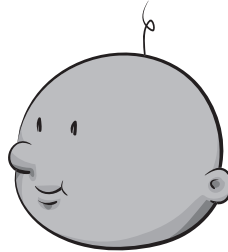


Handouts & Fridge Notes
Getting to Know Your Baby



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- **Create a baby diary.** Jot down each week your discoveries of your baby and your joys. Keep your diary handy so you can write when you have a spare moment. Add foot and hand prints with a stamp pad (see Journal page 41).
- Describe a typical day with your baby. (Journal pages 42-45)

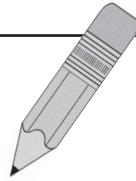
Read/Review



- Read Chapter 1: *Incredible Babies - Becoming a Parent and Getting to Know Your Baby*. (Check off any of your baby's milestones on the "Things I Can Do" checklist, page 46-48)



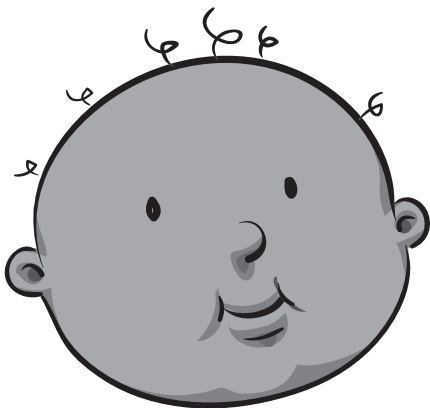
HANDOUT



CREATE A BABY DIARY

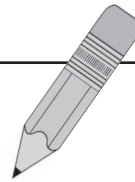


Jot down notes each week about your discoveries of your baby and the joys of babyhood. Keep your diary handy so you can write when you have a spare moment. Add foot and hand prints with a stamp pad.





HANDOUT



A TYPICAL DAY* WITH _____

SLEEP TIMES



FEEDING TIMES



PLAY & ALERT TIMES



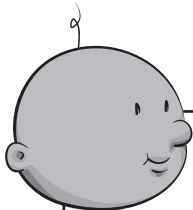
FUSSY/UNSETTLED TIMES



BOWEL MOVEMENTS



*While every day is unique, this form can help you reflect on general patterns



HANDOUT
THINGS I CAN DO (0–3 months)

Activity	Date/Check	Observations/Comments
I follow objects with my eyes		
I do gurgles, oohs and ahs		
I smile and laugh and squeal		
I found my hands today		
I look at my parent's face		
I have a favourite toy or activity		
I can recognise my parent's voice		
I can hold my head up		
I sit in a wobbly way but need support		
I know my name		
I can say baba		
I like being read to		
I found my feet		
I react when you are happy		
I love to be sung to		
I am imitating sounds		
I know when it is not you taking care of me		
I love to explore with my mouth		

FRIDGE NOTES

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR BABY

Every baby is different. Spend some time observing your baby and getting to know his/her temperament and how she/he reacts to your communication.

- Look and smile at your baby—your face should be about 12 inches from your baby's face
- Observe your baby's responses to your smiles and interactions
- Listen to your baby's cries to sort out different kinds of cries: hunger cries, messy nappy cries, tired cries, illness cries, boredom cries, over stimulation cries, or need for stimulation cries
- Watch how your baby responds to your cuddles, rocking, and affectionate touch
- Watch how your baby responds to music
- Sing to your baby
- Talk to see if your baby turns his head in response to your voice
- Talk to your baby when there is a pause in her feeding
- Observe how your baby responds to black and white objects, colour, objects with noises, and lights
- Wear your baby on your chest in a sling and see how she responds
- Respond to your baby's cues by trying out various ideas about what he may be trying to tell you
- Look for self-soothing efforts your baby makes such as sucking her hands
- Ask your partner what s/he is noticing about your baby
- Keep a diary and jot down things your baby is interested in or developmental landmarks

*My
baby and I
learn from
each other*



FRIDGE NOTES

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

I'm
keeping
life
simple



- Get as much rest as possible
- Take naps—try to sleep when your baby sleeps
- Give yourself a break—ask someone to watch your baby so you can nap
- Do something nice for yourself such as take a long bubble bath or walk with a friend
- Share your joys and difficulties with another parent
- Tell yourself you are doing a good job learning from your baby
- Keep a log of the fun moments
- Don't worry about a messy house or making fancy meals
- Accept a meal from a friend
- Use take-out for a special treat
- Keep life simple
- If you are breast feeding, express a bottle of breast milk every day so a friend, partner, or other family member can take over a feeding.

