

Infant Activity Calendar

Ideas for children from birth to 18 months old



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Special thanks to the following people for their recommendations and edits: from Alberta Health Services, Nutrition Services: Vanessa Restivo, Danielle Wohlgemuth, Emily Burt, Marissa Salon and Martina Sung; from Alberta Health Services Provincial Injury Prevention Program: Valerie Cook and from Alberta Health Services Public Health: Lorissa Jones, Kathleen Barker, Jennifer Splaine and Melissa Thomson.

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Dear parents and caregivers,

You are your child's best teacher. They will learn the most about the world from you. This calendar has been created to provide you with an activity to try with your child every day.

These activities do not require a lot of time, materials or preparation so you can fit them into your daily routine.

Activities are designed to encourage development in the areas of:

- communication-the language they understand and the language that they express
- gross motor skills– how they move their bodies in physical activities
- fine motor skills– how they use their hands
- self-help skills
- social skills
- problem solving skills with focus on their auditory attention, visual attention and memory building skills

Recipes, rhymes and parenting tips are included also to inspire and encourage. Please use caution and supervise all the activities.

Take time to play and enjoy creating special moments with your little one. Your impact on their overall development will be significant and will last a lifetime!



Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old

Parenting tip: Sleep and your infant

Infants in their first year need on average 14-17 hours of sleep. Usually they sleep for up to ten hours of sleep at night and the remainder of sleep takes place during many naps throughout the day. From 12-18 months a child needs up to 13 hours of sleep with possibly 1-2 naps a day and around 10 hours of sleep each night.

At first it is difficult to have a set routine for sleeping and waking, but as the child grows, try to establish a bit of a routine to have similar waking and sleeping times, with regular feeding times and play times throughout the day.

Regular sleep will help with irritability and fussiness. Put your child to sleep in a similar way each time, in a darkened room, with secure and loving ways to encourage settling and self-regulation.

Recipes:

Carrot puree (6 months+)

Cut carrots in 1 inch pieces and steam in a stovetop steamer for 12 minutes. Cool in ice water. Boil some water and let cool. Blend carrots in a food processor or blender, add some cooled water to mixture if not smooth. Fill 1/4 cup plastic containers or ice cube trays with the puree and freeze. Thaw and warm as you need.

Apple/pear cereal (6 months+)

Mix applesauce or pureed pears with your child's iron fortified rice cereal for a different taste.

Note: As your child grows older, make your purees thicker and less smooth.

Rhymes:

Eyes, Nose, Cheeky, Cheeky Chin

(Point to each body part while you sing:)

Eyes, nose, cheeky, cheeky chin
Eyes, nose, cheeky, cheeky, chin
Eyes, nose, cheeky, cheeky chin
Cheeky, cheeky, chin, nose eyes

Head and Shoulders

(Point to each body part while you sing:)

Head and shoulders, knees and toes
Knees and toes, knees and toes
Head and shoulders, knees and toes
Eyes, ears, mouth and nose



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Carry your child around your home and talk about what you see.		Rub lotion on their arms and legs, and massage. Talk or sing to them while rubbing in the lotion. Label their body parts as you massage.	Encourage your child to grasp a rattle or another toy. Once mastered hold it a bit out of their reach and see if they will move to grasp.	Imitate your child's sounds. Pause and see if they will try to imitate you. Use expressions and gestures and see if they will imitate also.	Look at a book facing your child. Point at pictures and say single words and make sounds where possible. In this way your child can look at the pictures and at your face to see the words.	Cover your face with a cloth or blanket and hide. Say "Where did I go?" Uncover and say either "Boo!" or Here I am!"
Help your child touch something that is cold like an ice cube or snow. Then say "brrr...cold"	Crumple some aluminum foil into a ball. Hold your child on your lap in front of a table. Roll the ball in front of them to watch and encourage him to "catch it."	Hold your child so they are facing you. Make funny faces and encourage your child to touch your face and label. "Nose", "eyes", "mouth " etc.	With your child laying on their back, pull off their socks one at a time and say "Bye-bye sock" or "sock off".	Place child on tummy on a beach ball or exercise ball, encourage tummy time play with the ball straddled between your legs on floor. Good eye contact!	Massage feet and hands and count each toe/finger. Clap feet or hands together and sing rhymes!	Hold your child and look into a mirror together. Talk, make faces, name body parts, make sounds, enjoy!
Hold a toy or medium sized ball above their arms or legs. Help or encourage them to lift legs to kick the toy or lift arms to grab the toy.	Position your child on their back or in sitting position and help them touch soft things (i.e.: soft animals, washcloth, blanket etc.) with various body parts.	Make a repetitive sound, word or noise and wait for your child's reaction then repeat. Examples: make an animal "hop, hop, hop" or a car goes "Brrrm!"		Give your child something large to hold so that they need two hands to hold it. A large stuffed animal, a large ball or a large bowl would work.	Make sounds like "ba,ba" or "da-da" and see if they will copy. Sing these sounds to the tune of "Row, row, row your boat".	Roll a ball or a toy car to your child in lying or sitting position and see if they will reach out to grab or eventually roll back to you.
Help your child to grab for different objects and allow them to explore each. Say "Look at the _____. Get it!" And when they do exclaim "yeah!"	Make a funny "wa-wa" sound by patting your lips with your hand. Wait for a reaction then pat you child's lips and see if they will make the sound. Repeat.	Show your child items in your house that are hard like furniture, toys, plastic items. Help them to pat the object. Talk about each item.	Tie a soft rattle or bells around your child's wrist or ankle and encourage them to shake. Say and sing: "Shake, shake, shake". Repeat.	Help your child to squeeze their hands when holding squeezable objects. Squeeze toys and sponges in the tub, squeak toys, foam balls etc.	When it is time to eat, say just that "it is time to eat" as you position them for feeding. Try to say it consistently each time.	Look at a picture book together, when your child is cuddled on your lap. Talk softly and label each picture and point to it.

Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old



Rhymes: Tony Chestnut

Tony Chestnut (*point to toes, knees, chest and head*)

Knows I love you (*point to nose, eye, cross arms over chest and point to "you"*)

Tony knows, Tony knows (*point to toes, knees, nose...repeat*)

Tony Chestnut knows I love you (*continue with gestures*)

That's what Tony knows (*point to toes, knees, nose*)

Rock-a-bye baby

(*same tune different words, can interchange "name" with the word "baby".*)

Mommy loves baby, yes she does

Daddy loves baby, yes, he does

Grandma loves baby, grandpa does too

Yes, little baby-we all love you.

Recipe: Baby teething cookies (for 9 month olds or older)

1 cup iron fortified infant cereal (plain or flavored)

1 cup whole grain flour

3 tbsp. vegetable oil

1/4 cup cold water

Preheat oven 425 F. Combine flour and cereal in a mixing bowl. Gradually stir in oil. Add water 1 tbsp. at a time until dough forms. Roll out dough onto a floured surface. Cut into rectangles or fun shapes with cookie cutters. Transfer shapes onto a parchment lined cookie sheet. Bake for 10-12 minutes or until biscuits are golden brown. Cool completely and transfer to an airtight container and use within one week.

Parenting tip: Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is the natural way to feed your baby. Breast milk is the only food or drink your baby needs for the first 6 months of life to support healthy growth and development. Solid foods can be given at 6 months of age with continued breastfeeding until to 2 years of age and beyond.

Other feeding notes

- For non-breastfed babies, iron-fortified formula should be given.
- Cow's milk (3.25%) can be offered
- between 9-12 months of age if baby is eating many iron rich foods.
- Weaning from the bottle can start at 6 months of age by giving water or formula in a regular cup.
- By 12-14 months old, babies should not be fed from a bottle.

Vitamin D

All babies should receive 400 IU of Vitamin D every day.

