ages & Stages

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The *Ages & Stages* Child Monitoring Program helps you follow your child's development from four months to five years of age. When you sign up for this free program, *Help Me Grow/Child Development Infoline* will mail you a questionnaire every few months until your child's fifth birthday. A care coordinator will then contact you by mail or phone about your completed *Ages & Stages* questionnaire.

Find out how *Help Me Grow*, a program of the Children's Trust Fund, can help.

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#### Parents, Did You Know?

**Parents as Teachers (PAT) programs** provide home visits and more to parents of children before birth and up to kindergarten entry. The information they offer helps both parents and children gain knowledge and build skills. To find out about training for home visitors or caregivers email: [connpat@earthlink.net](mailto:connpat@earthlink.net).

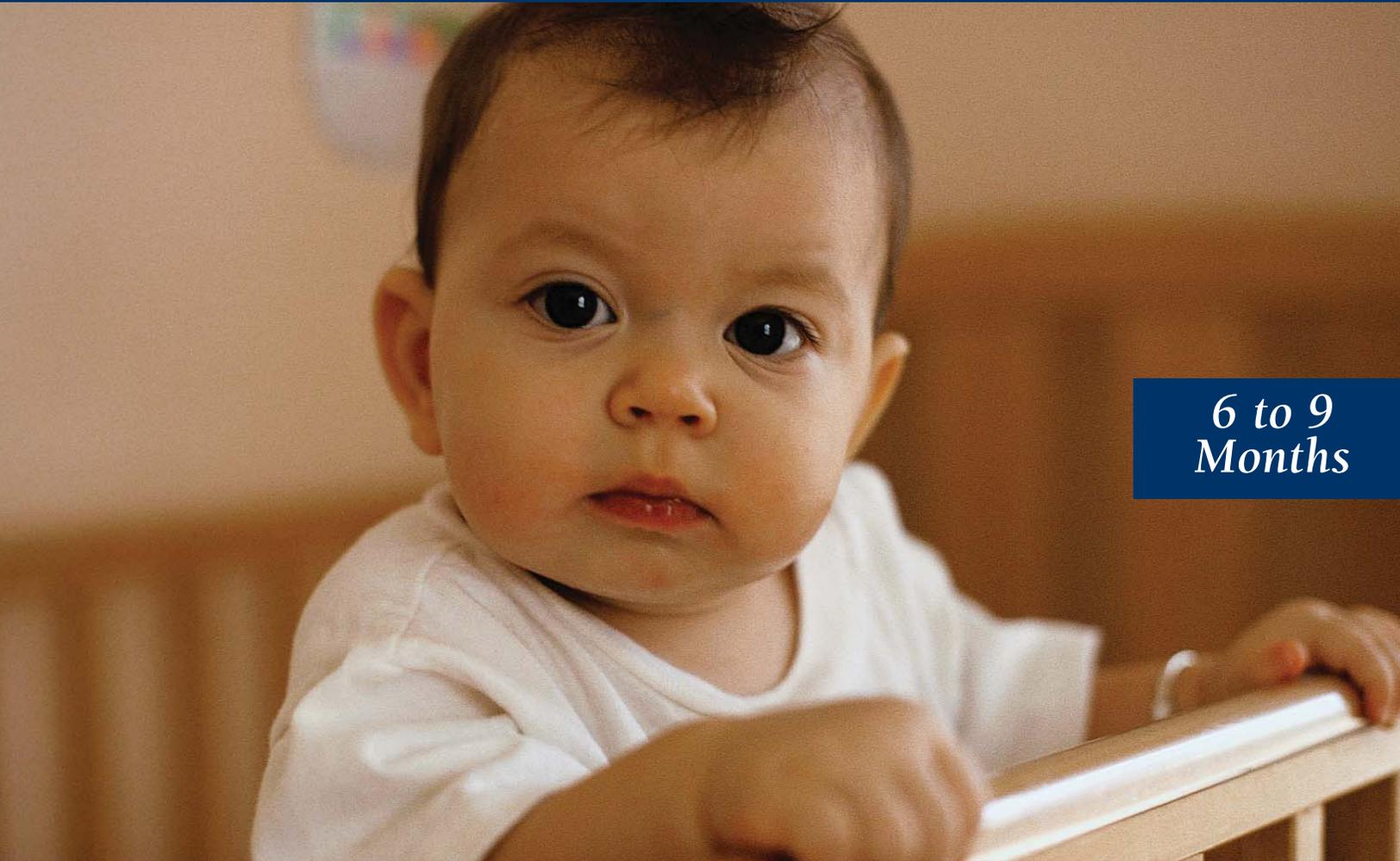


To find a program call 2-1-1 (InfoLine).

To find out more about PAT go to

[www.parentsasteachers.org](http://www.parentsasteachers.org).





6 to 9  
Months





### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### Social

##### *A baby:*

- Interacts with familiar people.
- May respond with fear or anxiety to strangers or unfamiliar people, and even relatives whom she has not spent much time with (often called stranger anxiety).
- Calls to you for help if stuck in a position he does not want to be in, or if something he wants is out of reach.
- Delights in copying you and having you copy her.
- Enjoys games like peek-a-boo with others.
- Enjoys affectionate games. For example, he may reach out to touch your face.

#### Feelings and Self-Awareness

##### *A baby:*

- Now shows an even wider variety of feelings.
- May seem to have quick mood changes.
- Can see the difference between herself and rest of the world.
- Responds to his name.
- Shows taste preferences.
- May show signs of wanting to feed herself.
- Is comforted by items such as a stuffed animal or a special blanket that helps him to feel safe and secure.

### A Supportive Environment Includes:



- Comfort toys (stuffed animal or blanket). These toys help the baby feel safe during times of need. Be sure to offer them during periods of change.
- A large enough space for the baby, other children and you. The environment should be set up in such a way to encourage exploration and interactions which promote the development of relationships.
- A variety of surfaces such as large soft pillows, mats, and blankets.
- A safe area so he can move freely without being told “no” or “stop.”
- Toys on floor or in small, buckets that let her make choices.
- A variety of toys (chewable, shakable, soft) to encourage development in many areas.
- Staying within reach or eyesight so he knows you are there to help solve problems and meet his needs.
- Completing daily routines such as folding laundry or preparing meals within the baby’s eyesight.

### Did You Know:



- The most significant emotional milestone during the second 6 months of life (and perhaps in all of child development) is the onset of attachment: a baby’s powerful bond to the most significant person in his life. (Brain Wonders)
- Stranger anxiety is one way babies outwardly demonstrate attachment: once babies recognize and prefer their primary caregiver(s), they become wary of adults who are not familiar. (Brain Wonders)

### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:



- Offer sensitive, responsive care-giving to build feelings of trust and security in the baby.
- Continue to help her soothe herself. She may calm herself by cuddling a comfort toy or by finding a comfortable space to lie down and suck her thumb. Let her make these choices to soothe herself.
- Name his body parts as you are talking to him during care-giving routines.
- Take every opportunity to fully engage in interaction with her as she gives signs that she wants to interact with you.
- Encourage and support his developing self help skills.
- Offer security during periods in which she experiences stranger anxiety.
- Respond to her efforts to get your attention.
- Continue to rock and cuddle him, reassuring him of your love.
- Express your happiness as she discovers new things or solves simple challenges by herself.

### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### Large Muscle Development

*A baby:*

- Has full control of her head.
- Will move in whatever way he can (rolling, scooting, dragging his body across the floor) to get where he wants.
- Rolls from back to stomach and stomach to back and may use rolling as a way to get from one place to another. She may almost curl her body to a sitting position while rolling.
- May creep or inch forward or backward.
- Appears focused on moving his body in relation to his environment.
- Begins to sit alone.
- Begins to sleep through the night.
- May begin to pull herself up on things in order to stand.
- Delights in throwing, banging, or dropping objects over and over again.



#### Small Muscle Development

*A baby:*

- Reaches with one arm and successfully grasps things of interest.
- Holds things and plays with them using his hands.
- Moves things between hands.
- Investigates things.



### Did You Know:

- Research indicates that infant walkers do not permit the right kind of practice for promoting the development of independent walking because infants cannot see their feet. This kind of visual feedback appears to be important when the baby begins to take those first steps on her own. Another problem is that walkers do not help babies develop a sense of balance, which is one of the greatest hurdles to the onset of independent walking. (Brain Wonders)
- When infants are born, the areas of the brain that will eventually control and coordinate voluntary movements are not yet well developed. These motor areas of the brain mature in a head-to-toe sequence, meaning that brain areas that control movement of the head and neck muscles mature before those controlling arm and trunk muscles (which in turn mature more rapidly than areas controlling the legs). (Brain Wonders)

### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- More open space and freedom for the baby to move within his surroundings. Exercise helps strengthen muscles that are important for motor development.
- A variety of textures under the baby (e.g., hard floors, rugs, soft mats, grass, wooden decks, etc.)
- A variety of safe and interesting things to move toward and reach for.
- A sort of obstacle course with pillows or cushions that the baby can climb over, around and through.
- Materials in containers that allow the baby a chance to dump and fill, over and over.
- Messy experiences. Many babies like to touch their food and explore with their fingers.
- Furniture safe for her to pull herself up on to stand.



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:



- Place things in the environment that challenge her to move and reach for them.
- Give plenty of room and reasons for moving around, grasping and playing with things.
- Allow for adult-supervised interaction with other babies and children.
- Avoid placing him in positions he cannot get into himself.
- Let her develop at her own pace.
- Plan a time for music so he can express himself through movement. Support him with your hands around his waist or by holding his hands while he bounces up and down if needed.

### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### A baby:

- Is alert during waking hours.
- Knows familiar things.
- Sees, reaches for and plays with things.
- Looks for dropped things, which develops object permanence (the understanding that something is there even when out of sight).
- Uses several senses at once.
- Waits for the effects of her actions.
- Has a stronger memory.
- Experiments with trial and error.
- Is very curious and explores the world around him. As a baby's mobility increases, he begins to look for and explore what he can see, hear, and feel. He will repeat actions over and over.
- Understands a few words that are repeated often.
- Begins to see that certain behaviors bring the same response (cause and effect).
- Uses toys in more difficult ways, moves from mouthing a small container to scooping and pouring.
- Explores and plays with a variety of things at once.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A variety of things to shake, rattle, bang, and drop such as stacking blocks or pop-up toys.
- Things at various levels so a baby can reach them.
- Safe surroundings as a baby is becoming more and more mobile and her curiosity is at an all-time high. Avoid things that are less than 2 inches around, have small parts or sharp edges.
- Be sure rooms are safe. Cover electrical outlets and remove things that can be pulled down. (See [Caring for Connecticut's Children, Volume 1](#) for additional information on safety.)



