



Communication

Activities to Help Your Baby Grow and Learn



Your baby's babbling is beginning to sound more like talking. He says "mama" and really means it and is beginning to learn the names of things. He may say "no" if he is not happy. Because he's so busy learning to walk, his language use may slow down a bit. He combines a word with a point or gesture and you know very well what he means.

- Hide the Noises** Show your baby three things that make noise, such as a squeak toy, a set of measuring spoons, and a rattle. Let baby play with them for a while. Then hide the items under a box or cloth and make a noise with one. Take the cloth off and ask baby, "Which one made the noise?" See if she can guess.
- Quiet Time** On weekends or at some time that's not busy, spend time with baby in a quiet place with no radio and no TV, perhaps outside. Talk to your baby about what you're doing or about what baby is doing. Let your baby hear your voice and see your face making words. Talk calmly and tell baby how special he is. When your baby talks, encourage him. Have a conversation.
- Rhythm Clapping** While listening to music, show baby how to move and clap in rhythm. Your baby will enjoy moving to the beat. Play different types of music, such as rock and roll, country, and classical music.
- Listening on the Telephone** When Daddy or Grandma calls, ask them to spend a few minutes talking to baby. Baby probably won't talk back to them yet but will be delighted to hear someone's voice coming through the telephone.
- Big Talk** While you do housework or get a meal together, talk to your baby about what you are doing. Encourage your little one to use two words together to make baby sentences, such as "Help me," or "More juice." This big language step will grow into a lot of talk.
- Little Reader** Read to your baby every day. Cuddle up and make this a special time. Point to pictures and name things for her. Sometimes ask her to find something: "Where's the cat?" She may need a little help from you at first.
- Big Helper** Your baby can be a big helper. Give him simple directions: "Can you get me a napkin?" "Give me your shirt." He may need you to point or help a little. Say, "What a big help. Thanks!"



12-16 months