



Simple Baby Games to Promote Early Brain Development

Birth to 3 Months

What brain research says:

The more gentle the stimulation you give an infant, greater strides are made in their brain development.

Birth to 3 Months

What brain research says:

A child's capacity to control emotions hinges on early experiences and attachments.

Birth to 3 Months

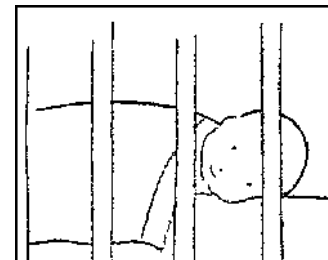
What brain research says:

Just reaching for an object helps the brain develop hand-eye coordination.

Newborn Game

Infants as young as one day old recognize the voices of their parents. If you patted your tummy and talked to your baby while she was in the womb, she will know the sound of your voice.

1. While your baby is lying on her back, walk to one side of the crib and call out her name.
2. Keep saying her name until she moves her eyes or her head toward the sound.
3. Walk to the other side of the crib and say her name again.
4. Gently massage her body as you smile into her eyes and say her name.
5. Clap baby's hands together or stretch arms (crossed over head)
6. Gently move infants legs as if pedaling a bicycle.



Hug and Kisses

How we touch, treat and nurture infants can have a deep effect on the kind of adults they become. This game will make your baby feel safe and secure.

1. Chant the following song as you rock and kiss your baby:

*Hugs and kisses, I love you I love
you, I love you
Hugs and kisses, I love you You're
my baby.*



2. When you are diapering your baby, you can sing this song and kiss her nose, toes and fingers.

Here's My Finger

This game strengthens a baby's hands and fingers, and also develops tracking skills.

1. Hold your baby in your lap.
2. Put your index finger in your baby's hand. She probably will grasp your finger, as this is a natural reflex with newborns.
3. Each time she grasps your finger, say positive words like, "That's my wonderful girl!" or "You're so strong!"



Birth to 3 Months

What brain research says:

The more you talk to your baby, the more her brain will make important connections for language.

3 to 6 Months

What brain research says:

A baby whose coos and gurgles are met with smiles will likely become emotionally attached.

3 to 6 Months

What brain research says:

The number of words an infant hears each day influences his or her growth and development, and ability to interact and engage with others through play and learning.

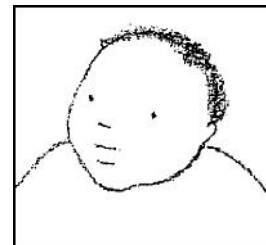
Talking to Baby

- Talk about everything that you are doing. Describe what you are doing when you are washing your hands, getting dressed, etc.
- Recite poetry and nursery rhymes, and sing songs throughout the day.
- From time to time, vary the sound of your voice. Try talking in a high voice, low voice, singsong voice, and soft voice.
- Babies may mimic your facial expressions.
- Babies begin making vowel sounds like “ah-ah” or “ooh-ooh” about 2 months old.



Talking Together

- At this age, babies often make lots of sounds. Mimic the sounds your baby makes. Those simple sounds will later turn into words.
- Take the words that your baby makes, such as “ba ba” or “ma ma,” and turn them into sentences. “Ma ma loves you,” and “Ba ba says the sheep.”
- Penelope Leach, a child development expert, says, “Your child may say hundreds of different sounds throughout the day, but if you clap and applaud when he says, ‘ma ma’ or ‘da da,’ he will keep repeating those sounds because it makes you happy.”
- The more you repeat your baby’s sounds, the more he will be encouraged to make more sounds.
- This is truly the beginning of conversation.



Connect with Conversation

When you let your baby know that you are listening to him and that you like what he says, you are developing his language skills and confidence.

1. Start a conversation with your baby. Say a short sentence like, “It is a beautiful day today.”
2. When your baby responds with some babble or a coo, stop talking and look into his eyes.
3. As he talks, respond with a nod of your head or a smile. This indicates to your baby that you are listening to him and enjoying his sounds.
4. Continue with another sentence. Always stop and listen to your baby’s response.



Excerpted from *125 Brain Games for Babies*, by Jackie Silberg. Reprinted with permission by Gryphon House Inc. This book is available in bookstores.

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