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Allow her freedom to explore. As she explores things over and over she learns about her environment.
- Change or rearrange things to keep her interest.
- Read simple board books that show things that might not be in his immediate environment.
- Point to and name your body parts (eyes, nose, chin, mouth, eyebrows, ears), as well as her hand, foot and knee.
- Continue to offer adult-supervised interaction with other babies and children.
- Offer bath toys, such as containers and washcloths to show and talk to the baby about pouring, squeezing and floating.
- When playing with a baby, be sure to pause and give him time to "take in" the experience in order to think about what just happened.



### Did You Know:

- Babies begin to understand how the world works when they see, touch, hold and shake things. Inspecting things also helps them to coordinate and strengthen their hand muscles.
- A baby's brain is now 50% of its adult size.
- As a baby begins to see that she can make things happen (e.g., push a button and a toy pops up), she builds her self confidence and wants to try new things.

### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:



#### A baby:

- Responds to different voice tones and inflections.
- Copies tones and inflections.
- Enjoys short songs and games with words that repeat such as peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake.
- Has more control over sounds she makes.
- Can now make many sounds to let you know how he feels.
- Is learning what words mean.
- Continues to communicate through her actions.
- Begins to look for things you name.
- Listens closely to the sounds in his environment.
- Understands a few words that he hears often, such as mommy, daddy, baby, bye-bye.
- Can vocalize simple syllables "ba", "pa", "da", "ma."
- Begins to babble "ma-ma", "ba-ba".

### A Supportive Environment Includes:



- Cloth or cardboard books, flap books and texture books with simple pictures.
- Plenty of toys to explore that make different sounds (musical stuffed toys, things that rattle, squeak toys, etc.)
- Reading together as part of his daily routine. Before naps are good times to cuddle and read a book together.
- Letting her touch and even take the book from you for a few moments, gently encouraging her to look at a page you have not yet read.

### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:



- Respond to his communication.
- Continue to talk often to her: Be sure to give her plenty of time to respond to you with her own babbling.
- During play times, comment on what he is doing, being careful not to interrupt his experience.
- Read – Read – Read during times when she is relaxed and both of you can enjoy the experience. Don't worry if she doesn't make it through the whole book. If it becomes a favorite, you will have many opportunities to read it over and over at her request.
- Create silly songs that include simple sounds he can imitate... ba-ba, ma-ma-ma...

### Did You Know:



- Children communicate in many different ways. Gestures such as pointing, looking, vocalizing, and crying are all messages that a baby is sending about what she wants or needs. As she develops, she will begin to learn that symbols - like words and pictures - are ways to communicate, too. This is an important learning leap in language and literacy development. (Brain Wonders)
- A baby's brain is full of activity when you talk, sing, and read books with him.



### Activities that Support Healthy Growth and Development

#### Touch and See!

Whenever they are awake, babies are hard at work trying to learn all about the world. To help them learn, they need many different things to play with and explore.

#### What You Need

- Different textured fabrics, such as velvet, cotton, corduroy, satin, burlap and fake fur.
- An old purse or basket of things into which the baby can put things and take them out.
- Measuring cups.
- Boxes and plastic containers.
- Noisemakers (rattles, plastic toy keys, etc.).

#### What to Do

- Let the baby look at, touch and listen to a variety of things. Brightly colored things that have interesting textures and make noises are particularly good. Describe the things and the sounds they make as she is exploring them.
- Put one or two things in a play area where the baby can reach them (more than two things at a time may be confusing).
- Say or read nursery rhymes or other verses that have strong rhythms and repeated patterns of sounds. Vary your tone of voice, make funny faces and sing lullabies. Play games such as “peek-a-boo” and “pat-a-cake.”



#### Close-up

Mark is playing on the floor with two 7-month-olds, Noah and Cameron, rolling a colorful, bumpy ball back and forth. Mark sits with his legs apart and the babies are sitting within 3 feet, facing him. Mark is careful to roll the ball slowly to Noah, giving him a chance to pick it up and turn it over in his hands. As Noah turns it over, it slips from his hands and rolls toward Mark. Mark smiles and says, “Yah, Noah!” and claps his hands. Noah tries to clap his hands and grins. Mark rolls the ball again. During this playtime, Noah learns: imitation (when he tries to copy Mark’s clapping); dropping an object; sitting alone; manipulating and investigating objects; interacting with others and enjoying games; using several senses at once; that certain behaviors bring the same response (cause and effect); and that people respond to his communication.

# 6 To 9 Months

## Parent Pull-Out

Your baby is “on the move”; now that he can control more parts of his body he wants to use them – and he does. He is making many different sounds now; at times copying sounds you make. However, he is more interested in you copying his sounds now. He is also learning cause and effect – when I cry, mommy and daddy come! Your baby may start to show anxiety with people he doesn’t know now and want to be with you more. This is the beginning of stranger anxiety and separation anxiety. He just needs to know it’s okay. Be sure to go slow when he meets new people.



### What To Look For And Do:

- Your baby is developing “baby patience” and can wait a while for you now but talk to her so she knows you heard her and are coming.
- Your baby will love copying you, whether it is sounds that repeat or funny faces.
- Your baby needs space to move and practice his new motor skills; placing toys a little out of his reach will encourage him to move.
- Your baby will love looking for toys or books if you put them in a bucket or different places she can reach. She’ll love taking them out and maybe even putting them in.
- Your baby will enjoy listening to you read and sing to him. He will copy sounds and words so you should name things around him.
- Your baby has full control of her head so she can sit alone and may even begin to pull herself up to stand. She may have her own way of moving around the floor or she may scoot.
- Your baby is learning that things exist even if they are out of sight. Be patient as he drops something, looks for it and then looks at you to get it back.



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##### Parents as Teachers (PAT) programs

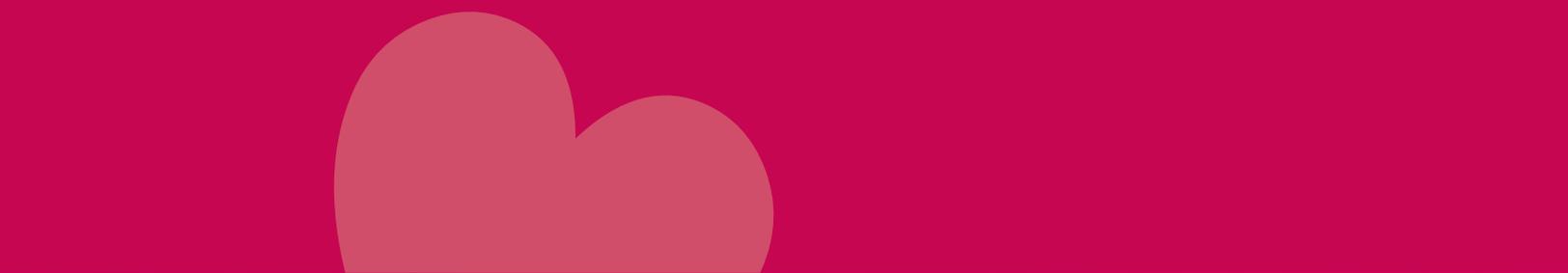
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9 to 12  
Months



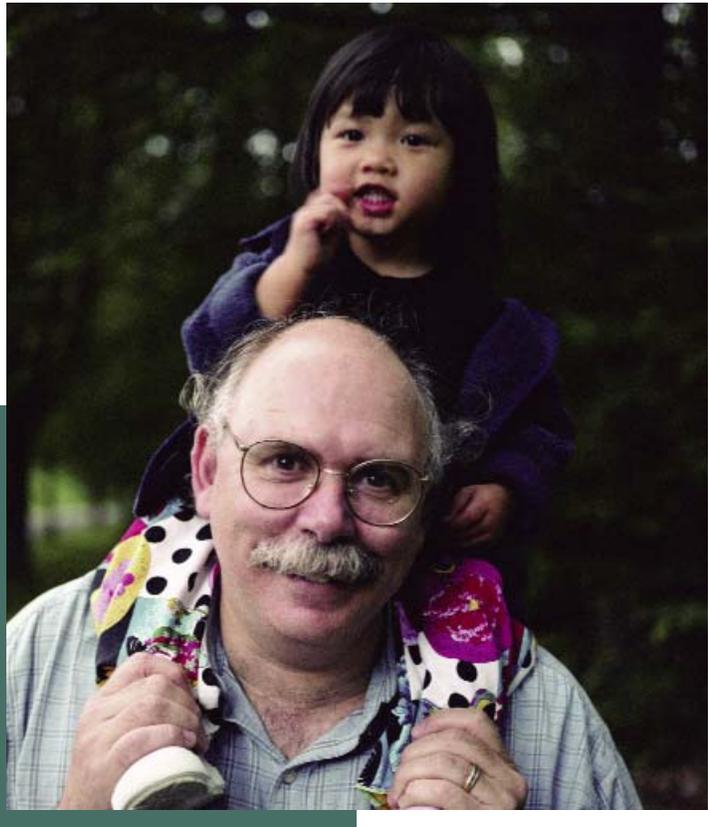
### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### Social

##### A *baby*:



- Enjoys performing for you, teasing, copying you and doing silly things to make you laugh.
- Shows interest in interactive games (peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake).
- Starts and enjoys interactions with other children and adults.
- Is becoming sensitive and interested in the moods and activities of others.
- Plays next to other children (parallel play).
- Can guess what will happen next.
- Closely watches the actions of adults and other children.



#### Feelings and Self-Awareness

##### A *baby*:

- Is attached to his primary caregiver and shows signs of preference for this person over others.
- May fear separation and strongly protest your leaving.
- Shows love and anger to you and other special people in her life.
- Rejects things he does not want by pushing them away, throwing them, or swatting them out of the way.
- Interacts with herself in the mirror.
- May become frustrated or angry with toys that are not doing what he wants them to do.
- Is developing self-help skills. She feeds herself finger foods and drinks from a cup while holding the handle.

#### A Supportive Environment Includes:



- Things to encourage many different self-help skills such as: dress up clothes and hats, a waste basket that the baby can reach to help clean up after meals or small messes, a pretend telephone, a laundry basket to put clothes in.
- Opportunities to interact with other children.
- Pillows and sofa cushions on the floor to climb over.
- A baby doll, blanket, and bottle.
- Unbreakable mirrors.
- Large cardboard blocks.
- Plastic dishes and cups.

### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:



- Make enough routine in the day so he can guess what will happen next.
- Give her opportunities for uninterrupted play.
- Encourage his problem solving. Do not rush in with help unless he is really stuck (**or, of course, if it is a safety issue**).
- Let her see what happens as a result of her behavior whenever it is safe to do so.
- With a baby's increased memory skills, he knows that you exist when you are not with him. He may be unhappy when you leave the room. Be positive when leaving him and be sure he has something that gives him comfort (blanket or toy). Remind him that you will return.
- Give her time and space to solve her own problems, but be nearby if she becomes overly frustrated or angry.
- Show him how happy you are when he is proud of himself and when he wants to share affection with you. When he acts frustrated or annoyed, respond with patience and sensitivity.
- Help her deal with her feelings. Comfort her when she cries, let her know you understand when she is frustrated, and help her to calm down and try again. Name her feelings for her (e.g., "You seem angry."). Your support will help her learn to handle the strong feelings she is having and develop self-awareness and self-control.
- Tell him and show him what you would like him to do. For example, use loud voices outside, throw and kick balls outside. This helps him learn how to use his energy appropriately.