Write your own favourite self-care activities here:



I help
my baby
feel secure
and safe



FRIDGE NOTES

COPING WITH CRYING

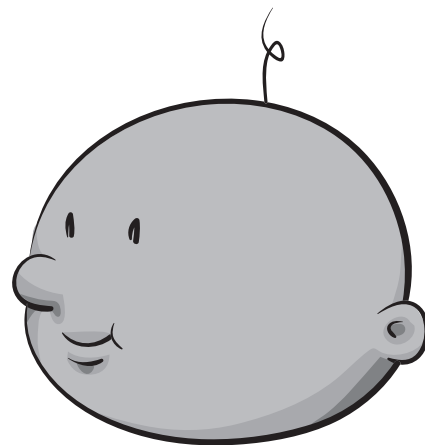
If you know your baby's hunger and nappy needs have been met and you've tried to soothe and cuddle your baby but she is still crying and inconsolable, it's time to take care of yourself so you don't get too frustrated. Take 5 minutes to calm yourself.

- Put your baby in a safe place and let her cry for 5 minutes

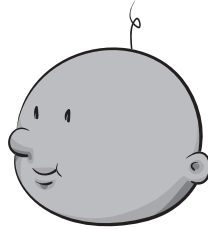
Stay nearby, but calm yourself:

- Put on quiet music to distract yourself
- Take deep breaths
- Remind yourself nothing is wrong with your baby—crying is normal and is her release as well as how she organises herself
- Tell yourself, "It will get better in a few months"
- Tell yourself "I can cope with this"
- Don't take your frustration out on your baby by shaking her
- Call someone for help if you feel your frustration building
- Remember the crying or unsettled period will usually end in 1–2 hours

After 5 minutes of relaxing, go back in to your baby and rock and soothe your baby for a while, then put her down and repeat the above. Usually you won't have to do this more than 3 or 4 times before your baby has calmed down.



Handouts & Fridge Notes
Communicating with Your Baby



Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- Continue your baby diary (pages 72-73)
- Talk to your baby using “parent-ese” during bath time, playtime, nappy changing and feeding times
- Sing to your baby—try a new song
- Watch for your baby to imitate your actions
- Imitate your baby’s sounds and take turns
- Check off your baby’s milestones on the “Things I Can Do” checklist

Read/Review



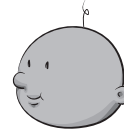
Read Chapter 2: *Parents as Responsive Communicators and Babies as Intelligent Language Learners.*

Note: The number of words that babies hear each day is an important predictor of later school success.



FRIDGE NOTES

ENCOURAGING YOUR BABY'S SOCIAL AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT



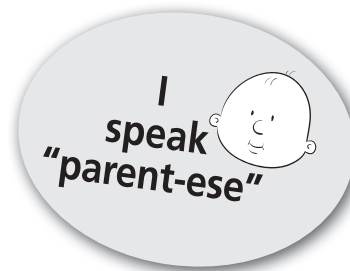
- Bathe your baby in language and social interaction throughout the day—talk “parent-ese”
- Listen to your baby and imitate, or mirror, your baby’s sounds
- Sing to your baby
- Notice what your baby is interested in doing and describe your baby’s actions — be baby-directed
- Name the objects and colours 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 nappy changing, feeding, and bath time fun routines 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

**I sing
and read
to my baby**



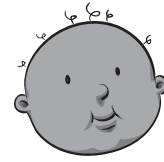
SPEAKING "PARENT-ESE"

- 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 (ooooh---sooooo)
- Longer pauses between verbalizations (wait for baby's response)
- Praise and positive feedback (that's right!)
- Use an animated voice tone



FRIDGE NOTES

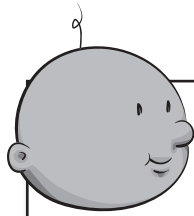
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES (1–6 MONTHS)



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)
- Vocalises oohs, aahs, gurgles (1–2 months)
- Smiles and laughs (2 months)
- Notices hands (2 months)
- Recognises parent's face (3 months)
- Squeals, gurgles, coos (3–4 months)
- Visually tracks objects (3 months)
- Recognises parent's voice (3–4 months)
- Baby recognises 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 recognise happy, sad or angry tones of parent's voice (6 months)
- Baby likes familiar language, songs, rhymes, greetings, games repeated (all months)
- Can recognise 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 (5–6 months)

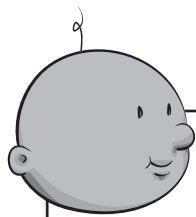




PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES (1–6 MONTHS)

- Lifts head (1 month)
- Stares at faces (1 month)
- Follows objects with eyes (1–2 months)
- Can see black and white objects (1–2 months)
- Holds head up (2–3 months)
- Visually tracks objects (3 months)
- Holds head steady (3 months)
- Baby can roll over tummy to back (4–5 months)
- Can grasp a toy (4–5 months)
- Can bear weight on feet with support from adults (4–5 months)
- Ready for solid foods (6 months)
- Distinguishes bold colours (5 months)
- Rolls in both directions (5–6 months)
- Baby begins to sit briefly without support (5–6 months)
- Can recognise a few words besides his name (e.g., all done) (6 months)
- Hand-eye hand coordination improves
- Baby pulls objects closer and starts bringing hands together and transferring objects
- Mouths objects (6 months)
- Vision fully developed (by 6 months)
- Passes objects hand to hand (6–7 months)



