Positive Parenting Tips: Babies

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Cognitive development for your baby means the learning process of memory, language, thinking, and reasoning. Your baby is learning to focus her vision from the periphery or the corner of her eyes to the center. She's also learning to recognize the sound of your voice. Language development is important during this time. It's more than babbling or saying ma-ma or da-da.

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.

Here are some positive ways to help the development of your baby:

- Talk to your baby. It's 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 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.

Proper nutrition, exercise, and rest are very important for children's health and development. Providing a safe and loving home and spending time with your child – playing, singing, reading, and even just talking – can make a big difference in his or her development.

To learn more about child development, visit www.cdc.gov.

For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO 24/7.