

Cooperative Extension

Child guidance: Discipline and safety

Your baby has lots of energy! She seems like she is constantly on the move. You may need extra patience to keep up with her.

- Baby is starting to get into things, and may find things you don't want her to have.
- Since everything she picks up goes into her mouth, it's time to think about safety.

Babies under one year old are too young to understand why they should stop doing something.

- Your baby may love to throw toys on the floor. He likes to hear the noise and watch the toys bounce. He thinks it's a great game!



- Baby doesn't drop things to annoy or "test" you. He's learning where things go when they are dropped.

1. One of the best forms of guidance is to think ahead – and make your home

safe for your baby. Baby-proofing will also simplify your life.

- Read all about it on page 5!
- **Baby needs and wants to explore.** So it makes sense to baby-proof your house, rather than having to follow him around saying No to everything he does. That approach is exhausting for you and demoralizing for Baby.

2. Another form of child guidance is to redirect.

- This means moving Baby away from a hazard (such as a lamp cord) to some safe place.

3. And you can substitute.

- Interest your baby in something he can play with. For example, find a different drawer in the kitchen that is OK for Baby to empty.
- Then gently remove the thing you don't want him to have. As you take it away, say something like, *This could hurt you.*

Do not slap your baby's hands or yell at him.

- Baby can't control his behavior yet.
- If you spank him, he learns that it is OK to hit.
- It's up to you to keep him out of danger – not to punish him for getting into it.

Month 5

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If you can strike a balance between

- (1) setting limits,
- (2) providing loving care and
- (3) having a sense of humor,

it will help Baby grow up with a good head on her shoulders.

What's It Like to Be 5 Months Old?

How I Grow

- I rock, roll, and twist my body.
- I kick my feet and suck on my toes.
- I keep my head and back straight when I sit, if you support my body.
- I stand up (if you hold me under my arms), jump up and down and stamp my feet.
- I have pretty good aim when I grab at something.
- I can roll from my tummy to my back, and I may be able to roll from my back to my tummy.



How I Feel

- I usually cling to you when you hold me.
- I stop crying when you talk to me.
- I am starting to show fear, anger, and disgust. It doesn't mean I'm bad, it just means I'm growing into a normal person with many emotions.
- I'm beginning to be aware of my feelings. I notice your feelings, facial expressions and body language.
- I have my good days and bad days — just like everyone.

How I Understand and Respond

- I recognize my name.
- I look around when I hear sounds.
- I can tell the difference between me and others in the mirror.
- I may cry when I see strangers.
- I look for something if I drop it.
- I remember what I just did.
- I am very interested in toys that can be touched and chewed on. I like to twist, shake and bang my toys.
- As I play, I am learning about nearness and distance. I'm also learning about "inside" and "outside."
- As I play and explore, I'm learning about space, form and texture.
- Play helps me learn about the world.

How I Talk

- I watch your mouth, and try to imitate you when you talk to me.
- I make sounds like ee, ah, ooh, dada, bye-bye, mama.
- I babble to myself, to my toys and to people — I get attention that way!



Each child develops at his or her own pace.

- Look back at last month's list. Am I doing anything now that I wasn't then?
- Look for my growth in each area, and gently help me to learn new things.
- If I was born pre-term, use my due date (rather than my birth date) for keeping track of how I am developing.

- Speedy physical development by itself does not mean that Baby is advanced in other areas.
- Slow physical development doesn't mean Baby is slow in other areas.
- **If Baby is developing slowly in more than one area, talk with your doctor.**

Games Babies Play

Difficult sounds: a communication game

Purpose: to encourage your baby to imitate sounds and words.

Repeat the sounds Baby makes so she can hear them twice.

As you say these sounds back to Baby, you are helping her learn how to make the sounds she has “invented.”

Help Baby learn new sounds by playing this game.

- Hold Baby in your arms and let her relax.



- Make sounds like “brr-own,” “grrr-ate,” “bizzz-y,” “uh-oh,” and “aaa-all gone.”
- Face her so she can watch your

lips move.

