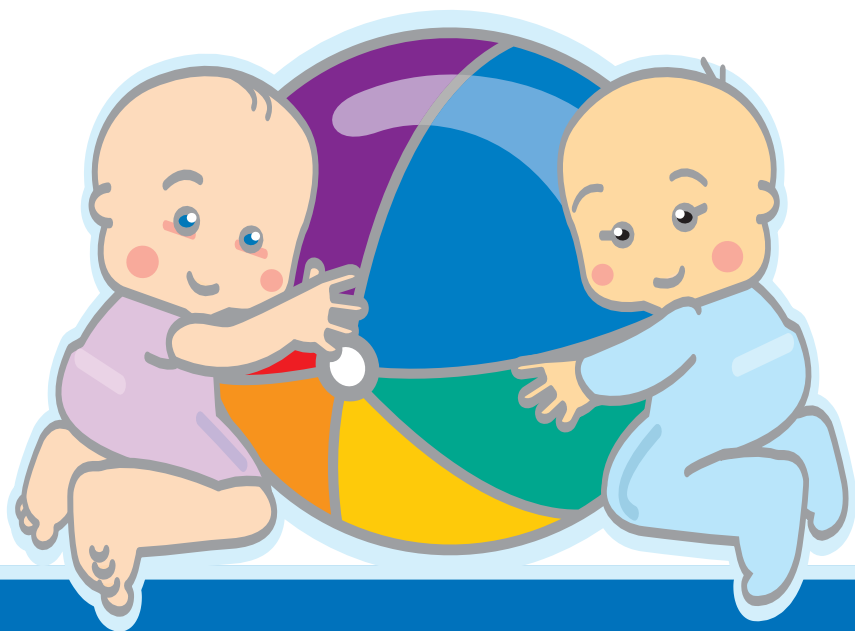


Baby

# RELATIONSHIP builders



# What's That You Said?

**W**hen your baby starts to make noises, it's a great time to let her know you hear her and are listening. In fact, using "baby talk" with your baby is a good thing! When she makes a noise, repeat the noise back to her. If she is making blowing or cooing noises, make the same noises back to her. If she is making letter sounds like:

**da, da, da,**

make those noises back to her. After you've played this way for a while, see if she will copy a noise you make – either one of her noises, or a new one you make up.

*Repeating the sounds your baby makes lets her know you are listening to her and will respond to her. It teaches her that she can communicate with you. Using "baby talk" holds her attention and is the beginning of conversation.*



# I'm Right Here

**Y**our baby needs your constant attention and support. Because he is not yet able to speak, he will use noises and make faces to let you know that he needs help.

When you hear his cry, or see that he is upset, try and respond to him as quickly as possible. Even if you know that he is not in danger, it is still important that you go to him right away. Of course there are times when you won't be able to, but most of the time, whatever you are doing can be put on hold (a telephone call, the dishes, feeding the dog). Your baby depends on your help and comfort!

*Your baby is learning to trust that his needs will be met. He is learning that you are a person he can count on. This trust will help him trust others and himself as he grows. The more quickly you respond, the safer and more secure he will feel and his need to cry for attention will lessen.*



# Cuddlebugs

**F**ind time each day to hug, cuddle and talk with your baby. If it is warm enough, dress her in only a diaper so that she can feel your touch on her skin. Gently rub her back and stroke her arms and legs. Kiss her cheeks and tell her that you love her. Rock her, sing to her, read to her, and talk with her. Give her lots of chances to respond. This affection will be a source of comfort for her and when she thinks of you, she will think of tenderness and love.

*Your baby needs to be touched and cuddled! This affection teaches her to trust the adults that love her and helps her to become aware of her body. Talking with your baby is a natural way to help her learn about relationships.*



# My Talk

**T**each your baby his own set of signs, and teach him to respond to questions. For example, ask:

**How big is John?**

Then say:

**John is SO BIG!**

and raise both arms over your head toward the sky. Ask the question again, and gently help your baby raise his hands over his head. After several times, your baby will learn the question and the signs that go with it. You can make up all kinds of signs – for things like:

**I want to eat.**

**I'm all done.**

**I want more.**

**And No, thank you.**

If you have the chance, instead of making your own sign language, you can learn and use standard sign language with your baby.

*Your baby is becoming confident that he can talk with you and communicate his needs and feelings.*



# Baby Play

**I**n vite a friend or family member who has a baby to come over to visit and play. It is best if your babies are over three months old, and make sure that both babies are healthy! Place your baby and her new friend on a soft blanket on their tummies or sitting up facing each other. Sit close by, but let them interact without getting too involved. (You are there to make sure that hair doesn't get accidentally pulled, or eyes poked in curiosity.) Let your babies look at each other, touch each other, and crawl over each other. You will find they are especially interested in each other's hands and feet!

