

Mama, Dadda! Language Play With Your Infant

- When you talk, try to use simple sentences and fewer words than you would with an adult.
- When you take a walk or drive with your baby, point out words on signs and ask questions like “Can you say zoo? We are going to the zoo.”
- Turn the baby to you and begin to make “cooing” noises - the baby will make noises back to you. Make big shapes with your mouth and watch the baby try to do the same things.
- Sing songs or find music to play that have a beat similar to your heartbeat.
- Children learn words they hear most often. Talk or sing to your baby during feeding times, play, or routines such as diaper changes and dressing.
- When you repeat or expand what children say, it helps them learn language. If a child says, “cat,” repeat the word to them or say, “Do you see the cat?”
- Help you baby learn new words by pointing and asking, “What’s that?” or read a book and ask, “Where is the boat? Do you see a boat?” Point to the pictures you name.
- At night, read before bedtime, find simple picture books and read, read, read, or make up stories about the pictures.



Information in this brochure was adapted from “Baby First...Right from The Start!” by Clarian Health Partners, Inc. and “Feeding Your Baby: The First Year” by New Mexico State University, College of Agriculture and Home Economics. “The Baby Book” by William & Mary Sears, “Touchpoints” by T. Berry Brazelton

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No! That’s Mine!

Chances are you’ve heard these words from your children. Being a parent is a tough job. By listening and responding to children, you can have a powerful impact. **Prevent Child Abuse** Indiana believes that we all want to use the best means possible to raise and nurture children. With a few skills and tips, all of us can build stronger family relationships.

- Offer choices. “Miranda, this is your choice. You can have one cookie now or one after dinner.”
- Solve problems. If children are fighting, help them learn words to use such as, “Tell Carlos your words, ‘I don’t like that.’” With toddlers, it is often best to help them get interested in another toy or game.
- Get feelings out. When children are angry, let them know it is okay, but help them find positive ways to calm down, like listening to quiet music, going to a quiet place, or going outside for some exercise.
- Be an example. Children learn what they live. If they see you hitting and yelling when you are angry, that is what they will learn.
- Avoid judgment - Don’t try to find out how a fight started; each will blame the other. Find ways to talk about how to solve it together.
- Build empathy. If children hit each other, tell them, “When you hit, it hurts. I can’t let you hurt others and I won’t let them hurt you.”
- Teach natural consequences. Toddlers can wipe up their own spills and an older child who writes on the wall can wash it off.
- Love with words. Remember to let your children know when they do things you like. At bedtime, tell them about all the good things you remember from the day.

Should you need more information about this or other parenting concerns, please visit www.pcaain.org or call **1-800-CHILDREN** (1.800.244.5373)

Family Series

Birth to Five



www.pcaain.org

Tips for Feeding Your Infant

Chances are you've wondered how to feed your infant. Being a parent is a tough job. By listening and responding to children, you can have a powerful impact. **Prevent Child Abuse** Indiana believes that we all want to use the best means possible to raise and nurture children. With a few skills and tips, all of us can build stronger family relationships.

Feeding time for infants through the first year provides an opportunity for bonding and helps your infant develop feelings of safety and security. The following are some tips that will help during feeding time:

- Infants need to be fed every one to four hours around the clock. Infants signal that they are hungry by crying or being restless. You should offer breast milk or formula whenever your child shows signs of being hungry.
- When breast-feeding, allow infants to feed until they are finished.
- When using formula, be sure to follow the directions on the package. Never over- or under-dilute the formula.
- Infants should not drink juices, powdered fruit drinks or soft drinks. Check with your physician concerning the appropriate age to allow your child to have these drinks.
- Expressed breast milk and formula may be kept in the refrigerator for up to 48 hours.
- When heating expressed breast milk or formula, place the bottle under warm tap water or in a pan of warm water. Never heat expressed breast milk or formula in a microwave.
- Always shake the bottle after it has been heated and test the temperature to be sure it's not too hot by putting a few drops on your wrist before giving it to your infant.
- Hold your infant while you are feeding. This allows your infant to feel more secure and to bond with you. It also provides for the safety of your infant.
- Burp your infant after every one to two ounces of formula or as your infant takes breaks from breast-feeding.

Helping Your Infant Sleep Through the Night

The definition of an infant sleeping through the night is sleeping five hours at a time. All infants have different temperaments and personalities. Your infant's sleep patterns are strongly affected by these factors. The following information will help you and your infant get a better night's sleep:

- Create a safe and loving environment for your infant. This will help your infant fall asleep.
- Always lay infants on their backs in an approved crib with a firm mattress. Remove soft pillows, cushions, comforters and toys from the crib.
- Set consistent bedtimes and bedtime activities, such as reading a book or giving your infant a soothing bath or massage.
- If your infant wakes up during the night, check for pain or discomfort, wet or soiled diapers, hunger or illness.
- Try rocking your infant back to sleep. Sing or talk in a soothing voice to help your infant back to sleep.
- Soft background noises, such as a bubbling fish tank, ocean sounds or a parent's heartbeat, can also help an infant sleep.



Tips for Communicating With Your Infant

Infants communicate in many ways. They coo, cry, smile and babble, infants also react to how parents communicate with them. Communication is one of the first ways that children develop bonds, learn trust and communicate their needs. The following are ways to increase communication between you and your infant and help your infant feel secure.

- Hold your infant's head to your chest. Your infant is comforted by the sound of your heartbeat.
- Make eye contact with your infant when you are playing, feeding and communicating.
- Help protect your infant's hearing by avoiding loud noises.

- Play music and provide soothing noises like ocean sounds, fans blowing and babbling fish tanks. Infants like these sounds and they have a calming effect.
- Be as calm as possible when you are around your infant. Because infants can sense your mood, they will know when you are tense or angry. Staying calm can help your infant feel calm, too.
- Lightly massage your infant's feet, hands, back and stomach. Massaging can calm a fussy infant and increase the closeness between you and your infant.
- Talk, read, and sing to your infant. This helps infants develop speech as they get older.



Uh, Oh! Tips for Toilet Training

- When children are around 24 months old, they may be ready to begin toilet training. Look for signs like waking up from naps dry and showing that they don't like a wet diaper.
- Avoid using age alone as a way to decide if your child is ready. All children grow at different rates, physically and emotionally.
- Never nag, punish, or shame your child about toilet training. If it is becoming a struggle, back off for a while and let the child decide when it is time.
- Put a small "potty-chair" next to the toilet and let the child get used to it by sitting on it with clothes on.
- Let your child sit on a "potty-chair" for as long as they want. Never force a child to sit for long periods of time.
- Ask grandparents, day care staff and babysitters to use the same ideas you use.
- Suggest a "practice" run to the "potty-chair" after naps or 20 minutes after a meal.