### *Did You Know:*

It's not too soon to help a baby develop some independence. You can encourage independence by letting a baby do things for herself. Whatever she's trying to do, if she has a reasonable chance of doing it herself, let her try. Praise her for trying. (Kleckner 70)



### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### Large Muscle Development

**A baby:**

- Crawls on her hands and knees.
- Crawls carrying something in his hand or mouth.
- Pulls herself up to stand. Soon she will be able to lower herself to a sitting position.
- Stands alone. He may not be able to get down easily from a standing position.
- Can get into a sitting position on her own.
- May move along holding on to furniture (side stepping).
- Moves about freely in his environment by crawling, cruising (side-stepping around furniture), or walking with help or alone.
- Continues to experiment and discover effects she can have on toys: shaking, pushing, dropping, throwing, or banging.
- Can throw a ball.



#### Small Muscle Development

**A baby:**

- Can pick up small things easily with his thumb and forefinger (pincer grasp).
- Explores and plays with things using her forefinger.
- Is strengthening eye-hand coordination.
- Uses his forefinger to point.
- Turns pages in a stiff cardboard book.
- Can make marks with jumbo crayons.

### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Even more room to explore. Safety proof the environment so as she moves and explores, she will not get hurt.
- An even greater variety of things, textures, experiences and toys: plastic or wooden cars and trucks, play or real telephones, blocks, dolls, balls, nesting toys, manipulatives, pop beads, puzzles, etc.
- Pillows to crawl over; soft mats of different thickness, rails or low furniture for standing or cruising, and low steps to provide a variety of levels for exploration.
- Strong surfaces to pull himself up and balance on.
- Chances to practice walking (with your help if needed) on safe surfaces (carpet or grass).



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:



- If the baby can pull herself up to stand but is having difficulty getting back down, encourage her to problem-solve how to get down. Help her if she tells you she is stuck and frustrated.
- Offer open spaces which let a baby move about and explore with little adult help.
- Encourage small muscle skills, such as pulling off socks, opening doors, taking apart nesting toys.
- Give bite size pieces of food that he can easily pick up and eat. Be sure to include him with the rest of the family at mealtimes as he enjoys being with you and copying you. Feeding himself helps promote independence.

### Did You Know:

- Dropping is an exciting new skill for a baby this age. At playtime, show the baby how you can drop toys one by one into a shoe box. Then take them out again. Give him a chance to fill and empty the box by dropping toys into it and then taking them out. He is very interested in toys and other objects when they are dropped or thrown! (Kleckner 55)
- He can use both hands but may show a preference for the left or the right. However, permanent hand preference is usually not established for another year or more. (67)



### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:



**A baby:**

- Now remembers games and toys from the past.
- Can guess when people will return.
- Can stay on a task (such as working on a puzzle) for longer periods of time.
- Will uncover or look for a toy she has seen hidden. She remembers where she has hidden the toy.
- Enjoys dumping and filling things.
- Can solve simple manipulative challenges (e.g., shape sorters).
- Is becoming interested in seeing the results of his actions.
- Understands 10-15 often-used words.
- Practices actions over and over again. This is how she figures out how things work.
- Is beginning to use things symbolically.
- Understands the meaning of "No."

### A Supportive Environment Includes:



- The same toys listed under Physical Development.
- Interesting and safe things from his real world to explore (e.g., pots, pans, wooden spoons, various sized boxes, shape sorters, etc.)
- A cardboard box filled with materials to feel: tape, felt, sandpaper, velvet, etc.
- Safe toys that are interesting and have moving parts: pull toys, jack-in-the-box, things with dials, levers, buttons, flaps, etc.

### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:



- Give her the chance to do things for herself.
- Help him understand and name the effect of his actions on others (e.g., "John is sad because you took his ball.")
- Continue to offer opportunities to strengthen self-help skills.
- Help her express separation fears and name her feelings. Give her comfort.
- Help him develop an attachment to you.
- Model the expression of feelings, desires, likes, and dislikes.
- Play hide-and-seek games. He can learn that you or things still exist even though he cannot see them.
- Encourage and praise the baby when she continues at a difficult task.

### Did You Know:

- A baby now knows that objects are permanent and look different in different settings. (Kleckner 68)
- The baby is now developing a sense of cause and effect. (68)
- Small frustrations are okay and important in building problem-solving skills and handling greater frustration.



### As A Baby Grows and Develops, Look to See:



#### A baby:

- Shows interest in the conversations of others.
- Responds to names of familiar things.
- Can carry out simple requests (things you ask her to do) so make simple requests of her such as, "Give me your book." or "Wave bye-bye."
- Uses words such as "ma-ma" and "da-da" and talks to himself.
- Uses intonations in her vocalizations. She jabbars expressively and enjoys "talking" to herself in the mirror.
- Enjoys repeating the same sounds over and over. He shouts and yells for pure delight.
- Is starting to understand your words. For example, when asked, "Where's the ball?" she will look for it.
- Is starting to understand what others are saying (receptive language) before he can say the words.
- Uses gestures and/or sounds to affect the behavior of others and to join in social interaction.

### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:



- Invite the baby to join in conversations.
- Be careful not to discuss him in his presence without including him in the conversation.
- Encourage interaction with other infants/siblings and older children.
- Continue to respond to her sounds and attempts to talk with you.
- Ask questions that she can respond to - either by shaking or nodding her head, or with the words "yes" or "no."
- Name things when he points to them. Also, point to and name things for him as he explores his world (both indoors and outdoors). Call his attention to interesting sights, sounds, tastes, odors, and textures.

### A Supportive Environment Includes:



- Picture books, photographs or photo albums.
- Music.
- A language-rich environment, including songs, finger plays, stories, flannel board activities, dancing, games, rhymes, and poems.
- Mirrors for her to see and "talk" to herself.

### Did You Know:



- From the very beginning, babies try to copy sounds that they hear us make. They "read" the looks on our faces and our movements to figure out what we mean or are trying to say. Talking, singing, smiling and gesturing to a baby helps her to love, and learn to use language.
- "Fathers of newborns should involve themselves in all parenting activities from the beginning. This helps to develop skills and confidence in parenting, along with early bonding and attachment to their children." (Perlman 98)
- A father's presence "...matters because it is neither the amount of time nor the setting in which the time is spent with children (i.e., married or not) that ultimately matters but, rather, the quality of what the father and child do together - including nothing at all." (Pruett 37)

### Activities that Support Healthy Growth and Development

#### Baby Talk

Babies love hearing the voices of the people in their lives.

#### Materials You Need

No materials required.



#### What to Do

- Touch her nose, ears, eyebrows, mouth, etc. and repeat the word for this body part several times. Do this with things, too. When she hears you name something over and over again, she begins to connect the sound with the object.
- Point to and name familiar things. By hearing the name of something over and over, he learns to associate the spoken word with its meaning. For example, "Here's your blanket. Your very, favorite blanket. What a nice, soft blanket!"
- Look at books together and name things that she points to in the book.
- Show him pictures of animals and make the sounds the animals make. Encourage him to copy you: "The cow says moo!" "Can you say moo?"
- Cut a large opening in a large cardboard box. Let her crawl into it and play.
- Children enjoy quiet times and places where they can be alone. He may go to his special place himself when he wants to be alone.



#### Close-up

Brandon is reading with one-year-old Keisha before nap time. The book is Ten, Nine, Eight by Molly Bang - a favorite because it is a simple story with pictures of familiar routines and things. As she sits in his lap, Keisha helps turn the pages of the sturdy board book. Brandon reads, "10 small toes all washed and warm" and asks her, "Where are your toes?" She smiles and points to her feet. He says, "Here are Keisha's toes," and lightly squeezes each toe as he counts "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10." She squeals with delight.



Keisha turns the page to "9 soft friends in a quiet room" and looks at the picture, pointing to the toys and making sounds. Brandon repeats after her, naming each stuffed animal and toy. He says, "Oh look, there's a kitty curled up in the toys. Can you find the kitty?" She points to the cat and says "kee!" then claps her hands, laughing. He says, "You found the kitty. It's a black kitty with yellow eyes." They continue through the short book, with Keisha turning the page each time she is ready to move on. As Brandon speaks more and more quietly, they end with "I big girl all ready for bed." Keisha is learning: page turning left to right, identification of body parts, one-on-one communication, counting, naming, and great give and take of conversation/language.



Your baby is becoming an independent person! She can understand much of what she hears and she says a few words. She is moving and exploring so safety is an issue. Play is changing. She is still playing with things but now using them in more purposeful play and may also play alongside other children. She is trying to drink by herself and also feed and undress herself. Encourage her.

### What To Look For And Do:

- Your baby needs social time with you and with other children. He loves interactive games and performing. Offer make believe toys for him. "Junk" is wonderful at this time. For example, an empty oats container makes a great drum.
- Your baby may be frustrated at times as she tries something new or difficult. Try to be a helper instead of doing it for him. Time for problem solving and hints are needed.
- Your baby needs routines at this stage as changes may be difficult. Routines help him guess how his day will go now that his memory is much better.
- Your baby needs more and more safe space: to crawl, to practice standing and walking, throwing a ball, climbing and moving her body in many ways.
- Your baby needs you to name things around him and talk to him about what is happening and what he sees. Have conversations with him. And play music!



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- Behavior
- Parenting
- Development
- Learning

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- Child Care Providers
- Caregivers

##### Ages & Stages

###### What is Ages & Stages?

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Find out how *Help Me Grow*, a program of the Children's Trust Fund, can help.

Call 1.800.505.7000



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To find out more about PAT go to

[www.parentsasteachers.org](http://www.parentsasteachers.org).



*12 to 18  
Months*



### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### Social

##### *A toddler:*



- Can follow one and two-step directions.
- Looks for your approval but is not always cooperative.
- Will show you when she needs your help.
- Will prefer you and rely on you to give comfort, reassurance, assistance and affection.
- Shows a sense of humor.
- Names his own feelings and the feelings of others.
- Would rather play alongside other children and will copy playmates.
- Uses the word "NO" to show independence.