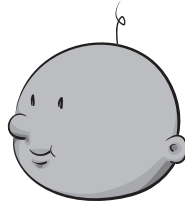


HANDOUT

THINGS I CAN DO (0–6 months)

Activity	Date/Check	Observations/Comments
I can sit upright briefly		
I do gurgles, oohs and ahs, and squeaks		
I smile and laugh		
I found my hands		
I can track objects with my eyes		
I can hold my head steady		
I can recognize my parent's voice		
I know my name		
I can say "baba"		
I am starting to explore solid foods with my mouth		
I found my feet		
I react when you are happy		
I love to be sung to		
I am imitating sounds		
I know when it is not you taking care of me		
I love to explore with my mouth		
I love to be read to		
I have a favorite toy		

Handouts & Fridge Notes
Physical, Tactile and Visual Stimulation



Physical, Tactile and Visual Stimulation Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- Provide some physical exercise for your baby—sit-ups, tummy time, bicycle exercises, sitting time, arm exercises
- Play peek-a-boo with your baby
- Involve siblings in your baby play
- Try a baby massage
- Check off your baby's milestones on the "Things I Can Do" checklist (page 103-105)

Phone/E-mail/Text:

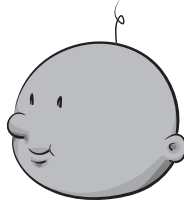


- Contact your buddy and share your favourite game or play activity with your baby



Read/Review

Read Chapter 3: *Providing Physical, Tactile, and Visual Stimulation for Your Baby* and keep your baby diary up to date (page 101-106).



Physical, Tactile and Visual Stimulation Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- Read to your baby and notice your baby's reactions
- Continue to provide physical exercises for your baby—sit-ups, tummy time, bicycle exercises, sitting time, arm exercises
- Provide some visual stimulation in floor gym, mobile above cot, or play the mirror game
- Try out a new baby game you learned with your baby
- Try a baby massage

Phone/E-mail/Text:

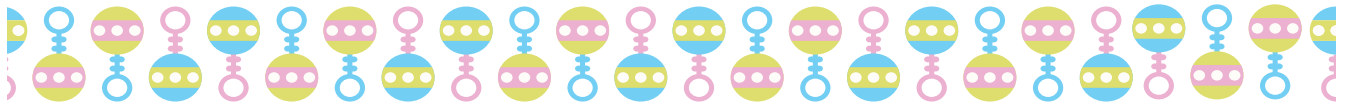


- Contact your buddy to share some visual stimulation you provide for your baby

Read/Review



Review Chapter 3 *Providing Physical, Tactile, and Visual Stimulation for Your Baby* and keep your baby diary up to date.



FRIDGE NOTES

Providing Physical, Visual And Tactile Stimulation To Encourage Your Baby's Brain Development

- Bathe your baby in language throughout the day—speak “parent-ese”
- Provide visual and tactile stimulation such as rattles, mobiles, and toys with textures, colours and sounds
- Provide physical exercise such as tummy time, cycling, stretches, massages, pull ups, walking motions
- Give your baby a baby massage
- Provide your baby with consistent comfort when upset
- Play games such as peek-a-boo with your baby often
- Sing to your baby
- Modulate the amount of stimulation your baby receives
- Wear your baby in a sling next to your body so she can see the world up high and can feel the rhythm of my movement and heart beat
- Pick your baby up and hold him high
- Look at books together and talk about the pictures
- Let your baby look in the mirror
- Tell your baby you love him and share feelings of joy
- At four months start to gradually structure your baby's day with regular routines for eating, nappy and bedtimes
- Tell your baby how special he is
- Touch your baby in loving ways
- Give your baby opportunities to explore (floor gym)
- Involve other family members in games and physical exercises
- Tell your baby's caregivers what exercises your baby likes to do and what his interests are

