

PARENTS



COMMUNITIES

UR Extension

SP418-K

Healthy Children Ready to Learn

9 MONTHS OLD



Dear Parents . . .
When you feel
good, your baby
does, too!



YOU have plenty of reasons for feeling good about yourself. You have done a great job of raising this little 9-month-old baby. And of course, if you feel good about yourself, your baby will feel good about herself, too.

When you feel good about the kind of person you are, you can

tackle almost anything. That's why it's important to cheer your baby on when she tries new things. Every time there is a "first" in her life — crawling, walking, talking, hitting a ball, etc. —

encourage her and help her build the self-confidence she needs.

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE 9



How I Grow

- I crawl and turn around, holding onto something with one hand.
- I crawl up stairs, too.
- I sit by myself and turn my body all the way around without losing my balance.
- I may be able to stand up and sit down without pulling on furniture.
- I stand for a little while when my hand is held.
- I side-step along furniture.
- I try to build towers with blocks or toys.
- I poke my fingers into holes, or into anything that looks interesting.
- I pick up small things with my first finger and thumb and larger things with both hands.

How I Talk

- I understand some words, my name and simple sentences.
- I repeat one or several sounds over and over.
- I like to cough, click my tongue and make hissing noises.
- I listen to people talking and try to imitate the sounds.

How I Respond

- I like to watch people scribbling on paper.
- I like to perform for people and love it when they applaud.
- I want praise for all my accomplishments.

How I Understand

- I try to figure things out by myself.
- I know that if I partly cover my eyes or look upside down, everything will look different!
- I know which toys are mine and get upset when they are taken away.
- I can remember a game, a person or a toy from the day before.
- I can tell what kind of mood people are in by looking at them.

MONTHS OLD?

How I Feel

- I'm very sensitive. If I see another baby crying, I will cry, too.
- I am afraid of a lot of things that didn't bother me before, like taking a bath.
- I am afraid of heights.
- I am very determined and sometimes stubborn — that's all part of my growing up!



FEEDING YOUR BABY

Your baby is learning how to feed himself!

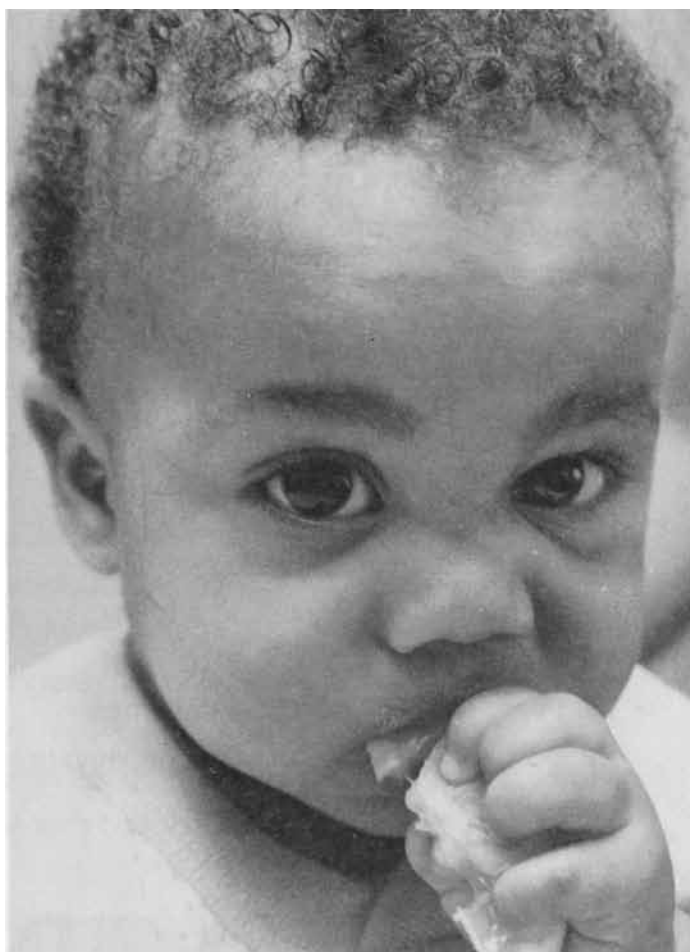
Does your baby hold most foods while eating? Or drink from a cup (with a little help)? Or hold and lick the spoon after it is dipped into food? These are the first steps in learning how to eat by himself. You can help him practice by giving him some of the following finger foods:

- Pieces of soft, mild cheese
- Bits of soft toast
- Graham crackers
- Cooked vegetable strips or slices
- Small, tender pieces of meat
- Peeled, soft fruit wedges or slices

Praise your baby while he is feeding himself, even if he is very messy. If the mess really bothers you, spread some newspapers under your baby's chair to catch any food that he drops.

No Seasonings

Although you may find unseasoned foods bland or tasteless, your baby does not. By now, your little one can eat most of the things you cook for the rest of the family. Just take out your baby's food before you add salt or other seasonings for the rest of the family.



Don't give your baby nuts, seeds, hot dogs or raw vegetables unless they are mashed or shredded.

Avoid all small, hard foods (such as popcorn) that can choke him.



