



PARENTING WITH SUCCESS NEWSLETTER

From 7 to 9 Months



YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT

FROM 7 TO 9 MONTHS

Brain Development

Look for your baby to:

- Explore the environment with a great deal of curiosity
- Experiment with objects to see the cause and effect of actions
- Demonstrate object permanence — looking for objects that have been taken out of sight
- Explore by throwing, banging and dropping objects
- Look to learn — he or she might look at objects briefly before putting them in his or her mouth

Here's what you can do:

- Safety proof your home and make sure baby's toys are safe
- Make some cabinets available for baby to explore (cupboards with safe items like: plastic ware, pots and pans, and some safe utensils)
- Allow him or her to play with toys and gadgets that are safe but have interesting moving parts
- Play memory games — show him or her an object and then hide it under a blanket, encouraging exploration
- Put a variety of toys in a large box or basket and encourage baby to take them out
- Show baby cause and effect toys — pop up toys, shape drop toys or household gadgets like light switches that make things happen
- Demonstrate stacking and knocking down soft blocks
- Bath time is a great opportunity for learning — collect interesting containers and floating toys to use in the tub

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.

Language Development

Look for your baby to:

- String together vowel/consonant combinations like bah bah bah
- Experiment with voice by making bubbles with saliva, clicking or sucking noises, screaming and squealing
- Understand a few simple, familiar words
- Listen to conversation
- Jabber with expression
- Listen attentively to rhymes and songs; sing and move along with music

Here's what you can do:

- Use self talk — talk to your baby about what you are doing.
- Use parallel talk — describe what your baby is doing, seeing, hearing.
- Provide baby with songs and conversation that is fun and stimulating.
- Make music available to baby.
- Point to objects and emphasize their names.
- Reinforce attempts to say words (if your baby picks up a bottle and says "bah", smile and say, "Yes! That's your bottle!")
- Recite simple rhymes and play interactive games like "So Big."
- Let baby play with plastic or hard board books. Make it a family routine to read to your child daily. Begin by simply pointing to and naming colorful and interesting pictures in an enthusiastic voice.



Social-Emotional Development

Look for your baby to:

- Recognize familiar people and possibly be upset by an unfamiliar face
- Display affection and annoyance and indicate when he or she needs help
- Have a happy disposition most of the time
- Want to be comforted when hurt or upset
- Show excitement and frustration
- Begin self feeding cereal or crackers
- Imitate behaviors he or she has seen and social interactions he or she has watched
- Prefer being near you
- Begin to initiate social interaction

Here's what you can do:

- Be prepared for separation difficulties; when you must leave your child, be honest and reassuring and give time to adjust to your leaving. Sneaking out can damage the trust you have built.
- Hold and reassure your baby when strangers approach.
- Offer calm support when baby is tired or frustrated.
- Keep singing, talking, making eye contact and playing social games.
- Show excitement when baby discovers something new or figures something out.
- Be open to your child when she or he wants to interact with you.
- Encourage her or him to play games with you.

Physical Development

Look for your baby to:

- Sit supported; may sit alone
- Get to a sitting position
- Pull to stand and stand while holding onto something
- Begin to crawl on hands and knees, on tummy (combat crawl); or move by scooting on his or her bottom or rolling
- Continue to experiment with objects by banging, throwing, shaking, dropping
- Grasp objects with fist
- Take two objects

Here's what you can do:

- Help baby practice sitting
- Give baby plenty of space to roll and scoot
- Demonstrate banging, shaking, pounding
- Hand objects to your baby
- Do another safety check of your home

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

PRODUCT RECALLS

All parents should monitor recalls of children's products (toys, equipment, clothing, etc). We recommend the Consumer Product Safety Commission, which will either email you periodic updates on product recalls or send a newsletter by mail. Visit cpsc.gov.

CAR SEAT SAFETY

If you are switching from an infant car seat to a convertible seat, be sure to keep your baby's car seat rear-facing. Current recommendations are to keep a car seat rear-facing until the child is 2 years of age and reaches the upper weight limit of the seat. Remember, the longer you keep your child rear-facing, the safer he or she will be. When you switch to a different car seat, have a child safety seat technician double check the installation of the seat. Your local hospital, fire or police station can help you find a child car seat technician in your area.



HYPERTHERMIA

Every year in the United States, young children die when left in a hot car. The temperature inside a car rises 19 degrees in 10 minutes, 29 degrees in 20 minutes and 43 degrees in 60 minutes. A child's body heats up three to five times faster than an adult's. Never, ever leave a child in a car, even for a minute to run an errand.

