Bringing out the best in ...

YOUR BABY

Enjoying your baby’s development in the first 12 months of life
Activities to encourage your baby’s development

Developmental stages you can enjoy

Social & Emotional

• Hold and cuddle your baby often, especially when baby seems troubled.
• Cradle your baby when feeding (whether breast or bottle). Maintain eye contact with baby during feeds as this helps with bonding.
• Spend time with your baby during the short periods of time that baby is awake. This helps in getting to know your baby.
• Softly massage your baby after bath and before night’s sleep.

Language & Understanding

• Smile and talk to your baby, keeping your face close to your baby’s.
• When talking to your baby, make eye contact and keep your face close to your baby’s.
• Sing to your baby. This helps language development.

Hand Movements

• Stroke your baby’s hands allowing baby to clasp your fingers.

Body Movements

• Encourage head control by holding your baby upright facing you with one hand supporting baby’s head and back. Smile and talk to your baby.

Contact your Child and Family Health Nurse or Doctor, if you have any concerns about your baby’s development.
Your baby delights at the sight of your face

2 TO 6 WEEKS...

Social & Emotional

- Smile at your baby when you are speaking. Soon your baby will start to smile back at you.
- Use facial expressions and a happy tone while talking to your baby.
- Hold, cuddle and kiss your baby often.
- Softly massage your baby after bath before night’s sleep.

Language & Understanding

- Sing to your baby.
- Hang up a mobile for your baby to watch and enjoy.
- Smile and talk to your baby, introducing baby to the different tones of speech.

Hand Movements

- Offer your fingers for baby to clasp.
- Encourage head control by holding your baby upright facing you with one hand supporting baby’s head and back. Smile and talk to your baby.
- Baby’s hands continue to close around objects placed in the hand, as a reflex.

Body Movements

- When held in a forward bent position, baby’s head raises slightly to be on the same level as the rest of the body. Baby still has no head control when pulled forward to sit.
- Baby lies in a more relaxed, less flexed posture.

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Talk to your baby... baby loves to hear the sound of your voice

7 WEEKS TO 3 MONTHS

Development:
- Baby enjoys looking at your face and listening to you speak.
- Baby is excitable, for example, gurgles when sees food coming.
- Baby expresses emotions. One of many is the enjoyment felt in spending happy times with those around.
- Baby's eyes are bright and alert, ready to learn.

Social & Emotional:
- Spend time talking to your baby about the happenings of the 'here and now' (here is your food... yummy milk).
- Sing action rhymes such as 'twinkle twinkle'. This will not only teach your baby language skills, but will also encourage social interactions.
- In order for your baby to explore the surroundings, carry baby around the home facing away from you.

Language & Understanding:
- Familiarise your baby with common sounds such as animal noises, music, bells and noise-makers. Hearing is linked to the development of speech.
- Blow raspberries and have your baby touch your lips to feel the vibration.
- Engage your baby in 'baby talk.' By mimicking sounds made by your baby, you will be teaching your baby to take turns talking (talk-listen-respond).

Hand Movements:
- Baby may cry for long periods of time. For tips on settling baby, visit the crying baby section of the Hospital website.
- Baby becomes quiet when an unexpected sound is heard.
- Baby makes bubbly sounds and raspberry sounds...
- Baby begins to imitate sounds and the up/down tunes in speech.
- Baby begins to take turns talking.

Body Movements:
- Baby is not yet able to pick up a toy but can wave a rattle aimlessly when placed in hand.
- Baby enjoys swiping at objects.
- Reflexive movement of baby's hand closing around objects disappears.
- Baby's hands remain open most of the time.
- Baby is fascinated to watch and play with own fingers.
- Baby likes to clasp and unclasp fingers as if clapping.

Activities to encourage your baby’s development:
- Offer light or soft rattles of different shapes to your baby to explore.
- Hang up toys for your baby to explore.
- Give your baby more opportunities to hold own head up by gradually reducing support as baby's head control increases.

Developmental stages you can enjoy:
- Baby lies on tummy propped up on forearms with head up and looking around.
- When baby is held upright baby's head has better control.
- When baby is pulled up to sit, the head does not fall back.

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4 TO 6 MONTHS

You are your baby’s first playmate

Activities to encourage your baby’s development

- Introduce your baby to other family members and friends.
- Use facial expressions and a pleasant voice when talking to your baby.
- Hold, cuddle and kiss your baby often.

Developmental stages you can enjoy

- Baby recognises the parents and is still quite comfortable in the company of new faces.
- Baby shows affection towards familiar persons.
- Baby notices/watches your mouth intently.

Social & Emotional

- Baby can easily roll from front to back, but back to front is more difficult.
- Baby can reach for a toy.
- Baby has good, strong head control.
- Baby is close to being able to sit alone.
- Baby can briefly take the body weight when held up on feet.

Language & Understanding

- Have your baby listen to wind chimes, birds and other sounds.
- Foster your baby’s babbling by reading to baby.
- Talk to your baby about what you and your baby are doing.
- Point out common objects to your baby and name the items.
- Count the items you are showing your baby.