**I sing
and read
to my baby**



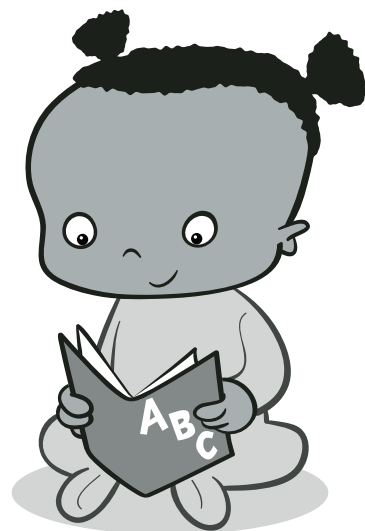
**I hold and
cuddle my
baby**



FRIDGE NOTES

Reading with Your Baby

- Read at a quiet time when you are relaxed and comfortable—with TV and music turned off (this prevents over stimulation)
- Hold and cuddle your baby when reading
- Read for a few minutes each day when your baby is alert and has been fed
- If you have other children, read to them while you are holding or breastfeeding your baby
- Point to pictures in the book and talk about them, or make up your own story
- Use “parent-ese” when reading—face to face, sing-songy, higher pitched, slower voice
- For 2–6 month old babies read books with rhymes and songs, or bold pictures, or black and white picture books. Use cloth books that your baby can touch and taste.
- For 6–9 month old babies read books that stimulate senses such as “touch and feel” books, board books, cloth books, teething books, books about daily routines such as bathing, eating, sleeping, and books that label objects and parts of the body.
- For 9–12 month old babies, read books that encourage children to chime in and repeat words (your baby won’t be able to talk yet, but will be interested in the patterns); books that label objects and parts of the body; books that illustrate action words such as walking, running; and books with flaps or noises. This is a good time to incorporate books into your child’s naptime and bedtime routines.
- Remember that children’s attention span for books will vary. Some children may pay attention for 10—15 minutes, while others may be bored after a few minutes. Don’t be discouraged if your child seems distracted at first. Read for a few minutes and then follow your child’s lead to another activity. Come back to reading again and again. Gradually your child’s attention span will increase. Several short reading times are just as beneficial as one longer time.





FRIDGE NOTES

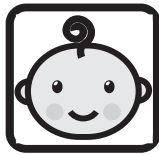
Baby Alert: Keeping Your Baby Safe During Baths

- Never leave your baby unsupervised, even for a minute
- Children can drown in a very small amount of water
- Gather all your supplies (soap, flannel, nappy, towel etc.) ahead of time
- Make sure the bathroom is warm
- Switch off your phone and don't answer the door when your baby is being bathed
- Until your baby can sit up unsupported, use a special baby bath
- When your baby can sit up alone, use a rubber non-slip mat if you switch to the regular bath tub
- Put on the cold water first
- Position your baby away from the tap
- Use a cushioned tap cover so your baby won't bump his head
- Don't put your baby in the bath when the water from tap is still going
- Be sure the bath water is warm but not too hot; babies generally prefer a much cooler bath than you do. Be sure to check the temperature.
- Fill the bath with only 2–3 inches of water for babies
- Use soap and shampoos sparingly and if you play in the bath use the soap at the end
- Make bath time fun



*I help
my baby
feel secure
and safe*



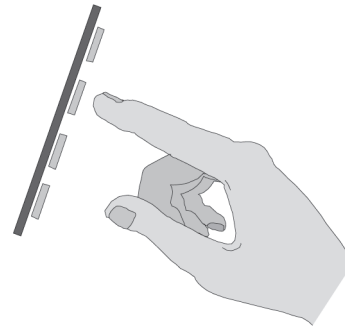


BABY ALERTS

- Babies under six months of age can be put on a floor gym or mat on the floor while you take a brief break because they cannot crawl yet. However, don't leave them unattended on the floor for even a few minutes if you have other toddlers or animals nearby. Never leave an infant alone on the floor for more than a minute or two. You should always be nearby to monitor. You never know, this may be the day that your baby rolls over, or learns to pull herself forward.
- Using a walker of the kind that suspends your baby over the floor so that he can move his feet and cruise around is not recommended because they allow your baby to be more mobile than he is developmentally ready for. Children who have good trunk support will probably enjoy a stationary "exerciser" which will be much safer.
- If you have a bouncy chair, do not put it on a table or up high because your baby might bounce it off the table.



