



PARENTING WITH SUCCESS NEWSLETTER

From Birth to Six Weeks



YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT

FROM BIRTH TO SIX WEEKS

Brain Development

Look for Your Baby To:

- Be interested in watching things in his or her surroundings
- Begin to follow people and objects with his or her eyes
- Bring fist to his or her mouth and suck on it
- Observe faces and sometimes imitate expressions
- Learn to trust

Here's What You Can Do:

- Provide baby with lots of opportunities to see what's going on
- Change his or her position and location frequently so there are new things to see
- Hold objects about 8 inches from baby's face and move slowly from side to side.
- Talk to him or her about what you're doing and seeing him or her do
- If the room isn't too brightly lit, baby may be able to keep her or his eyes open longer and observe for longer periods of time
- Respond to your baby's cries promptly and effectively. This reassures baby that his or her needs will be taken care of

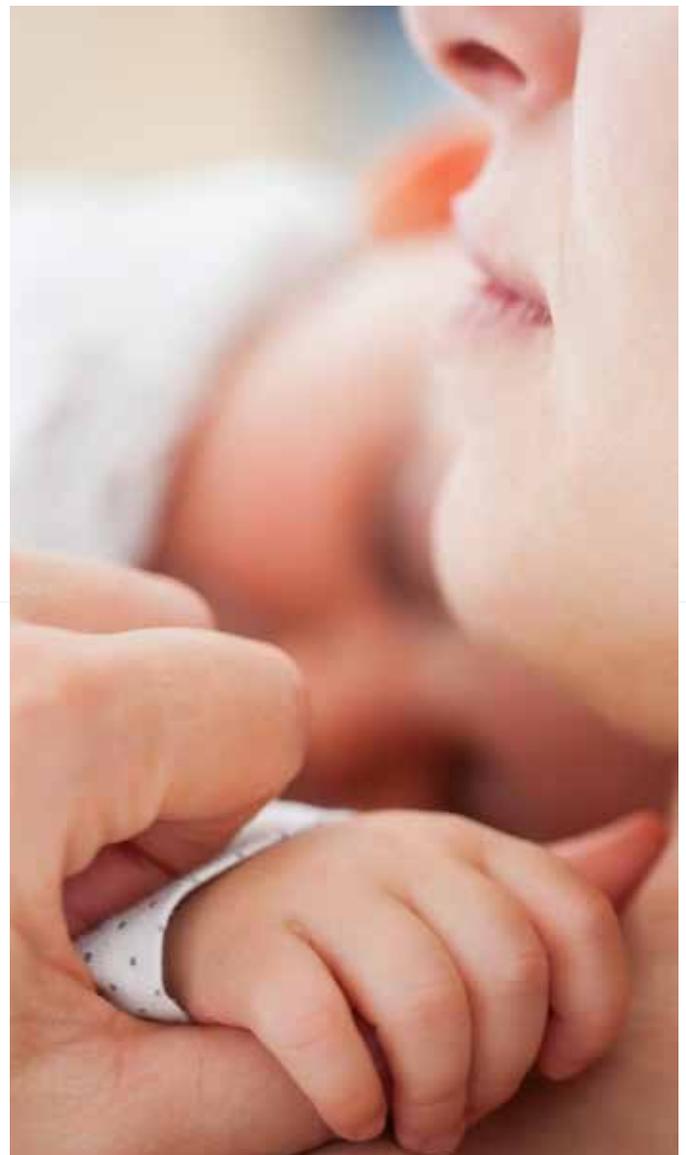
Language Development

Look for Your Baby To:

- Recognize the voices of parents
- Begin to coo and gurgle during awake and alert times
- Have different cries for different needs
- Respond to sounds
- Prefer voices to other sounds

Here's What You Can Do:

- Talk and sing to your baby frequently
- Mimic baby's sounds
- Listen to your baby's cries and learn to recognize what the differences mean. By responding, you are teaching your baby that his or her needs will be met
- Provide lots of different sounds for your baby to listen to
- Read to your baby, even though she or he doesn't understand the words



Social-Emotional Development

Look for Your Baby To:

- Enjoy watching people in his or her surroundings, especially faces
- Be comforted by your touch and voice, and stop crying when held
- Begin to smile at parents
- Begin to develop a sensitivity to the moods and feelings of parents
- Expect that his or her needs will be taken care of

Here's What You Can Do:

- Provide baby with lots of opportunities to watch things and people around her or him
- Feel free to hold and cuddle your baby often
- Look at your baby often and talk to her or him
- As you hold your baby in your arms, smile and make little noises to your baby, and let him or her know that you are happy to be with him or her
- Respond to your baby's needs when she or he cries. This teaches baby that you can figure out his or her needs
- Remember, you CANNOT spoil a newborn baby!



Physical Development

Look for Your Baby To:

- Begin muscle development in a "head to toe" pattern
- Try to lift his or her head — it will be wobbly and still needs lots of support
- Move arms and legs; begin to bring a fist to his or her mouth
- Follow people and objects with his or her eyes

Here's What You Can Do:

- Provide baby with some "tummy time" so he or she can practice raising his or her head a few times each day (Remember to always put your baby to sleep on his or her back)
- Encourage baby to follow an interesting object with his or her eyes by holding it 8-10 inches in front of him or her and moving it slowly side to side

PREMATURE BABIES

If your baby was born earlier than expected, developmental milestones may be "off schedule" a bit. Don't be concerned if your premature baby isn't doing all of these things yet. You may need to save this newsletter for a few weeks and then check again.

ALL BABIES ARE DIFFERENT

All babies develop at their own rates. Notice your child's growth in each area so you can encourage each new stage. Your job is to provide opportunities for your child to learn new things when he or she is ready, without being pushed or pressured. If you have concerns, contact your health care provider or the family life education office at Avera, 605-322-3660.

LET'S MAKE IT SAFE

Is Well Water Safe for Babies?

If you get your drinking water from a well, it is important to have your water tested before you use it to mix your baby's formula. Some wells can contain high levels of bacteria and nitrates which are harmful to your baby. Have your well water tested once a year to protect your family's health. For more information on well water safety, visit epa.gov/safewater/privatewells

Warming Baby's Bottle

Microwaving is not recommended as a safe way to warm your baby's bottle of breastmilk or formula. Microwaving can cause hot spots in the liquid which can burn a baby's mouth. Some plastic bottles are not durable enough to withstand microwaving and may burst, burning a baby. Use a bottle warmer, or put the bottle in a pan of hot water. Always shake the bottle to be sure the heat is even, and test on your wrist for proper temperature.

Safe Travel for Babies

It is a law in all states that babies MUST be buckled in approved car seats whenever traveling in the car. Be sure your car seat is properly installed. In Sioux Falls, contact Sioux Falls Fire Rescue for help.

Product Recalls

All parents should monitor recalls of children's products. We recommend the Consumer Product Safety Commission or Safe Kids, which will either email you periodic updates on product recalls, or send a newsletter by mail. Visit cpsc.gov or safekids.org



HEALTH HINTS

Immunizations

Childhood immunizations are important! Talk to your baby's health care provider to set up a schedule of immunizations for your child.

When to Call the Doctor

It will take time to adjust to your baby's habits and schedule. It is normal to be concerned about little problems that are common in the first few days of life. However, a call to your health care provider is a good idea if your baby has any of the following symptoms:

- Fever taken under the arm of 100.4 degrees F or higher
- Repeated vomiting
- Several refused feedings in a row
- Listlessness
- Crying excessively for no known cause
- An unusual or severe rash
- Frequent or successive bowel movements with excess fluid, mucous or foul odor

You can also call Avera McKennan Ask A Nurse at 605-322-6877 or 1-877-AT-AVERA 24 hours a day if you need help deciding whether to take your child to the doctor or you have questions.



LITTLE BODIES NEED BIG NUTRITION

Feeding Your Baby is One of Your Most Important Jobs!

