

Your
12-14
Month-Old
Baby



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

First Steps! First Words!

I CAN TALK!

By the time your baby is 14 months old, most babies say, “**Mama**” and at least **one more word**.

I CAN WALK!

Your 12-14 month-old is probably **starting to WALK**. And, your baby wants to **climb** on everything. If you can, put safety gates that fasten to the wall at the top and bottom of stairs.



I WANT TO EXPLORE!

12-14 month-old babies are learning how to move, and how other things move.

Your baby likes to COPY what you do.

Your baby loves to copy you and is learning from your habits (good and bad). Avoid using your phone around your baby.

Try this!

Read a book with your baby.

Ask your baby to point to the pictures.

“Where’s the doggy? Where’s the baby?
Point to the tree. Where are the shoes?”

The more you read and talk with your baby, the easier it will be for your baby to learn to talk and read and be ready for Kindergarten.

Following your exploring baby can be fun, but can also be **tiring** and **stressful**. Look inside for ideas about **lowering stress**.



QUESTION: What is my 12-14 month-old baby learning about TALKING?

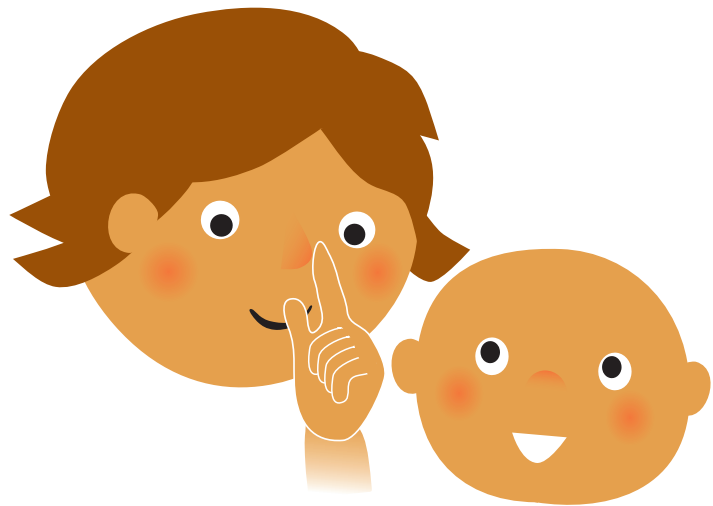
ANSWER: Most **12-14 month-old** babies can say, “**Mama.**” By 14 months, most babies will also say at least **one more word**. Babies **shake their heads “no”** with a frown. This is a time when babies learn that they can make choices. They prove it by saying, “No.” This is a sign of growing up.

Babies who learn more than one language gain something that will help them through their whole lives. If you speak more than one language, talk to your baby in all of the languages you know. Or, you can speak one language and daddy or someone else can speak another language.

Babies who hear more than one language may **seem** to talk a little later. In fact, they **know as many words** as babies who hear only one language. For example, babies growing up in homes where they hear Spanish and English may say, “apple” because it is easier than “manzana.” The same babies may say, “pez” instead of “fish” because “p” is easier to say than “f.” This is a great time for your baby to learn languages!

Your baby understands many more words than they can say. Your baby may understand words for parts of the body, clothing, and other familiar objects. You can use color names, but 12-14 month-old babies do not know colors yet.

Some babies do not start talking until they are 18 months old. If your baby is not talking yet, watch and see how your baby responds to you. When you smile, does your baby smile back at you? Does your baby give you a toy, then wait for you to give it back? Does your baby hear you come into the room? If your baby does not respond to you, ask your doctor. If your baby needs extra help, it is best to get the help as early as possible. There are special programs for helping children, even little babies!



Try this!

Help your baby learn parts of the body. Your baby will have fun pointing to parts of the body. “Where is Mommy’s nose? There is Mommy’s nose! Where are Mommy’s eyes? Where is Mommy’s foot?” Play the same game with shoes, pants, shirts and other clothes. The more excited you sound, the more fun your baby will have.



