

Help Your

# Baby


*Papa, Mama,  
How you can enhance  
my development - Intellectually,  
psychologically & physically?*

Learn!

**Bonus**

A quick and  
easy chart of  
baby's  
development

by Penny Warner

 SmartBaby

# **Help Your Baby Learn!**

*by Penny Warner*



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# ***H*ow To Get The Most Out Of This Guide**

*T*oday's parents are often busy with their jobs, childcare tasks, and household chores. Finding time to read a whole book is no longer easy. That's why we've created – Help Your Baby Learn, as a guidebook to help you understand your baby and enhance her development, using specific activities in a number of developmental areas. Although you will probably want to read this book more than once, and refer to the subjects index or the time period when needed, you can also read about the topics one or two months ahead of your baby's age. This way, if your baby's development tends to be ahead of the norm, you can get started on enhancing specific areas.

As you use the book, jot down information in the activity log book so you have a record of your baby's major milestones during that special first year of your baby's life.

The booklet is divided into three sections for quick and easy reference.

## ***S*ection 1**

provides a short description of all the games and activities that parents can provide to entertain baby and enhance baby's development. Since your baby changes so rapidly from month to month in the first year, the section is divided into twelve months, from newborn to baby's first birthday. Each month offers new and different ideas to help you stimulate your baby's thinking skills, increase her motor ability, and develop her social and psychological development. The activities are based on the average baby's developmental milestones, so you can use them appropriately as your baby grows and learns. Most of all, the activities are easy to do, fun for you and your baby, and will help increase all areas of your baby's development.

## Section 2

provides an overall understanding of each of the following areas:

- Cognition Development, including memory, intelligence, thinking skills, problem solving ability, classification skills, and behaviour.
- Language Development, including body language, facial expression, differences in crying, early speech sounds, babbling, and your baby's first words.
- Emotional and Social Development, including what kinds of emotions babies have, how your baby expresses those emotions, her developing sense of self, her relationship to you, and her ability to interact socially with others.
- Five Senses, including the importance of touch, her interpretation of smells, her differentiation of taste, her rapid development of sight, and her acute sense of hearing.
- Motor Development, including her basic reflexes, her head and body control, her gross and fine motor skills, and her progress toward taking her first steps.

This section also includes a detailed explanation of the pointers highlighted throughout the chart and how to use them to enhance your baby's development during the first year. For example, when you come across point [28] in the chart, which says 'Begins babbling and cooing, using "oohs" and "aahs"', refer to the booklet, find the number, and read the information 'Baby begins to make meaningful noises, such as cooing. Coo at her, and watch her try to respond by imitating you. Repeat as you have a "conversation" so she receives positive reinforcement and feedback. She'll soon increase her coos, along with other deliberate mouth noises – all examples of pre-speech practice. Repetition reinforces neural pathways that help a child connect sound to meaning'.

## Section 3

provides an activity logbook where you can record all of your baby's major achievements, milestones, and special memories, such as her first smile, her first haircut, her first word, and her first step. The section also includes space for you to insert your baby's footprint, lock of hair, birth certificate, other mementoes, and monthly photos. That way you'll have a permanent record of your baby's growth and development the first year of her life.

### Note



denotes Smart Action. These icons offer quick and easy tips for stimulating your baby's development, and having more fun with your baby.



denotes Baby Safe. These icons alert you to some of the common dangers, and offers ways to keep your baby safe and healthy.



denotes Baby Capture. These icons remind you to capture baby's magic moments each time she surprises you, delights you, or communicates with you.

The terms He, She, and Baby are used interchangeably. There is no sex difference unless otherwise indicated.

Remember: This is just a guide. Bear in mind that babies are unique individuals who develop at their own pace. Don't worry if your baby does not follow the benchmark exactly.

## **S**ection 1

### **Enhance Your Baby's Development**

It provides a monthly coverage from newborn to one year old.  
Preview is available for 0 -1 month

- **0 - 1 month old** -

## **H**ow You Can Help – Physical Development

### **G**rowing Body

Don't be obsessive about weighing your baby all the time to make sure she's growing properly. Just check now and then to see if she's producing eight to 12 wet diapers a day, and having a bowel movement at least every other day. All you need to do is look at her to see that she's healthy and growing normally.

