

Learning in Families Together: Infant Development 2

Infants “talk” through actions and sounds.
They experiment with noises and objects.

Karen DeBord, Virginia Cooperative Extension Specialist, Family and Human Development; Reviewed by Crystal Tyler-Mackey, Extension Specialist, Community viability, Virginia Tech



Parenting Secrets

- Early in life, babies depend on others for warm, consistent care so they can learn to trust others in their world.
- Infants feel safe when they learn what to expect.
- Even babies can learn conversation and early language.

Together Time

Establish routines early, especially bedtimes, to begin to teach limits and to allow yourself to enjoy some quiet time.

- A routine may be as follows: dinner, taking a stroller ride, bath time, reading and rocking, soft singing, night-night.
- Parents must take care of themselves and need time for rest, too. Routines (like a set bedtime) give you personal time while helping your child get needed rest.

- Parents begin to understand what a certain cry or movement means. Watch and listen for your baby’s cues.

Play Time

It is amazing to just watch the brain connections fire!

- Watch your baby. Look into your baby’s eyes. Really connect visually and try to figure out what they are thinking.
- Babies love mirrors and reflections but don’t realize it is not another child. Point to the “baby.”

Learning Time

Babies babble. Babble and coo with them. They learn the rules of speech by listening to you. After you speak or coo, pause and let them respond. Then it is your turn.

- Make up songs and chants for babies to mimic.
- It is never too early to start to read aloud with your child.
- Name objects you give them (bottle, juice, toy, blanket) to begin to teach language.
- Hold your baby close and gaze into each other’s eyes. This draws you closer.
- Mirror sounds your child is making. Coo together. This is important for your child’s language development.