

First Steps

PARENTING IN THE FIRST YEAR

WEXFORD, MISSAUKEE & NORTHERN OSCEOLA COUNTIES



3-4
Months

How Baby is Changing

Your baby probably spends less time crying and sleeping now, so she has more time to learn about herself and the world. Baby has just found that she has hands and feet that she can move... and she loves to watch them.

Your baby doesn't have full control over her arms and legs yet, so she may get angry or frustrated when she can't make her body do what she wants it to do.

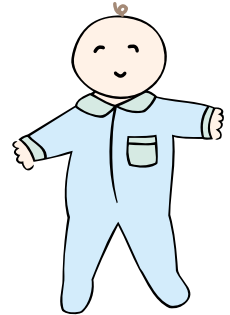
Try putting a toy in her hand. Baby will probably hold on and watch it as she moves her arm. Baby might even reach for things and grab them. She can get her hand to her mouth and such on her fingers.

Baby likes to watch things. She will enjoy following a toy with her eyes. Hold it near and then move it away. Bring it close again or move it out of sight. Your baby doesn't know yet that things still exist when she can't see them.

Baby loves making noises. She can even laugh now! The more you respond to her when she "talks," the more baby will answer back and smile at you. This is good practice for real talking later.

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Separation Anxiety...

If your baby

- reacts with fear or anger to new situations...
- adapts very slowly to any change in schedule...
- doesn't keep a regular schedule...

Then you could easily get...

- angry
- impatient
- confused

But your baby needs you...

- to be patient and sensitive;
- to introduce new people, food, and situations, very gradually;

- to offer several chances to get used to anything new.

As you get to know your baby, you will learn about her unique temperament, her style of behavior, and how to best respond to her needs.

Your sensitivity, warmth, consistency, and response to her cues will help her handle change. You can support her strengths and help her learn to control her behavior.

Not All Babies Like to Cuddle

Most of us think that all babies love to be held, rocked and cuddled, but some babies don't.

If your baby is a non-cuddler, it doesn't mean that he doesn't like you or that you're a bad parent. It may be the way your baby is made, part of what makes him a unique little person.

Some very active babies don't like to slow down long enough to cuddle.

Watch this kind of baby closely. Is there a time of day, maybe first thing in the morning or at bedtime, when he's slowed down and more ready to be held?

Other babies may be extra-

sensitive to the world around them. Bright lights, loud noises, sudden changes, even holding can sometimes be too much. These babies are often very jumpy.

For this type of baby, try to reduce the stimulation level. Turn down the radio or TV, put a dimmer switch on the nursery light, and handle him very gently and carefully.

Show love to him in other ways. Smile and make eye contact when you talk to him. Sing to him. Read to him. Remember, even noncuddly babies want and need to be held sometimes.

Baby's Sisters & Brothers

How are your other children reacting to the baby now? It's normal for sisters and brothers to be upset at the change in their family, especially if they're younger than 5 years.

A toilet-trained child may go back to diapers for a while. Good eaters may lose their appetites. You may notice other changes, too.

Since young children can't always control their actions, don't leave the baby alone with a child younger than four. He or she may hurt the baby accidentally.

Watch when your children are together. Praise your older child when he or she is good to the baby.

If baby gets lots of gifts, ask your family and friends to remember your older children, too. Keep a few small gifts on hand for them, or let them open the baby's presents.

It's important for you and your partner to spend special time alone with each older child, even if just 15 minutes or half an hour.

Try to find time to take your older child for a walk or for an ice cream cone, or play a favorite game. Read to your older child during baby's feeding or after baby's bedtime.

Try to do this often so your older children feel that they're important, too.

Your Baby Wants You To Know

How I Grow

- I hold my head and back pretty straight when you support my body.
- When I'm on my tummy I can lift my head, lean on my elbows, arch my back and rock.
- I move my arms and legs a lot.
- When you hold me, I push with my arms and legs.
- I touch my face with my hands.
- I grab for things with both hands, but sometimes I miss.

How I Talk

- I coo simple sounds like ooh, ah, ae.
- I answer sounds I hear by gurgling, cooing, and squealing.
- I don't cry as much as before. Have you noticed?