REMEMBER—MEALTIMESHOULDBE
A PLEASANT TIME FOR YOU AS WELL AS
FOR YOUR BABY.

THE NAME GAME

PURPOSE OF GAME

- Helps your baby learn that everything has a name.
- Encourages your baby to imitate the sounds you make when you're naming objects.

HOW TO PLAY

- Let your baby sit in your lap while you hold a magazine.
- Point out and name at least 10 objects pictured in the magazine.
- Point to the object, name it, and say, "See the car. Look at the dog."
- While you are pointing, you can sometimes ask your baby, "What is that?" Wait a few seconds and then say something like "That's a car!"



Note: Your baby will not understand all the words you use. However, he will hear the different tones of your voice. They will help him become aware of language.



D.I.S.C.I.P.L.I.N.E

DOESN'T MEAN PUNISHMENT — IT MEANS TEACHING AND GUIDING

For babies under a year old, discipline is pretty simple. It means teaching limits through loving care and guidance. The key to this teaching is **REWARD**.

You reward your baby when he does something you approve of, and you distract him when he does something you don't like. For example, when your baby makes sounds and tries to talk, you reward him with a smile.

When he does something annoying or touches something you don't want him to have, you distract him by offering another toy, or you direct his attention to something else.

Slapping your baby will not teach him to be good. He won't even know why he is being hit. Instead, he will learn that

- He should be afraid of you.

- It's O.K. to hit others.
- When he grows up, it's O.K. to hit his own children.

Sometimes your baby will not be happy with the decisions you make and will make a fuss. You even may be tempted to give in to his demands. But keep in mind that setting limits is necessary for your child's safety and welfare.

It is possible to set limits while allowing your child the freedom to explore and grow. Stick to those limits and be firm in your guidance.



EVEN WHEN YOU ARE SETTING LIMITS, YOUR BABY KNOWS
THAT YOU CARE FOR HIM.



A SPECIAL TIME FOR YOUR BABY & YOU

It's so easy to get caught up in day-to-day routines and pressures that you may overlook the need for a special time for you and your baby.

Think about setting aside a special time each day — a time when you can give your baby your undivided attention **WITH NO INTERRUPTIONS.**

The length of time is up to you, depending on how busy your schedule is. Even a small pocket of time — perhaps 15 minutes a day — can mean a lot for both of you. It can mean a time to enjoy and appreciate each other.

How can you spend this special time? Sing, read, play or listen to music. Relax together. Cuddle. Enjoy just being together.

To help your baby understand how much time you'll have together, point to the clock to show when this special time will start and end. As your baby gets older, she will eagerly look forward to this pocket of time for "just the two of us."



Q&A

"My mother is always telling me how to take care of my baby. I know she means well, but I get really upset that she questions everything I do. How can I talk to her about this without hurting her feelings?"

Relatives, especially grandparents, can be very special people in your baby's life. This is especially true if you are a single parent, a teenage parent or if you live at home. Grandparents can provide warmth, security and loving care for your baby. But sometimes, they think they know "what's best" for your baby, and they try to tell you what to do every step of the way.

If this happens often, then it's a good idea to talk openly about your feelings. Discuss your feelings about child rearing. Listen to their ideas, and gently remind them that **YOU** are your baby's parent and are directly responsible for your child. Let them know that they play an important role in the growth of your child, so that they won't feel that you are casting them out. Come to an understanding of what the grandparent relationship means for your baby, as well as for you. Let them know how **YOU** want to raise your child, with their help.

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



Healthy Children Ready to Learn

COMING NEXT

In... HEALTHY CHILDREN
READY TO LEARN

- Open Letter from Baby
- Temper Tantrums

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 Family and Consumer Sciences Professor Janie Burney and others. Contact Family and Consumer Sciences Professor Denise Brandon for information about this publication.

RESOURCES

From a Bookstore or Library:

Touchpoints: Birth to Three by T. Berry Brazelton and Joshua D. Sparrow, Da Capo Press, Cambridge, MA, 2006.

Your Baby's First Year (Second Edition), American Academy of Pediatrics, Bantam, New York, 2005.

Child of Mine: Feeding With Love and Good Sense (3rd Edition) by Elyn Satter, Bull Publishing Co., Palo Alto, CA, 2000.

From the Extension Office:

Preparing Formula for Your Baby, SP445-A, by Janie Burney, University of Tennessee Extension, 2005.

When Is Your Baby Ready for Solid Food?, SP445-B, by Janie Burney, University of Tennessee Extension, 2005.

Tips on Infant Feeding: 6 to 9 Months, SP445E, by Janie Burney, University of Tennessee Extension, 2002.

Childhood Lead Poisoning Series, SP605 and SP605-A - SP605-L, by Martha Keel, University of Tennessee Extension, 2003.

What You Should Know About Lead and Children, SP421, by Janie Burney, University of Tennessee Extension, 2004.

Selecting a Quality Child Care Center, SP455, by Matt Devereaux, University of Tennessee Extension, 2002.

From the Internet:

<http://extension.tennessee.edu>

<http://fcs.tennessee.edu>

www.cyfernet.org

www.zerotothree.org

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

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