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SP418-D-Healthy Children-2 Months Old

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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Healthy Children Ready to Learn

2 MONTHS OLD

Dear Parents . . . It's fun to watch your baby grow!

Your baby is beginning to take interest in everything. While she is awake, she busies herself with looking, listening and learning. Even though

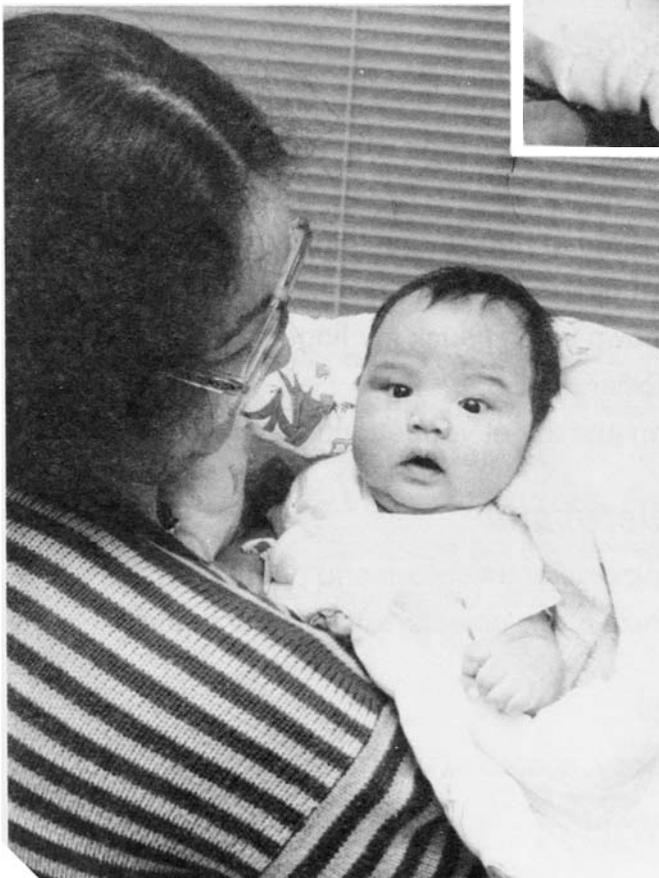


she can't really talk yet, she lets you know how she feels by crying, smiling or screaming.

If she is a quiet baby, she spends a lot of time just looking. If she is an active baby, she does a lot of smiling or screaming,

depending on how she feels!

Your baby is beginning to learn about herself as a person. And you, as her parent, are learning all about her!



REMEMBER

- CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR, NURSE OR CLINIC ABOUT THE IMMUNIZATIONS YOUR BABY NEEDS.
- DON'T LEAVE YOUR BABY ALONE ON A TABLE OR CHAIR. YOU'LL BE SURPRISED HOW FAST A BABY CAN TURN AND ROLL OFF. THAT QUIET BABY CAN WIGGLE LIKE AN EEL!

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE 2 MONTHS OLD?

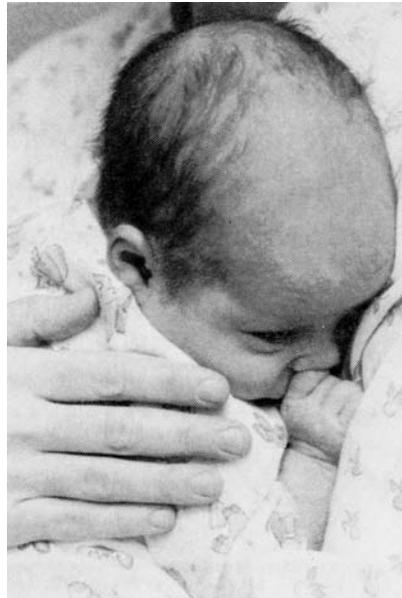


How I Grow

- I still wobble my head a little when I am propped up.
- I hold my head up for a few minutes when I'm on my back.
- I hold onto things for a little while.
- I move my arms and legs and “bicycle” with my feet when I get excited.
- I stay awake for as long as 10 hours a day.
- I may even sleep for as long as seven hours a night. Be patient with me if I still wake up during the night — pretty soon I'll be able to sleep longer!

How I Talk

- I gurgle, laugh and smile when I'm happy.
- I like to try out cooing sounds.
- I cry to let you know when I want something.



How I Respond

- I blink at shadows made by my own hands.
- I follow you with my eyes when you move around.
- I like to stare at people and things.
- I smile at others besides my mother.
- I quiet down when I suck my fingers, a bottle or a pacifier.
- I perform just to get your attention.