How I Respond

- I stare at the place things drop from, but I don't watch where they go when they fall.
- I get excited when I see people or things I know.
- I can pay attention a little. I stop sucking to listen to sounds or to look at things. Then I look and continue to suck.
- I like to listen. Talk to me in simple sentences.

How I Feel

- I usually love to be cuddled.
- I don't like to be left alone. Let me sit where I can watch you!

How I Understand

- I'm starting to have a memory. I like some toys better than others.
- I like to bring objects to my mouth to explore them.

How You Can Help Me Learn

- Give me safe squeaky toys and rattles to hold or bat.
- Play Pat-a-Cake or "So Big" with me.
- Look into my eyes when you talk to me.
- Let me see myself in the mirror. Or, get me a safe mirror of my own for my crib or changing table.
- Respond quickly to my cues (like crying) so I know I can count on you to comfort me and satisfy my needs.



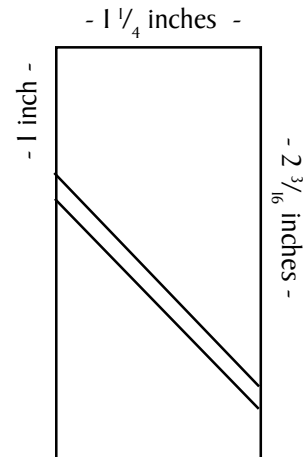
Choosing Safe Baby Toys

Toys don't have to be bought at a store or even specially made for babies. Here are some tips for choosing toys:

- Babies can put things *in* their mouths, but they can't always take them *out*. **Never give babies toys smaller than 1½ inches on all sides.**
- Avoid toys with small parts that could come off, like plastic eyes on stuffed animals or the squeakers in rubber toys.
- Toys for babies should not be made from anything that could break or splinter.

- Don't give baby anything with sharp edges, points or corners that could hurt his mouth or eyes.
- Watch out for stuffed toys or foam toys. Be sure baby can't tear or bite off pieces on which he could choke.
- Be sure all strings are less than 12 inches long so baby can't get his neck or fingers trapped. If you have older children or pets, be extra careful to see that small parts of their toys stay out of baby's reach.

This is a small parts cylinder, similar to a paper towel container or toilet paper roll container. Anything that could fit inside it is too small for a child who puts things in his mouth.



Baby Shots

During the second month, along with his well baby check-up, doctors recommend starting a series of shots to protect babies from dangerous diseases. Here's a schedule:

- Diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus (DPT/DTaP) at 2, 4, 6 months and between 12 and 15 months.
- I.P.V. (Inactivated Polio Vaccine) at 2, 4, and between 6-15 months; again between 4-6 years.
- Haemophilus Influenza B (HIB) started at 2 months, with added HIB shots at 4, 6 and between 12 and 15 months.
- Hepatitis B vaccine is started at birth and is given again at 4 and 6 months.
- Measles, mumps and Rubella (German measles) MMR is given between 12 and 15 months.
- Pneumococcal conjugate (PCV7) vaccine. Pneumococcal infection causes severe disease in children under five years old. PCV7 vaccine can help prevent serious

pneumococcal diseases, such as meningitis, blood infections and ear infections. PCV7 is given at 2, 4, 6 and between 12 and 15 months.

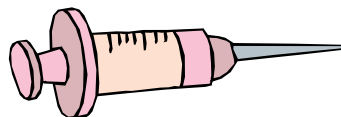
- Varicella (chickenpox) is given at 12 months.

You may be wondering...

- What if my baby is sick— should he or she be given shots? Answer: Babies and children with minor illnesses, such as a cold, may be vaccinated. But children who are moderately or severely ill should usually wait until they recover before getting their shots.

Risks/Side Effects

Immunizations do have some risks and side effects, but they are much safer than the diseases would be. If you have questions about shots for your baby, talk to your baby's doctor or nurse.



What to Expect Afterwards

Some children: * get cranky, * have a low fever, * are sore, red, or swollen where the shot was given. Ask your nurse or doctor what to do to make your baby feel better right after the shot.