- Nuzzle or cuddle her after you make the sounds.
- Laugh, smile, or hug her gently when she makes the sounds.

If Baby still wants to play, branch out with new words and sounds.

- Face your baby so she can see you say other words and sounds.

Help Baby learn about his body.

To help him discover his feet:

- Rub his feet together.
- Bring his feet to his mouth.
- Count the toes.
- Say, *This little piggy went to market* (wiggling the big toe) *This little piggy stayed home wiggling the next toe*

This little piggy ate roast beef for dinner (wiggling the third toe) *This little piggy had none* (wiggling the fourth toe) *And this little piggy cried wee, wee, wee, all the way home* (wiggling the littlest toe).

Help Baby discover his hands.

- Rub his hands together.
- Bring his hands to his mouth.
- Count his fingers.
- Help him clap.

- Do hand games, such as *Patty Cake*.

(Clap Baby’s hands). *Patty cake, patty cake, baker’s man (girl), Bake me a cake as fast as you can (swirl).*

(Pat hands on lap) *Pat it and (move hands in a circle) roll it and (draw a letter with the hand) mark it with a B. (Pulling hands away from Baby) Put it in the oven for Baby and me.*



Take time to laugh together!

Read simple books to Baby.

- Baby likes to look at brightly colored pictures.
- Point to the item being talked about as you read.
- Make up your own short story about pictures you see on a page of a book or a magazine.

Feeding Baby

Between 5 and 7 months, several things begin to happen:

- Baby's growth will begin to slow down.
- She will become more active and burn more calories.

Your doctor is probably telling you to not start solid foods for another month or two. Your friends and relatives are probably telling you that everyone starts solids sooner. Pay attention to your doctor.

Breast is best! Keep up the breast milk and/or the type of infant formula your doctor has recommended. Need more information? Click on <http://aap.org/>

- If you don't already have a support group, check out <http://lalecheleague.org/>



Help Baby learn to eat when he is hungry, and quit when he is starting to feel full.

Hungry babies may:

- Open their mouths when they see the breast or bottle.
- Lean forward to be able to drink.

Babies who are starting to feel full, may:

- Hold their mouths tightly shut.
- Push away the breast or bottle.
- Lose interest in eating.
- Turn their upper body away.



No honey, honey!

Babies under 1 year old should not be fed honey.

Honey has spores that can cause infant botulism.



Crib toy safety alert

Remove crib toys that fit across the crib this month. When babies can push up on their hands and knees — some time around 5 months — they can fall over the toy, and not be able to get free. This could cause strangling. Hooded shirts (or anything with strings in it) can also cause strangling — so keep away from Baby.

Helping Baby's Memory

- Watch how Baby reacts when things disappear from view. Does Baby lean over to look for things he dropped? Does he look for a favorite toy?
- These are signs that Baby's memory is growing. When he was younger, "out of sight was out of mind." Now, he is learning that

things exist even when he can't see them.

You can have fun with Baby, and help his memory.

- Show Baby a toy, then cover it — slowly at first — with a cloth or cup. Does Baby try to pull the cover off? What if you cover only part of the toy? Try different toys

and different covers.

- Play peek-a-boo to help Baby learn that you come back when you go away. Sometimes, cover your face and sometimes cover his.
- If Baby doesn't have fun playing these games now, wait a few weeks and try again.

It's time to baby-proof your home!

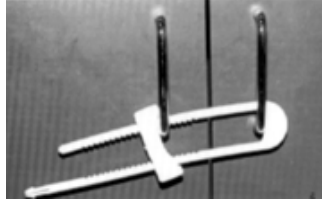
Your baby wants to move, climb, open things and poke into small spaces. She does not understand how dangerous things can be. There are many reasons to baby-proof your house:

- It helps Baby avoid accidents and injuries.
- It gives Baby a large area to safely explore – which helps her learn.
- You won't have to keep saying NO.
- It keeps your valued items safe.