#### Feelings and Self-awareness

##### *A toddler:*

- Shows many different feelings and responds to the feelings of others (e.g., may cry when others cry).
- Focuses on himself and says things are his.
- Continues to fear strangers and often, new and unfamiliar places.
- Shows affection to an increasing number of familiar people.
- Will make clear her likes and dislikes and moods, which are going to be her own and different from yours.
- Is beginning to know the difference between what is his and what belongs to others.
- May experience frustration as she has difficulty expressing her needs, desires and feelings in words.
- Expresses or shows a strong will and tests the limits to strive for independence.
- Shows interest in doing things for himself, including dressing and feeding.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A regular and consistent schedule.
- Places where she can use her self-help skills: taking off clothes, washing her hands, putting her clothes in a drawer, etc.
- The chance for him to be around other children close in age. A toddler will enjoy playing alongside other children.
- Comfort and help the toddler to move on when she gets frustrated.
- Whenever possible, change his surroundings to reduce frustration (e.g., do not leave materials that he should not have within his reach.)



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Support her efforts to do things for herself.
- Let him know you are aware of the things that belong to him and help him work through conflicts or disagreements with others.
- Know that uncooperative behavior is often a sign of self assertion (wanting to make decisions on her own and be independent). Let her know that her feelings are understood. This will help her calm and regain control.
- Give choices whenever possible. For example, "Do you want to wear the blue shirt or the red one?" This will help him feel in control.
- Recognize and let toddlers know you understand that they are fearful, hesitant, and uncertain in new situations. Help them to feel safe and gain comfort through your words and gentle touches.
- With a new found desire to do things for herself, you may see her experiencing higher levels of frustration.
- Offer tools for him to use in frustrating situations, such as words to help describe feelings, gestures, or ways to ask for help. This will help him learn to deal with his feelings.
- State clear consequences for actions. Let her know what you will do if she acts in a way you do not want her to. For example, "If you swing the bat at Pat, I will take it away."
- Let him experiment with his self help skills: taking off his clothes, washing his hands, putting his clothes in a drawer.
- Give a warning when activities will change or end, or something needs to be done to the toddler, such as a diaper change. (Example: "After lunch, I am going to change your diaper.")



### Did You Know:



- Toddlers often have difficulty controlling impulses such as the desire to bite, hit or scream. Toddlers can sometimes restrain themselves when told "no" (although they will also want to test you), but it is especially difficult for them to control themselves when they are tired, hungry, or upset. By observing a toddler, it may be possible to identify the signs of a frustrating situation before it occurs or gets out of hand. When a toddler is overtired, she may need to be invited to a quiet area, or redirected with a song or movement game. (Brain Wonders)
- If a tantrum cannot be avoided, it's important for the caregiver to know how to handle the situation effectively. Negative behavior is normal and healthy in a toddler during the second year. Try to understand the reason for the behavior as the toddler is trying to establish individuality and independence. Remaining calm but firm is not only best for the toddler, but also for you. If you become increasingly angry and demand compliance, you become a role model for additional negative behavior on the toddler's part. Redirecting the toddler's attention to a pleasant activity may diffuse the situation and is far more effective than scolding. (Kleckner 105)
- Experiencing frustration/tantrums is an important developmental process for toddlers in learning how to cope with and get through difficult situations. Allowing toddlers to express these strong feelings while they are learning other ways to manage feelings is a necessary part of development.

### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### Large Muscle Development

*A toddler:*

- Stands without support. She may take steps by herself but stills prefers to crawl as a faster way to get around.
- Lifts his knees high and steps down with the front part of his foot hitting the ground first. At first, his walking appears clumsy. As he approaches his 2nd birthday, he begins to step more smoothly with a heel-to-toe movement.
- Is now able to move more easily around things in her environment. Walking becomes more coordinated.
- Can climb up and down stairs. This is also a time when he might try climbing out of his crib.
- Runs, propels herself on riding toys, throws objects, kicks, hops on two feet, expresses herself through dance.



#### Small Muscle Development

*A toddler:*

- May use both hands at the same time for two different reasons and prefers one hand over the other.
- May undress himself or untie his shoes. This is a good time to encourage self-help skills.
- Shows interest in exploring sensory materials and uses art materials.
- Feeds herself finger foods, drinks from a covered then an uncovered cup, and washes her own hands.

### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Large, open spaces to explore, both indoors and outdoors. Spaces should be free of things with sharp edges, allowing him a safe place to crawl and practice walking.
- Many opportunities to practice walking and moving around obstacles in the environment (e.g., large pieces of furniture).
- Things that can be played with in different ways, explored safely with a young toddler's whole body and carried around while walking.
- Opportunities to carry, dump, climb and push (pull things such as toy shopping carts, doll strollers, or small wagons and riding toys).
- Plenty of safe, low places for climbing under, over, inside of, on top of, and around.



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Offer surroundings that are safe to move around in.
- Support her efforts to walk, but be careful not to push her to walk, allowing her to develop at her own pace and in her own time. Changing back and forth between walking and crawling is normal.
- Place favorite toys in different areas of the room and ask him to bring them back to you.



### *Did You Know:*



- Toilet Learning is a process

which includes three basic skills necessary for success. First is **muscle control**. A toddler must be able to control his sphincter muscles to hold and let go of bowel and bladder contents. Second is **communication**. A toddler must be able to understand what it is you want him to do and to communicate with you—by word or action—when he wants to use the toilet. Third is **desire**. A toddler must want to be trained. He may want to please you, to be like his friends, or he may simply prefer to be clean. Bladder and bowel control are developmental behaviors. There are wide variations in the age at which a toddler reaches the appropriate stage of development. Generally, the later training begins, the less time it takes. However, the concept of “readiness” is central. How will you know he is ready? He may indicate readiness by: being regular in bowel movements, staying dry for an hour or two in the daytime and waking up dry from naps, complaining when wet or soiled and generally liking to be clean and tidy, being aware the urine and feces come from his body, wanting to imitate adults and be grown up, telling you when he has had or is having a bowel movement, and pausing and making sounds or grimaces when having a bowel movement. You can respond and promote successful toilet training by being calm and patient, having a matter-of-fact attitude, by clearly telling the toddler what is expected of him, by accepting gradual successes, by praising and encouraging his successes, and by understanding his failures. Casual responses to failures indicate that you have confidence in him to do better next time. Note that the age at which a toddler starts toilet training and the progress he makes is not an indication of the toddler’s other developmental achievements. (Kleckner 107)

### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### A toddler:

- Can find hidden toys and will go looking for them if you ask him to.
- Has a better memory.
- Can solve a problem and tries new ways to solve problems.
- Often (not always) thinks about actions before acting.
- Copies others who are not present. By 12 months, the brain has matured enough that it is possible for toddlers to remember things that happened a few hours or even a day earlier. Within the 12-18 month range, the toddler is able to remember what someone else did and repeat it some time later.
- Has the potential to learn from what she has seen others do. You may demonstrate the use of a particular toy such as banging on a musical instrument or placing a peg in a hole. While the toddler may not repeat the action immediately, she may display it in some form at a later time in the day or week. (Brain Wonders)
- Becomes more and more familiar with stories and remembers sequence and details. He delights in his excitement over being able to guess what comes next. Do not be surprised if he becomes upset when you try to skip pages in his favorite book.
- Is starting to role play and use props in pretend play.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- The toys and household items listed in the Birth to 12 month sections of this document. However, toddlers can use these toys in much more sophisticated ways.
- Large beads to string, large Lego blocks, small building blocks, stacking cones, wooden blocks, nesting toys, puzzles, dolls, dress-up clothes (hats, pocketbooks), cooking utensils, pots and pans.
- Push-pull toys.
- Opportunities to play with interesting and challenging materials: things that encourage manipulation, interaction and the need to figure something out, such as blocks, puzzles, water and sand, and plenty of props for pretend play.
- Toys that are put away and brought back at a later time. A toy he hasn't seen in a while cannot only spark new interest, but also exploration in new and complex ways.



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Encourage active problem solving by showing an interest and following the toddler's lead in play and activities.
- Let yourself be a safe, secure base from which she can explore. You are there to encourage her to explore on her own, as well as to give comfort and emotional support when needed. She has come to count on your trusting relationship for emotional support.
- Continue to provide for interaction with other toddlers.
- Set up his surrounding so that he can see new and more complex ways to use toys and equipment.
- Be open to her new ways of exploring her world ( e.g., stacking pillows, using puzzle pieces as cars, etc.)
- Allow a toddler to make limited choices (e.g., an apple or banana for snack, crayons or markers to color, etc.)
- Let him make mistakes as he is exploring and playing with things. These are learning experiences, too!
- Continue talking with her. This not only supports her developing communication and thinking skills, but also her sense of self. Through practice she becomes aware of the power of language to gather information and communicate her needs. (Brain Wonders)



### Did You Know:

- Around 12 months of age toddlers begin to think in more complex ways. They will spend time using objects as tools. For example, if you give them a stick, they will use it to try to get an out-of-reach toy. Toddlers are aware that if they pull on a string, the attached toy will come along, which makes pull toys very popular at this age. Toddlers will also begin to experiment with objects to see what they can do. For example, they will throw a ball to the ground and see that it bounces, then throw a doll to see what it will do. (Brain Wonders)



### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:



#### A toddler:

- Knows that words stand for things.
- Recognizes named body parts.
- Makes sounds and says words very similar to those he has heard most even though you might not understand the words.
- May say her first words which often are the name of a person, thing or action. Words may include “hi,” “bye,” or “no.”
- May say two to eight words. Remember receptive language (the ability to understand what others are saying) develops before expressive language (the toddler’s ability to speak words).
- Uses non-verbal signs that he understands what you are saying, such as pointing or moving toward something you have named.
- Begins to increase her vocabulary toward the end of this period. Vocabulary usually is not more than 10-20 single words.
- Uses gestures and sounds together to tell you what she wants you to know.
- Will repeat or try another ways of letting you know what he wants if his first try does not work.

### A Supportive Environment Includes:



- Toy telephones and dolls to promote language development.
- Interactive books, magazines, and newspaper pictures.
- Talking to a toddler about her play.
- Music.
- Language partners (adults and other children).

### Did You Know:



- Research suggests that talking with toddlers influences the growth of vocabulary. The more words a toddler hears while engaged in “conversations” with her care providers, the larger her vocabulary will be and the faster it will continue to grow. It is important to understand that listening to the TV, or to your conversations with other adults in your care setting, will not do the job. The best support for this kind of language growth is talking directly to your toddlers about things that are meaningful to them, especially their own actions, feelings and attempts to speak. (Brain Wonders)
- Children need to hear a lot of words. Be sure to offer more positive and supportive language rather than a lot of commands. It’s helpful when you talk about the “here and now” - things that are going on in front of the child.

### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:



- Get down on his eye level and make eye contact when speaking with him.
- Continue to talk about what she is doing as she is doing it.
- Show excitement in his efforts to communicate with you.
- Encourage conversation with other adults and children.
- Give simple instructions to follow.
- Play games with her.
- Sing songs and repeat finger plays over and over again to support his desire and need for repetition.
- Encourage expression of feelings through words.
- Encourage expansion of language experience.
- Listen to the tone of his voice. Is he asking a question, stating a command, or voicing a protest? Watch him as he tries to speak. Is he pointing to something? What is he looking at? These are clues to the meaning of his expressive language.



