

Positive Parenting Tips for Healthy Child Development



Infants (0-1 year old)

Developmental Milestones

Cognitive development for your baby means the learning process of memory, language, thinking and reasoning. Your baby is learning to recognize the sound of your voice. She is also learning to focus her vision from the periphery or the corner of her eyes to the center. Language development is more than uttering sounds (“babble”), or mama/dada. Listening, understanding, and knowing the names of people and things are all components of language development. During this stage, your baby is also developing bonds of love and trust with you. The way you cuddle, hold, and play with your baby will set the basis for how he will interact with you and others.

For more information on developmental milestones and warning signs of possible developmental delays, visit [Learn the Signs. Act Early.](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/ActEarly) (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/ActEarly>)

Positive Parenting

- Talk to your baby. It is soothing to hear your voice.
- When your baby makes sounds, answer him by repeating and adding words. This will help him learn to use language.
- Read to your baby. This helps her develop and understand language and sounds.
- Sing to your baby.
- Play music. This helps your baby develop a love for music and math.
- Praise your baby and give him lots of loving attention.
- Spend time cuddling and holding your baby. This helps her feel cared for and secure.
- The best time to play with your baby is when he’s alert and relaxed. Watch your baby closely for signs of being tired or fussy so that you can take a break.
- Parenting can be hard work! Take care of yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally. It is easier to enjoy your new baby and be a positive, loving parent when you are feeling good yourself.



Promoting the health of babies, children, and adults,
and enhancing the potential for full, productive living

www.cdc.gov/ncbddd

Department of Health and Human Services

National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities



Child Safety First

Now that your newborn is at home, it is time to make sure that your home is a safe place. Look around your home for household items that might present a possible danger to your baby. As a parent, it is your responsibility to ensure that you create a safe environment for your baby. It is also important that you take the necessary steps to make sure that you are mentally and emotionally ready for your new baby. Here are a few tips to keep your baby safe during her first year of life.

- It is important that you never shake your newborn baby. Newborn babies have very weak neck muscles that are not yet able to support their heads. If you shake your baby you can damage his brain and delay normal development.
- To prevent SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), it is recommended that you always put your baby to sleep on her back. For more information on SIDS, visit National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sids/sids.cfm>).
- Place your baby in a car safety seat every time he rides in the car. The safest place for his safety seat is in the back seat of the car. Children who are less than one year OR are less than 20 pounds should be placed in a rear-facing care seat.
- To prevent your baby from choking, cut her food into small bites. Don't allow your baby to play with anything that may cover her face or is easy for her to swallow.
- Never carry hot liquids or food near your baby or while holding him.
- Immunizations (shots) are important to protect your child's health and safety. Because children are susceptible to many potentially serious diseases, it is important that your child receive the proper immunizations. Please consult your local health care provider to ensure that your child is up-to-date on her childhood immunizations. You may visit the CDC immunization website (<http://www.cdc.gov/nip/recs/child-schedule.htm>) to obtain a copy of the recommended immunization schedule for U.S. children

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