Get down and crawl around. Look carefully at everything in the rooms where Baby goes. Create a safe area for Baby to play.

- Cover all electrical outlets.
- Move cleaning products to high shelves.

- Put small items (matches, nails, tiny beads) out of sight.
- Move chemicals (cleaning products and bug killers) to high shelves.



- Keep all medicines out of reach.
- Install child-proof locks on cabinets that hold items that you don't want Baby to have.
- Use new gates to make "off limits" stairs and other places you don't want Baby to play. Old-fashioned accordion gates are dangerous. Baby can be trapped in the "v's" in the gates.

Until you have a safe play area, borrow or buy a playpen or safe gate.

- Playpens work well with some babies, and others cry the minute they're put into one.
- If you do use a playpen, be sure it has a spring lock and that there are no hinges or joints that can pinch tiny fingers.



Do not keep your baby in the play pen very long. She will get tired of it, and it keeps her from safely exploring and learning.

What is your baby like?

Your baby is one-of-a-kind! Babies may differ in these ways:

Rhythms: Some babies eat, sleep, even have bowel movements at around the same time each day. Others never do the same thing from one day to the next.

Approach or withdrawal: Some babies shy away from new things, while others seek them out.

Adaptability: Some babies won't take their formula if it isn't the right temperature. Some babies can only sleep in their own cribs. Others do fine no matter where they are or with whom.

Intensity of reaction: Some babies whimper quietly when they're cold or hungry. Others howl as soon as they are unhappy.

Level of responsiveness: Some babies notice the tiniest change around them. Others can sleep

through thunderstorms.

All of these things make up your baby's temperament. Some combinations are easier to live with than others!

Easy babies are active and predictable. They adapt easily to change, and are usually happy.

Slow to warm up babies pull away from new things a little, and adapt slowly to change.

Difficult babies tend to be unpredictable. They withdraw from new situations, adapt slowly to change, and react very slowly.

If Baby is difficult, know:

- Baby is not difficult on purpose, and is not bad. He can grow up to be as bright and loving as others.

- Your baby was born with this "style" of adapting, but it may change as he grows.
- A difficult baby needs more caring and more patient parents – who will accept him and help him learn.

To help a difficult baby,

- Introduce things slowly, so he gets used to them.
- Pay attention to Baby's signals, and adjust your plan to his temperament. Over time, you will find the right amount of stimulation to suit him.
- The style of adapting that makes Baby difficult at this age can help him be a great problem solver when he is older.

Watch out! High chair safety

When Baby starts to lean forward out of his infant seat — and you're afraid he will tip over — it's time for a high chair. Babies can get badly hurt in a high chair. Here are some things to look for to be sure the high chair is safe for baby:

- It should be sturdy, with a wide base so it won't tip over.
- A seat belt with a crotch strap to go between Baby's legs (to keep him from sliding out) is a must.



- The tray should lock securely on both sides — with no sharp edges.
- Belt buckles and tray locks should

be easy for you to use — but NOT easy for Baby to use.

- Caps or plugs on tubing are firmly attached and cannot be pulled off (this could cause a child to choke).
- It should be easy to clean. If the finish will allow, you can place the high chair in the shower stall to soak and steam it clean.
- If the seat is slippery, attach rubber bathtub adhesive stickers so he doesn't slide around.

Do's and Don'ts of High Chair Safety

- **DO** always use the seat belt and strap.
- **DO** lock the tray into place.
- **DO** be sure Baby's hands are out of the way when you lock the tray.
- **DO** be sure that there are no sharp edges to cut her or you.
- **DO** keep the high chair at least 12 inches away from a table or

counter. Baby could push off and tip over. Don't leave the chair near a stove.

- **Don't** leave her alone in the chair. **DO** watch Baby closely. Some babies have slipped down between the leg straps and strangled.
- **Don't** let Baby stand in the chair.
- **Don't** let other children climb on the chair.



