

Your
1-3
Month-Old
Baby



School Readiness Program
Provided by the WIC Program and First 5 LA



Watch and Learn! Cuddle and Hold!



Cuddle, cuddle, cuddle! Hold your baby.

Your touch helps your baby's brain grow.
By touching your baby, you are teaching your baby that they are safe, can trust you, and will be taken care of.

Smiles, smiles, smiles! Your baby wants to communicate with you.

Your baby learns to trust you when you respond to him.

Try this!

Learn what your baby likes.
Does your baby like quiet or does your baby also like the excitement of a noisy room?
(Babies don't like very loud voices.)
Does your baby like to be held looking over your shoulder or cradled in your arms? Of course, babies like different things at different times.



Your baby is a great teacher!

Let your baby teach you what comforts her.
Look inside this handout for information about what 1-3 month-old babies are like and how they communicate.

Cuddling helps your baby grow!

QUESTION: My baby is not a newborn anymore. Will picking up my baby every time he cries spoil my baby?

ANSWER: No! We used to think so, but doctors now know that 1-3 month-old babies are too young to spoil. Hold your baby a lot. You can't spoil your baby by cuddling or responding to his or her needs. Your touch actually helps your baby's brain grow. Your touch teaches your baby that you will take care of them. Gentle touches help babies develop.

Try this!

This is a great age to start playing tickle games. Some babies like being tickled. Others don't like it. See what your baby likes. You can make up your own game, or play "This Little Piggy" with your baby's fingers or toes.

Your baby wants to communicate with you.

Babies begin to smile when they are 1-3 months old. Your baby is beginning to try to get your attention. At first your baby may not look at you when he is smiling. Soon, your baby begins to take turns smiling. First, your baby smiles at you. Then your baby waits to see you answer with a smile or loving words. **HINT: Don't miss your turn, put down your phone.**

Here's another fun one. While you say the rhymes, do the actions.

SAY THIS:

Round and round the garden
Goes the teddy bear
One step ... two steps
Tickle under there!

While you DO THIS:

Draw circles on your baby's tummy.
Keep drawing circles.
Walk your fingers slowly up your baby's chest.
Tickle gently under your baby's chin.

QUESTION: How should I talk to my baby?

ANSWER: Parents all around the world use a special way of talking to babies. They use higher tones and speak slowly. Their speech sounds more like music. They use short, simple sentences. Babies learn to talk earlier when talked to this way. Babies also learn more words when talked to this way.

Try this!

When your baby gurgles or coos at you, you can smile, coo, and talk back. They love to hear you talk. The more you talk and sing to your baby, the sooner your baby will begin to talk, and the more words your baby will learn.

QUESTION: I speak more than one language. What language should I use when I talk to my baby?

ANSWER: Use the language or languages that you like to speak. Babies' brains are designed to learn languages. Hearing more than one language will help your baby learn to speak more than one language. Babies that hear more than one language get a wonderful gift!

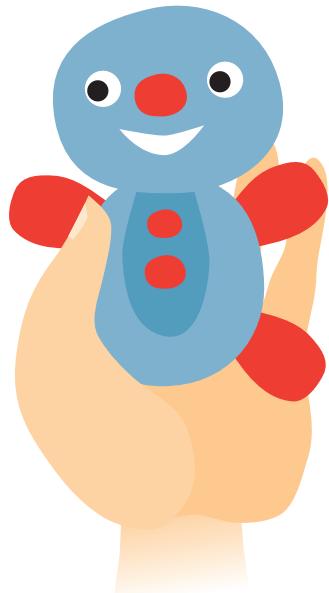
Your baby learns to trust you when you respond to her. Your baby is not like any other baby. Some babies only like quiet voices. Other babies like quiet and louder voices. Some babies like to be carried facing forward. Other babies like to look over their parents' shoulders.

Bonding

Bonding starts at birth and continues every day. When you take care of your baby, feed your baby, and hold your baby, you are teaching your baby that you will take good care of her. You are the most important person in your baby's world. Your care teaches your baby that the world is safe. **Babies who feel safe explore more and learn more.** When babies explore and learn, they grow new connections in their brains that help them learn even more.