Fifty-one percent of child hyperthermia deaths occur when a child is ACCIDENTALLY left in a car. This usually happens when the normal daily routine changes, or when the parent or caregiver is very stressed or distracted, and the child has fallen asleep. Some prevention techniques include:

- Place a stuffed animal in your child's car seat. Move it to the front seat when you place the child in the car seat. You will always know that if the stuffed animal is in front, your child is in back.
- Put your purse, wallet, laptop, briefcase, or anything you must have with you in the back seat. This means you have to open the back door to retrieve it before exiting the car, and gives you a back-up plan for noticing a forgotten child.

Thirty percent of child hyperthermia deaths occur when children play in unattended cars. Some prevention techniques include

- Never allow children to play unsupervised in cars
- Keep car doors locked, even in the driveway and garage, to keep children out
- Keep car trunks shut and locked to prevent access by children

Eighteen percent of child hyperthermia deaths occur because a child was left in the car ON PURPOSE, usually when an adult is running a "quick" errand. Prevention techniques include:

- NEVER leave a child in a car, even if you think it will be less than three minutes. It is easy for the errand to take longer, and for the adult to lose track of the time elapsed. It only takes minutes for the car temperature to rise to a level that can injure or kill a child.
- Cracking windows open DOES NOT reduce the time it takes for the temperature to rise.

HEALTH HINTS

LITTLE BODIES NEED BIG NUTRITION

Starting the Cup

Your baby is probably ready to start using a cup. Choose a non-breakable cup with handles. You can start with a cup that has a lid with a spout, but remember — the goal is for baby to drink from an open cup with no lid. The movement of a baby's mouth when using a sippy lid does not teach baby to move the liquid to the back of the mouth. Sippy cups cause liquids to flow over the teeth rather than toward that back of the mouth like an open cup. This can cause dental cavities. Babies and toddlers should not be carrying sippy cups around unless they contain only water.

Start with a small amount of formula, breastmilk or water in the cup. Show baby how to hold and tip the cup. Remember, learning this skill will take lots of practice and might be messy! An alternative to a sippy cup is a cup with a lid containing a soft, flexible straw that pops up.

WARNING: Honey is harmful to babies. Do not feed honey to babies until they are at least 12 months of age. A young baby's immature immune system and intestinal tract cannot handle a harmful spore that can be present in honey.

New Foods for Baby

At about 6 months of age, you can begin to add protein foods like strained meats to your baby's diet. You can also begin yogurt, cottage cheese and soft cheeses.

Foods to avoid in the first 12 months:

- Bacon, lunch meats and hotdogs
- French fries
- Creamed vegetables
- Puddings and ice cream
- Cookies, candies, cakes

- Sweetened drinks (soda)
- Honey, peanuts, peanut butter
- Caffeinated drinks and diet drinks
- Cow's milk

Remember!

- Your baby's bottle is for breastmilk and formula only; do not add cereal or juice to the bottle.
- Do not give your baby Kool-Aid, Hi-C, soda or fruit punch. These fluids can harm your baby's teeth.
- Children do not need juice before one year of age, however, you can offer 2-4 ounces per day of 100 percent juice with vitamin C diluted with water in a child-sized cup.

[Learn more: Feeding Guide for Healthy Infants](#) and [Children's Nutrition Guidelines](#)



HEALTH HINTS cont.

EYE DEVELOPMENT

Baby's eyes have been developing since birth. It takes a long time for baby to learn to use both eyes together and there are things you can do to encourage this development.

- When you put baby in the crib, alternate baby's position so he or she has the opportunity to use both eyes.
- Move objects into baby's field of vision, horizontally, vertically and close and far. This helps baby practice using both eyes and both sides of the body.
- Take baby on outings to give him or her new things to look at and focus on.
- It is not unusual for a baby to continue to cross the eyes occasionally until as long as 18 months. Tell your health care provider if you notice this and ask for advice regarding additional evaluation.

SUN SAFETY

Fresh air and sunshine is good for your baby, but too much sun can cause problems. Here are some tips for sun safety:

- The sun's rays are strongest from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., so limit baby's exposure during these times.
- Keep baby out of direct sun; use the sun shade on your stroller and dress baby in a hat and light weight clothing that covers most of the body.
- Babies older than 6 months should use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. Always test a small area of your baby's skin with sunscreen to check for an allergic reaction, before applying to larger areas of the body. Reapply sunscreen every two hours.



