POINTS TO REMEMBER

Encouraging Your Baby’s Social and Language Development

• Bathe your baby in language and social interaction throughout the day—talk “parent-ese”
• Listen to your baby and imitate, or mirror, your baby’s sounds
• Sing to your baby
• Notice what your baby is interested in and describe your baby’s actions – be present and focused.
• Name the objects and colors of toys your baby plays with
• Put your baby in a central place in the household where he can see the family action and you can talk to him
• Describe what you are doing to your baby—describe your baby’s actions as well as your own actions and routines
• Describe what you see, hear and smell around the house or outside—use simple words
• Make everyday things such as diapering, feeding, and bath time fun rituals and provide lots of talking
• Tell your baby you love her and share your feelings of joy
• Notice when your baby is distressed, unhappy, sad, happy or curious and name and reflect her feelings
• Read to your baby—your baby won’t grasp the plot but reading helps babies develop speech and thought
• Take time to cuddle. Balance stimulation with quiet time. Gentle kisses can help your baby feel safe and loved
• Love and show joy to your baby
• Smile at my baby, and watch my baby smile back
• Provide predictable responses
Speaking “Parent-Ese”

- Face-to-face contact (12 inches from baby’s face)
- High pitched, sing-song voice
- Slow rhythm
- Short phrases
- Clear articulation
- Repetitive
- Exaggerate facial expression (big smiles)
- Lengthen vowels (oooooh—sooooo )
- Longer pauses between verbalizations (wait for baby’s response)
- Praise and positive feedback (that’s right!)
- Use an animated voice tone
POINTS TO REMEMBER

Social and Emotional Developmental Milestones

(1-6 MONTHS)

Remember your baby will develop at his own unique pace. Consider these general developmental milestones.

• Stares at faces (1 month)
• Follows objects with eyes (1–2 months)
• Vocalizes oohs, aahs, gurgles (1–2 months)
• Smiles and laughs (2 months)
• Notices hands (2 months)
• Recognizes parent’s face (3 months)
• Squeals, gurgles, coos (3–4 months)
• Visually tracks objects (3 months)
• Recognizes parent’s voice (3–4 months)
• Baby recognizes own name (5–6 months)
• Coos when you talk to him (4 months)
• Initiates “baba” (5 months)
• Ready for solid foods (6 months)
• Plays with hands and feet (5 months)
• Baby can recognize happy, sad or angry tones of parent’s voice (6 months)
• Baby likes familiar language, songs, rhymes, greetings, games repeated (all months)
• Can recognize a few words besides his name (“all done”) (6 months)
• Imitates sounds (6 months)
• Babbling begins (5–6 months)
• Mouths objects (6 months)
• Separation anxiety may begin (6-7 months)
Promoting Your Baby’s Cognitive and Language Development

- Speaking “parentese”
- Provide visual stimulation
- Mirroring baby’s sounds and expressions
- Modeling social behaviors & language
- Musical activities and games
- Give baby soft things to touch
- Nurturing feeding
- Gentle touching
- Baby aerobics
- Singing love songs and rhymes
- Positive tone of voice
- Describing actions and naming objects
- Tactile stimulation—rocking, massaging, swaddling
- Read picture books
- Emotion coaching
- Modeling social behaviors & language
- Musical activities and games
- Baby aerobics
- Read picture books
- Tactile stimulation—rocking, massaging, swaddling

Part 2: Communicating With Your Baby ©The Incredible Years®