

Simple things make all the difference

There are many simple things you do every day that help your child learn and grow. The chart in this brochure shows the many ways young children grow and develop. It also shows what you and your baby's other caregivers can do to encourage learning and healthy development. You may want to hang it above your baby's changing table or on your refrigerator so you can look at it often.

Find your baby's age at the top of the chart, and then look at the pictures below. See what many babies are learning or doing at the same age. Find some simple ideas for play with your child that can help her learn and grow.



If your baby was born prematurely use your baby's "adjusted age" when you use this development chart. To figure out your baby's adjusted age, take his actual age (in months) and subtract how many months he was early.

For example, if your child was born 6 months ago, but was born 2 months early, use the adjusted age of 4 months.

Keep me safe while I'm learning and growing

There are things you can do to reduce the chance of injury but you still need to watch me closely.

- Always put me on my back to sleep. Make sure my other caregivers do the same.
- Make sure I am buckled up correctly in my car seat on every car ride.
- Don't let me play with anything that is small enough to fit in a toilet paper tube. I could choke.
- Stay with me every second while I am in the bathtub or near water. I can drown in even a few inches of water.
- Put safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs and in doorways to rooms that are not child-proofed.
- Keep cleaners, poisons, vitamins and medicines locked up, or on a high shelf.
- Put plastic covers on electric outlets, and latches on cupboards, drawers and toilets.
- Keep furniture away from windows so that I can't climb up and fall out.
- Attach tall or heavy furniture, like dressers or TV cabinets, to the wall or keep me away from them.
- Keep me away from the stove, oven and microwave, and away from hot foods and drinks.
- Have at least one working smoke detector on each level of our home, and change the battery once a year!



Questions or concerns?

Every child grows at his or her own pace. Sometimes children have developmental delays that can improve with extra support.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's development, talk with his or her doctor or nurse. You can also call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588, or 711 (tty relay) for the name of a Family Resources Coordinator (FRC). An FRC can help arrange for a free developmental screening and further services, if needed.



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If you have a disability and need this document in another format, please call 1-800-322-2588 (711-TTY relay).

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Watch & help me grow Birth to 18 months



One simple activity, like reading together, can help your child develop in many different ways.

You are your child's first teacher.

The time you spend with your baby is important.



I learn best when you love me, encourage me and help me be with other people. When you hold me on your lap I feel close to you and know you want to read with me.

I want to learn and you can help me. I like it when you let me choose the book and decide when to turn the pages.

I learn when you help me explore the world around me. You are showing me how wonderful books are and all they can teach me.

I grow and learn when my body is active. When I sit on your lap I hold my head up and try to turn pages with my fingers. As I get older, I can act out the stories for you as you read them to me.

I learn when you play, talk, read and write with me. As you read to me, I am learning words and stories. I will begin to understand that the words on the page mean something.

The chart inside shows many other everyday activities you can do with your baby to help her develop.

You help me learn and grow through everyday things we do together. Everything I learn, do and feel is connected.
How I learn and grow depends on both who I am and what I experience.

Watch and help me grow from birth to 18 months!

Birth - 3 Months

3 - 6 Months

6 - 9 Months

9 - 12 Months

12 - 15 Months

15 - 18 Months

PHYSICAL HEALTH

I grow and learn best when my body is healthy.

I can lift my head.



I need some awake time on my tummy, playing with you on the floor.

I can roll over.



I love exploring on the floor. Put toys near me...I'll reach for them!

I can sit up, try to move.



I learn by doing. Give me toys I can hold and a safe place to move around.

I use my fingers and toes.



Play games and sing songs with me that use my hands and feet.

I start walking without help.



Let me try new things. Play and walk with me outside.

I can climb and dance.



Find places I can use my arms and legs to climb safely. Dance with me!

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL

I learn best when you love me, encourage me and help me be with other people.

I need and trust you.



Feed me and respond when I cry so I learn I can count on you.

I show my feelings.



Notice my feelings. Respond to my sounds and moods in a reassuring way.

I like familiar people best.



Have the same people take care of me. This helps me feel safe and loved.

I enjoy playing with adults.



Sing out loud and dance with me. Play with things that make noise.

I like to explore with help.



Encourage me to explore while you watch. Smile and say, "You did it!"

I need help with my feelings.



Stay near me when I'm upset. Hug me and say kind words to me.

HOW I LEARN

I want to learn and you can encourage me.

I look at faces and smile.



Look in my eyes while you change me or feed me. Smile at me.

I like to hold things.



I like to see and touch everything. Help me play with safe toys.

I like to play with toys.



Play with me using toys with different textures, sounds and shapes.

I move to explore.



Give me safe places to play and move. Watch me closely.

I know what I want.



Notice what I like and want to do. Play along with me.

I learn through play.



Let me find new ways to play. Show me your ideas, too.

THINGS I KNOW

I learn when you help me explore the world around me.

I learn through my senses.



Play quiet music while you hold me close.

I notice routines.



Cuddle me and sing quietly to me before bedtime.

I am interested in people.



Show me people in pictures and books. Look in the mirror with me.

I like to play hiding games.



Hide something and then uncover it. Play peek-a-boo with me.

I begin to scribble.



Let me try crayons and markers while you draw with me.

I put things together.



Help me play with things I can stack or simple puzzles.

LANGUAGE

I learn when you play, talk, read and write with me.

I make noises and listen.



Talk to me and respond to my sounds. I'm learning from what you say!

I make and respond to sounds.



I learn words before I can talk. Tell me the words for things we see and do.

I babble and try to talk.



Read books with me. Name and help me point to things in the pictures.

I use sounds with gestures.



Talk with me. Wait for me to make sounds and then talk to me again.

I begin using words.



I want to understand and say words. Tell me what is happening as we do it.

I want to be understood.



Listen and give me time to talk. Add your words to mine.

Birth - 3 Months

3 - 6 Months

6 - 9 Months

9 - 12 Months

12 - 15 Months

15 - 18 Months