How I Understand

- I recognize different voices and people.
- I recognize a few objects, such as my bottle.

How I Feel

- I feel happy, scared or uncomfortable at times.

CRYING BABY?

Here's what to do:



Crying is how babies tell us that something is wrong. Babies have different cries for different needs. As time goes on, you will learn how to tell what your baby needs by the way he cries. Here are some of the reasons your baby may cry:

- He may have a wet or soiled diaper. Check it and change it, if needed.

- He may be sick. Check his temperature. If he has a fever, check with your doctor.
- He may be hungry. Babies need to eat frequently.
- He may be dressed too warmly or not warmly enough. Adjust his clothing to make him more comfortable.
- He may have an air bubble in his stomach that makes him uncomfortable. Gently burp your baby. Try feeding him again after burping.
- He may have a diaper rash. Leave his diapers off for a while. Free circulation of air helps skin to heal, and most babies love the freedom of not wearing a diaper. If the room is cool, wrap him loosely in a blanket.
- He may want to be held close. Talk to him, cuddle him and rock him for a while.
- He may be bored.
 - Turn him around in his bed to give him a different view.
 - Hang something over the bed that he can watch but can't reach.
 - Play some soft music.
- If he fusses without any apparent reason, he may just have extra energy that he needs to release. He may calm down on his own after a time of crying.

Babies learn to trust you when you respond to their cries. If you respond to your baby's needs as quickly as possible, you teach him that he can trust you. This will help to build a strong bond that will grow with time.

Q&A

"My baby likes to sleep on her back. Is this position bad for her? Should I try to change this habit?"

Babies should be placed on their backs to sleep. Placing your baby on his or her stomach may increase the risk of "Sudden Infant Death Syndrome," or SIDS.

Also, be sure there are no soft toys, pillows or a lot of bed clothes near your baby. Young babies can smother on these.

It is important for your baby to feel comfortable while sleeping. If you are worried that your baby's head is starting to flatten because she always sleeps on her back, there are several things you can do. Tie some colorful, safe toys on the other side of the crib so that she has to turn her head to look at them. Or turn your baby around in the crib so her head is where her feet were before. When the baby is awake, she can be placed on her tummy where you can watch her. The head flattening will disappear when your baby learns to roll over and change her sleeping position.

FEEDING YOUR

BABY

Parents used to think that feeding solid foods at bedtime would help their babies sleep through the night. Not true! If your baby is hungry, give her breast milk or formula — it will help her sleep.



NO SOLIDS YET

There are good reasons for waiting to feed solids. Your baby's digestive system is not ready yet to handle foods other than milk. Her tongue and swallowing movements won't develop enough for solid foods until she is about 4 to 6 months old.

SLEEPING THROUGH THE NIGHT

Babies will usually sleep through the middle-of-the-night feeding by the time they are 2 to 3 months old.

If your baby sleeps through the 10 p.m. feeding (or the last feeding of the day), you may want to wake her up at 11 p.m. for a feeding. She will then probably sleep through the night until 5 or 6 the next morning. But some 2-month-olds will wake up every four hours to be fed, day or night.

Remember that your baby is the best judge of how much she needs at each feeding. Be careful not to force her to feed longer than she wants. She will change her feeding pattern when she is ready.