Often, placing a cold washcloth where your child received the shot will help him or her feel better. Non-aspirin pain reliever infant drops (Acetaminophen), like Tylenol or your drug store's brand name, can also be given to lessen any pain. Ask your doctor or nurse about how much to give your child.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or worries.

It takes several shots to give your child full protection against these diseases. Make sure your child gets every shot he or she needs.

Your doctor or nurse will give you a record of your child's shots. Keep it and carry it with you to every medical appointment.

Children with special needs may need an adapted schedule. Contact your doctor for more information.

Make Baby's Room Interesting

Baby is more alert and active now, and his vision is more like yours. Here are ideas for fun things to look at in his room.

Walls

Hang bright-colored wall hangings or pictures. Pictures can be posters, art prints, family photos, or cutouts from magazines.

Change the display often. If you have older children, they can supply lots of original art. An unbreakable mirror in the crib or over the changing table is good, too.

You might also hang a bright-colored toy or stuffed animal from the ceiling.

Windows

If you put baby's crib so the infant can look out a window, he will have lots of new things to look at. Don't put baby in reach of the window or in direct sunlight.

A hanging plant or bird feeder outside can make it even more interesting.

A crystal prism in front of the window will throw rainbows into the room. How about wind chimes? Your baby can look at and listen to them. Be sure to keep these out of his reach.

Watch out for cords on blinds and make sure they are out of your baby's reach.

Activities: Baby Games!

Babies love to be with people, and games are a good way to have fun and learn at the same time. Here are some suggestions about how to play with your baby:

- Choose games your baby likes. Certain ones will become favorites. It's important that you are playing, NOT which game you play.
- Choose a time when you and baby are rested and alert.
- Take turns with baby. Give her time to respond.
- Show baby you're really interested in the game. Open your eyes wide, look surprised, smile, talk excitedly.
- Move baby's arms and legs in rhythm with the game, fast to get her excited, slow if she gets too overworked. Body movement can help baby develop physical abilities.
- Reward her with lots of praise and smiles.
- Talk while you play. Baby understands your tone, even though she doesn't understand words. Naming things baby sees helps her learn that words stand for things.
- If baby's attention starts to wander, it's time to stop.



Peek-A-Boo:

If baby can't see something, she doesn't know it's still there! Hide your face behind your hands and say, "Where's Mama?" Then take them away and say, "Peek-A-Boo!"

Play Peek-A-Boo by hiding baby's face with a washcloth in her bath or with a shirt when you're dressing her.

Shake the Rattle:

This game can be played with a rattle or any baby toy. Hold the toy in front of her and move it to get her attention. Then try to keep her eyes on it while you slowly move it from side to side, up and down and in circles.

Try holding the rattle off to one side and shaking it. Does she look to see where the sound comes from? She soon will. Brothers and sisters can play these games, too.

Rhymes & Songs:

When you share rhymes and songs with your baby, he is learning language and getting to know you better. You are also creating a closeness that will last a lifetime.

Spanking for Babies? NEVER!

You probably haven't thought about discipline for your baby. After all, your baby is only 3 months old! But there are some things about discipline you may want to start thinking about.

"Discipline" comes from the word "disciple," meaning student. Think of discipline as teaching, not punishing.

The most important thing you can teach your baby now is to trust you. You can do this by meeting her needs, so she learns that you are there when she needs you. Later on, you will need to set limits to keep her safe (between 8-15

months). The trust your baby has in you will help her to try to obey so she can please you.

Tiny babies like yours don't do things on purpose to annoy you, even if it seems like that sometimes. Baby can't help crying, messing her diapers or waking up at night when you want to sleep. A tiny baby should never be spanked for any reason. Never hit or shake a small baby. Shaking can cause permanent brain damage, blindness or even death.

Every parent gets upset and frustrated sometimes. But if you ever feel so angry



Never shake a baby.

This can cause blindness, brain damage, or death.

that you're afraid that you might hurt your baby, get help.

Call a sitter or a friend so you can take a break. At least put baby in her room, in a safe spot like her crib, shut the door for 15 minutes and rest. Calling Parents Help line 1-800-942-HELP for another group to talk may help.