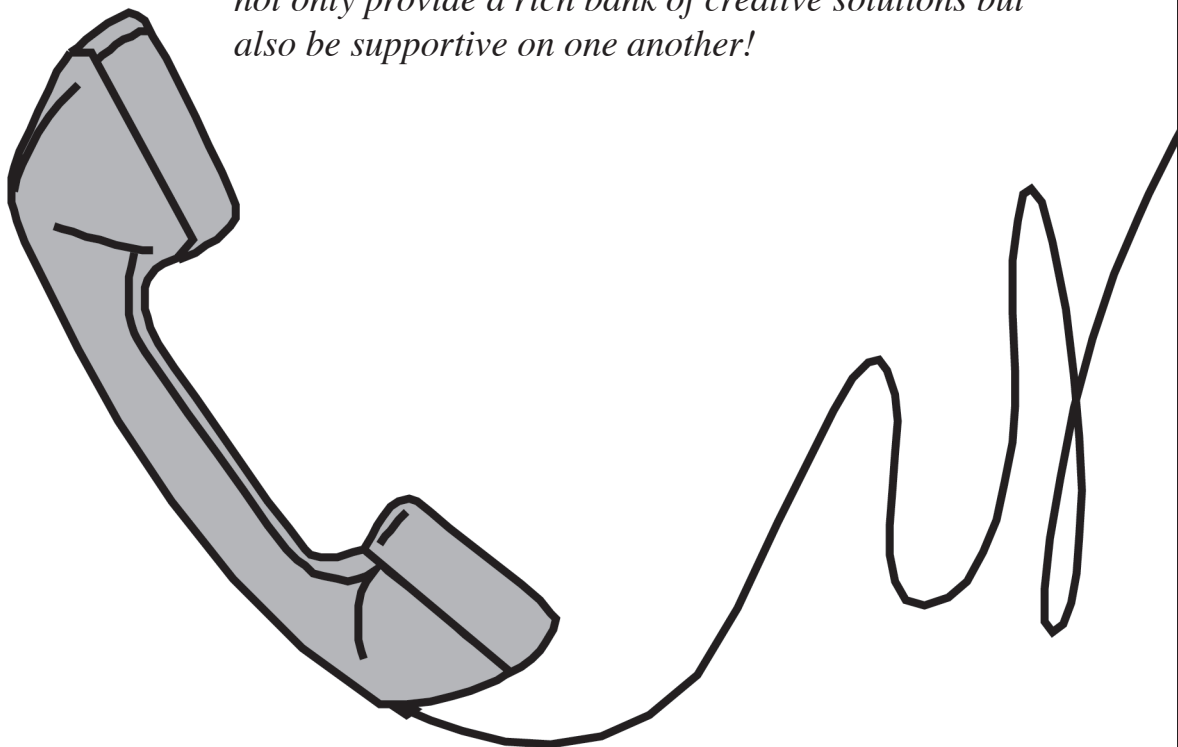
Calling Your Buddy



From now until the final week of the Parenting Programme you will be asked to call, text or email a person from your group. The purpose of these calls is to share ideas and “hot tips” about how the home activities are going.

These calls need last no more than five minutes and can be scheduled at your own and your buddy’s convenience. You may prefer e-mail or text - that is fine!

Parents sharing with each other can not only provide a rich bank of creative solutions but also be supportive on one another!





HANDOUT



Baby Diary **My baby's stimulation diary** **3-6 months**



Keep track here of activities your baby enjoys, such as looking at a mobile, having a back rub, listening to music, or being swaddled. Note your baby's responses to you and to other family members or friends when they talk and interact with your baby.

Favourite Toys

Favourite place to be massaged or touched

Favourite position to be placed on my body

Favourite exercise (bicycle, walking, arm pull ups, push ups, tummy time, sitting time)

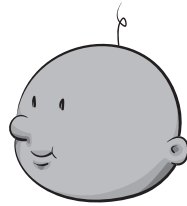
Reaction to bath time

Favourite song

Favourite game

Favourite visual stimulation

Handouts & Fridge Notes
Parents Learning to Read Babies' Minds



Parents Reading Babies' Minds Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- Write out your baby's bedtime routine (see page 136)
- Write out your baby's daily schedule (see page 139-141)
- Continue to talk, play and provide your baby with physical, auditory and visual stimulation
- Do something special for yourself—take a walk, go out for dinner, have a bubble bath, let a friend help out while you go to a movie/film
- Complete the temperament questionnaire on yourself and your baby (page 142-145)

Phone/E-mail/Text:



- Contact your buddy to share your daily schedule

To Read

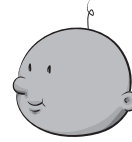
Read Chapter 4: *Parents Learning to Read Babies' Minds*.

**I have a
bedtime
routine**



FRIDGE NOTES

Tips to Establishing Your Baby's Healthy, Independent Sleep Habits



Remember that different parents have different goals and philosophies for their child's sleep. If you are happy with your current routine, you do not need to change it! If you want to encourage your baby to sleep on his/her own, the following tips will help you and your baby meet that goal.

- Set bedtime and regular nap times to regulate sleep patterns (start at 4–5 months).
- For babies younger than 6 months, be baby-led in establishing routines.
- Choose a bedtime that fits your family schedule and stick to it as much as possible. Try to have a calming down period in the early evening.
- Establish a bedtime routine such as:
 bath, nappy, pajamas, story, song and kiss good night.
- Do the bedtime routine in the same order each night.
- Establish a less elaborate, but consistent naptime routine.
- Try to place your baby in his bed when he is drowsy, but not yet asleep.
- If your child is old enough to lift her head up independently, introduce a small, light lovey.
- Encourage your baby to fall asleep independently without a bottle, or rocking, or sleeping with your baby.
- Remember babies often need to cry for a few minutes after being put in their cot.
- If your baby wakes up in the middle of the night give her a chance to go back to sleep on her own.
- By 6 months, most babies do not need to be fed in the middle of the night for nutritional purposes. Many have learned to use breastfeeding or a bottle for comfort at these times. These feedings can be gradually shortened and then stopped.

Remember babies cycle between deep and light sleep every 3–4 hours. When they are in light sleep they may cry out and thrash about. Before responding to your baby, give him a chance to resetttle on his own. Remember that every habit is different, be led by your baby in establishing healthy sleep habits.