### Activities that Support Healthy Growth and Development

#### Shop 'Til You Drop

Shopping for groceries is just one of many daily routines that you can use to help a toddler learn. Shopping is especially good for teaching new words and for introducing him to new people and places.

#### What You Need

A grocery shopping list.

#### What to Do

- Pick a time when neither you nor the toddler is hungry or tired.
- At the store, put him in the shopping cart facing you. Take your time as you walk up and down the aisles. Let him feel the items that you buy - a cold carton of milk, for example, or the skin of an orange. Talk to him about the items: "The skin of the orange is rough and bumpy. Here, you feel it."
- Be sure to name what you see on the shelves and talk about what you are seeing and doing: "First, we're going to buy some cereal. See, it's in a big red and blue box. Listen to the great noise it makes when I shake the box. Can you shake the box? Now we're going to pay for the groceries. We'll put them on the counter while I get out the money. The cashier will tell us how much money we have to pay."
- Encourage the toddler to practice saying "hi" and "bye-bye" to clerks and other shoppers.
- Leave the store before he gets tired or grumpy.



### Close-up

It is 10am and 14-month-old Jordan is fussy and crying. Sandra, Jordan's caregiver, moves toward him with one of his favorite toys. When she reaches him, Jordan bats the toy, turns away and whimpers. Sandra tries again to comfort Jordan by inviting him to come and sit on her lap and look at a book. Jordan falls to the floor and cries. After a moment, Sandra looks at the clock and then at Jordan and says gently, "Jordan, are you hungry?" She continues with, "Jordan, if you are hungry, go sit in your little chair." Jordan walks over to his little chair. Sandra asks warmly, "Jordan, do you want milk or juice?" Jordan replies, "Ju-Ju." Jordan is learning: to communicate what he needs and what he is feeling; to make choices; to follow simple directions; to use words to get what he needs; and about cause and effect.



Your baby is taking on the world! From an infant who relied on you totally, your toddler can now walk, talk, feed himself and go after what he wants!



### What To Look For And Do:

- Your toddler can follow one and two-step directions but may not always want to do so. This independence needs to be encouraged but you also have to set limits (rules). Expect that she will test the limits (rules) as she learns what she can do and what is not allowed.
- He needs lots of places and things to explore and he enjoys other children. Keep choices to a minimum or he'll become frustrated.
- She is much more coordinated and you'll see it as she moves around things, climbs stairs, and maybe out of her crib. She even runs and pushes herself on a riding toy.
- Your toddler still likes to explore different materials and now will do so with art materials, as well as with water and sand, and toys such as large beads to string.
- He will learn from watching others and copy them so be careful what he sees as it may come out in his pretend play.
- She is using more and more words and other ways of communicating her needs. She is still learning more words so make those she hears positive words.



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18 to 24  
Months





### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### Social

##### *A toddler:*

- Is becoming aware of other people's points of view. He begins to understand that others have feelings and becomes very interested in them.
- Plays make believe (dramatic play) and pretends to be a character in a book or movie with you or others.
- Uses words or pictures to tell you what she is interested in... "Look, airplane!"
- Continues to enjoy copying adult behaviors and activities.
- Is interested in helping with day-to-day activities around the house.

#### Feelings and Self-Awareness

##### *A toddler:*

- Shows increased interest in the dressing process. Taking off his clothes is becoming a big hit!
- Is becoming an independent person who wants to do things by herself. "NO" becomes one of her most powerful words; she enjoys saying it and trying it out in many contexts.
- Temper tantrums may be on the increase as he realizes he cannot do everything he wants when he wants, or tell you in words exactly what he is feeling.
- May be refusing to eat. This is often a sign of both her growing independence and a decrease in appetite and rate of growth.
- Is drinking from a cup without a lid, using a spoon to feed himself and performing many other simple tasks by himself.
- Is beginning to gain some bladder and bowel control.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A cup without a lid at mealtimes, along with a spoon so she can feed herself.
- Materials for dramatic play such as dress-up clothes, dolls, or plastic dishes.
- Many opportunities to take off socks, hats, and shoes.
- Opportunities for a toddler to help sort, fold, store and choose clothes to wear.
- Many opportunities for him to try things on his own. Delight with him in his accomplishments and be there to help when he needs it.
- Some things of her own that are placed where she won't fear others taking them.



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:



- Encourage her to help with day-to-day jobs as she is able. Encourage her to try doing new things for herself.
- Set clear, simple rules (limits) and gently but firmly follow through with them. Safety always comes first (e.g., sitting in a car seat while riding in the car).
- He wants to do things for himself and will tell you what he wants. This may be frustrating for you at times. Think about some of the behaviors that are frustrating for you and try to think of them before they happen. During these times, you may want to try to move his attention to something that you see as a more positive option, such as asking him about an upcoming fun activity.
- These times can also be very frustrating for a toddler. Encourage her to find her comfort toys, or to help calm herself by sucking her thumb (if this is a comfort for her).
- Be patient! Although a toddler wants to do everything he sets out to do himself, he still needs you close by to help.
- Respect her: When you show respect, she learns to respect herself and others.
- Model pro-social, sharing behavior in your everyday interactions with children and other adults. Play games that involve sharing and turn taking. While this will help him to use and practice these behaviors, do not expect him to share with other children all the time. Toddlers need time to mature and lots of practice to use these skills regularly during play.
- Keep consistent daily routines around eating, sleeping, bathing and toileting. Routines help toddlers guess what comes next in their day and master daily experiences which promote self-confidence. Help her get ready for changes by telling her what will happen next and giving her some time to move from one thing to another.
- Be there as a good listener.
- Name feelings - your own and the child's (e.g., "I feel sad." or "Putting on your shirt is frustrating.")



### Did You Know:

- As he becomes more aware of his wants and needs, issues of ownership and sharing will come up. Toddlers often claim things as "mine" and are very possessive. However, know that there is hope. As he learns what is his and what is not, he will begin to think about sharing with others.
- A toddler is also learning how to control her behavior (self-control) and act appropriately in situations (beginning to understand what she should and should not do). However, she is not good at this yet. She may hit, cry, yell, bite and may not be able to stop herself from doing these things. Self-control comes with time and brain maturation. (Brain Wonders)

### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### Large Muscle Development

*A toddler:*

- Is beginning to walk faster and in a more coordinated manner.
- Runs, but awkwardly.
- Will walk up stairs holding a hand.
- Is learning to master body movements by stooping, walking, kicking, throwing, climbing and running.
- Can bend over to pick things up without falling.



#### Small Muscle Development

*A toddler:*

- Can use a crayon to scribble, as well as copy marks.
- Is gaining better control when feeding herself.

### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Keep the toddler's play area interesting for him. You may want to change his toys by rotating them, or adding new ones. For example, when his interest lowers for a toy, put it away for 2 weeks or so and then bring it back out again. He may have a renewed interest in it. A few toys will catch his attention; with too many choices he may move quickly from one to another.
- Encourage her to play with other children. Rolling balls back and forth and running together can be lots of fun. Always watch toddlers playing together.
- Give enough opportunity for physical exercise. He may enjoy dancing to music, hopping, pretending to exercise with you - touching his toes, reaching high above his head, etc.
- Help the toddler get on and off a 4-wheeled riding toy until she can do it by herself.
- Give opportunities to grasp, hold, pour, scoop, squeeze, and otherwise play with a variety of materials that can be safely handled and put in the mouth.
- Let him see you reading, writing or drawing; observation is a powerful learning tool both for you and him.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Room to walk and run and opportunities to take walks to new and different places such as a community park.
- Experiences where he can see, touch, taste, hear and smell, such as water and sand play.
- Materials such as crayons, pencils, dolls and doll clothes, nesting toys, paper, puzzles, play dough, snap together blocks, small blocks, small toy figures and cars.
- Riding toys, wiffle ball and bat, bean bag toss into a cardboard box or laundry basket, climbing toys, jungle gyms, puzzles, stringing beads, shape sorters, etc.
- Large pieces of paper taped to the table or floor with washable crayons or markers. Always stay close by to supervise a toddler who is just learning to experiment and explore with art materials. Keep in mind that crayons do break and creative play can be messy.
- An assortment of blocks of different size, shape and color to practice stacking, building and balancing. Join in her play and let her be the leader.



### Did You Know:

- As she is practicing the many ways to use her body (running, hopping, kicking, pushing, pulling), a toddler may become less interested in other areas of development. For example, you may notice that learning new words slows down a little. This is normal. Continue to give her opportunities to practice all of her skills.
- In just a few months, toddlers go from crawling to walking to almost running. Practicing their new moves strengthens connections in their brains that help with coordination. Each new motor skill adds to a toddler's sense of mastery and feelings of competence.
- Your local library has many activities, as well as books, for a toddler to engage in. You can also sign out activities.



### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### A toddler:

- Is beginning to solve problems in her head.
- Is quickly learning new words.
- Is beginning to enjoy imaginative play and role playing, such as being a “dog” - walking on 4 legs and barking (symbolic play).
- Knows some sounds that animals make and enjoys copying them.
- Takes things apart and tries to put them back together again.
- Will figure out how to move past things, such as climbing on a chair to reach something he wants that’s too high for him to reach from the ground.
- Is calling on past experiences to figure out new challenges.
- Continues to be very curious about her surroundings and new environments.
- Begins to notice tiny details.
- Is experimenting with cause and effect. He is a little scientist, causing things to happen and then watching to see what happens next. For example, he may roll a ball into blocks and watch them fall. Then he may roll a ball into a chair and see that it doesn’t move.
- Is using one object to represent another (using a block as a phone).
- Recognizes herself in the mirror.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A variety of toys to choose from placed at the toddler’s level (e.g., small people, animals, doll houses, nesting bowls, pots and pans, and large mixing spoons).
- Blocks and other stacking materials (empty boxes) to build up, knock down and build up again. He will learn there are many ways to accomplish the same goal.
- Sturdy books that are available.
- Outdoor play. Investigate the outdoors with her. Talk about the colors, shapes, patterns, and textures that you both see and feel. Watch closely as she still may want to put her mouth on things to explore them.