Prevent lead poisoning

Last month we talked about how even tiny amounts of lead can poison an infant. If your home was built before 1978, you could have a problem.

- Lead reduces memory, intelligence, ability to concentrate, and hearing.
- Damage to Baby's developing systems cannot be cured — only prevented.
- Lead paint becomes a problem when it chips or turns to dust. It

becomes dust when doors or windows rub while moving, when people walk over a painted floor, during remodeling, or as outdoor paint weathers.

- When Baby crawls, then puts her fingers in her mouth, she may be eating dust that contains lead.
- If your baby spends time in any place built before 1978, ask your doctor, clinic or Public Health nurse about a blood test for lead.

- Look at last month's cleaning tips. For advice and help in dealing with lead in your home, call your Public Health office, or call (800) 424-LEAD. For more information: <http://www.epa.gov/>
- **Repairs can create lead dust.** Find out how repairs can be made so Baby is not exposed to lead dust when fixing walls, windows, plumbing or electrical lines.

What happened to time for us?

Ever since we had the baby, there's been a lot of strain between my partner and me. We never seem to have time just to sit and talk anymore. I can't seem to tell him how I feel. Things really seem to be piling up between us.

Many parents feel this way.

With all the demands that a new baby adds to your busy life, it's hard to find time to sit down, talk, and make a plan for working together.

Even though it is hard, it's important to find the time to talk about what's bothering you.

Chances are, your partner has been storing up some gripes also.

- **Set up a "date."**

Set aside a special time (or times) each week that you can be together and talk without being interrupted.

- **Use "I messages".**

Tell each other how you are feeling without blaming the other. Instead of saying, *You always put me down*, say, *I feel*

put down when you tell me... By using "I messages", your partner will not feel blamed or accused, and is likely to be more interested in addressing the problem.

Be direct.

Say what you mean, rather than hoping your partner can guess or know what you mean. Instead of saying, *The living room looks messy*, say, *I get upset when the newspapers are all over the room, and I have to pick them up.*



Avoid the question trap.

Instead of, *Why didn't you call to tell me you'd be late?* Say, *I was worried that something had happened to you when you didn't come home at the usual time. Next time, please call me,*

so I won't worry.

When you find yourself ready to ask a "question trap" or blame someone:

- Identify what you are really feeling.
- Send an "I message" to state your feelings.

Listen, listen, listen!

- Give your partner a chance to air his or her feelings and gripes. Don't interrupt, jump to conclusions, preach, or quickly offer advice.
- Check back to see if you really understood what was said. For example, say, *Let me see if I understand...* or *Are you saying that....?*

It's normal for new parents to have many mixed feelings.

If you use these important communication skills, you will be able to find solutions to problems before they get out of hand.

Do yourself a favor...

Some parents make a regular date to be with other parents and babies.

- Once a week, 2-3 parents and babies get together for an hour or more.
- Babies enjoy these play groups. Parents may enjoy them even more!

You may be able to use each other for emergency baby-sitting, too.

- All parents have days when their babies wear them out.
- It helps to have a friend you can call on for an hour or so if you need to run an errand, or when you just need time alone.

To raise a baby well, you need help.

- Is there someone in your neighborhood who loves babies?
- Are there new parents nearby who might like to join a little play group?

Help Me Learn

- Talk to me in complete sentences about what you are doing.
- When you talk with me, **pause to give me a chance to answer**. At first, I'll just be able to smile or wave my arms. Learning to talk is hard work! I'm learning that we talk to each other by **taking turns**.
- Give me lots of chances to practice sounds and praise me when I succeed.



- Hold me on your lap in front of a tabletop or other flat surface. Tie one end of a piece of string around one of my favorite toys

while I am watching you. Place the toy out of my reach, then tell me to *get the toy*. I will soon learn to pull the string to get the toy. Be sure to take the string off the toy before you give it to me to play with by myself. Put the string away where I can't reach it.

- Keep up our "tummy time" sessions. Watch me closely and play games with me so this can be a fun time for both of us .

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