**Healthy sleep
habits**



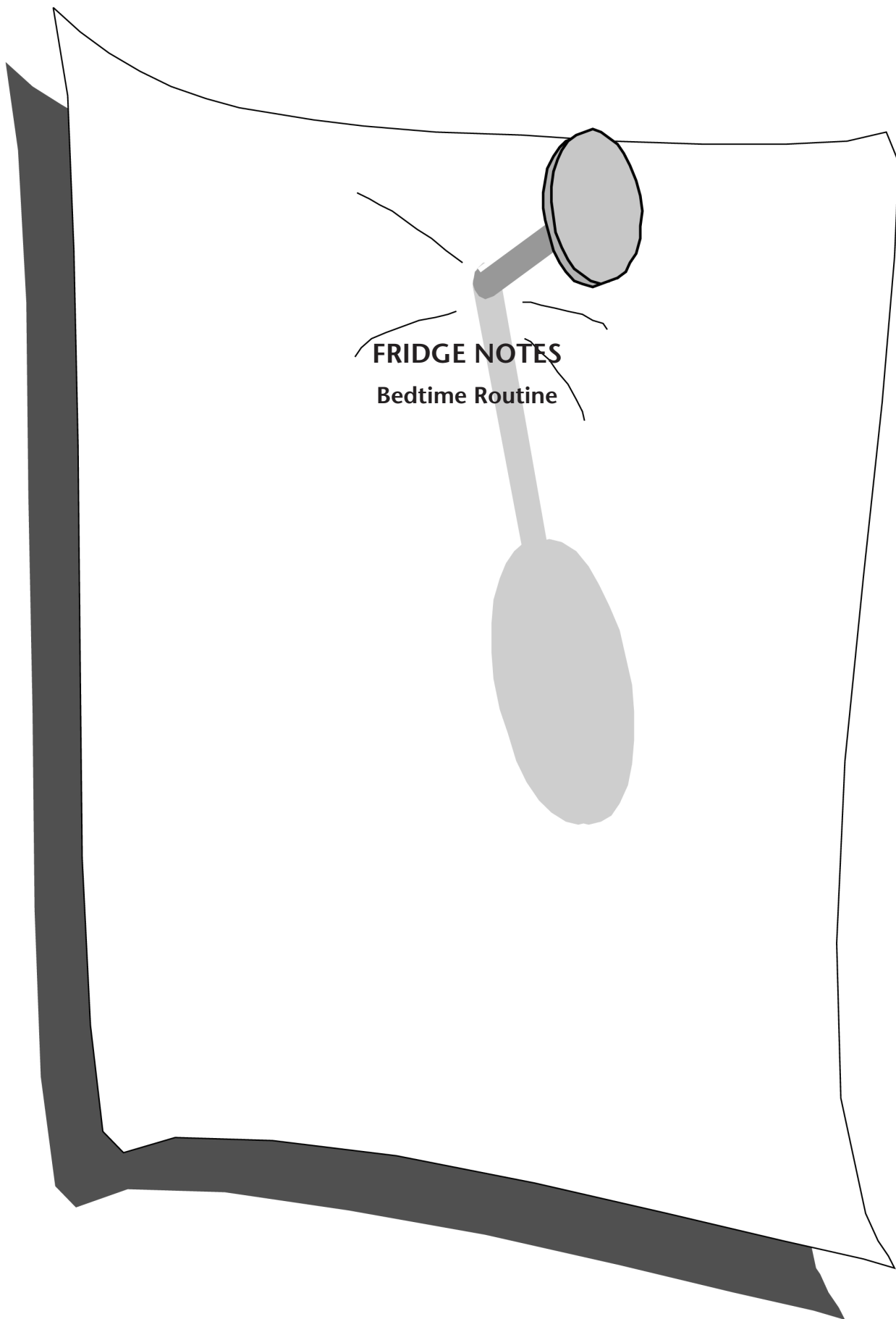
I help
my baby
feel secure
and safe



FRIDGE NOTES

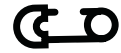
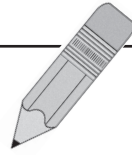
Helping My Baby Feel Loved, Safe and Secure

- Cuddle, rock, kiss, and hug my baby often
- Speak "parent-ese" to my baby
- Try to make sense of my baby's nonverbal cues and cries by checking out nappy, feeding, or cuddling needs
- Try to see my baby's point of view and talk to my baby about it
- Provide consistent comfort when my baby is upset
- Say my baby's name often
- Make everyday things such as nappy changing, feeding, and bath time fun and loving rituals to give a familiar feeling
- Tell my baby I love him and share feelings of joy
- Notice when my baby is distressed, unhappy, sad, or happy and name and reflect his feeling
- Structure my baby's day with predictable routines and responses
- Modulate the amount of stimulation my baby receives
- Touch my baby in loving ways
- Try to be consistent and limit the number of activity changes each day
- Stay calm with my baby when my baby is upset
- Read my baby's mind and respond with adjustments





HANDOUT



A TYPICAL DAY* WITH _____

SLEEP TIMES



FEEDING TIMES



PLAY & ALERT TIMES



FUSSY/UNSETTLED TIMES



BOWEL MOVEMENTS



*While every day is unique, this form can help you reflect on general patterns



Here are nine traits proposed by Thomas *et al.* that describe a baby or child's reactivity to his or her environment. Think about where your baby is on each of these traits. Each trait is a continuum so your baby may be very much like one of the traits, but he or she may also be in the middle:

My baby's activity level:

Very Active

Quiet and Relaxed

1 2 3 4 5

This is the predictability of his or her sleep times, appetite, and bowel movements.