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Continue to offer choices, but only two or three at a time. Let him make decisions throughout the day and be sure that the options you offer are ones you are okay with him choosing.
- Allow her to work out a challenge or problem she is facing without your help. Think of ways in which she might solve this problem. Be close by to ensure her safety. Applaud her accomplishments.
- Continue to encourage his use of language by giving him words to express his feelings and desires. Continue to talk about what you both see and do.
- Encourage her exploration of toys. Be sure to let her pace herself. She will determine her rate of learning.
- If you haven't already done so, be sure to safety-proof the environment. Get down on a toddler's level and look around to identify the things that might catch his interest.
- Call her attention to small things in books, magazines, or on other everyday items like cereal boxes. Ask her to point to some of the details.
- While a toddler's experimentations may cause you frustration and irritation, knowing that these are the ways in which he has to learn about his world and what his body can do, it is important to be patient, provide guidance and ensure his safety.
- Play pretend games with her. You will learn a great deal about her thoughts and how she feels and will have many chances to expand on her thinking. This can help her be more creative.
- Resist pressures from others to "teach" a toddler specific academic skills, such as colors and shapes. He will learn these readily if you refer to them in the course of your daily conversations. "Do you prefer a red apple or green apple?" or "Can you hand me the blue ball?" (Brain Wonders)



### Did You Know:



- While a toddler is beginning to think symbolically and use items to represent something real in her life (pretending to eat a plastic apple), she still learns best when she sees, hears, and touches real things (a real apple) at the same time.
- Music is an activity that serves as a memory booster. For reasons we do not yet understand, songs, rhythms, and chants seem to linger in young children's minds especially well. Somehow the association of melody and lyrics encourages young brains to take hold and store the words of songs better than those of regular conversation. (Brain Wonders)

### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### A toddler:

- Can respond to personal pronouns (me, her, him).
- Can follow 2-step commands (e.g., "Please pick up your shoes and put them in the closet").
- Listens to gain meaning from what is heard.
- Begins to use more words than gestures when speaking.
- Is using her words to gain attention and indicate her wants, sometimes very forcefully.
- Uses words to tell you about specific things, people, or actions.
- Uses words such as "I", "me" and "your."
- Has a vocabulary that is growing by leaps and bounds - around 9 new words a day. He understands simple questions, can speak about 50 words and understands about 300 words by age 2.
- Speaks in short, two-word phrases like, "Me up!" meaning "Please pick me up!"



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Continue to talk about what she is involved in. Name things for her. Ask her to name things she sees during her play. If a toddler says a word or phrase incorrectly, simply repeat it correctly for her.
- His speech may be hard to understand and often he speaks slowly. Be patient, giving him time to complete his thought.
- Praise toddlers for trying to communicate with you and encourage their continued use of language. Remember that speaking "correctly" comes with time and maturity.
- Read aloud and often with her. Create a quiet space or reading area where you can snuggle together while reading a book.
- Ask him questions and encourage him to ask you questions. Be an active language partner with him.
- Continue to listen with interest to what she is saying and give her more words to describe her thoughts. For example, "That doggie." "Yes, that is a doggie and he is playing with a red ball."
- Offer real pictures of animals, people and familiar things to draw his attention and encourage his conversation.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Books, books and more books. (See Books to Grow On pp 86-88)
- Trips to the local library.
- Story-telling. Toddlers love to hear stories whether they are read or told to them. Tell stories about things of interest to them.
- Rhymes, finger plays, poems and songs. Yes, even ones you make up!



### Did You Know:

- It is important to know about a child's hearing ability from infancy through toddlerhood. Frequent ear infections and even mild hearing loss can lead to language delays. As the child's caregiver, share any concerns with his family and urge them to talk to the family doctor.
- Shortly after a toddler begins using 50 words, a vocabulary explosion occurs. She begins adding several new words to her spoken vocabulary every day. Interestingly, researchers have noticed that this vocabulary explosion occurs at about the same time as an increase in the number of synapses (connections between brain cells) in an important language center of the brain known as Wernicke's area. (Brain Wonders)





### Activities that Support Healthy Growth and Development:

#### Make your own play dough:

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- 2 tablespoons cream of tartar
- 2 cups water
- 1 tablespoon mineral oil
- Food coloring

Mix all ingredients in a saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring until stiff. Allow to cool, then knead. Store in a zip lock baggie. It will last a long time. Use cookie cutters to make different shapes. Poke a hole near the top of each shape. Let air dry. Put string through the holes and hang from a hanger to make a mobile.

#### Make your own finger paint:

- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 2 cups water
- Food coloring

Mix ingredients in a saucepan. Boil until mixture thickens. Allow to cool, then pour into jars or other storage containers and color with food coloring. Best used on a glossy paper (butcher or shelf paper) that's taped to a surface like the floor or a low table.



### Close Up

2-year-old Sophie is in the kitchen while her caregiver, Janice, is making cookies. Sophie pushes a chair near the sink where Janice is working and says, "me up." She climbs onto the chair to wash her hands. Janice pours the liquid soap in Sophie's hand. After Sophie rubs her hands together she reaches toward the faucet. Janice turns the water on and off for Sophie and offers her a paper towel. After she dries her hands, Sophie climbs down and throws the paper away. Janice takes a small plastic cup, dips it into the bowl of measured flour and says, "Sophie, would you like to help me pour the flour?" Sophie smiles broadly. She pushes the chair closer to Janice and climbs. After Sophie empties the cup of flour into the batter, Janice looks at Sophie while pointing to a box of raisins and says, "Hmm... what else do we need for our cookies?" Sophie says, "Raisins." As Sophie dumps the raisins into the batter, she takes one for herself. As she reaches for another, she checks Janice's face. Janice laughs. Sophie takes another raisin. Janice hands Sophie the spoon and asks, "Sophie, do you want to help stir the batter?" Sophie takes the spoon with glee. While Sophie is stirring, Janice asks, "What do we do next?" Sophie points to the oven. Janice replies, "That's right. After we put the cookies on the pan, we'll put them in the oven." Sophie is learning: to guess what comes next; sequencing; to communicate what she wants; self-help skills; to develop her fine motor skills; social skills.



Your baby is now a toddler! She loves to help with daily

chores and wants to do things for herself. She can feed and dress herself with little help. And she can play by herself or next to others but she will still want you close by when she gets frustrated or tired. Routines are still very important.

### What To Look For And Do:

- Your toddler needs you to set limits (rules) and create routines. He will then learn how to fit his needs and wants within what is allowed. Explain what will happen if he does not follow the limits (rules) you have set. Make sure he knows what will happen ahead of time. Follow through on what you say.
- Your toddler needs you to know what she is feeling. Help her name her feelings and help her work through them.
- Your toddler is trying new skills such as stooping (although he may fall over at first), swinging a bat, riding a bike, and using small materials such as puzzles and small toys.
- Your toddler needs lots of time for physical play (watch her carefully at the playground). She also needs quiet time to look at books and play pretend games (household items are great). She can use one item as another (a banana for a phone).
- Your toddler loves music and can join in simple action songs. Listen when he talks to you and stretch his sentences by adding words that further describe what he is trying to say.



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24 to 36  
Months



### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### Social

##### A toddler:



- May want to keep what belongs to him close by and often will not want to share.
- Will play for longer and longer periods of time.
- Is more involved and interacts more in play with other children.
- Begins to seek out play with other children on his own.
- Plays make believe with one or more children.



#### Feelings and Self-Awareness

##### A toddler:

- Begins to understand the idea of personal property and may say, "That's mine."
- Begins to show independence and continues to show pride in his accomplishments.
- May say "no" at first, even to something she wants.
- Still finds it hard to describe how he feels even though his vocabulary is growing and he is able to put more words together. This can be frustrating for him.

#### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Space for what belongs to him.
- Similar toys in a play area in order to lessen problems around sharing with other children.
- Art, music, and movement to provide opportunities for her to express her feelings.
- Offering props for pretend play: dress-up clothes, puppets, dolls, small animal figures, etc., to allow opportunity for role-playing.
- Planning for situations/experiences where a toddler can be successful and experience a sense of accomplishment and pride.
- Time to join in a group where he interacts with other children and shares in stories and song.
- Providing consistent daily routines around eating, sleeping and toilet learning so that she can guess what comes next in her day and master daily experiences. This strengthens her self-confidence.



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Respect her desire to hold onto and take her possessions with her.
- Model sharing and turn taking. Waiting helps children learn self-control and recognize that others have needs too. Encourage cooperative play with others but do not expect a toddler to be able to show these behaviors all the time.
- Allow him the opportunity to try things himself even if you know it will take a little longer to get done.
- Read books that explore and discuss feelings. For example, consider “When Sophie Gets Angry - Really, Really Angry” by Molly Bang and “The Way I Feel” series by Cornelia Spelman.
- Help toddlers stay involved in play by extending their play experience and preventing interruptions of their play.
- Help her identify and name her feelings: anger, frustration, happiness, and sadness.
- Anticipate situations in which he may have difficulty and intervene before an aggressive action takes place, such as hitting or biting.
- Help her connect her feelings with actions. For example, “I know that you are angry, but you may not hit Claire. Say, I’m angry.”
- Offer strategies that he can use in frustrating situations, such as using his words to solve the problem or asking for help.



### Did You Know:

- While older toddlers have more interest in their peers than they did at 18 months, they are still most interested in pleasing themselves and cannot yet understand another child’s perspective. It is not unusual for toddlers of this age to be verbally and physically aggressive in their play with objects and peers. (Brain Wonders)
- Be sure to stay close by and prevent aggression when possible or intervene if necessary.
- Older toddlers are still unable to stop themselves from acting on their desires. Again, recognizing their feelings and suggesting other ways they can express themselves is still the best response at this age. As they grow, encourage them to think about what else they can do (e.g., throw the balls into the laundry basket instead of the wall). The ability to substitute an acceptable action for one that is not acceptable is essential for functioning well in school. (ZERO TO THREE)



### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:



#### Large Muscle Development

##### A toddler:

- Enjoys running but may have difficulty stopping and turning. He also likes hopping, skipping, jumping and climbing.
- Walks up and down stairs using one foot then the other.
- Throws a ball and kicks it with one foot.
- Begins to balance on one foot.
- Pedals a tricycle.

#### Small Muscle Development

##### A toddler:

- Helps to dress herself with clothing that's easy to put on. She may still need your help with snaps, buttons and zippers.
- Begins to brush his own teeth with help.
- Can use a spoon, fork and cup but may still spill.
- Can turn pages of a book one by one.
- Enjoys messy, creative play such as painting with a paint brush, finger painting, scribbling, gluing and taping under your careful supervision.
- Begins to favor one hand over the other.
- Begins to cut with safety scissors, draws straight lines, and can copy a circle.

### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- Space to run on hills, ramps, low stairs, etc.
- Riding toys, rocking toys, balls - small and large.
- Trips to a playground with swings, climbers, sand and water play.
- Books, 2 - 4 piece large puzzles, pegboards, stacking toys, things to string such as large beads.
- Play dough (see recipe p. 55), washable crayons, markers, paints (see recipe p. 55), chalk, and taping and gluing activities.
- Clothing to play dress-up, dolls to dress and undress, household items to encourage pretend play (e.g., pretend cooking)



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Encourage free movement (within safe limits) and self-expression through movement - running, spinning, dancing.
- Provide for and become involved in sensory experiences with him. Talk about what you are feeling, smelling, tasting, and hearing.
- Offer her simple choices whenever possible.
- Offer a variety of toys that encourage his hand and finger use. Rotate toys available within the environment and encourage new ways to use familiar toys.
- Be a toddler's "coach" by supporting her if she gets stuck when trying new things.
- Include him in making meals (pouring ingredients, stirring, etc.) or setting-up and cleaning the table with you.
- Go for walks exploring the outdoors together and use these opportunities to teach her about concepts such as big and small.



