

Parenting Your Infant

What to Expect & How to Support Your
Child's Development Along the Way



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What We're Covering . . .



Development & Guidelines

- We're exploring eating, sleeping, and developmental milestones.



Engagement & Activities

- Maximizing day-to-day experiences through activities; diaper changes, baby wearing, & floor time.



Daycare & Homecare

- Daycare benefits, home care benefits, and exploring the differences to find the best fit.





Development & Guidelines

Breastfeeding & Formula Feeding

- **Within the first year of life, breast milk or formula will be your baby's main source of nutrition.**
 - **Breastfed**
 - Most newborn, breastfed babies eat as often as every 1 to 3 hours. As they get older, infants will then eat every 2-4 hours
 - **Formula fed**
 - Most newborn, formula fed babies eat 1-2 ounces every 2-3 hours. As they get older, they will typically eat every 3-4 hours as they get older.
- Whether you breastfed or formula fed, it is important that you **follow your baby's cues** -also known as "**responsive feeding.**"
 - **Hunger Cues**
 - Puts hands in mouth
 - Turns head towards breast, aka "rooting"
 - Opens mouth / makes sucking noises
 - Fists may be more clenched/flexed muscles
 - **Fullness Cues**
 - Turns head away from bottle or breast
 - Closes mouth/keeps it closed
 - Fist & body may be more relaxed





Development & Guidelines

Introduction to Solids

- According to the Dietary Guidelines for American Academy of Pediatrics, **solid foods can be introduced around 6 months** as long as signs of readiness are observed:
 - Can sit up without assistance
 - Controls, turns, and stabilizes the head and neck
 - Brings objects to mouth
 - Tongue-thrust reflex is gone

Different Approaches to Solids

- **Spoon Feeding**
 - Caregiver may typically spoon feed baby **pureed foods**
 - **Caregiver leads** the eating experience
- **Baby-led Weaning**
 - Caregiver provides **whole foods** (cut when applicable) to baby.
 - **Baby leads** their eating & exploration experience
- **Combination Feeding** (Spoon Feeding & Baby-led Weaning)





Development & Guidelines

Infant Sleep

- **Newborns (0–3 months old) need approximately 14–17 hours** of sleep/day.
- **Infants (4–12 months old) need approximately 12–16 hours** of sleep/day.

Tips for Better & Safer Sleep

- **Safe Sleep Conditions:**
 - **Always place your baby on their back** during rest/sleep time.
 - Avoid loose sheets, blankets, plush toys, pillows, and bumpers, as they **can be a suffocation hazard**.
 - Consider a crib, sidecar crib, bassinets, and play yards for sleep. Strollers, baby wearing & your chest are some options for infant naps.
- **Notice "sleepy cues"** and prepare for rest. Cues may include:
 - Rubbing eyes, yawning, heavy and reddish eyelids, fussiness, and gazing off.
- As your baby nears their nap time, you can **engage in calming activities (building a routine)** such as:
 - Reading a book, singing lullabies, body massage, and/or rocking them.
- Get your baby outside during the day to **support a healthy sleep/wake cycle**.



Development & Guidelines

Milestones

- **All children develop differently and at different paces.** However, if you are concerned with your child's development, trust your gut and check in with your child's pediatrician.
- **0–3 Months:**
 - Rooting and latching onto nipple (breast or bottle)
 - Turns head towards sounds
 - Coo's, cries, and begins babbling
 - Smiles and makes eye contact
- **4–7 Months:**
 - Follows moving objects with their eyes
 - Recognizes and responds to name
 - Begins to sit up without support
 - Can roll over on either side
- **8–12 Months:**
 - May become upset when separated from caregiver
 - Identifies and may say familiar words
 - Crawls, cruises, and can pull self up to standing position
 - Can self-feed finger foods





Engagement & Activities

How Learning Happens

- At its absolute core, learning is our brain's ability to make connections.
 - Connections are made from day-to-day interactions and are enhanced by **hands-on, sensory-rich, repetitive experiences that elicit intrinsic motivation.**

Activities

- Practice a **healthy balance of new experiences and offering new materials**
- **Less is more! Everything is brand new to our babies,** therefore keep it simple and offer fewer options, while allowing your infant to revisit materials and experiences time-and-time again.
- **Read books:**
 - It is never too soon or too late to read to your baby!
 - Aim to read to your baby at least 2x a day.
 - Start slow and gauge duration by their engagement.
 - Reading can happen as your baby eats, is on the floor, and /or be part of a bedtime routine.





Engagement & Activities

Diapering

- **It is estimated during infancy that 12 diapers could be changed a day!**
- **Verbally & Physically communicate with your baby:**
 - Inform your baby that you're going to pick them up and change their diaper
 - Pick your baby up with delicacy and warmth
 - Describe your actions as you go
 - Maintain eye contact – nonverbal communication is still communication!
- **Be silly and have fun with the experience:**
 - Be expressive with facial expressions and tone of voice – "Stinky poopy!"
 - Play games after the diaper is changed or provide relaxing experiences:
 - Peek-a-boo
 - Blow bubbles on tummy
 - Body massage
 - Move legs in bicycle motion to alleviate gas pains.
- **Increases a positive diaper experience as well as the baby/parent bond.**





Engagement & Activities

Baby Wear

- Baby wearing is a great way to keep your baby close (for comfort) while offering them **different views & perspectives of the world around them.**
 - Talk and sing as you go!
 - **Supports expressive & receptive language development**
 - For older infants, forward face them so they **can touch and reach for things around them** (e.g. leaves on a tree, different fabrics, etc.)

Floor Time

- Offer your baby time on the floor for **free range exploration**
 - **Add a few materials at reasonable distance** to encourage your baby to reach/obtain them.
- Also known as **tummy time**, this event allows your child to **strengthen muscles, while eventually practicing skills such as sitting up, crawling, and cruising.**
- **Follow your baby's cues**
 - If they are uncomfortable, pick them up and try again later. Tummy time can also be practiced by having baby lay across your chest.





Daycare & Homecare

Finding a fit for your family!

- There is no "right" or "wrong" or "better" or "worse" option when it comes to your child's care – it's all about your specific family needs!

Daycare

- **Whether daycare or home care, you're entitled to ask questions!**
 - Teacher credentials & experience
 - Policies, calendar of events & school closings
 - Book a tour!
- **Advantages:**
 - More accountability of care
 - Greater likelihood that teachers are receiving ongoing professional development and trainings.
 - (Typically) greater exposure and experiences with peers
- **Challenges:**
 - Less personalized schedules
 - Less 1:1 engagement





Daycare & Homecare

Homecare

- **Whether daycare or home care, you're entitled to ask questions!**
 - Caregiver credentials & experience
 - References
 - Schedule & availability
 - Invite a candidate over and see how they interact with your baby. Observe adult/child engagement
- **Advantages:**
 - More customized care
 - 1:1 focused care
 - Care (may) come to you
- **Challenges:**
 - Less accountability of care
 - Reliant on one person's attendance
 - Daycare will still typically be open in the event a teacher is absent





Questions?

Let's Hear Them!



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