Your baby doesn’t need words to communicate! Your baby can learn to talk with movements, called, “signs,” like waving bye-bye. Many babies can learn signs before they can learn to talk out loud, but both take a long time to learn. Be patient. (Look at Handout F for more about signs.) Learning to use signs helps babies learn to talk.

QUESTION: What are 12-14 month-old babies' MOVEMENTS like?

ANSWER: Most babies take their **first steps** by 14 months. A few babies are older when they start walking. Babies love to practice **crawling or walking up** stairs. You will get a lot of exercise following your baby up and down, again and again and again! Make sure that your baby can't get to any stairs without an adult close by.

Your baby will be very busy getting into everything. Trash baskets are fun to turn upside down. Pulling books or pans from shelves makes noise. You may get tired of chasing your baby. Life will be easier for you if your baby cannot reach the things you don't want your baby to touch. **Get on the floor and see what your baby sees.** Then move delicate things out of reach.

12-14 month-old babies are getting better and better at **using their hands**. They can pick up little pieces. They love small pieces of food that they can pick up themselves.

Try this!

Your little scientist will want to see how different things move. Let tissue paper float in the air. Blow on it so that your baby sees it move. Play with bubbles. Bounce balls. Roll balls to the wall and let them bounce back. Roll balls to your baby. Blow a leaf into the air. And remember, tell your baby what is happening.

You can make it **SAFE** for your baby to explore. Exploring is very important for your baby. **Babies need to spend a lot of time on the floor playing and exploring.** This is how your baby learns. Using a playpen for short times (fifteen minutes) is O.K. It is best to give your baby as much time as you can on the floor.



Try this!

Your baby loves to **THROW** things. Give your baby soft sponges, light balls and other safe things to throw.

Try this!

Give your baby a cardboard paper towel tube and some small pieces of cereal. Show your baby how to drop the food through the tube.



Your little scientist wants to shake, rattle, and roll, and **EXPLORE** everything. This may mean a big mess, especially during meals. **Making messes helps your baby learn.** You can put a towel or large trash bag under your baby when eating. This makes it easier to clean up. Give your baby small pieces of food that your baby can pick up. You still need to help. Try giving your baby a spoon to play with while you use a different spoon to feed your baby. It won't be long before your baby can eat "all by myself!"

QUESTION: Sometimes I get very angry and frustrated with my baby. I'm tired of having to watch and take care of my baby all of the time. I feel stressed. What can I do?

ANSWER: Every parent feels tired and frustrated at times. It is important that you take care of yourself. When you feel stressed, take a few slow deep breaths. Taking time to relax helps you and your baby. You can teach your baby good ways to handle feelings like anger. By relaxing, you protect your baby from words or actions that could hurt your baby. Ask a friend or relative to watch your baby to give you a break. If you feel you cannot take care of your baby, ask your doctor for advice. Call 211 if you have more questions or need help.

QUESTION: What are the best TOYS for 12-14 month-old babies?

ANSWER: You are more important than any toy. **Read** to your baby every day. **Play** on the floor with your baby every day. **Cuddle** your baby every day. **Talk** and **sing** in every language you know!

12-14 month-old babies like to push or pull toys. A stroller is more fun to push than to ride in. They also like balls that are too big to fit into their mouths, toys that squeak, move, open and push. Let your baby hold the book and try to turn the pages. Name the pictures in the books. Read with different voices. Have fun reading to your baby! Children whose parents read to them do better in school.

Try this!

Your baby will love to **COPY** everything you do. You can copy your baby too. This shows your baby that you are paying attention and are interested in what your baby does. Peek-a-boo is still fun for everyone!



Screen time is not recommended for infants under 18 months. Any media use should be very limited and only when an adult is standing by to co-view, talk, and teach. Remember, screen time includes TV, cell phones, computers, tablets, and other hand-held games and devices.

Safety Corner



Now that your baby is on the move, he will need someone to watch him all the time. Remember to...

- Keep all electric cords out of your baby's reach. If your baby grabs a cord, they can pull something that can fall on them.
- Cover all electric outlets with safety covers to keep little fingers out.
- Keep small objects that are small enough to fit through a toilet paper roll off the floor. Make sure that there are no coins, small toys, or anything that could be a choking hazard for 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.