### Did You Know:

- Play is essential to a toddler's healthy development. Through play he interacts with other children, has the opportunity to explore what he can do with his body, pretends and tries out various roles, explores the properties of objects, practices language and new vocabulary, and tries out different feelings.
- It is through all of these play experiences that a toddler's development is supported in the following areas: personal and social, physical, cognitive (thinking abilities), and language development and communication.



### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### A toddler:

- Is beginning to solve many problems on his own and will try many ways to solve a problem that he is facing.
- Will stay focused on a task for longer periods of time.
- Enjoys simple puzzles (4-5 pieces), and simple jokes.
- Knows most of her body parts and can name them on dolls and people.
- May count two or three things.
- Enjoys comparing sizes - "big" and "small."
- Notices differences in size, shape and color; and enjoys matching and grouping things that are alike.
- Remembers events and places he has been and enjoys telling others about his experiences.
- Begins to explain WHY she wants to do something. For example, "Why do you want the apple?" "Because I'm hungry."



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A variety of construction materials: cardboard, glue, construction paper, clay, crayons.
- Simple hands-on science activities and small experiments such as using food coloring to change the color of water.
- Things to sort and classify by color, size, shape and weight.
- Continued availability of art materials for messy, creative play, as well as other things he can play with using his hands and fingers.
- Books.



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Develop a sense of timing, knowing when to step in and when to hold back and let her work out her differences.
- Be aware of the strength of emotions, the development of thinking and problem-solving skills, and the difficulty toddlers may have in controlling their impulsive behaviors. You can help them learn how to control aggressive behaviors by being attentive to their play and interactions; by helping them identify, label, and connect their emotions with actions; and by helping them find more appropriate solutions when conflicts arise. (Brain Wonders)
- Give both girls and boys the same opportunities to explore different activities such as large and small muscle play, conversation, dress up and dramatic play, art, music, science, and outdoor play.
- Talk about events you have done together with a toddler, such as a walk to the park. Ask him to remember things he saw and did.
- Play a game having toddlers touch body parts, head, nose, ears, eyes, as you name them.



### Did You Know:

- Toddlers love to ask why. They are naturally curious and this is an important way for them to learn. "Why" questions make toddlers think more about an issue. Asking toddlers "why" questions is an excellent way to encourage them to talk about what they think and how they feel.
- Being able to control impulses requires maturation of thinking skills. In fact, this involves several steps. In order to control impulses children need to first know the rule involved (e.g., No grabbing an object from another child.) and then understand that the rule applies to a particular situation (No taking the toy from Jimmy.) They need to be able to shift and control their attention from what they want to the expected behavior (Susie wants the truck, but she shouldn't take it from Jimmy.) Finally, children need to be able to think of the alternatives to their behavior (Instead of taking the truck from Jimmy, Susie can see if there are more on the shelf or wait until Jimmy is done playing with it and have a turn, etc.) (Brain Wonders)



### As A Toddler Grows and Develops, Look to See:

#### A toddler:

- Enjoys expressing himself through language. He talks about what he is doing while doing it, trying out what he has learned about communicating with others in new contexts. He expects even strangers to be language partners with him.
- Can talk about the past.
- Can say her own first and last name.
- Has mastered vowel sounds and many consonant sounds although he still may have trouble with articulation.
- Will use personal pronouns such as I, me and you, although not always correctly.
- Enjoys telling and retelling stories and short jokes (sometimes forgetting the punch line).
- Takes cues from others, laughing out loud when others are laughing.
- Enjoys talking on the phone and pretending to talk on the phone.
- Enjoys “reading” familiar books to you and other playmates.
- Understands “How” and “Why” questions.
- Uses phrases or sentences to ask a question about something she wants to do (e.g., “Go to playground?”) with inflection.
- Has conversations with adults and peers that make sense, often with four or more back and forth comments on a variety of topics.
- May speak between 800 - 900 words and understands more than 1,000 words by the end of this period.



### A Supportive Environment Includes:

- A variety of children’s books.
- Pictures at a toddler’s eye level, including samples of her artwork.
- Songs and language games (rhyming words, etc.).
- Plenty of opportunity to talk with other children and adults.
- Music and musical instruments, including home-made drums, shakers, etc.
- Puppets, small people, animals, dollhouses, barns, and baby dolls.



### Ways You Can Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Continue to encourage him to talk with you. Ask questions such as, “What do you think would happen if...?”
- Ask her what she is feeling in different situations. For example, “Are you happy to see Beth?” “Did it make you feel angry when Josh took your toy?”
- Ask him to tell others what he wants. Provide him with examples such as, “I want the truck.” “I was using that ball.”
- Remind her to solve challenges with others using her words as opposed to physical means (hitting, grabbing, kicking).
- If a toddler is approaching a “break down” point (e.g., ready to break into uncontrolled crying), let him know that you understand what he is feeling and provide support (e.g., “I know you are tired and feel frustrated because you cannot find Elmo. Let’s look together.”)



### Did You Know:

- By engaging in conversations with a toddler and really listening to her responses, she feels important.
- In today’s world, bilingualism is a skill to be valued and supported when it is the goal of the toddler’s family. Infants are quite capable of learning two languages from birth. They begin life with the ability to hear the differences among the sounds of many languages. Any sounds a child continues to hear reinforces the brain connections used to process them, so she will retain the ability to perceive and produce them.
- By 2 - 3 years, toddlers are very capable of using each language with different people in different contexts. For example, speaking Spanish with the care provider and English with Mom and Dad, or speaking English with Mom and Spanish with Grandma. (Brain Wonders)
- Remember: a toddler exposed to two languages is dealing with two very different systems of communication. While she is capable of doing this, her progress in each may appear a bit slower than if she were communicating in only one language. (Brain Wonders)



### Activities that Support Healthy Growth and Development:

- Puppets (home-made will do just fine) offer an opportunity for children to safely express their feelings through pretend play. For directions on making puppets, check the Internet, sewing patterns at fabric stores, and your own imagination! Puppets can be made from all kinds of materials: socks, fabric scraps, felt, paper maché, poster board, paper bags, paper plates and cups, and even vegetables!
- Mirrors and dolls also inspire toddlers to engage in pretend play. Mirrors enable him to see himself during dress-up play as he explores different roles using related props. (Dombro, Colker and Dodge 228)
- Dolls that are about 12 - 15 inches long and can be carried in one hand are preferred. Dolls should reflect different ethnic backgrounds to promote his understanding and acceptance of diversity in the larger world. (228)
- Using a paper bag or a shoe box, design a "mystery" box or bag for her to explore. Toddlers enjoy the surprise of reaching into a mystery box to discover hidden objects that must be identified by their shape, texture, or smell. (229)
- "Toddlers naturally gravitate to toys that promote their independence. Self-help boards, cards, or frames for practicing fastening and unfastening Velcro strips, snaps, buckles, hooks, and zippers are always favorites". (229)
- Push and pull toys, blocks, riding toys, climbers, and even large cardboard boxes continue to be popular with this age group.



### Close Up

Dan, a teacher, takes a group of children to the playground. 35-month-old Jin and 30-month-old Trae race toward the slide. When they reach the stairs, they try to climb the stairs at the same time, each declaring, "Me first!" Dan walks over to the children and says calmly, "I see both of you want the slide. It's not safe for both of you to go up the stairs at the same time. How can we solve this problem?" Jin says, "Me first!" Trae hits Jin and declares, "No, me first!" Dan takes Trae's hand and says, "I cannot let you hit Jin. You need to tell Jin that you want to be first." Dan goes on to say, "What if we take turns? I'm going to let Jin go up the stairs and count how long it takes for her to slide down. Then it will be your turn, Trae, and I will count for you." Jin climbs the stairs and slides down. She races back to Trae and Dan and declares, "Trae, now it's your turn!" The children continue to take turns climbing and sliding during their morning play. Trae and Jin are learning: to delay gratification; to cope with frustration; to use words to solve problems; to share and take turns; adults can be helpful; and number and time concepts.





Your baby is now a big boy (or girl)! He can say his thoughts and feelings in words. He can tell others his name and age and what he wants or needs. He can walk, run and jump. He can figure out ways to get what he wants and remembers what comes next in the day. He can feed and dress himself and may even be starting toilet training.

### What To Look For And Do:

- Your toddler will play for longer and longer periods of time and even plays with other children instead of just next to them. She may even initiate a game with them and take turns. She has learned this through interactions and playing simple games with you.
- Your toddler loves books about feelings and books that give him ideas for pretend play. He also loves TV and videos but be careful what they are and how often he watches.
- Your toddler uses one foot then the other when going up and down stairs and can kick a ball without falling. She can pedal a tricycle and begin to balance on one foot.
- Your toddler still enjoys art play especially if it is messy so offer materials that he can touch, smell and taste safely.
- Your toddler is developing school readiness skills as she can stay focused for longer periods of time: doing puzzles, counting a few objects, comparing sizes, noticing differences and solving problems.
- Your toddler will love telling you jokes (some that only he gets). He may “read” you his favorite book and loves to ask “why” a million times a day.
- Your toddler needs lots of space, things to play with and use in different ways, books and music, and your attention.



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## Pamphlets

### Keys To Great Parenting—Fun and Learning with Your Baby or Toddler

A series of seven pamphlets based on seven keys to unlocking your child's wonderful abilities. Titles include: *Care for Yourself; Cuddle, Talk and Read with Your Child; Know How Your Child Develops; Be Playful with Your Child; Show Your Child the World; Teach Self Control; Practice Nutrition, Health and Safety.*

## Web Sites of Interest

### Better Baby Care Campaign

<http://www.betterbabycare.org>

The Better Baby Care Campaign is a nationwide effort to improve the quality of infant and toddler child care. It provides up-to-date information on research and resources regarding infant and toddler care. The website provides information on federal, state, and local policy initiatives.

### Brain Wonders

<http://www.zerotothree.org/brainwonders>

Brain Wonders provides information about early brain development and the relationships between babies and their parents and caregivers that support intellectual and social-emotional development.

### Brazelton Touchpoints Center

<http://www.touchpoints.org>

The Touchpoints Model is a training program that provides skills and strategies for professionals to build alliances with parents of children from birth to three. It combines relationship building and child development and promotes building and maintaining relationships with parents as the basis of preventive care. It focuses on key points in the development of infants, toddlers, and their families.

### Child Care Aware

<http://childcareaware.org/>

Child Care Aware helps parents find the best information on locating quality child care and child care resources in their local communities. It is funded through a cooperative agreement with the Child Care Bureau, Administration of Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

### Child Care Bureau, Administration For Children And Families, U.S. Department Health And Human Services

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/>

The Child Care Bureau is dedicated to improving the quality, affordability, and availability of child care for families. The Bureau administers federal funds to states, territories, and tribes to assist low-income families in accessing quality child care when parents work or participate in education or training programs.