For more information about feeding your baby, contact your local Community Health Services office or call Health Link at 811.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Put a cloth or blanket over your child's face and say "Where are you?" Take it off and then say "there you are!" or "Peek-a-boo!"	Give your child a rattle or noisy toy to hold, and you hold one also. Show your child how to bang the toy on the floor or on a table top.	Sit your child on your lap. Hold your child's shoulders and gently bounce and sing a song. As they get stronger hold them by the sides and then later by the hips, in this activity.	Call your child's name when you enter a room or when trying to get their attention, smile and respond when they look at you.	Experiment with new sounds and see if your baby will copy you (try clicking with your tongue, smacking your lips, blowing bubbles with saliva, gurgling etc.)	Give your child a picture card such as a greeting card or cut a picture from a cereal box. Show them how to turn the card over using their wrist and forearm. See if they will copy.	With an empty paper towel roll or plastic cup make "do-do-do" sounds. Give to your child to see if they will make the same sound: "do-do-do".
Blow bubbles so they can watch them, when they pop say "pop". Be careful of eyes, try to blow near their hands.	While carrying your child, move fast, dance to music or move in a circle. Say words like "whee" or "dance" or "spin", while moving.	Sing this month's rhymes with your child. Do the actions with your child. When you say the word "love" in the "Rock-a-bye baby" rhyme song, give them a kiss!	Tie a short string no longer than 6 inches to one of your child's toys. Show how the toy moves when you pull the string. Encourage them to pull and say "Come here ____"		Say "Who's my valentine?...my sweetie?...my love?" Then say "You are" then tickle or kiss them. Pause and repeat.	Show your child a stuffed animal, when you touch the nose say "beep", when they touch the nose also say "beep". A great cause and effect game!
Sit on a chair with your child facing away from you, support their hips, bounce them gently and sing a rocking song.	Turn the water on and off in your babies presence. Say "Here it comes, the water is on"...then say "the water is off, all gone!"	Play "So Big" with your child. Using different tones, whisper, use deep tones, or a high pitched voice, combine these and say "so big" as you lift your child's arms to the sky.	Show your child a toy with moveable wheels or a doll with moveable limbs and show them how they move and see if they will try to grab to imitate the movement.	Lie on your back with knees bent and place your child on your stomach sitting with their back against your thighs. Bounce them and play "horsie", helping them to balance.	Encourage your child to touch your mouth or your throat when you are talking. They will enjoy, feeling the vibrations and are learning about communicating in this way.	While you are holding your child next to a table, drum your hands on the table. Try loud beats and soft beats and help your child to copy.
	Partially cover a toy with a cloth. Make sure they can still see part of it. Say "Where's the ___?" and pull off the cover and say "there it is!"	Listen to music together. Sing along and encourage your child to sing also!	When entering a darkened room, when you turn on the light say "lights on" and same when you leave "lights off".	Help your child to hold two toys. Help your child to move them up and down or bang them together. Say "up...down" or "bang, bang, bang" during the actions.	Shake a rattle or squeak a toy next to your child, but slightly out of their sight. When they turn to see it, say "you found it".	Sit your child on your lap or in their high chair. Put some floatable toys in a pan of water and show how to bob them up and down.

Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old

Parenting tip: Soother safety

- Avoid giving a soother or artificial nipple to breastfed babies until breastfeeding is going well (at least 6 weeks old).
- If you choose to give your child a soother or pacifier, purchase one that has a soft nipple that is all one piece, so that it flattens out against the roof of your child's mouth when they are sucking. A hard nipple may cause jaw problems later in the child's life.
- Check your child's soother often to make sure the nipple is firmly attached to its base.
- Replace pacifiers every 2 months, even if they look perfectly fine. Throw out soothers that change color, are sticky, cracked or torn.
- Do not tie the soother around your child's neck with a cord or string.
- Do not coat the soother with honey, or other sweet substances. This can cause cavities, and honey should not be given to children under 12 months.
- Wash your child's soother often with soap and water, and rinse well. But do not clean in your own mouth as you can transmit germs that cause sickness or cavities.
- Weaning from the soother should happen early at around 1 year of age.

Rhymes:

There's a cobbler on my street

There's a cobbler on my street
Mending shoes for little feet
With a bang and a bang, with a bang, bang, bang
(lightly tap the bottom of your child's feet)
Mending shoes the whole day long
Mending shoes to make them strong
With a bang, and a bang, with a bang, bang, bang
(again tap your child's feet)

The Moon is Round

The moon is round as a round as can be.
(Trace your child's face with your finger)
Two eyes, a nose, and a mouth
(point to features while you sing)
Like me!
(point to yourself)



Recipes:

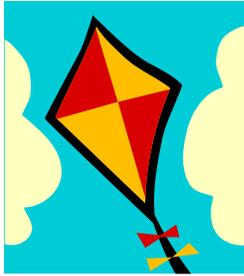
Sweet potato with cinnamon (6 months+)

Peel and chop sweet potato into bite sized cubes, place in a stovetop steamer and steam for 10 minutes until soft. Sprinkle with cinnamon and mash with a fork. With the leftovers store in ice cube trays or 1/4 cup containers, and freeze for later meals.

Fruit blend (6 months+)

Cut up finely, mash or blend in a food processor: banana, pear, peaches, mango, cantaloupe or kiwi, a combination of these or one or two. Serve!

Note: before mixing foods try each food first with your child and leave 2 days between the trial of each food

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Babies like to experiment with sounds especially when there is a toy, spoon or their fingers in their mouths. When you hear their sound, copy it back to them.	Help your child learn to roll from back to their side by placing a toy near their shoulder. Help them roll to their side to grab it. Say "Get it"!	Put a picture from a magazine or cereal box up beside where you change your child's diaper. Point it out and talk about things in the picture, Change the picture regularly.	Stack some blocks or small boxes, then roll a ball and knock them over. Stack again and see if they will try to roll the ball.		When holding a toy, accidentally drop it. Say "oops!" and point to where it went and say "fell down".	When preparing food for your child, even if it is just pouring water into a glass. Talk to them and describe what you are doing.
Sit your child on a table in front of you and support. Wear a colorful hat, tie or scarf and encourage your child to balance while exploring the item of interest.	Place a toy inside a clear container with a lid. Show them how to put it in and take it out. See if they will try the action or if they will hand it to you for help.	When the family dinner is cooking, talk about the smells and what is cooking.	Give your child time on their tummy to encourage head control, pushing up with arms, and later working towards crawling.	Sing to your child this month's rhymes: "There's a cobbler on my street" and "The Moon is round"	Make a brag book for your child, include pictures of all family members. Point at pictures and say their names.	Make a tunnel out of a box, cutting away the ends. Roll a car or ball through the box. Say "Where did it go?" and "there it is" when they discover and see it.
When shopping place child safely in shopping cart. When rolling vary speeds and say "fast" ,"slow" "go", and "stop". Always keep them at arm's length.	Give your child a teething biscuit to try to eat on their own when ready to try solid food at around 6 months old. Say "Mmmm, good cookie".		Holding a doll or a stuffed animal. Point out the facial features and label for your child. Touch the body parts on the object then on yourself or on your child.	Sit on the floor with legs outstretched and place your baby on their tummy across your lap. Encourage them to push their hands down on the floor to push up.	Take your baby to "people watch" at a recreational facility, a shopping center, park or restaurant. Name things or people as you see them together.	Make a color shaker, using a clear bottle such as a vitamin bottle. Fill with water, sequins, glitters, marbles. Seal and glue lid on. Encourage your child to shake!
Encourage your child to try drinking from a regular cup...the earlier the better. Try a straw cup or sippy cup once they have mastered the regular open cup.	Sit on floor with legs apart & stand your child facing away from you. One hand holds the child across the chest, the other across the knees. Encourage bearing weight on feet, and support.	Try to minimize or allow no TV watching until your child turns 2 years of age. Use books often, picture cards or just point to objects and label as an alternative.	Place your child propped with towels if need be in a box or a laundry basket and give them ride. Great for strengthening balancing muscles.	When your child makes a sounds try to repeat it back. This is important in building the foundation of communication.	Make a ramp using books, propped. Then take a ball or a car and release at top of ramp, position your child at the bottom to catch item! Say words like "here it comes!", "go", "stop", "catch it".	When they have learned to sit, then offer toys to their side and front to strengthen balance and righting reactions.

Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old

Rhymes:

Round and round the garden

Round and round the garden, (*draw circles in your child's palm or on their tummy*)

Like a teddy bear,

One step, two steps (*take steps with walking fingers*)

Tickle you under there (*tickle them under their arms*)

Round and round the garden

Through the wind and rain

One step, two steps,

Tickle you there again

Itsy-Bitsy Spider

The itsy bitsy spider climbed up the water spout

Down came the rain and washed the spider out

Out came the sun and dried up all the rain

And the itsy bitsy spider climbed up the spout again

(*Variation: lower your voice for "the great big hairy spider"*)

Parenting tip: Dental care for babies

Wipe gums with a soft cloth, after eating, and first thing in the morning and last thing before bed at night.

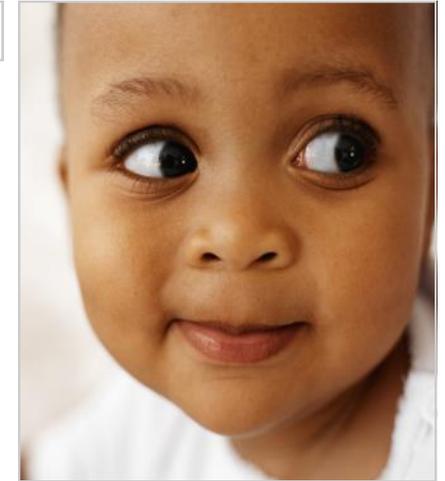
When their first teeth appear, you can start brushing their teeth using fluoride toothpaste. Use only a small amount of toothpaste as small as a grain of rice until they are age three years old.

Check your child's teeth often for signs of tooth decay, if you see white lines along the gum line or brown areas along the gum line this could be a sign of early tooth decay.

Have your child's teeth checked by a dental professional at one year of age. Check your local Community Health Services office for a dental program that offers checks and tooth brushing strategies.

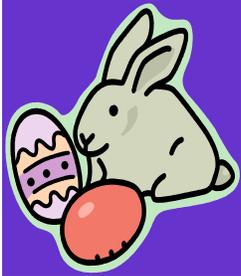
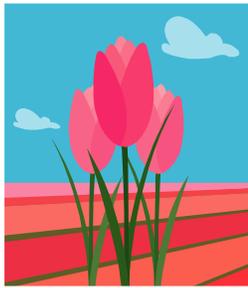
Remember you should help your child brush their teeth until they are 8 years old.

Try to wean your baby off of a soother/pacifier as well as a bottle by the time they are 1 year old. This will be better for their teeth and their oral structure and muscles.



Drinks for baby (6-12 months old)

- Breastfeeding is recommended until 2 years of age and beyond. Along with solid foods, breast milk will provide your baby with the nutrients they need.
- Water can be offered in small amounts to quench their thirst from a regular cup with two handles. Do not use a sippy or straw cup.
- For non-breastfed babies, iron fortified formula should be given until 9-12 months of age, then they can be given whole cow's milk in an open faced cup. Babies should be weaned off the bottle by 12 months of age.
- Juice is not needed by babies. If you do offer juice make sure it is 100% unsweetened juice and limit it to only 1/2 cup (125 ml) per day.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
If your child is over 8 months old place some bite size crackers or cereal pieces in some plastic eggs. Have your child shake and then open them up to try eating.	Look at a picture book or a magazine. Talk about what you see and label and then give the sound that the object makes. "Car...beep-beep"; "Cow...moo-moo" etc.		Sing to your child when washing their face and hands or when bathing. "This is the way we wash our hands, wash our hands..."	Bounce your little monkey on the bed. Try it on their stomach and on their back and bounce them gently. Air mattresses work great for this also.	Lay your child on a large blanket or towel, on their back or stomach. Hold the corners and give your child a ride on a smooth floor. Wheee!	In a metal coffee can or metal bowl, show your child how to drop something inside to make a noise. Continue until they try it.
"Foot up, arms up" When dressing your baby, each time talk about clothing items and body parts. "Pants on...foot up" if they do not do the action help them and repeat "foot up". Do the same with arms!	Make homemade baby food (when baby is over 6 months). Blend cooked vegetables in a blender and place into ice cube trays. Freeze and thaw later.	Play the telephone game with a toy phone or an old phone. Push buttons and pretend to talk, "hello", "hi", and then give to child. When finished say "bye" and hang up.	When preparing a meal make some pasta and when it is cooked give some cooled pieces to your child for them to explore while sitting at their high chair.	Practice the featured rhymes with your child: "Round and round the garden" and the "Itsy Bitsy Spider".	Hide a toy under a washcloth. Say "Where is it?" See if they will uncover to find where it is. When they do say "There it is!"	Play with nesting containers. With a bunch of similar shaped containers of different sizes. Nest the smaller into the larger. Let your child take apart and guide to put together.
Use one or two word phrases with your baby. Use an animated voice and repeat often. Also speak closely to your child so they can see your face when you are talking.	Make your own pegboard. In the lid of a shoebox, cut holes big enough for spoon handles or straws to poke through. Your child will like to put these in the holes and take them out.	In a sink or in a basin, pour in some bubbles and water and mix with a whisk. Make lots of suds and have your child explore, grabbing and popping. Watch their eyes.	At bath time, use a sponge, cup or a squirt toy and drop water on different body parts. Say "water on your leg", "water on your tummy", "water on your arm" etc.	When your baby is 9 months+, put cereal pieces in muffin cups. Encourage your child to grab one out of each cup and eat. Great concentration and hand muscle work out.		Time to get the stroller out and go for a walk. Go over grass, sidewalk, and gravel for different feels. Talk about what's happening. "Bumpy, fast, slow, smooth...etc"
Go to a park and slide down a slide together. Hold on tight...wheee!	Make a puppet, stuffed animal or even a sock, talk or sing to your child. This is especially handy if you are waiting somewhere.	Sit your child on one of your legs, with hips bent and legs on flat surface. Support if necessary. Say "I am going to get you" and then tickle or kiss their neck. Repeat!	Take a walk outside and point out all the things that you see. Explore your neighborhood or yard.	Stand your child beside an upside down sturdy box or basket and support. Stack some blocks on the top and see if they will try to knock over.	Put a toy in a container. Show them the item and then dump it out. Repeat. Say "in" and "out" during activity.	Make a peek-a boo book. Place a photo between two pieces of cardboard that are taped together. Decorate the top page. Say "Where's ___?" "here they are!"

Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old

Rhymes

A lady goes...

(place your child on your lap and vary the degrees of bounce)

A lady goes bouncy, bouncy, bouncy, bounce
A gentleman goes trotty trot, trotty trot, trotty trot
A cowboy/cowgirl goes gallopy gallop, gallopy gallop,
gallopy gallop Yee Haw!

This little piggy

(wiggle their toes one at a time)

This little piggy went to market
This little piggy stayed home
This little pig had roast beef
This little pig had none
And this little pig went whee, whee, whee, whee
All the way home.

(Change the objectives "to the movies, "had pizza" etc.)

Parenting tip: Language development warning signs

If you answer "no" to any of the following questions with respect to your child's language development and your child is between ages 0-18 months, please contact your local Community Health Service office or a Speech and Language Pathologist for further assessments.