What about SIDS?

SIDS, also called Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, is when a healthy baby dies during sleep. SIDS peaks between the ages of 2 and 4 months and then declines. No cause is known, but it is suspected that causes could include: existence of a brain abnormality combined with a lack of oxygen, repeated exposure to tobacco smoke, increased carbon dioxide levels, or an infection.

What you can do:

- Make sure nothing interferes with baby's oxygen supply.
- In general, put baby to sleep on his or her back. However, always check with a doctor as to which sleeping position is best for your baby. Because of certain medical conditions, baby may need to be placed in various positions to sleep.
- Put baby to sleep on a firm, smooth surface.
- Give her tummy time when she is awake.
- Make sure pillows, comforters, and animals stay away while she sleeps.
- Babies should be kept warm, but they should not be allowed to get too warm. Keep the temperature in your baby's room so that it feels comfortable to you.



Please don't smoke.

There's a baby in the house.



Children develop at different rates. Talk with your child's doctor, nurse or educator if you have concerns with delays in growth and development. Children with special needs may not develop at the same rate as other children, but they can still enjoy many of their same activities, adapted to meet the needs of the child.

Fire Escape Plan

Decide on a place outside where everyone in your family will meet, so you'll know they're all out. Time how long it takes to get everyone out of the house.

Make sure someone is responsible for getting out young children. Who will carry the baby? Plan on more than one escape route. Practice with your eyes closed, in case of heavy smoke.

Teach everyone to crawl along the floor if they smell smoke. In a fire, smoke rises, and usually air along the floor is cooler and better to breathe.

Feel doors with your hand before opening them in a fire. If the door is hot, don't open it. Use an alternate route, like a window. Fire ladders are a good idea for homes with more than one level.

Get everyone out of the house first, then call the fire department.



FIRE SAFETY STARTS AT HOME

The best way to prevent burns or deaths from fire is to be prepared ahead of time.

Every home needs at least one **smoke detector** located outside the bedrooms. Having one on each level of a home is a good idea. Test the smoke detector on the first of each month, and replace the batteries every six months, perhaps when the clocks change for daylight savings time.

In the kitchen:

- Don't keep food or flammable objects near the stove.
- Check to be sure all burners and the oven are off when you're done cooking.
- Always turn pot handles toward the back of the stove, so children can't pull them down. Never leave cords for coffeepots, hot pots or other appliances dangling.
- Use back burners on the stove.
- Keep a box of baking soda on hand to put out grease fires. Put a tight lid on a pot to smother a fire. Turn the burner off if you can reach it safely.
- Keep an all-purpose **fire extinguisher** in the kitchen, away from the stove.
- Children have very delicate skin. Don't drink hot coffee with a child on your lap — it might spill and cause burns.

In the bathroom:

- Plugged-in electrical appliances, like hair dryers or radios, can cause shock or death if they fall into water — even if they are turned off. Electricity and water don't mix!

In other rooms:

- Don't run electric cords under rugs. The pressure from walking on them can wear them out and cause fires.
- Be sure cigarettes are out. Flush butts down the toilet or run them under water before throwing them away.
- **Never smoke where you sleep!**
- When you light a fire in the fireplace, be sure the flue is open and the chimney is clean. Close the screens. Before you go to bed, be sure the coals are out. They can flare up while you're sleeping. **NEVER** use gasoline, kerosene or any flammable liquid to start a fire.
- Keep portable heaters away from people, drapes and furniture. Use only the fuel recommended by the maker. Electric heaters should have automatic shut-off controls.

In storage areas:

- Keep flammable objects like rags, papers and gasoline cans far away from the furnace and the water heater.



Don't Prop the Bottle

If you are bottle feeding, don't prop the bottle and leave your baby alone. Don't put baby to bed with a bottle of formula or juice. A baby left alone with a bottle could spit up and choke.

It is important for your baby to have the closeness of being held in someone's arms at every feeding. Look at your baby — hold your baby — talk to your baby. Avoid reading or watching TV during this time. If feeding takes a long time because baby gets distracted, feed her in a dimly lit, quiet room to help speed things up. Other family members, even older children, maybe able to give baby a bottle.