### Connecticut Birth To Three System

<http://www.birth23.org/>

The mission of the Connecticut Birth to Three System is to strengthen the capacity of families to meet the developmental and health-related needs of their infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities. It provides resources, publications, programs and referrals, as well as a Child Development Infoline that offers an opportunity to talk personally with someone about your concerns. The phone number to call is 1-800-505-7000.

### Connecticut Parents as Teachers (ConnPAT)

[connpat@earthlink.net](mailto:connpat@earthlink.net)

<http://www.parentsasteachers.org>

This web site contains information for parents, caregivers and home visitors. Parents as Teachers is a resource network. ConnPAT is the state system for Parents as Teachers National Center; it provides information on PAT programs in CT as well as training Institutes for PAT parent educators and for the child care system.

### Early Head Start National Resource Center At ZERO TO THREE

<http://www.ehsnrc.org>

The Early Head Start National Resource Center (EHSNRC) is operated by ZERO TO THREE, Washington, DC, in collaboration with WESTED of Sausalito, CA. The EHSNRC works at the national level to provide information and training to Early Head Start on a range of topics including: developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive services for infants/toddlers and families, building effective relationships with families, creating developmentally appropriate environments, effective networking, collaboration, and community-building skills, inclusive services for children with special needs, and other topics.

### Educational Resources Information Center-Clearing House On Elementary And Early Childhood Education (ERIC/EECE)

<http://www.eric.ed.gov>

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system designed to provide users with resources and information on education. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (ERIC/EECE) provides information for educators, parents, families, and individuals interested in the development, education, and care of children from birth through early adolescence.

### Healthy Child Care America (HCCA)

<http://www.healthychildcare.org>

The HCCA program is a collaborative effort of health professionals, child care providers, and families working to improve the health and safety of children in child care. HCCA seeks to maximize the health, safety, well-being, and developmental potential so each child experiences quality child care within a nurturing environment and has a medical home.

### Healthy Minds

<http://www.zerotothree.org/healthyminds/9-12months.pdf>

What do we really know about how a child develops? What can parents do to best support their child's healthy development and growing brain? Some of the answers are in this series of Healthy Minds handouts. Each handout is based on findings from a report (Neurons to Neighborhoods Science of Early Childhood Development) from the National Academy of Sciences that examined the research on child and brain development to establish what is known about the early years. The information is age-specific, summarizes key findings from the report and suggests how you might be able to use the key findings to nurture your own child's healthy development.

### **Help Me Grow**

<http://www.ct.gov/ctf>

A program for children at risk, ages birth to five, funded by the Children's Trust Fund, to help families connect to existing resources in their communities. They can also help families monitor their children's development through the Ages and Stages Questionnaire process. They can be reached through the Child Development Infoline at: 1-800-505-7000.

### **I Am Your Child (IAYC)**

<http://www.iamyourchild.org>

The IAYC Foundation is a national, non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of early childhood development and school readiness. It develops a wide variety of resources for parents, early childhood professionals, child advocates, health care providers, policy makers, and the media.

### **Maternal And Child Health Bureau, Department Of US Health And Human Services (MCHB)**

<http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov>

MCHB provides links to resources, publications, websites, and federal and state programs relating to the health and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, pregnant women and their families. MCHB also provides a list of child health links including children with special needs.

### **National Association For The Education Of Young Children (NAEYC)**

<http://www.naeyc.org>

NAEYC is a nation-wide membership organization of early childhood educators and others dedicated to improving the quality of programs for children from birth through third grade. The website provides information on accreditation, early learning, resources for both parents and childhood providers, and early childhood education policy.

### **National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI)**

<http://www.nbcdi.org>

The National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) is a nonprofit organization that provides support through programs, workshops, and resources for African American children, their parents and areas of early health and education, health, elementary and secondary education, child welfare, and parenting. The website provides links to information about their local affiliates, conferences, and programs.

### **National Center For Children In Poverty (NCCP)**

[http://www.nccp.org/it\\_index.html](http://www.nccp.org/it_index.html)

The National Center for Children in Poverty is a non-profit, non-partisan research and policy organization. It strives to identify and promote strategies that prevent child poverty and improve the lives of low-income children and families.

### **National Childcare Information Center (NCCIC)**

<http://nccic.org/cctopics/infants.html>

The National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC), a project of the Child Care Bureau, is a national organization that links information and people to complement, enhance, and promote the child care delivery system, ensuring that all children and families have access to high quality, comprehensive services. This link is a publication and organizational resource that pertains to infants and toddlers.

### **National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC)**

<http://nectac.org>

The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center supports the implementation of the early provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Its mission is to strengthen service systems to ensure that children with disabilities (birth through five) and their families receive and benefit from high quality, culturally appropriate, and family-centered supports and services.

### **National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative**

<http://nccic.org/itcc>

The National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative is designed to support Child Care Development (CCDF) state and territory administrators in their efforts to effect system-wide improvements in infant and toddler care. The initiative is funded by the Child Care Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services and is located at *ZERO TO THREE*.

### **The Program For Infant Toddler Caregivers (PITC)**

<http://www.pitc.org/>

The goal of PITC is to help caregivers recognize the crucial importance of giving tender, loving care and assisting in infants' intellectual development through an attentive reading of each child's cues. The videos, guides, and manuals are designed to help child care managers and caregivers become sensitive to infants' cues, connect with their family and culture, and develop responsive, relationship-based care.

### **Resources For Infant Educators (RIE)**

<http://www.rie.org>

### **ZERO TO THREE**

<http://www.zerotothree.org>

The *ZERO TO THREE* website offers information for those interested in the healthy development of young children, birth to three. The site includes information on brain development, learning during every day, the developmental assessment process, parenting tips, professional journal articles, and policy briefs, as well as easy-to-use, A-Z topic listings, a search engine, and a growing list of Spanish materials.

# Books to Grow On

Compiled by the librarian members of the American Library Association-Children's Book Council Joint Committee

April 2003

## 0-6 Months

The child explores the world through the senses-sight, sound, and touch.

All Fall Down, Helen Oxbury

Animal Crackers: Bedtime, Jane Dyer

Baby Animals: Black and White, Phyllis Tildes

Baby Rock, Baby Roll, Stella Blackstone

Big Fat Hen, Keith Baker

Black on White, Tana Hoban

Blue Hat, Green Hat, Sandra Boynton

How a Baby Grows, Nola Buck

I Love Colors, Margaret Miller

Max, Ken Wilson-Max

My First Baby Games, Jane Manning

My Very First Mother Goose, Iona Opie

Peek-A-Boo! Janet and Allan Ahlberg

## 6-12 Months

The child in increasing exploration with his hands and is able to reach for books, touch and feel pictures. He prefers pictures of faces and begins to vocalize.

Animal Kisses, Barney Saltzberg

Baby's Lap Book, Kay Chora

Brown Sugar Babies, Charles Smith

Goodnight Moon, Margaret Wise Brown

I Can, Helen Oxenbury

I Smell Honey, Andrea Pinkney

Maybe, My Baby, Irene O'Book

My Colors (Mis Colores), Rebecca Emberly

Red, Blue, Yellow Shoe, Tana Hoban

Time for Bed, Mem Fox

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star, Jeanette Winter

Welcome, Baby! Baby Rhymes for Baby Times, Stephanie Calmenson

Where's the Baby? Tom Paxton

## 12-18 Months

The child is able to hold a book with help, turn pages, point at pictures, and make sounds for a particular picture.

The Bear Went Over the Mountain, Rosemary Wells

Big Dog, Little Dog, Dav. Pilkey

Count with Maisy, Lucy Cousins

Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z, Lois Ehlert

The Everything Book, Denise Fleming

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed, Eileen Christelow

Freight Train, Donald Crews

Itsy Bitsy Spider, Rosemary Wells

Jamberry, Bruce Degen

My First Action Rhymes, pictures by Lynne Cravath

Pat the Bunny, Dorothy Kunhardt

Rabbit's Bedtime, Nancy Elizabeth Wallace

Read to Your Bunny, Rosemary Wells

Sheep in a Jeep, Nancy Shaw

Ten, Nine, Eight, Molly Garrett Bang

Tom and Pippo Read a Story, Helen Oxenbury

Where Is My Baby? Harriet Ziefert and Taback Simms

Where's Spot? Eric Hill

You Are My Perfect Baby, Joyce Carol Thomas

Zoom City, Thatcher Hurd

## 18-36 Months

The child is able to name familiar pictures, turn one page at a time, and carry a book around the house. She is able to concentrate on simple stories but still needs a great deal of one-on-one interaction and physical activity.

Be Gentle! Virginia Miller

Book! Kristine O'Connell George

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault

Color Zoo, Lois Ehlert

Come Along, Daisy Jane Simmons

Construction Zone, Tana Hoban

Dinosaur Roar! Paul Stickland and Henrietta Stickland

Dinosaurs, Dinosaurs, Byron Barton

Hello, LuLu, Caroline Uff

Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear? Nancy White Carlstrom

Little White Duck, Bernard and Walt Whippo

Maisy's ABC, Lucy Cousins

Max's First Word, Rosemary Wells

"More More More," Said the Baby, Vera Williams

Mouse Mess, Linnea Riley

On Mother's Lap, Ann Herbert Scott

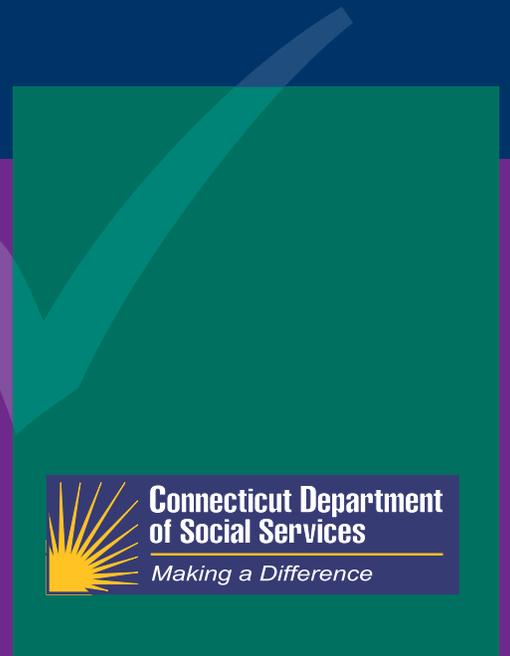
Silly Little Goose! Nancy Tafuri

The Tale of Peter Rabbit, Beatrix Potter

The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Eric Carle

The Wheels on the Bus, Raffi

You're Just What I Need, Ruth Krauss



Developed by the Connecticut Department of Social Services