- Baby turns decisively towards the location of noise.
- Baby makes babbling sounds such as ‘ga ga’.
- Baby recognises the basic sounds of baby’s native language.
- Baby looks at objects when named.
- Baby is very interested in surroundings.
- Baby loves laughing, squealing and chuckling.

Hand Movements

- Offer safe objects of various shapes and sizes for your baby to hold and move.
- Provide your baby with toys and household items that may be banged together to make noise.
- Offer your baby a number of textures to feel and learn, including teething rings, fruits and vegetables, making sure they are large enough to avoid being a choking hazard.

- Baby can move toys from one hand to the other.
- Baby puts everything in the mouth.
- Baby can bring together two toys.
- Baby can enjoy the touch of different materials, both rough and smooth.

Body Movements

- Give your baby time on the floor to practice rolling over.
- Deliberately place toys at a distance so your baby can reach and grab for them.
- Provide opportunities for your baby to sit up by carrying your baby in an upright position and holding your baby in a sitting position with support.

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Tuning into your baby will help baby understand the environment

7 TO 9 MONTHS

Development

Social & Emotional

- Introduce your baby to new adults, children, and other babies in order to become better acquainted with family and friends.
- Use towels, sheets, paper, and mirrors to play peek-a-boo with your baby.

Language & Understanding

- Allow your baby to explore the home environment after checking the safety of the area. (Kids Health fact sheet – Home Safety Checklist at www.chw.edu.au/parents/kidshealth)
- Organise outings/picnics to places such as the park, zoo etc as a way of familiarising your baby with the outdoor environment.
- When your baby points to or shows interest in an item, name the item so baby can learn, repeating new words in simple sentences.
- Teach your baby to imitate sounds and actions such as clapping hands and blowing kisses.

Body Movements

- Baby is keenly interested in the environment and the happenings of the surroundings.
- Baby pokes/points at objects with index fingers.
- Baby uses baby talk, with no real words, in the tone of human speech.
- Baby understands the word 'no' and obeys it sometimes.

Hand Movements

- Baby starts to hold small objects between thumb and index finger.
- Baby begins to hold bottle by self.
- Baby can grasp and self feed finger foods and can chew lumpy food.
- Baby begins to be able to release things from hand.
- Baby is better skilled at hand movements.
- Baby can move hand at the wrist.

Body Movements

- Baby needs some help in getting to a sitting position. Once securely seated, baby leans forward to pick up toys and play with them.
- Some babies are now crawling, backwards, at first.
- Baby pulls self up to stand while holding onto furniture.
- Baby makes walking movements when held standing.

Developmental stages you can enjoy

Activities to encourage your baby’s development

- Provide your baby with small items such as plastic spoons and cups to pick up and hold.
- Involve your baby in action rhymes. Help with accompanying hand movements.
- Teach your baby to wave good bye.

- Provide your baby with chewable toys and cloth books to hold and play with while sitting.
- Use wiggly/attractive toys to encourage your baby to crawl towards them.
- Place interesting toys just out of reach on stable furniture to help with pulling self up to stand.
- Avoid using a baby walker as there is an increased risk of injury associated with its use.

- Provide your baby with safe, small items such as plastic spoons and cups to pick up and hold.
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Contact your Child and Family Health Nurse or Doctor, if you have any concerns about your baby’s development.
• Make your baby feel safe and secure by holding, cuddling and kissing your baby often.
• Use simple instructions and some commands such as ‘don’t touch’.
• Help your baby with the tunes of rhymes.
• Assist your baby with learning and pronouncing words.
• When your baby pronounces a word, respond by putting the word in a sentence.
• Call your baby often by own name so baby becomes familiar with it.
• Look through simple, colourful picture books and name objects.
• Play hide-and-seek
• Baby babbles with a tune and tries to communicate with action and gestures.
• Baby enjoys repeating animal sounds.
• Baby usually says first two words but knows many more. Baby learns the meaning of these words through others’ response to them.
• Baby turns when own name is called.
• Baby begins to point to things baby wants.
• Baby begins to show an interest in pictures.
• If a toy is hidden under a cup, baby knows where to look to find it.
• Baby gives and takes objects to and from people nearby.
• Baby picks up small items with a good grip, using index finger and thumb.
• Baby holds objects with both hands.
• Baby can put blocks into a container.
• Baby throws toys out of toy box.
• Separation anxiety begins.
• Starts to discover the power self has over parents.
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Social & Emotional

• Help your baby with the tunes of rhymes.
• Assist your baby with learning and pronouncing words.
• When your baby pronounces a word, respond by putting the word in a sentence.
• Call your baby often by own name so baby becomes familiar with it.
• Play games where your baby points to body parts that you name and vice versa.
• Look through simple, colourful picture books and name objects.
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Language & Understanding

• Play with your baby by handing objects/toys back and forth.
• Help your baby build towers with blocks. Initially, the amusement will be with knocking them down.
• Assist your baby with placing shapes into the appropriate openings and completing simple puzzles.

Hand Movements

• Assist your baby with walking by holding baby’s hand or by allowing baby to walk using stable toys with wheels.
• Baby is able to walk by holding onto furniture.
• Many babies begin to walk alone.
• Baby can drop from walking to sitting position with a poorly controlled bump.

Body Movements

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