### **S**ensory Awareness

As your baby's senses develop, stimulate her with sensory objects to enhance her awareness. Show her colourful, moving items to look at, such as people, animals, or mobiles\*. Play musical toys or sing songs to stimulate her listening skills. And give her various textures to feel, such as a soft blanket, a firm toy, a pliable teether, and a furry stuffed animal.

### **F**eeding

Find a comfortable place to nurse your baby, with lots of pillows for support. Use this time to talk to your baby, sing to her, caress her, and make eye contact. Feeding time not only involves physical growth, but it also leads to social interaction.

### **R**eflexes

There are some tasks you can do to enhance your baby's reflexes. To help him with sucking and swallowing, stroke your baby's cheek – he'll move his head in search of the nipple. To minimize baby's startle reflex, use a soft voice, pick him up slowly, and don't make sudden noises or moves.

*\* Mobiles are gadgets that are hung over the crib so the baby can enjoy the visual stimulation*

## *G*ross Motor

Let baby spend time on his tummy to encourage pre-crawling practice. Get down on your tummy, facing baby, and talk to him. You'll see him try to lift his head as he flaps his arms and legs. Move from side to side, to encourage baby to turn his head left and right, a result of the tonic neck reflex.

## *F*ine Motor

You can help baby begin to control his fine motor movements by gently massaging his tight finger grasp. To encourage his grasp, place a rattle in his hand and watch him curl his fingers around the handle. Then gently uncurl his fingers to help him release the rattle.

## *H*earing Voices

You can enhance baby's ability to distinguish your voice by reading to her from picture books that offer short sentences, rhyming words, and repetitive phrases. She's too young to understand the content, but she's not too young to enjoy the sounds of language and to recognize patterns. Early reading correlates to interest in reading later on.

## *T*ouch Time

Lay a soft padded blanket on the floor and place your baby on it, face up. Lightly cover your hands with unscented, non-allergenic lotion, and give baby a massage, starting at her shoulders, working down to her fingers, then down her torso to her feet. Roll her over and repeat the massage.

## *K*icking Legs

Lay your baby on her back, grasp her lower legs gently, and begin cycling. Move her legs forward, backward, up and down, back and forth, even like a frog. Be creative in the way you move her legs around, then let go after each new movement to see if she tries to copy the movement.

## Speech Sounds

Some babies are especially susceptible to middle-ear infections in infancy. If not properly treated, infections can become chronic, causing temporary hearing loss. If baby misses too many speech sounds in early development due to ear infections, it could impair his ability to learn language, so be sure to have him checked regularly, especially when he has sniffles, rubs his ears, or doesn't seem to be responding to your voice.

## Colour Vision

Since infants prefer bright solid colours, like red and green, provide your baby with lots of stimulating mobiles, posters, and toys in basic colours. Fine prints and pastels aren't as attractive to him, but they do like bold patterns, familiar shapes, and especially faces. Put up lots of pictures of other babies to keep him company.

## Alertness

When baby is fully awake, it's the perfect time to play. He's more apt to stay alert if you provide interesting things for him to look at and listen to. You, the parent, are especially fun to play with, so spend this alert time enjoying your baby. You're the perfect toy!

## ***H*ow You Can Help – Cognitive Development**

### ***T*hinking**

Begin a game of Peek-A-Boo with your baby the first week. While nursing or holding her, smile and talk to her. Then cover your face with a cloth for a moment. Talk to your baby again, then remove the cloth and smile. Watch your baby's eyes widen as you magically reappear.

### ***L*anguage**

Just because your baby isn't speaking yet, doesn't mean she isn't learning language. The more you talk to her, the sooner she'll develop language skills. As you talk to your baby, use a higher pitched voice, simple words and short sentences, lots of repetition, and facial expression. Watch your baby respond with body language and eye contact.

### ***P*roblem Solving**

To help your baby learn to problem solve even at this early stage, give her simple choices. For example, put a rattle in her reflexive grasp and a soft cloth in the other hand. See what she does with them on a very simple level. Place the nipple near her mouth, and watch her figure out how to get it.