- During your child's first three months, do they react to sound by either startling to loud sounds or can they be soothed by calm and gentle sounds?
- Does your child (between 4-6 months) respond to your smiles and interactions with interest or try to "talk"?
- Between 6-12 months does your child babble or try to "talk"?
- Does your child (between ages 12 to 18 months) try to use words and talk a bit and do they interact with others?

Early detection can mean helping your child to talk easier as well as to understand more about their world. Early intervention activities and ideas are essential to enhance communication. If you have concerns contact your local Community Health Services office for more information.



Recipes:

Note: before mixing foods try each food first with your child and leave 2 days between trial of each food

Potato deluxe (8 months +)

Mix cooked mashed potato, with tuna or shredded cooked chicken, milk, grated cheese, peas or corn. Serve! Great as leftovers also.

Fruit blend (8 months+)

1 apple peeled, cored and diced
1/2 pear peeled, cored and diced
1/2 cup blueberries

Place fruit in a saucepan and just cover with water, then simmer for 5 minutes. Drain and transfer to a blender and puree. Serve.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Tie a string to a toy or a ring. Dangle in front of your child and see if they will reach to grab. Move it side to side, up and down and see if they will follow.	Play a clapping game with your child. Sing or just say “clap, clap, clap” With two blocks see if they will hit them together also.	With another family member play hide and seek. Hide behind a sofa or under a blanket. Then say “Where is ___?” See if they will look, then pop out and say “there they are”	When dressing, name body parts. With feet and hands when putting into sleeve or pant leg, look for them in the openings. Say: “fingers, where are you?” “toes...”etc.		Set up a mirror for your child to see themselves while they play on the floor. Watch their responses to their image.	When your child is lying on their back see if you can pull them to sit and then to stand just holding their hands. Make sure they are supported, through their neck and back if weak.
While playing with a toy they are interested in, see if they hold it firmly and will they resist your pull with a tight grasp? Play a bit of tug of war, but let them win.	Look at a touch and feel book that has textures. Or when you are looking at a book together point at the objects and just say one word, and tap your finger to get their attention.	Sing featured rhyme for this month. Try to sing them throughout your daily routines.	Whatever your child does, whether it is an action or a sound copy it. “Monkey-see Monkey-Do”. See if they will take turns, and if they will start to copy you.	While playing see if they will give a toy to you. Just say “give” and reach out your hand and see if they will give it to you. If they do, praise them; if they do not keep trying.	Change your child’s play positions throughout each day, to workout their whole body. Lay on back, sit upright, tummy time, stand with support, sit in chair etc.	Place your hands under your child’s chest and hips. Then hold him in the “superman” position and fly! Try in front of a mirror and encourage the child to reach out!
	Hide a toy that makes a noise turn it on. See if they will search out the sound. Then show them the toy once you have seen their response.	Place your child on a beach or large ball, on their stomach and roll back and forth. Also try sitting them on the ball, move them side to side, supporting at hips to see if they will react.	Try giving your child a regular cup to drink with especially at meal time. If they spill, give them a cloth to wipe up with.	Walk outside today, explore grass, sit and let your child feel and pull with their hands. Some will love; others will not.	When talking with your child, let them see your face and mouth as you form words and sounds. Simple words and short phrases are best. Do not use baby talk.	Use a rattle or bells to see if they will turn both directions to listen. Try shaking a bit out of their sight also. Let them explore and shake to make their own sounds after.
Add a gesture to a new word when introducing it. For instance when saying “Bye-bye”, then wave; for “no” shake your head; for “up” hold out your hands, etc.	Put a sticker on one of your facial features. When your child tries to grab it, name the body part. Repeat with another placement. Watch that they do not eat the sticker.	Present two different toys to your child for your child to look at, encourage them to inspect one and then the other.	Put a sock on one of your child’s hands and encourage them to remove. Try the other side also.	With a cup, place a toy or ball underneath and see if they will find. Ask “Where is the ball?”	Give your child a massage. Use lotion and rub their arms and legs and back. Name their body parts as you rub them. Make up a little song.	Ask your child “where’s your tummy?” Lift their shirt and say “there it is”, and give it a tickle. Repeat. Soon they will lift their own shirt.

Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old

Parenting tip: Sun safety

Be careful with your baby when you go outside on a sunny day. Cover your baby up with a blanket, and/or have them wear a hat and long sleeves and pants. Stay in the shade with your baby, use an umbrella if there are no other sources of shade. DO NOT put sunscreen on babies less than 12 months old. Apply children's SPF 30 (or higher) sunscreen on all skin that is exposed to the sun, when your child is 1 year old and older.

Mosquito safety:

Use mosquito netting around your child when in a seat or in their stroller. Do not use insect repellent with DEET on infants under 6 months of age. For children 6 months to two years use only one application of insect repellent containing 10% DEET per day. An insect repellent with 5% DEET is preferable. When applying avoid putting on your child's face and hands. Wash treated skin and remove treated clothing after returning indoors. Or have your child wear long sleeved clothing and pants and avoid going outdoors at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are at their worst.

Recipe: Watermelon ideas (6 months+)

- Wash the exterior of the watermelon and slice into pieces and prepare in a way that is appropriate for you baby.
- Mash or puree for your baby(6 months+). Enjoy alone or add to iron fortified infant cereal.
- Combine watermelon, frozen strawberries and full fat plain yogurt for a delicious smoothie that can be enjoyed by spoon, straw or even frozen into homemade popsicles.
- Chop watermelon into bite size pieces for a healthy and refreshing finger food. Serve alone or mix with cottage cheese.

Note: before mixing foods try each food first with your child and leave 2 days between trial of each food



Rhymes

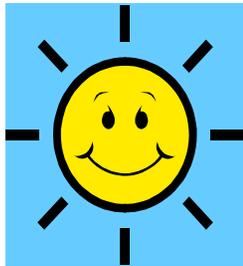
Peek-a-boo song (Tune: "Where is Thumbkin")
(Hide your child under a blanket)(Can use name in song)

Where is baby? Where is baby?
What should we do? What should we do?
Peek-a-boo baby Peek-a-boo baby (lift blanket)
I see you, I see you

A Smooth Road

(with your child on your lap, vary the bumps according to the tune)

A smooth road, a smooth road, a smooth road
A bumpy road, a bumpy road, a bumpy road
A rough road, a rough road, a rough road
A....hole! (let your child fall between your legs)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Wear a shirt with a pocket. Put a small toy or object of interest into the pocket. Ask "Where did it go?" and see if they will seek it out.	Dip "O"-shaped, multi grain cereal into applesauce or yogurt and place on their tray. Are they raking with all fingers or are they using their thumb and pointer finger to pinch to pick it up?	Play the dump and pick up game. Fill a container with blocks or small toys and dump. Then pick up and put back in. Caution: they will want to repeat again and again.	Help your child with cause and effect activity such as turning a light switch on and off, or pulling a ceiling fan cord. Say "on" and "off" to correspond with effect.	Allow your child to play with some pots and pans. Show them how to bang two lids together. Give them a spatula and let them bang on the pot. Fun and noisy!	If your child is over 6 months and eating solid foods-place your child's snack– baby cookie or biscuit inside a container and see if they can get it out, by grabbing it or dumping it out.	When outside allow the wind to blow bubbles, you may have to move your arm to create your own wind. Use words like "look", "pop", "uh-oh", "all gone" etc.
Pretend play with invisible food. Use play dishes and invisible food. Use words like "mmm", "good", "drink", etc.		Make an indoor wagon out of a box with a string connected, put things in and pull towards your child, so they can peek. Great for when they are mobile to help clean up.	With your child have fun helping them to kick a ball. You can swing them into it before they can walk or if they are walking place the ball in front and they will walk into it. Say "kick".	Fill a small bowl with water and together explore filling cups, small bottles, scoops, big spoons and funnels.	Set aside a kitchen cabinet with things that your child can play with. They will enjoy opening and closing and taking everything out. Keeps them busy while you cook!	Hat play. Try putting on hats (or even a bowl, fresh diaper, aluminum pie plate) on their heads and when they take it off, Put on something different. Ask "Whose that?"
Play with large fridge magnets on a refrigerator door. Position yourself in front of the fridge with your child on your lap or standing bearing their weight. Watch carefully.	When outside see if you can find an insect (ladybugs work great) place in a jar for the child to watch them walk around.	Use manners in your directions. "May I have that <i>please</i> ?" When they give you something that you asked for, say " <i>thank you</i> ". Early modeling of manners will help them to learn theirs.	Messy play! Once your child is over 6 months and eating solid foods- On their high chair give them a scoop of yogurt or and then show them how to make lines, shapes and circles in the substance.	Sing "Pop goes the weasel". When you sing the word "pop" coincide it with an action like a clap, falling down, or closing a book. Sing again and repeat.	Place a stuffed animal or toy in front of them when they are in their jolly jumper, or when you are holding them, and encourage them to reach out with both arms for the item.	With a glass of milk and a straw, blow bubbles for your child to see. Say "bubbles". Stop and ask "Want more?" Then repeat.
When outside find a dandelion flower which has gone to seed. Blow the seeds, and watch them float away.	Sing the featured rhymes: "Peek-a-boo song" and "A smooth road" for this month with your child.	After a diaper change, pull your child up from laying to sit or to stand. And say "Up!"	Hide a toy in a box, an old purse, a paper bag or a container, and help them find it. When they find say "there it is!". They will want you to repeat again and again.	Purchase a pinwheel toy and either blow it or show your child how it blows in the wind. Listen to the wind, rustle leaves etc.		Sit outside in the grass. Turn the sprinkler on a low setting. Have your child watch and see if they will try to catch the water.

Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old

Parenting tip: Crying and your child

Sometimes you won't know what your baby is trying to tell you when they cry, just try your best to figure it out. Stay calm and ask your partner for help. Know that even if you can't calm your baby, they will still know that you love them and that you are trying.

Babies cry for a number of reasons. Sometimes crying is a late sign of hunger. Feed your baby when they show the early signs of hunger such as smacking lips, sucking on hands or fists and searching with an open mouth.

If they are not hungry ask yourself, "what do they need?" A clean diaper? A burp? A cuddle? Try different things, such as gently rocking, walking with them or talking, singing and playing soft relaxing music.

Never shake a baby for any reason. Babies and young toddlers have heavy heads and weak neck muscles. Even a few seconds of shaking can cause blindness, hearing loss, and life long health problems or death.

Rhymes:

Here comes the mouse

Here comes the mouse, (*speak slowly and walk your fingers up their legs or arms*)

Here comes the mouse,

Here he comes, here he comes, here he comes!

(*spoken quickly and tickle your child at the same time*)

You are my sunshine

You are my sunshine

my only sunshine

you make me happy

when skies are grey

You'll never know (child's name)

how much I love you

Please don't take my (boy/girl) away

Please don't take my sunshine away

Recipes:

Note: before mixing foods try each food first with your child and leave 2 days between trial of each food
Chickpea Hummus (6+ months)

1 1/2 cup canned chick peas drained, rinsed and mashed

1/3 cup tahini paste or peanut butter

1 clove garlic, peeled

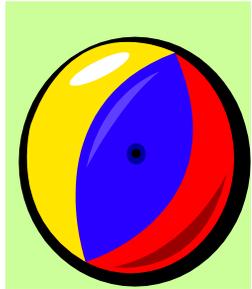
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice

1 tbsp. vegetable oil

2 tbsp. full fat yogurt

Add all ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth. Add water if needed until desired consistency is achieved. Serve on its own or as a spread.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Go for a walk outside, and help your child feel different things (i.e.: rock, twig, branch, leaf, etc) Describe how they feel: smooth, bumpy, rough etc.	Roll up a blanket and place your child on their tummy so that they are on their hands and knees. Hold their hips and rock them back and forth. Place a mirror on the floor.	Tie two or three items on to their high chair and encourage them (while sitting) to retrieve the items by pulling up on the strings. Make sure they are securely fastened to be safe!	Young babes like to look at black and white designs and faces. Make a design on a paper plate with a black marker and encourage them to look at it, in sit or in side-lying position.	When your child is 9 months or older, in a clear, dry plastic bottle, place some cereal or bite sized snacks inside. Shake it and dump it and see if your child will copy you.	When a toy falls over or when something tips over say “uh-oh”, or “oh no”. See if your child will imitate you.	Sit on a sidewalk or porch with a bucket of water, cups, and sponges. “Paint” with water on the surfaces, try making footprints and handprints too!
Go to the park and swing together. Place your child on your lap and hold with both arms. See if they like it; keep it low and help them feel secure.	Sing “Ring around the Rosie”, holding your baby and dancing in circles. Then when you sing “they all fall down” either fall down or dip your child lower and then pop back up.	If your child is over 6 months- On a hot day, give your child an ice cube to explore on a flat surface. Will they pick it up? Try eating it? Play with it until it melts? Supervise!	While holding your child on your lap sit and bounce gently on your bed. Make fun sounds as you bounce. Then rock them side to side and pretend to almost fall over. Whoa!	When grocery shopping, point out different items and label them, also let your child feel or hold different (safe) items while they are in the cart.		Fasten a rattle, or slide a ring toy or teething bracelet on one of their legs and see if they will bang their feet to make noise or lift their leg to inspect.
When your baby is in their high chair or sitting with you by a table, put a little water on the flat surface. Encourage them to explore with their hands moving back and forth.	Sit your child on a cushion, a thick book or stool with their feet planted on the floor. Place some toys at their feet and see if they will bend to pick up toys. Support at their hips!	Hold a ribbon or paper streamer or a thin strip of aluminum foil, in front of a fan or outside when windy and watch with your child how it moves in the wind.	Stand your child on your lap facing you, and support. Move your legs up and down to march their legs up and down or encourage them to dance to the beat.	Place water in an ice cream lid, and have your child place their feet in it. Help them walk or stand on a cement surface and leave their footprints. Can vary this activity with paint and paper.	When you hear your phone ring, say “phone!” Encourage your child to play with a play telephone , and if the call is a familiar person let them listen to the voice.	Sit in front of a table together, stack some blocks or measuring cups. Encourage your child to knock them down. Say “Oh no”, or “fall down”.
Before you change your child’s diaper, lower your child from sit position into laying position by holding their hands; and say: “down, down, down”.	Read a book in a tent with a special snack. A tent can be made by just throwing a blanket over your head. Use a flashlight to look at a book or each other.		When outside, lift your child high above your head and say “So big” then bring them down and say “whee”. Repeat.	When playing with a stuffed animal or puppet, make it hide and say “bye-bye” and wave. When it comes back say “hi!” Encourage your child to copy words or wave.	Lay your child on their tummy, hold a toy above their face, lift it up and across their body to encourage them to lift their head and push up on arms or to turn over to watch or get it.	When sitting at the table together give your child an object to look at. See if they will pick it up. Make sure that the item is not small enough to fit through a toilet paper tube, to reduce choking risks

Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old

Parenting tip: Car Seat Safety

Your baby must be in a rear-facing seat that is correct for their weight and height when in a vehicle.

It is safest for a baby to stay rear facing until at least 2 years old, or they reach the maximum height and weight for the car seat as stated by the manufacturer.

A rear facing seat provides the best protection for a child's head, neck and spine in a sudden stop or crash.

For installation instructions refer to the safety seat instruction manual and your vehicle manual.

Check out: www.myhealth.alberta.ca or www.healthyparentshealthychildren.ca or Call Health Link at **811** for all the most up to date information.