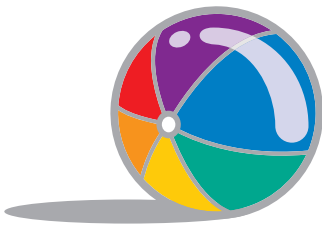
*Babies love to look at other babies. They are interested in the same way they are interested in a new toy! In time, these early play times may grow into true friendships!*



# So Happy to See You!

**Y**ou will have many chances every day to walk into a room and make eye contact with your baby. Whether it is when she wakes up in the morning or from a nap, or when you get home from work or an outing, your baby will be looking to you for a reaction. Use your face and voice to let her know how much you love her and how happy you are to see her. Look her in the eyes, give her a big smile, and say, Hi! Spend a few minutes talking with her and giving her your full attention. She will see how important you are to her and will know how special she is!

*Your baby learns about herself through interacting with the people that love her. When you smile and are excited to see your baby, you are strengthening the bond between you and teaching her how to express love.*





# Hand and Finger Play

**S**it with your baby on your lap so that you can help him move his hands and fingers. Do the motions of a rhyme that uses your hands and fingers like pata-cake, or just use simple motions while you speak,

**Clap, Clap, Clap,**

and clap your baby's hands together. You can make a song to go along with the motions, clapping your baby's hands, rolling his hands one over the other

**Roll, Roll, Roll,**

patting his tummy

**Pat, Pat, Pat,**

and so on. Do the same hand and finger play several times. As he grows, he will start to do the motions by himself.

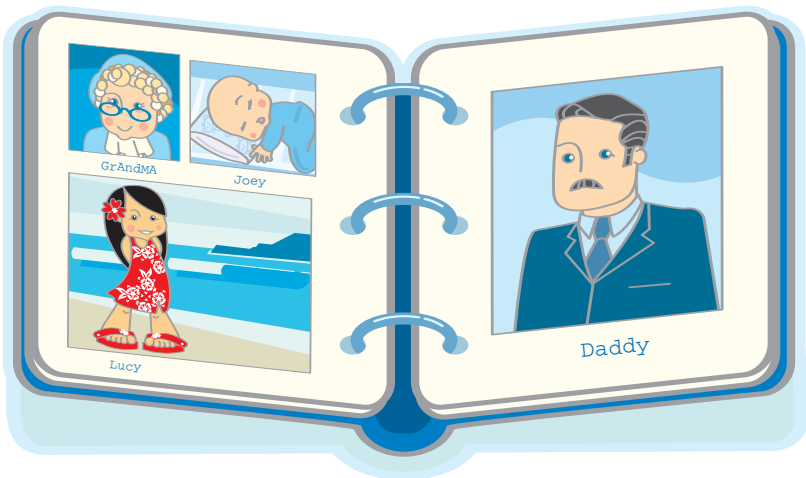
*Playing together with your baby helps him learn to interact with people.*



# Family Book

Collect photographs of your family. Paste them into a pre-made album or make one yourself, and write "My Family" on the cover. Under each picture, write the name of the person your baby is looking at. Read the book to your baby and point to the family members in the picture. He will love to see the faces of the people he knows, and will become familiar with the faces of those he doesn't see very often. This book will be one of his favorites. As he gets older, you can tell stories about each person in his family.

*The "My Family" book will help your baby learn the names and faces of all the people in his family. He will begin to understand the idea of "family." If you do not have many people in your family, think about adding close friends that are important in your and your baby's life.*



# Who is Coming to Visit?

**I**t is always an event when someone comes to visit. Some children are very excited to see visitors, while others become nervous and do not like their routine changed.

When you know you are going to have a visitor, prepare your baby. For example, throughout the day, remind her:

**Aunt Martha is coming to our house, or  
When you wake up from your nap,  
Aunt Martha will come over.**

As the arrival time gets closer, take your baby to the window or front yard and start watching for Aunt Martha. When you see her car, or see her walking toward the house, say

**I see Aunt Martha! Do you see her?**

Point to your guest and give your baby a chance to see her. If she does not know this guest, don't push your baby into her arms right away. It is common for babies to be afraid of strangers and that is O.K. Let her watch for awhile. In a few minutes, she will probably find a way to approach your guest herself. If not, try giving Aunt Martha a favorite toy or stuffed animal. Remember that every child is different in the amount of time it takes to make a new connection. If you respect that time, your baby will learn to look forward to having new visitors!

*Your baby is learning about new people and how to interact with them. If you handle these times carefully she will feel in control and learn to feel confident about meeting new people.*



# Hello Park, Goodbye Park

**B**abies love to play. Sometimes it is hard for a little one to understand that play time is over, and he needs to do something else (like leave the park, or go to bed). He may cry about leaving the park or stopping playing. Help your baby learn to “end” an activity by using the words Hello and Goodbye. Start by using a hello greeting at the beginning of play time. For example, when you get to the park or start a new activity like building with blocks, say:

**Hello park! or Hello blocks!**

Say hello to all of the objects in the park or all the different color blocks to give your child plenty of time to get used to his new surroundings or activity:

**Hello swings, hello slide, hello grass! or  
Hello red block, hello blue block,  
hello green block!**

When play time is over, say goodbye to the park or to the blocks as you put them away. Saying goodbye to all of the things in the park (the slides, the swings, the grass, the other children) or to all of the blocks (the red one, the blue one, the green one) helps your baby close out this activity and move to the next one.

*Your baby is learning how to transition from one activity to another.*



# Notes