

0-4 Months

Discover your baby's personality

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growth
for healthier, smarter kids

See What Your Child Sees

Beginning at birth, babies learn about and explore the many things all around them.

At birth, a baby is born with a "birthday kit":

- Your baby has billions of brain cells ready to learn.
- Baby's lips, tongue, hands and fingers are very sensitive.
- Help your baby explore using all five of her senses:
 - Touch her lips or cheek. She will turn her head and open her mouth.
 - Put your finger in the palm of her hand. She will grasp it.
 - Hold your baby up and place her foot on a surface. She will step.
 - When she looks to one side, her arm on the same side will straighten out.

The world as your baby sees it:

- Imagine what this new world seems like to your baby.
- Your baby was welcomed into a bright, noisy,

cold and busy world.

- Comfort baby in this new world. Cuddle time provides warmth and baby gets to know your touch.
- Enjoy close face-to-face time with your baby. He will quickly learn to recognize your face. Baby will also learn your special smell and your voice.

Eating time is learning time:

- Crying won't always mean your baby is hungry. First comfort baby with rocking, massage or cuddling.
- When baby is hungry, he will let you know when he is full. When he is full, he will let go of the nipple, turn his head, or fall asleep.
- Milk is a great pleasure for baby.
- In the first few weeks of life, baby will:
 - make eye contact
 - start to see patterns and lights
 - have stronger head and neck muscles
 - turn to sights (your face) and sounds (your voice)
 - reach up and touch the breast or bottle
 - start to smile and coo

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Back-and-Forth

Learn your baby's personality

Every baby is different. Learn about your baby's unique needs. Baby will learn to trust you and know that you provide relief.

Cries can mean many things:

- "I'm tired!" or "I'm bored!" (especially at the end of the day)
- "I need a diaper change!"
- "I just want to blow off some steam!"
- Some babies are more sensitive. Stay calm and you will teach your baby to act the same way.
- "I'm hungry!"

Other signs of hunger may include:

- flexing fists
- sucking on lips
- smacking lips
- making fussy sounds
- being restless after walking

During awake times:

- Talk, whisper, sing, hum. Imitate the sounds your baby makes.
- Smile when they smile. It will teach the baby how to get your attention by smiling and cooing.

Play! Explore! Learn!

Your baby learns through new experiences

Reflexes become skills:

- Help your baby use their "birthday kit" of reflexes.
- Place things with different textures in your baby's hands and gently on their face.
- Stimulate your baby's senses: sights, sounds, smells

and touches.

- Help your baby grow strong. Have daily tummy time.
- Place safe things so that the baby can reach and grab.

Routines

Every day routines will make you and you baby more secure together

Sleep is an important daily routine:

- Babies sleep 16-18 hours per day
- ABCs of Safe Sleep
 - Place your baby Alone, on his Back, in a Crib.
 - No bumpers, blankets, stuffed animals or toys.
- Sleep steps: a warm bath, a massage with lotion, a soothing voice, a quiet area, low lights and no distractions.
- Read a book, whisper, hum or sing softly while you cuddle and rock the baby.
- Background sounds, like a fan, can block out noise.

By 4 months, your baby will blossom. Baby will be stronger, reach for items you place in front of them and will often roll over. Your baby will be easily distracted by new things. Baby will explore her world by placing items in her mouth, making lots of sounds, and smiling and laughing.

Resources:

- Good4Growth.org - practical tools and tips to help create healthier, smarter kids
- HealthyChildren.org - parent resources from the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Zerothreethree.org - resources focused on advancing the healthy development of babies and young children