Rhymes: Pat-a cake

Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake Baker's man (*clap your child's hands together*)

Bake me a cake as fast as you can

Roll it and roll it (*roll arms over one another*)

and mark it with a "B" (*or the 1st letter of your child's name*)

And put it way up in the oven for "baby" and me (*lift hands way up and point to child and then to self*)

Here is the Bee hive

Here is the bee hive (*clasp hands together*)

But where are all the bees, (*open hands palms up*)

Hidden away where nobody sees (*cover eyes*)

Out of the hive they will come

1,2,3,4,5 (*unfold fingers from fist*)

Buzz (*tickle your child all over*) says the bees

Recipe:

Banana French Toast (6 months+)

Mix 1/2 banana, 1/4 cup of milk, 1 egg and 1/2 tsp vanilla or cinnamon in a wide bowl.

Then dip pieces of whole grain bread and coat, place on a non stick griddle or pan and cook both sides until golden brown. Cool a bit and serve in small cut up pieces and allow your baby to enjoy this tasty finger food!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
With some measuring cups show your child how they nest together, how a small one fits into a larger one.	Play with your child with a noisy toy. Make a sound and see if they will copy the movement to make the same sound.	Give your child a long item to hold, such as a serving spoon, or a paper towel tube. Extend your hand out and see if they will pass the item to you and then pass it back!		Record your child's babbling, on video or on an audio device. Send to family, makes a great keepsake also.	Make cookies with your child. Let them smell the ingredients (vanilla, flavoring) and hold a spoon. Do not let them eat batter though. Say "mmm, smells good"	After you change their diaper, ask them "Want up?" Hold your hands out and watch their response, if they look at you and try to reach out...then say "going up!"
With a piece of yarn or string, thread toy rings, cardboard tubes, jar rings etc. and tie between two chairs. Sit your child in front of string and encourage them to move the items.	Place your child on your lap and play "horsie" Gently bounce your leg. Stop and start, and say "Giddy up or whoa horsie" to correspond with the action. Yee-haw!	Turn the music on and dance! Hold your child's arm and move to the music, dip them, twirl them, bounce. Enjoy!	In front of a large mirror, make faces at each other. Swing your child close to the mirror. Say "who is that handsome/pretty boy/girl?" Ask "where's your nose?" etc.	With a stuffed animal or toy, play "pop up". Hide your hand under a blanket or something and then cue it to "pop". Say "hi!" then hide again and repeat!	Sit your child on your thigh supporting their head and back. Tip your child's body backwards and forwards, side to side. Bounce. This is great for strengthening their balance.	Give your child some paper. Encourage them to squeeze and crumple. Be watchful if they tear to remove so they do not eat the paper pieces.
Sit with your child at a table and roll a ball or a car off the table and say "Where did it go?" see if they will seek it out. Repeat.	With connectable rings, pop-beads or blocks, show your child how to snap together and pull apart. See if they will hold on while you pull.	Roll a large ball, roll to your child in a sitting position. See if they will push it away from themselves, or hold on to it. Repeat! A beach ball is perfect for this as it is quite light.	When dressing your child, talk them through what you are doing. "Now we put your shirt on, where are you? There you are. Let's put your pants on, toes where are you? Aha!" etc.	With two blocks, see if they will hold both in each hand. Then show them how to bang them or clap them together. Clap, clap, clap!	Play "peek-a-boo" with your child. Hide behind a blanket or pillow and "peek". When they start to crawl, hide behind a couch or chair and see if they will seek you out.	Stack toilet tissue rolls and then push them or kick them over together. Repeat.
Sing the featured rhymes together for this month: "Pat-a-cake" and "Here is the bee-hive"	Hide a toy that makes a continuous noise, by your child and see if they will seek it out.	While carrying your child look for something in a cabinet or room or even the fridge. Say "Where's the milk?" for example have them help open the door then say: "there it is" .	With a toy car, drive the car on your child's arms and legs, back and tummy. See if they will drive it on you. Make car noises and say "go!"	Tickle your child. Name their body parts as you tickle. See if you can get them to smile, giggle and laugh. Precious!		Hide a ball or a small toy under a plastic cup while they are looking. See if they will look for and then grab the toy.

Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old

Rhyme:

If you are happy

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (*clap, clap*)

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (*clap, clap*)

If you're happy and you know it, and you really want to show it

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (*clap, clap*)

Parenting tip: Safety for your baby

- Always keep one hand on your baby anytime they are on a high surface such as a change table, couch or counter. Always place the car seat and baby seat on the floor.
- Always use the safety strap when your baby is in her stroller or swing or infant seat.
- Never leave your baby alone near water even for a second. One hand should be on your baby while they are in the bath. Do not use bath seats they are dangerous and could tip over.
- When your child starts to move, place wall mounted gates at the top of your stairs and pressure mounted gates at the bottom of your stairs.
- Reduce your child's chance of choking by cutting food into tiny pieces (the size of a fingernail), when they are able to eat finger foods (at around 9 months of age).
- Keep small objects out of reach to prevent choking. Anything that fits inside a toilet paper roll is too small for your baby to play with. Keep coins, button batteries, detergent pods etc, out of reach.
- Medicines, vitamins, alcohol, cannabis products, cigarettes, cosmetics and household cleaners should be out of sight and locked up tight.
- To prevent burns turn your hot water heater down to 49 degrees Celsius or install an anti-scald device on your tap. Do not drink hot beverages while holding your baby and keep hot food and beverages out of reach.

Recipes: (6 months+)

Once your child has been introduced to many foods individually, then you can try the following ideas for adding texture, variety and new flavors to your child's meals:

- Try mixing iron-fortified cereal with mashed fresh or canned fruit
- Finely mashed or ground pasta mixed with sauce, cream or grated cheese
- Soft cooked rice with soft or pureed vegetables
- Fork mashed soft or cooked vegetables. Try foods like avocado, sweet potato, parsnips, and squash.
- Fork mashed flaked salmon, tuna, turkey or chicken with pureed vegetables. Make sure fish bones are removed.
- Fork mashed cottage cheese or ricotta cheese with added mashed fruit (fresh/canned) or vegetables.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
With a noisy toy or bells, move them to both sides without your child seeing, and see if they will turn their head to localize the sounds.		When your child is over 6 months-Try offering breast milk or water to satisfy your babies thirst before juice. If you do offer juice give an open cup with 100% unsweetened juice and limit to 1/2 cup per day.	Play with a squeaky toy. Squeak the toy by squeezing and then give to your child to see if they can copy the action. They may use their hands or quite possibly their mouth.	With your child facing away from you on your lap, bounce them gently and tip them from side to side. As you tip kiss their ear and say "peek-a-boo!" on each side.	Talk about "hot " and "cold" with your child. With an ice cube allow them to touch and say "brrr...cold", fill a cup with hot water and empty let them feel the outside of cup and say "hot"!	When saying "hi" or "bye-bye", say the words with animation and wave. Help your child to wave also, each time.
With a favorite toy, move the object behind an object and have it reappear on the other side. See if your child will track where it goes when this action is repeated.	Sitting face to face, make a sound that you have not heard your baby use before. Try "shh" for example, put your finger to your lips. Will they copy the action or the sound?	Sing his month's rhymes with your child daily: "If you are happy and you know it" and "Sally goes round the sun".	When dressing your child, talk about body parts. When putting arm in sleeve, look in and say "where are your fingers? there they are!" as they slide them out. Try toes and head, also.	Play "how does the animal walk?" while your child is laying down. Move their feet and legs and make up movements: "elephants stomp, horse gallop, mice scurry," etc.		Place different desirable toys or objects just out of reach and encourage them to move their bodies to "reach" and get the item.
Give them a ring toy to play with (can use homemade rings and peg). Will they take the ring stack apart? Place rings on peg and see if they will put on or take off.	Cover a sibling or parent with a blanket and then say "Where did they go?" See if they will seek the person out by lifting or pulling blanket.	Place a toy that makes sound within a child's visual range and then move the toy and wait for them to re-locate. Then say "there it is!"	With a pot, place blocks and smaller toy inside, and help your child stir with a wooden spoon and "cook" the blocks.	Give your child (6 months+) a drink from a cup at each meal. Put a bit of breast milk or water in so they can practice. Encourage them to gesture for "more?" Say "mmmm, milk" etc.	Explore leaves outside. Give your child a leaf to touch, does it crumble or can they tear it in half. Just watch so they do not eat it.	Place some smaller toys in a container or bag. Say "what's in there?" When they grab an item, and inspect it, give them the name of the item like "block", "ball", etc.
Place blocks in a container, one by one, and then dump them out. Dump and fill, they will do this over and over.	Take turns with your child. Lay your child on the floor and see if they will try to get your attention. With a squeal, or an action, copy what they do, and repeat!	With two color pieces of fabric, wave your arms back and forth and make them "fly" or "go". Give them one and see if they will copy.	Make a paper megaphone, by rolling sheets of paper into a cone and tape together. Make loud sounds and quiet sounds and see if your child will copy.	Put a blanket over your child and your head and make a tent and say "it's dark in here", "where are we" and then take blanket off and say "here we are!"	Sit cross legged on the floor and sit your child on your lap. Hold and move their ankles so they are doing a tap dance on the floor. Sing or play some music.	Put lots of different hats in a box! Try them on yourself and on your child. Say "hat on", "hat off".

Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old



Recipes:

Parsnip and pumpkin (6 months+)

Peel and dice 1 parsnip and 1 cup of pumpkin. Steam or simmer in a bit of water until tender. Then blend in a food processor or mash well together. Serve.

Creamy Peach Blend (6 months+)

Place 1 peach (peeled, pitted and chopped either cooked or uncooked) into a blender or food processor. Puree, then add milk, formula or breast milk to it to give it a creamy consistency. Blend and serve.

Rhymes:

Slowly, Slowly, Very Slowly

Slowly, slowly very slowly goes the garden snail (*walk fingers slowly up your child's legs*)

Slowly, slowly very slowly up the garden trail

Very quickly goes the little bee (*buzz your fingers in the air*)

Quickly, quickly, very quickly

You can't catch me

Quickly, quickly, very quickly runs the little mouse (*walk fingers quickly up their arms*)

Quickly, quickly into his little house (*move your fingers into their arm-pit area and tickle*)

Wiggle, wiggle little toes (tune: Twinkle, twinkle little star)

Wiggle, wiggle little toes (*wiggle toes one by one*)

Oh, my goodness what a pose

Up above my head so high (*lift legs above head when they are laying on their back*)

Dancing, dancing in the sky (*move legs*)

Wiggle, wiggle little toes. Oh my goodness what a pose!

Won't you come and touch my toes.

Parenting tip: Eye health

- At 6 months of age, your baby is ready for their first eye exam by an optometrist. At this age, the optometrist can examine their eye movement ability, eye health, and excessive, or unequal amounts of near-sightedness, far-sightedness or astigmatism.
- Try to schedule your appointment for when your baby is the most relaxed and alert. Alberta Health Care covers the cost for all eye exams for children under the age of 18! Have your child's eyes checked every year!
- Active play activities and eye-hand exploration are all very important to strengthen your child's vision.
- For more information contact your local Community Health Services office or The Alberta Association of Optometrists at 1-800-272-8843 or check out www.optometrists.ca for an optometrist near you.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
When turning a light or a radio off say “bye bye”, or “no more”. When turning an object on that will be loud, prepare them for the sound.	Give your child a box or a basket to sit and play in. If they still need support to sit, place a towel or blanket around their legs and trunk.	Place your child on a large exercise or beach ball and roll them side to side, front to back while sitting or on their tummy.	Use your child’s name when you are speaking to them so that they learn their name. When playing peek-a-boo for example: “Where’s Mary?” then “There is Mary!”.	When your child is exploring different sounds gently pat their mouth so they make a “wa-wa-wa” sound. Do this action with your vocals and hand also.	Help your child to turn lights or a doorbell on and off. Say “On and Off” and watch their reactions and cues to continue .	Read a magazine with your child, point to things of interest and label with just one word and point to the object!
Cut a hole in a lid of a container, get them to put in different toys through the hole. Take lid off and dump out items. Repeat!	With a wind chime or bells, move or shake to produce sound. Encourage your child to copy the movement, and see how they react to sound.		When your child is playing– by banging or shaking or making sounds. Copy what they are doing. Copying is part of learning!	Roll your child up in a small blanket so that just their head is sticking out. Then on a count of three, “1,2,3” pull the blanket end so they can anticipate the unrolling.	Give them a bean bag, to explore and encourage them to throw it. Toss it back to them into their lap.	Play some music, and sing along. Clap or click your tongue to the beat. See if your child will copy.
When holding your child securely either facing you or facing away, spin around in one spot and then switch directions.	Let your child explore different items from the kitchen especially plastic items. This activity is good to offer when you are making a meal!	Place your child on their tummy on a lazy Susan (a rotating tray for food) Turn them slowly one way and then another. Place a toy for them to try to grab as they spin.	Place some bird seed on a surface close to a window where your child can watch the birds come to eat! Talk about what they see.	Give your child some junk mail to tear apart. You may need to start and then help them to finish. Make sure they do not eat any small pieces.	Sing this month’s rhymes with your child daily: “Slowly, slowly, very slowly” and “Wiggle little toes”	Practice washing your child’s hands, through out the day: before meals, after meals and after diaper changes! It is just a good habit to start young!
Fill a bag with hard and soft, rough and smooth items (spoon, stuffed animal, sandpaper, mirror). Have them reach in bag and pull out item and explore textures!	With a straw, blow air on different body parts of your child. Say “I going to blow on your hand, your leg, your toes...” etc.	Pick your child up and wander through the rooms of your house and ask “What’s in here?” or “Who’s in here?” Comment on who or what you see.	Carve a pumpkin for Halloween. Let your child watch. Let your child feel the pulp and the seeds. Then light and see what their reaction is in the dark!	Dress your child up for Halloween, keep it simple and safe. Dress yourself up too with different hats, scarves, glasses etc, and see what their response is.		With a paper towel roll, show your child how you can put a spoon or small ball through the hole. Say words like “in and out”.

Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old

Parenting tip: No screen time for babes!

- The Canadian Pediatric Society **does not recommend any screen time** (TV or computer or electronic device) for children under the age of 2 years of age, and instead encourages parents and caregivers to take time for more interactive play in its place.
- Many homes report always having the TV on, even when there is no one watching. This reduces speech for both infants who are then listening to the TV instead the caregivers, and for the caregivers they are not engaging as much with their child also, as they are distracted by the noise.
- Instead promote more talking and understanding through playing, reading, singing and enjoying music.

Rhymes:

So Big

How big is (child's name)?

He/she is so, so sooo big! (*Lift hands over your child's head*)

Someone's going to get you

Here comes a pig! oink-oink! (*can interchange different animals and their sounds*)

(*kiss their tummy or neck*)

Gotcha!