When your baby drinks while lying on her back, formula can back up into the tubes between his throat and ear, called Eustachian tubes. This formula can grow bacteria and cause painful ear infections that could hurt your baby's hearing.

Baby Bottle Mouth

If baby has a bottle in his mouth all night, the juice or milk sugars can decay her gums or new teeth! When your baby is asleep the flow of saliva decreases and the liquids from the bottle pool around the teeth. Sugars in the liquids provide energy for the bacteria to grow. Bacteria produces acids that attack tooth enamel. Children lose their baby teeth later, but they are important for keeping space in the mouth for permanent teeth and for speech development. If she must have a bedtime bottle, use water only.

Breast-feeding Tip

Now that your milk supply is established, you can give her a bottle once or twice a day if you wish. Make it the same feedings each day. If you express just enough milk to relieve the pressure, but don't pump, your breasts will stop making milk when your baby gets a bottle.



Hearing

Searching response.

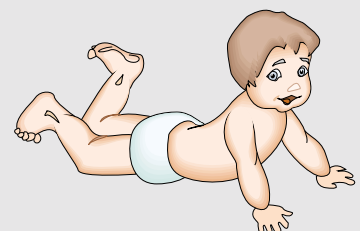
Your baby will turn her eyes and head to look for an interesting sound, or when you call her name. She enjoys music and noisemaking toys and begins to coo and gurgle. You will hear her begin to repeat sounds such as ooh, aah, and ba-ba.



Give your baby many sounds to listen to — musical tapes, chimes, bells, songs. See if he will turn his head when you ring a soft bell about 18" away from his ear.

Motor Skills

Your baby enjoys reaching for dangling objects, playing with her own hands and will transfer a toy from hand to hand. She is ready to pull herself to sitting.



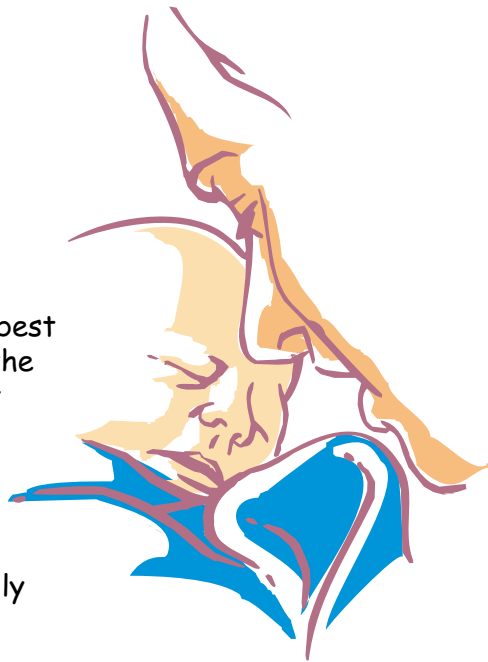
When You Need Help

Catholic Human Services	775-6581	Love, Inc.	779-1888
Cradle To Classroom	876-2300	Mercy Hospital	1-800-33-MERCY 876-7200
Child's Doctor	_____	MSU Extension	
Day Care Information (4 C's)	1-800-968-4228	Missaukee	839-4667
District Health Department		Wexford	779-9480
Missaukee	839-7167	North Central Community Mental Health	
.....	825-2040	1-800-49-ALPHA	
Wexford	775-9942	(1-800-492-5742)	
Family Independence Agency		OASIS/Family Resource Center	
Missaukee & Wexford	779-4500	Car Seat Loans	775-7299
.....	1-800-684-2170	Crisis Line	775-7233
Emergency	911	Poison Control	1-800-POISON-1 (1-800-764-7661)
Head Start Enrollment/Information		Wexford-Missaukee ISD	
Cadillac	775-9781	(Intermediate School District)	
Lake City	839-4012	Preschool	876-2300
Manton	824-3385		
Mesick	885-1915		

Talk to me.
Play with me.
Love me.

As their child's first and best teacher, parents often are the first to have concerns about their child's health or development.

If your child seems to be experiencing some unusual difficulty, contact your family doctor or community health center.



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