### ***S*enses**

To help your baby begin learning from the moment he's born, all you have to do is stimulate his senses and he'll respond on a basic level. For example, move a brightly coloured object across baby's line of vision and he'll try to follow it with his eyes. Call his name and he'll try to turn his head in the direction of the sound. Touch his palm and he'll grasp.

## *L*anguage

As your baby begins to express his needs and wants, imitate his sounds and expressions to reinforce them. If he coos, coo back. If he purses his lips, reflect it for him in your own face. Then add some new sounds and faces, and watch him try to copy you. You're enhancing the foundation of communication.

## *V*isual Stimulation

Make your baby's world visually interesting to encourage his cognitive development. Place colourful pictures on the walls and the ceiling over the crib, so baby has something interesting to look at. Hang mobiles over the crib that move, make sounds, and are visually stimulating, and change them from time to time, to hold his interest. Walk him around the house and show him interesting things to see.

## *P*erceptual Development

Offer your baby dissimilar objects to look at, listen to, touch and feel, such as a flat plate and a round ball, a soft blanket and a rough towel, a cold bottle and a warm bottle. She's building concepts through experience, and soon she'll be able to categorize objects based on their shapes, colours, size, and number.

## *C*ause and Effect

You can help baby practise other examples of cause and effect while you're feeding her. Try this: While baby nurses, sing to her. When she pauses, stop singing. Watch her pauses become more frequent as she tries to figure out what causes the singing and what stops it.

## *O*bject Awareness

As baby's interest begins to interrupt habit, you'll find this is a great time to introduce new and exciting objects for baby to study. While she's lying in her crib, attach something new to the mobile, and watch her

body language. While nursing, show her a new rattle, and she'll stop nursing for a moment to study the interesting object. Keep her world fresh and new to stimulate her growing interest.

### *S*hort-term Memory

You can help increase your baby's memory by playing a game of "Here It Is!" While holding your baby, bring a brightly coloured toy into his line of vision. Move it slightly to attract his attention, then move it out of his sight. Wait 2-3 seconds, then bring it back again. Say the name of the object to reinforce the connection. Repeat several times.

### *P*atterns

By anticipating baby's patterns, you can be prepared to meet his needs in a timely way. If you know it's about feeding time, you can be ready to nurse him instead of waiting for him to cry. When you know he's tired, you can start the ritual of rocking him to dreamland. When you sense he's about to cry, you can pick him up and soothe him before the tears begin in earnest. And when it's alert time, you can be ready with toys.

### *P*laythings

It's not too early to provide simple toys for your baby to study and enjoy. Good playthings for baby at 1 month include a music box with something that moves to the music, baby gyms that attach to the crib, mobiles that play music and spin around, unbreakable mirrors, and colourful stuffed animals with no small parts that can come off and be swallowed. Also make sure toys have no sharp edges and don't have strings or cords that baby can get tangled with.

## ***H***ow You Can Help – Psychological Development

### *S*elf-Awareness

To help your baby begin to distinguish herself from the world, give her some time in front of a mirror. At first she'll just wonder at the movement and face opposite her. Soon she'll realize, through cause and effect, that she's the person in the mirror causing the movement. Nothing delights a baby more than her own reflection.

### *E*mootional Expression

Most experts believe if you respond to your baby's cries quickly, she's more likely to cry less over time, and feel more psychologically secure, knowing that someone is taking good care of her. The old adage, "Let her cry it out," is no longer accepted by most experts.

### *S*ocial Interaction

Spend as much time with your baby as you like. Ignore the old-fashioned admonition that you'll spoil your baby if you pick her up and hold her too much. You can't spoil your baby in the first year. In fact, the more you pick her up and hold her, the more rapid gains she'll make physically, cognitively, and psychologically.

### *R*ecognizing Mom

Play another game of Peek-A-Boo with your baby to enhance his recognition of you. Place baby on your lap, facing you, then cover your face with a handkerchief or washcloth. Talk to baby through the cloth for a moment or two, then remove the cloth and say "Peek-A-Boo!" Watch his face!