Ride a horse

Ride a horse, ride a horse (*bounce your child on your lap*)

(Child's name) goes around,

Not too fast, not too fast

Or (child's name) falls down (*falls between your legs*)



Recipes: Yummy Turkey Balls (6 months +)

1 pound or 2 cups of lean ground turkey

1 egg

1/2 cup of iron fortified cereal

1/4 cup of whole milk

2 Tbsp. tomato sauce

Preheat oven to 350F. In a large bowl combine ingredients and mix well with a wooden spoon. Form meatballs and add to a baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes at 350F or until they reach an internal temperature of 185 F. Cooked meatballs can be pureed with added water or milk for a younger baby or chopped for finger food.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Use your child's name in conversations with them. If you want to get their attention, call their name within close proximity of them.	In a dark room at night, use a flashlight, and shine it on different objects in the room. Label as they see them. Shine on their hands and feet also.	Sing this month's rhymes with your child daily, "So big" and "Ride a horse".	Play airplane with your child. When laying on your back, bring your knees up, with feet off floor, place your child on your calves and hold their arms. Move your legs...wheel!	Spin a top, or wind a wind-up toy. When it stops wait for your child to gesture or indicate for more. Say "go?" and then repeat.	Let your child explore your face and touch cheeks, lips, ears and eyes, make sounds so they can feel the vibrations of your mouth and neck also.	Tickle your child gently all over and say "tickle, tickle!" or to see if they will anticipate, in a whisper, say "ticka,ticka" and then gradually raise your voice to say "tickle, tickle".
Have your child make the beds with you. Place them in the bed, and flutter the sheets over top, when they are covered play peek-a-boo. Continue with the next layers.	Go to your local library and inquire into programming for babies: like "Rhyme Time", "Mother Goose", "signing for babies" etc.	Make shakers for your child. Fill plastic containers with different items (beans, rice, etc.) fasten lids on tightly and have your child shake!	Call grandma or grandpa or another family member. Let your child listen and "talk" on the phone with them.		In front of a mirror point at your child and say their name, then point to yourself and say your name. Repeat. Point to their body parts, and name also.	Massage your little one with lotion. Do not massage when they have a full stomach. Massage first thing in the morning or last thing at night.
Sing "Twinkle, twinkle little star" with actions. Raise their arms up high.		Place some pillows on the floor, and help your child move into different positions, rolling, cuddling, or crawling over the pillows.	Fill plastic bottles with different volumes of water, turn over metal loaf or cake pans. Then show your child how to bang them with a wooden spoon to make different sounds.	Dance, with your child. Sing the "Hokey Pokey" and help your child "put" each body part into the circle.	Make a house for your child out of couch cushions. Place your child inside. Say "where are you?" or "are you in a house?" etc.	Blow raspberries on your child's tummy, arms, back, legs and palms. Say in between blowing "I'm going to get you". Repeat.
When your child is on the floor, crawl around them on your hands and knees and talk to them. This is lots of fun once they get mobile also.	Make shadows with your child in a dark room using a lamp or flashlight. Make different hand shadows or just let your child see their own silhouette on the wall.	On a long piece of yarn tie a toy with wheels or without. Show your child that if you pull on the string how they can get the toy.	Count your child's fingers and then toes. At the end, tickle or blow raspberries on their palm or bottoms of feet.	Give your child a small plastic funnel to play with in the bathtub. Show them how to make the water pop up through the funnel.	Tie a rope on a laundry basket. Place your child inside and then pull them towards you with the rope...be careful not to tip them.	If your child is over 6 months old- With applesauce or yogurt place on a paper and have your child poke, smear, and slide fingers around to explore.

Ideas for infants from birth to 18 months old

Parenting tips:

Recommended toys for infants (0-6 months):

Soft balls, rattles, noise blocks, squeeze toys, baby mirrors, soft cloth or plastic books they can explore with their mouths, pictures of smiling faces or black and white designs they can look at. At this age ultimately YOU are their best toy!

Recommended toys for infants (6-12 months):

Floating bath toys, plastic books, picture books, wheeled toys, rattles and noisemakers, hammer and peg toys, soft balls, mirrors and activity centers, squeaky toys, blocks, and pop-up or jack in the box toys. Again peek-a-boo using a blanket, and one on one interactions, are the best games to play!

Recommended toys for infants (12-18 months):

Stacking and nesting toys, simple puzzles, picture books (board books and even a small photo album with family members in it), pull toys, music CD's, blocks, sandbox toys, toy telephones, push toys, large balls, plastic containers for filling and dumping, and cardboard boxes.

Safety note: To prevent choking: do not give a young child any toy that is small enough to fit through a cardboard tube of a toilet paper roll.



Rhymes: These are baby's fingers

These are (child's name) fingers (*wiggle fingers*)

These are (child's name) toes (*wiggle toes*)

This is (child's name) belly button (*find belly button*)

Round and round it goes (*tickle baby*)

Leg over leg (*great for diaper changing*)

Leg over leg

the dog went to Dover (*gently cross the baby's legs 4 times*)

When he came to the stile,

Whoops! He went over! (*Slip diaper under their bottom when you go whoops*)

Recipes

Easy "Peasy" Chicken Dinner (9 months+)

Soft poach, slow cook or roast 1/2 of a chicken breast (skinless and cubed). (cooked chicken needs to an internal temperature of 185F)

Steam a small sweet potato chunk (peeled and also diced) for 3 minutes.

Add peas and cook for 2 minutes.

With a slotted spoon transfer all ingredients into food processor and blend, may need extra liquid if need be. It does not need to be too smooth because a bit of texture is important as they get older.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sit with your child in between your legs, hold a broom handle across your bodies, encourage your child to hold. Make rowing motions together, sing "Row, row, your boat".	Lift your child's arms high over their head and when they are sitting facing you or when on their back and say "So big!" Bring their arms down and repeat!	Stack Kleenex boxes or toilet paper rolls with your child and show them how to knock them down. See if they will help stack and repeat.	Pretend your child's teddy bear or doll is real, feed them a cookie, give them a drink, put them to bed etc.		Show your child a picture of Santa and ask them what he says? Then say "ho, ho, ho" and see if they will repeat. Show them Santa and say "ho, ho, ho" again.	When outside, when it is snowing encourage your child to open their mouths to catch snowflakes on their tongue. Explore snow and bring indoors to play with also.
Make shortbread or gingerbread cookies and roll out the dough to use cookie cutters, show them how you cut the dough. Give them a piece to explore- but watch that do not eat! Cook and enjoy!	Look at pictures of animals and make the corresponding animal sounds with your child.	Use praise with your child, when they complete tasks, say things like "good job", "you did it", "awesome", "super", etc.	Make handprints and footprints with paint, place on white or brown wrapping paper or a box for decorating a special gift.	Sit with your child and another person, cover the person with a blanket and say "Where did they go?" When they reach for the blanket, or pull it off, then say "There they are!"	Sing this month's rhymes with your child daily: "These baby's fingers" and "Leg over leg".	Place a dishtowel or a bathrobe tie under the arms of your child and across their chest. Hold the fabric carefully and help your child steady to stand and later walk.
Encourage your child (6 months+) to try drinking from a regular cup...the earlier the better.	Fill a two liter bottle with water, glitter, confetti, buttons, cut straws etc. and seal well. Shake and swirl, let your child watch and feel the bottle.	Play with a squeaky toy. Squeak the toy by squeezing and then give to your child to see if they can copy the action. They may use their hands or quite possibly their mouth.	After your child's bath, massage them with lotion and sing rhymes and songs to them.	Kiss your child on one cheek then the other, then the back of the neck, on the legs, feet, etc.	Tie a soft rattle or bells around your child's wrist or ankle and encourage them to shake. Say and sing: "Shake, shake, shake"	Talk through a wrapping paper tube to your child. See if they will talk back. This will encourage lots of babbling, as they like hearing their voice at this age.
Make a snow angel with your little one, dressed in their snowsuit, toque and mittens. Take a picture for a keepsake!	When your child is 9 months and older, in a clear, dry plastic bottle, place some cereal or bite sized snacks. Shake it and dump it and see if your child will copy you.		Experiment with new sounds and see if your baby will copy you (try clicking with your tongue, smacking your lips, blowing bubbles with saliva, gurgling etc.)	Place some toys on the end of a towel. Show your child if you pull on the towel, how they can retrieve the items to play with.	Make homemade baby food for your child 6 months and older. Blend cooked vegetables in a blender and place into ice cube trays. Freeze for later use.	Give your child a hat to put on, and take off. Play in front of a mirror so they can see themselves. Say "on" or "off".



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