

TALK!

Talking to your baby from birth is a priceless gift that enriches brain development, and it's the best way to help your baby understand and learn to use language!

Use the Language of Love. Babies begin learning to talk by taking turns. They coo, look at you, and wait. You coo and they gurgle back. These early conversations teach your baby about language, and about being loved!

Have Changing Table Chats. Diapering is a wonderful talking time. Your baby loves to gaze at you and will focus on watching your face and listening to your words as you tell her what you're doing.

Respond Gently. In the first year, crying is your baby's basic communication system. Respond with a gentle tone and loving words so that he learns you are listening to him.

Be a Generous Word Giver. Name everything your baby can see! Flowers and animals, toys and clothes. The more words your baby hears the better!



Talk About What Your Baby is Doing. When your baby reaches for your nose, say in a cooing voice, "That's my nose. Are you going to grab it?"

Talk About What You Are Doing all Through the Day. Before you pick your baby up, reach your hands towards her and say, "I'm going to pick you up." This helps her learn language and to expect what will come next.

Tell Stories. Stories can be made up or you can tell a familiar tale like "The Three Bears." Or just tell a story about what you are doing with your baby as it is happening!

**Every Baby! Every Day!
Talk. Sing. Read. Play.**

A Community Campaign led by the Family Reading Partnership



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SING!

Music wakes up your baby's brain! Babies enjoy the rhyme and rhythm of the words and melody in a song, and love watching your face as you sing.

Just Sing! Sing to your baby, even if you don't think you sound great. Your baby is a great audience and will love hearing how your voice changes when you add music.

Sing Songs From Your Childhood.

Babies have been soothed by lullabies for centuries. Do you remember any songs that your mother or grandmother sang to you? Pass them along to your little one!



Add Some Variety.

Babies enjoy all kinds of music. Try classical music, jazz, or your own favorite popular music.

Chant. For a change, just say the lyrics with a strong beat, instead of singing. You can make any song into a rap or chant!

Hum! If you can't remember the words just hum a tune. Or replace all the words with one syllable, especially if it is a sound your baby is practicing, like "ba" or "da."

Move While You Sing. Music and movement just naturally go together. Your baby will love swaying to music with you.

Change It Up. Sing or hum, faster, slower, softer, and slightly louder. All of these simple changes make the song a new and interesting experience for your baby.

Make It Personal. Use familiar tunes and change the words. Insert your baby's name or just sing about whatever you are doing!

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READ !

Listening to you read gives your baby the words he will say one day. Reading together now will start a loving tradition of sharing books everyday for years to come!

Snuggle Up and Read. Holding your baby close while reading helps him connect the things he loves most—your voice, and being with you—to books!

Read Throughout the Day. Read for even a few minutes at a time. Soon your baby will settle into the routine and be ready for the whole book... and then a whole stack of books!



Read the Pictures.

If your baby wants to flip the pages, just talk about the pictures. Point to things and name them.

Keep Books Handy. Keep books in your stroller, diaper bag, car, near the highchair, at the changing table. Have baskets of books throughout the house so there will always be a book ready for your baby to enjoy.

A “Taste” for Reading. For older babies, books, become toys to grasp, open, close and even chew on! Learning to love books starts with actively exploring them.

Read Anywhere! When your baby gets older and wants to keep moving, read while he is sitting in his high chair or while he’s practicing standing.

Again... and Again! Babies love, and learn from, repetition. Don’t be afraid to read the same books over and over.

Visit the Library. Many libraries have story time for babies. Pick up a book for yourself, too. When you’re reading for pleasure you are your baby’s reading role model!

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PLAY !

Your baby is curious about everything! When you play together you are teaching your little one about the great big world, how things work, but more importantly that you love spending time together!



Your Face is a Toy! Your face will be your baby’s favorite and most important toy for many months. Show your baby all the things your face can do! Try slowly sticking out your tongue. Your baby may try to copy you!

Hands and Feet are Toys Too! Count those toes, pretend to eat them up, kiss all those little fingers!

Surprise! Take a floaty scarf and fling it into the air, letting it settle by your baby’s feet or on your head, then let it land on your baby’s head. Act surprised every time!

I’m Gonna Get You! When your baby is sitting in her infant seat, move slowly toward her saying “I see you, and I’m coming to get you! I’m gonna kiss you! ... Gotcha!” Then cover your baby in kisses.

Tummy Time Together. Tummy time helps babies learn to push up, roll over, sit up, and crawl. Join your baby on the floor. Lay with your face close to his. Talk with him, shake a rattle, and make funny faces.

Your Closet is a Play Space. Your closet is a great place for you and your baby to explore. Let your baby look at all the colors, and feel the silky or wooly fabrics. Play a version of peek-a-boo by ducking behind hanging clothes.

Learn to Respond to Your Baby’s Cues. Just like adults, babies don’t always like being social. When your baby has had enough, she will turn away or fuss a bit to let you know she needs a break. She’ll be ready to play again soon!

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