Mostly Regular/Predictable

Mostly Irregular/Unpredictable

1 2 3 4 5

This is how s/he adapts to changes in routine, new food, new people, or new places.

Adapts Quickly

Slow to Adapt

1 2 3 4 5

This is how eager s/he is to try something new versus how fearful or shy s/he is when presented with a new situation or person.

Eager Initial Approach

Initial Withdrawal or Reluctance

1 2 3 4 5

This is how sensitive s/he is to noise, tastes, textures, bright lights, touch or temperature.

Not Sensitive

Very sensitive

1 2 3 4 5

This is how intensely he or she reacts emotionally to things, even minor events.

High Emotional Intensity

Mild Calm Reaction

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

My baby's distractibility:

This is the degree to which s/he is distracted by sounds, sights, or things in the environment versus how much s/he can shut out external stimuli and pay attention.

Very Distractible

Not Distractible

1

2

3

4

5

My baby's mood:

This is the degree to which s/he is happy or positive versus negative.

Positive Mood

Negative Mood

1

2

3

4

5

My baby's persistence:

This is the degree to which s/he can persist or sustain his or her attention versus how easily s/he gives up in the face of obstacles.

Long Attention Span

Short Attention Span

1

2

3

4

5

Easy and Flexible Temperament Baby

If your baby is mostly regular, adaptable, positive, calm and has a moderate activity level you have an easy temperament baby; about 40% of children fall into this category.

Slow to Warm Up and Cautious Baby

If your baby is slow to adapt, initially withdraws and has moderate activity and intensity, your baby will have a slow to warm up temperament; about 15% of children fall into this category.

Challenging Temperament Baby

If your baby has a high activity level, is unpredictable, poor adaptability, and is intense and negative you have a more challenging temperament baby; about 10% of children fall into this category.

About 35% of children are a combination of these patterns.



Parenting Approaches: A Temperament Focus

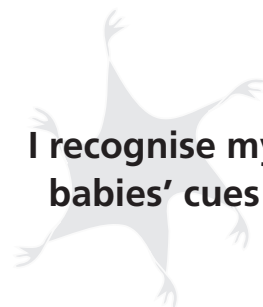
Since parents can't change their baby's temperamental style, parenting approaches must be accepting and responsive to the unique temperament or cues of each baby. It is important for parents to try to get a reasonable "fit" between their baby's temperament and their parenting style. This can be done by parents observing and learning about their baby's internal state and behavioural style and then altering or adapting their parenting expectations, encouragement, and responses to suit their baby's unique needs.

Remember, it is important not to label your baby or child as easy, shy, or difficult. These labels can damage your child's self-esteem and perhaps set up a self-fulfilling prophecy that prevents your child from expanding his or her behavioural repertoire. Perhaps, your baby's temperament may develop differently in subsequent years and this can be influenced by the environmental responses.

However, knowing what kind of temperament your baby has may make the difference between a happy or a troubled child and between an accepting or a frustrated parent. Understanding your baby's temperament can improve your relationship with your baby because you will learn how to bring out the best in your baby within the limits of his temperament. It is within your power as a parent to help your baby cope with his temperament, to build his self-esteem and eventually come to understand himself better.

For example, parenting the easy or flexible temperament baby will demand somewhat less parental time or attention because the baby will adapt easily to changes in routines, and may not express his or her individual wants. Because of this easy style, parents will need to make special efforts to find out about their baby's frustrations and hurts and interests and assess what he or she is thinking and feeling and why that is. Otherwise, such a child may become invisible in the family, insecure, and not be helped to develop his uniqueness.

**I recognise my
babies' cues**



On the other hand, the inflexible, hyperactive, inattentive, unpredictable, or easily frustrated baby may seem to have an insatiable need for attention. Babies with these challenging temperaments often leave their parents exhausted because of the amount of monitoring and attention that they require. These babies will need predictable routines, help in preparing for transitions, and outlets for their high level of energy. Parents can work to recognise cues and triggers for their baby's intense emotions and be proactive by prompting a self-calming activity, or changing to a soothing activity such as a story or warm bath. Parents of intense babies will strive to be tolerant, patient, and model appropriate responses. It is important to remove competing distractions when possible, make sure there is not too much stimulation causing them to dysregulate, provide frequent breaks, and try to respond calmly to the baby's intense reactions. Parents of intense babies will need to get support for themselves so they can rest and refuel their energy.



On the other hand, the cautious, slow to warm up baby will be relatively inactive, reluctant to explore, and may withdraw or react negatively to new situations. These babies will also need clear routines as well as encouragement to try new activities and ample warm up time to meet or be held by new people and eventually to enter new situations such as nursery or preschool.