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of a baby's life, and also recommends that breastfeeding continue for the first year. Fortified infant formula is an acceptable substitute if you choose not to breastfeed. Most babies will not need solids until 6 months of age. Adding solids too early might lead to allergies. Despite what some people will tell you, feeding cereal will not help your baby sleep through the night. Do not add cereal to a baby's bottle; this is a choking hazard. If you have questions about breastfeeding, call the Avera Breastfeeding Center at 605-322-4490. Check with your health care provider if you have other feeding questions.

THINKING ABOUT GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Can You Spoil a Baby?

Research tells us that you cannot spoil a baby who is less than 6 months old! Babies of this age only cry if they have a need, and they depend on you to help them. Crying is a baby's main way of communicating — it does not mean the baby is being demanding, or that you are not a good parent. When you meet your baby's needs quickly, the baby gains confidence in finding ways to have his or her needs met, and learns to trust you. This is a very important foundation for baby's brain development. As parents and babies become more familiar with each other, you will learn to recognize differences in the baby's cries and what they mean.

HEALTH HINTS cont.

Why Does Baby Cry?

Babies cry for a reason. It is the only way they have to let you know they need something. Some common reasons for crying might be:

- **Hunger**
Try feeding slowly
- **Pain**
Change position, burp, massage
- **Tired**
Rock or put baby in the crib
- **Sick**
Check for fever, call your health care provider
- **Too hot or cold**
Add or remove clothing
- **Too much stimulation**
Provide quiet time
- **Needs a diaper change**
Change diaper
- **Needs to suck**
Offer breast or pacifier
- **Lonely**
Hold baby, talk, sing, use baby sling
- **Needs change of position**
Move baby to a new location or position

Some babies cry more than others. Some babies have certain times of the day when they cry. Crying is a normal behavior. If you think your baby cries too much, or more than is typical, talk to your health care provider.

CHILDCARE CORNER

Selecting Childcare

If you will be returning to work and leaving your baby in childcare, you have important decisions to make. Be sure to give yourself plenty of time to make the best decision for your child's care.

- Decide if you want a family child care or a child care center
- Interview all possible candidates and check references thoroughly
- Ask about the childcare providers training and experience
- Find out what the adult/child ratio will be, especially with infants
- The home or center should meet basic safety requirements
- Be sure you agree with the philosophy of the provider with regard to discipline, learning, television time, etc.
- Be sure your provider knows about Abusive Head Trauma — formerly known as Shaken Baby Syndrome — and how to prevent it
- Be sure your providers place your baby on his or her back to sleep

For more information on choosing childcare, contact the Help!line Center by dialing 211 in the Sioux Falls area or visit their website helplinecenter.org and click on the childcare guide.

Activity Corner

Your child's favorite toy at this age is you! He or she loves to see your face and hear your voice. Talk to baby using exaggerated facial expressions and a higher pitched voice – he or she sees and hears these best. Sing to your baby. Your baby doesn't care if you are in tune or not! It is not too early to read to your baby. He or she doesn't understand the words, but looking at books can help with eye development and focusing abilities. These activities seem simple, but they play an important role in developing your baby's brain!

Help your baby experience a variety of textures by giving her or him things to hold or touch and by varying the fabrics he or she comes in contact with. Make a floor blanket by sewing together fabrics squares of different textures (satin, terry cloth, fleece, etc).

Mommies Matter; Dads Do, Too

It is important that parents get adequate rest. The demands of a newborn can be exhausting! Don't be afraid to ask for help from friends and family. Keep your days as simple as possible and don't expect to accomplish too much. Your house may not be as clean as you like, or you may not get all the laundry done, but that's OK. After a few months, you will feel more able to tackle these tasks.

Take time to get to know your baby. Don't expect to know how to do everything perfectly overnight. It takes time to understand your baby's schedule, cues and cries.

Many parents don't expect the strong feelings they have during the first few weeks after a new baby comes home. Tears and "baby blues" can happen for no apparent reason.

A Word About Television

Because of the brain development occurring, real life experiences are better for babies than watching television or other electronic screens. The sound and lights from television, even children's programs, can be distracting to babies and can keep them from doing activities that are more helpful. Watching a one dimensional television screen does not promote eye development in babies – learning to focus on distance, tracking side to side and experiencing depth. Most experts recommend keeping the TV off as much as possible to maximize your baby's learning.