GAMES BABIES PLAY

Learning to Look: An eyes-and-ears game

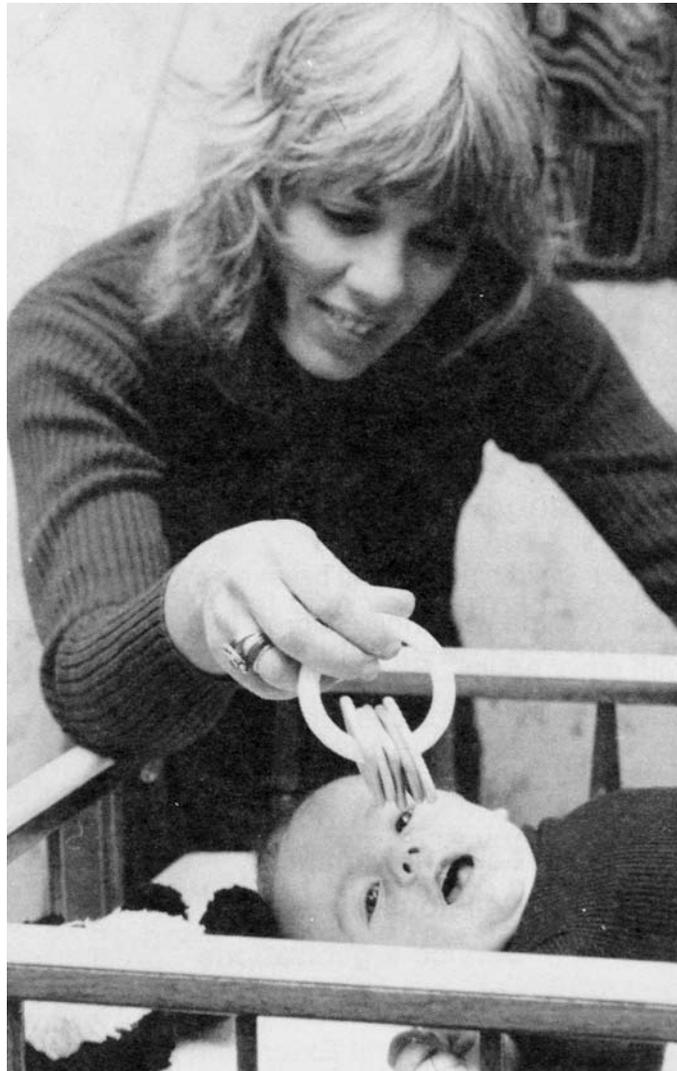
Playing with your baby gives her a chance to explore the world and satisfy her growing curiosity. She will enjoy your loving attention and benefit from it.

PURPOSE OF THE GAME

- Trains your baby's eyes to follow an object and to pay attention.

HOW TO PLAY

- Put your baby on her back. Stand behind her and put your hand gently on her stomach. Try to keep her from seeing your face. You want your baby to watch the object and not you. (Remove your hand from her stomach if it bothers her.)
- Hold a noisemaking object, like a ring of keys, about a foot above her face.
- Shake the object gently until she looks at it.
- Watch your baby's eyes to see how she follows the object.



- Move the object slowly in a circle in the air, around her head.
- Change the direction of the circle. If your baby can't follow the object in a circle, make only part of a circle.

OTHER EYES-AND-EARS GAMES

- Put mobiles over your baby's crib so she can watch them as they move.
- Move objects back and forth in a straight line in front of your baby.

MORE THAN 11 MILLION ADULTS IN THE U.S. ARE SINGLE PARENTS



If you are a single parent, your child's needs will be even more demanding on you. It is easy for single parents to become so involved with their children that they stop seeing other people. But you need to spend time with other adults. Share family activities, such as outings, with friends you enjoy being around. Check the following places for news about parent groups and other activities which may interest you:

- **Local newspapers**
- **Religious groups**
- **Service organizations**
- **Library bulletin boards**
- **UT Extension office**

Don't limit yourself to events and groups labeled "for single parents."

RELAX!

Be Good to Yourself

Allow time each day for relaxation and exercise — you've earned it! These exercises only take a few minutes and will make you feel refreshed again.

- Lie flat on your back. Take a deep breath. Now breathe out slowly. Repeat five times.
- Lie flat with your arms at your sides. Move your arms out to shoulder level, keeping elbows stiff. Then raise your arms over your head and bring your hands together. Repeat five times.
- Lie flat, then raise your head, touching your chin to your chest. Try not to move any other part of your body. Repeat a few times.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Extension Family and Consumer Sciences agent at your county UT Extension office.

COMING
NEXT

In . . . HEALTHY CHILDREN
READY TO LEARN

- Exercises to Loosen Up
- Games



HEALTHY CHILDREN READY TO LEARN was originally developed as the **Parent Express** series by the University of California Cooperative Extension Service. The material was adapted for use in Tennessee by Janie Burney, Professor, Family and Consumer Sciences, and others. Contact Denise Brandon, Associate Professor, Family and Consumer Sciences, for information about this publication.

RESOURCES

From a Bookstore or Library:

Touchpoints: Your Child's Emotional and Behavioral Development by T. Berry Brazelton, Perseus Publishing, New York, 1992.

What to Expect the First Year, by Arlene Eisenberg, et al., Workman Publishing Co., New York, 1989.

From the Extension office:

Selecting a Quality Child Care Center, SP 455, by Matthew Devereaux, University of Tennessee Extension, 2002.

From the Internet:

www.utextension.utk.edu

fcs.tennessee.edu

www.cyfernet.org

www.civitas.org

www.zerotothree.org

www.k-12.state.tn.us/smart/

Visit the UT Extension Web site at <http://www.utextension.utk.edu/>
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