## *R*esponding to Dad

Let Dad be actively involved in daily care of baby, to add to his emotional bond and attachment. He can change diapers, give baths, and feed baby bottles to replace breast-feeding, so encourage him to enjoy these routine activities with baby. That way Dad won't miss those special moments that occur frequently throughout the day.

## *A*ttachment

To enhance attachment with your baby, feel free to cuddle and hold him as much as you like, talk to him throughout the day, and just sit and look at each other. See to your baby's needs as soon as they appear, and your baby will learn to trust not only you, but others in his environment and in his life.

## *A*ctivity Temperament

Active babies need more to keep them occupied. They tend to stay awake longer, move around more, and cry easily. Move slowly with an active baby, to give him a sense of calm to help him learn to control his intense activity.

## *Q*uiet Temperament

If your baby is slow to warm up, meet her needs by letting her approach new situations, new people, and new experiences at a slower pace. Talk to her; reassure her before trying something new, then respond to her distress if she's uncomfortable.

## *I*n Sync

As you begin to sense your baby's needs, moods, and timetable, you'll realize your baby is essentially her own person. Watch for cues – eye contact, facial expression, body movements, vocalizations – and soon you'll be able to read her signs for attention, food, quiet, and stimulation.

## *E*ye Contact

Hold your baby face to face and look into his eyes. Talk to him, smile at him, and make funny faces to hold his attention. Watch his face change as your facial expression changes. Note that he maintains eye contact longer than he did in the first weeks. Wink at him, blink your eyes slowly, and see if he reacts. Cover your eyes, uncover them, and say Peek-A-Boo to bring his attention back to your eyes.

## *F*irst Smile

You can encourage that first smile by holding baby face to face, and smiling at him frequently. Talk to him, smile wide, show your teeth, wiggle your tongue, and make the smile as interesting and attractive as you can. If you think baby is beginning to smile, reinforce it with a cheery word and a big grin. Sometimes, a light stroke on either side of the mouth can encourage a smile!

*S*adness – If a parent is still suffering from post-partum motions, and displays a lot of tears or emotional upsets, this can have a strong impact on the baby. Be sure to seek help from your doctor if you've still got the "blues", so you can be treated with counselling and medication. You don't have to feel sad, and neither does your baby.

For more Parenting Guides and other information, log on to [www.smartbaby.com.sg](http://www.smartbaby.com.sg)

## **S**ection 2

### **Explanation Of The Chart**

This section provide explanation to the attached  
2 - dimensional chart at 84cm by 60cm

The section coverage includes the following areas:

- Memory Development
- Intelligence
- Behaviour / Learning
- Language Development
- Social - Emotional Development
- Sense: Touch
- Sense: Smell
- Sense: Taste
- Sense: Sight
- Sense: Hear
- Motor Skill Development
- Games

## **S**ection 3

### **Recording Baby's Activities**

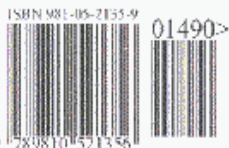
**HELP YOUR BABY LEARN** is a comprehensive guide to your baby's growth and development in the first year – and what you can do to enhance it! The guide includes a developmental chart and an accompanying booklet that offers:

- An easy access chart to your baby's month-by-month development
- Expert information on how your baby grows cognitively, physically, psychologically, emotionally, and socially
- The importance of the five senses in your baby's development
- Monthly learning programs you can use to teach you baby
- Tips for recognizing your baby's magical moments

**HELP YOUR BABY LEARN** also provides additional materials to help you enjoy your baby's first year, including:

- **"Baby Capture"** activity logbook to record your baby's major milestones, achievements, and special memories
- **"Smart Action"** quick tips for having fun with your baby while stimulating his or her development
- **"Baby Safe"** tips to alert you to common dangers and enhance baby's health and safety.
- Plus hundreds of fun, easy games and activities to enhance all areas of your baby's development, divided into monthly, age-appropriate sections

**S\$14.90 / RM29.50**



To find out more about this book, visit us at <http://www.smartbaby.com.sg>

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