

Communication

Activities to Help Your Baby Grow and Learn



Your baby's babbling is beginning to sound more like talking. He says "mama" and really means it. He also is beginning to learn the names of things. He may say "no" if he is not happy. Because he's so busy learning to walk, his language use may slow down a bit. He may combine a word with pointing or using his hand to gesture, but you know very well what he means.

Hide the Noises

Show your baby two things that make noise, such as a squeak toy, a set of measuring spoons, keys on a ring, or a rattle. Let baby play with them for a while, then hide the items under a box or cloth and make a noise with one. Take the cloth off and ask baby, "Which one made the noise?" See if she can guess.

Quiet Time

On weekends or at a time that's not busy, spend time with baby in a quiet place with no music and no television (perhaps outside). Talk to your baby about what you're doing or about what baby is doing. Let your baby hear your voice and see your face making words. Talk calmly and tell baby how special he is. When your baby talks, encourage him. Have a conversation.

Rhythm Clapping

While listening to music, show baby how to move and clap in rhythm. Your baby will enjoy moving to the beat. Play different types of music, such as rock, country, hip-hop, funk, electronic, pop, or classical. Be sure to keep the volume down. Those sweet ears have to last a long time!

Listening on the Phone

When Uncle or Grandpa calls, ask him to spend a few minutes talking to baby. Baby probably won't talk back yet, but she will be delighted to hear someone's voice coming through the phone.

Big Talk

While you do housework or get a meal together, talk to your baby about what you are doing. Encourage your little one to use two words together to make baby sentences, such as "Help me" or "More juice." This big language step will grow into a lot of talk.

Little Reader

Read to your baby every day. Snuggle up and make this a special time. Point to pictures and name things for her. Sometimes ask her to find something: "Where's the cat? Oh, here it is." She may need a little help from you at first.

Big Helper

Your baby can be a big helper. Give him simple directions: "Can you get me a napkin?" or "Give me your shirt, please." He may need you to point or help a little. Say, "What a big help. Thanks!"

Notes:



Don't Forget! Activities should be supervised at all times by an adult. Any material, food, or toy given to a young child should be reviewed for safety.