THINKING ABOUT GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

FIVE GREAT IDEAS FOR GOOD DISCIPLINE

- 1. Prevention is important!** Try to anticipate things that might get baby in trouble by safety-checking your home; move the breakables and gate stairways. If baby does something that you can't allow, think of ways to prevent it in the future. You can create a "trouble-free" environment for your baby to explore and learn. This is much better for development than yelling, hand slapping, and too many "no's".
- 2. Ignoring is a form of discipline!** When baby does things that are annoying but not really harmful, it is OK to ignore them. Pulling all the socks out of the sock drawer means more work for you, but it doesn't really hurt anything, and baby is learning from it! Also, getting too much attention for these kinds of behaviors teaches baby to do it again to gain attention.
- 3. Redirection and distraction can work!** When baby does something or has something that you do not like, give her or him something else to catch her or his interest. Getting baby started on a new activity is much easier than trying to take something away.
- 4. Reward good behavior!** Give your baby smiles, hugs and other attention when she or he is playing nicely. When you only notice misbehavior, your baby will do those things just to get your attention. Your attention is baby's most important reward! Use it to get baby to practice doing what you want.
- 5. Limits are important, but so is freedom!** Exploring is baby's way of learning, but your job is to protect baby. Think carefully about offering both freedom and appropriate limits. Limit baby's time in playpens and high chairs; too much can hurt baby's learning and exploring.

Minimizing the No's

Your baby is beginning to understand a few words and the tone of your voice. Instead of saying no to discipline baby, use one or two words for a specific direction:

Hot!

Yucky!

Tastes bad!

Ouchy!

Careful!

Come here!

You get the picture! This will be much more effective than just yelling no all the time. Baby's memory is still short, so it will take time to remember which things are off limits.



BABY PLAYTIME

CHILDCARE CORNER

Communicating With Your Childcare Provider

It is important to keep the lines of communication open between parents and childcare providers. This sounds simple, but in reality it can be hard. The short time when a child is dropped off and picked up is really not enough for good communication. Consider a weekly phone visit with your provider (be sure to set this up in advance when the caregiver is not too busy) or start a "traveling notebook" that you write in and bring to your provider. He/she can write in it and send it back. When problems arise, address them immediately. Be clear and calm when you talk about issues. Remember to praise and reward your provider! This person is an important part of your child's life and needs reinforcement that he/she is doing a good job.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Baby Playtime

Baby is learning to use her or his hands and fingers. Provide safe containers for dumping and filling. Containers with lids that can be removed are great because she or he can put objects in, put the lid on and make them "disappear." This reinforces object permanence. A simple shape sorter will be interesting to baby.

Continue reading to your baby every day. You might try to make your own book by using sturdy cardboard squares. Glue large, colorful pictures to the squares and write a word or phrase in big letters on each page. You can cover with clear contact paper if you like, for durability. Suggestions for pages:

- Photos of baby, other family members and pets
- Pictures of baby's favorite toys
- Pictures of baby's favorite foods
- Pictures of familiar things cut from magazines
- Pictures of plants or flowers that grow nearby
- Things that have texture (sandpaper, fake fur, interesting fabric)

The Drop Game

Baby is learning that objects still exist, even when they go out of sight. This is called "object permanence" and is an important developmental milestone! When your baby is in the high chair, you may notice him beginning to drop things over the edge on purpose. This can be very annoying! But remember, this represents important learning and is NOT naughty behavior! Be patient and this stage will pass.



AWAY FROM MOM & DAD

SEPARATION AND STRANGER ANXIETY

Your baby may demonstrate stress over two types of situations.

Separation Anxiety is the fear of being away from you. Baby is now smart enough to create a mental picture of his or her parents. This means that he or she will miss you when you are away. Baby does not have a concept of time yet, so he or she can't imagine how long it will be before you return. These two things will cause stress when you leave, but by being emotionally supportive, you can help baby deal with separation and become more independent. Go ahead and hug your baby when he or she cries and accept these feelings. Reassure him or her you will return. Leave baby only with people you trust. Avoid sneaking out when your baby isn't looking. This teaches your child you can't be trusted and will only make him or her more insecure.

Stranger Anxiety occurs when a child is wary around unfamiliar people. Baby is now smart enough to remember the faces of important people in his or her life. He might have a serious, watchful stare. Other times he or she will look at a new person, then look away a few times before becoming comfortable. Baby may also cry and try to get away from the new person. All these reactions are normal. Try to put yourself in your child's shoes. How do you feel if a stranger hugs you? Keep him or her close to you and give him or her time to get used to a new person, before allowing the person to hold baby. Grandparents, relatives and friends may have a hard time understanding this. Let them know that it will be worth it for them to get acquainted with baby slowly.

MOMMIES MATTER; DADS DO, TOO

Time for Yourself

Happy parents make happy babies. Be sure to find ways to get some personal time each week. Trade off so each parent can get out of the house to do something he/she enjoys. Find a trusted sitter or friend to watch baby in your home while you work on a hobby, take a bath or exercise. Check into a baby-sitting co-op so you can trade baby-sitting with other couples and enjoy a night out with your partner.