Try this!

Hold a toy and move it slowly in front of your baby. By three months of age, most babies will turn their heads and eyes to watch the toy.



QUESTION: Do some parents not play enough with their 1-3 month-old babies?

ANSWER: Yes! But some parents play with their babies too much. Pick times for playing that your baby will enjoy. Good times to play with your baby are when they are awake, but not fussy, crying, or sleepy. Your baby wants to play when her eyes are wide open. You will see that your baby seems to be watching or listening.

QUESTION: What does my 1-3 month-old baby SEE?

ANSWER: Soon your baby will smile at you even when you are across the room! By the time they are three months old, babies can see across a room. They recognize familiar people and toys. Babies also love to look at faces, swirls and patterns with circles. An unbreakable mirror is a great toy for babies this age.

QUESTION: What does 1-3 month-old baby HEAR?

ANSWER: Your 1-3 month-old baby likes to hear your voice more than anything else. Talk and sing to your baby. Your baby will start to turn toward your voice. Doctors know that the more you talk and sing to your baby, the earlier your baby will talk and the more words your baby will learn. Your baby also likes soft music.

Try this!

When your baby makes a sound, say the sound back. See if your baby will make the same sound again.

Try this!

Hold your baby in front of a mirror and point at yourself in the mirror. Say, "There's Mommy!" (Daddies can say, "There's Daddy!")

Point at your baby in the mirror and say, "There's ___!" (Fill in your baby's name.) Move to the side of the mirror and ask, "Where's Mommy?" or "Where's Daddy?" Move back to the mirror and say, "There's Mommy!" or "There's Daddy!"

QUESTION: What SOUNDS do 1-3 month-old babies make?

ANSWER: Your 1-3 month-old baby is beginning to make sounds like, "ah-ah-ah," and "oo-oo-oo." This is the first step to talking! When you answer and smile, you are teaching your baby how to have a conversation.

QUESTION: What MOVEMENTS do 1-3 month-old babies make?

ANSWER: You will notice that your baby is getting stronger. Their movements are getting smoother. By the end of the third month, most babies can:

- raise their head and chest
- stretch their legs out and kick
- hold up their head and chest with their arms for a short time when lying on their tummy
- open and shut their hands
- bring their hands to their mouth
- grab, shake and bat at toys

Try this!

When your baby is lying on his back, hold a favorite toy above him. Your baby will begin trying to bat at the toy. The more you play this game, the better your baby will get at hitting the toy. Remember, your baby gets tired more quickly than you do. When your baby turns away, it is time to stop playing.



Try this!

Your baby has toys within easy reach: 2 hands and 2 feet! You may laugh at how interested your baby is in his or her own feet. Keep your baby's fingernails and toenails short and clean to prevent scratches.



Back to Sleep!

Your baby is learning the difference between day and night. He or she is probably staying awake longer during the day and sleeping longer at night. Remember to put your baby to sleep on their back. Sleeping on their back is safest for your baby.

QUESTION: What are the best TOYS for 1-3 month-old babies?

ANSWER: Your baby still needs YOU more than any toys! Cuddling, talking and singing to your baby are the best gifts you can give.



Screen time is not recommended for infants under 18 months. Remember, this is a great time to read to your baby.



First 5 LA

First 5 LA is a child advocacy and grant making organization created by California voters to invest Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues in programs for improving the lives of children from prenatal through age 5 in Los Angeles County. First 5 LA champions health, education and safety causes concerning young children and families. For more information, please visit www.first5la.org.



The WIC Program

WIC provides nutrition and health education services, breastfeeding support, referrals to community agencies and healthy food to eligible women, infants and children under age five. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For more information, please visit www.wicworks.ca.gov.

Safety Corner



Keep your baby safe from choking and suffocating.

- Don't let your baby play with small objects that can be placed in the mouth.
- Plastic bags form a tight seal if placed over the nose and mouth. These can stop your baby from breathing.
- Balloons can be inhaled and may cause death from choking.
- Do not put anything around your baby's neck. Necklaces, ribbons, or strings may get caught on parts of furniture or other objects.