Parent's Temperament Fit with their Baby's Temperament

Parents also have their own temperament and need to understand how their own temperament style meshes with their baby's temperament. Sometimes parent-baby temperaments are very similar; other times they are very different. Both similar and different parent-baby temperaments may result in clashes or they may be complementary.

Do the questionnaire you did earlier for your baby now for yourself. See what you find out about your temperament fit with your baby at this stage in his/her development.

My Temperament

My activity level:

This is the amount I move versus how much I relax. I am:

Very Active

Quiet and Relaxed

1

2

3

4

5

The regularity of my bodily functions:

This is the predictability of my sleep times, eating, and bowel movements. I am:

Mostly Regular/Predictable

Mostly Irregular/Unpredictable

1

2

3

4

5

My adaptability:

This is how I adapt to changes in routine, new food, new people, or new places. I usually:

Adapts Quickly

Slow to Adapt

1

2

3

4

5

My approach:

This is how eager I am to try something new versus how fearful or shy I am. Usually I am:

Eager Initial Approach

Initial Withdrawal or Reluctance

1

2

3

4

5

My physical sensitivity:

This is my sensitivity to noise, textures, bright lights, temperature is:

Not Sensitive

Very sensitive

1

2

3

4

5

**My baby
is
unique**



My intensity:

This is the intensity of my reactions or emotions:

High Emotional Intensity

Mild Calm Reaction

1 2 3 4 5

My distractibility:

This is the degree to which I am distracted and notice everything around me versus how much I can shut out external stimuli. Usually I am:

Very Distractible

Not Distractible

1 2 3 4 5

My mood:

This is the degree to which I am happy or positive versus negative. Usually I have a:

Positive Mood

Negative Mood

1 2 3 4 5

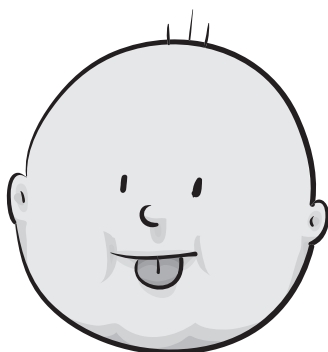
My persistence:

This is degree to which I can persist or sustain my attention versus how easily I give up. Usually I have a:

Long Attention Span

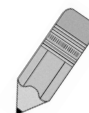
Short Attention Span

1 2 3 4 5



Brainstorm/Buzz

Do Something Special For Yourself



Taking care of a baby is hard work and tiring and never done. It is important that you schedule some relaxing and pleasant time for yourself.

Make a list below of things you find enjoyable.

Things I Find Enjoyable

Going for a walk.

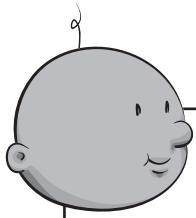
Talking to a friend over tea.

Exercising.

Listening to music.

Smelling a flower.

Goal: I will commit to doing something joyful and relaxing for myself this week. This will include: _____



Fridge Notes

Goodness of Fit—Managing Your Baby's Temperament

Even if parents have different temperaments than their children, they can still strive for a good fit with their baby and child. A good fit is when parent's demands and expectations are compatible with their baby's temperament, abilities and characteristics. The goal is always to manage rather than to squelch or change temperament.

Here are some tips for achieving a good fit and managing your baby's temperament.

- Realise that your baby's temperament style is not your "fault" because temperament is something biological and innate, not something that is learned from parents. Your baby is probably not purposely trying to be difficult or irritating. Don't blame him or yourself.
- Respect your baby's temperament without comparing to other siblings or trying to change his or her basic temperament.
- Consider your own basic temperament and behaviour and tailor your parenting responses when they clash with your baby's responses to encourage a better fit.
- Remember what you model for your children is what they learn from you.
- Try to consider and anticipate your baby's adaptability, activity level, sensitivity, biological rhythms and ability to sustain attention when planning activities that are most suitable for your baby.
- Try to focus on the issues of the moment. Do not project into the future.
- Review your expectations for your baby, your preferences and your values. Are they realistic and appropriate?
- Anticipate high risk situations and try to avoid or minimise them.
- Enjoy the interactions and the differences in each of your children.
- Avoid labeling your baby as bad or difficult as this may lead to negative self-image and further compound his difficulties.
- Try to distinguish between a tantrum that is temperamentally induced (reaction to disappointment) versus one that is manipulative (designed to get parent to give in).
- Help your baby feel special.
- Find a way to get relief for yourself and your baby by organising some time apart.

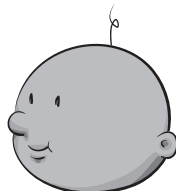
Remember above all temperament qualities can be shaped to work to a baby's advantage if they are sensibly managed.

***I make my
baby feel
special***



Handouts & Fridge Notes

Gaining Support



Gaining Support Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- Write out your baby's favourite play activities to share with a baby sitter or child-care provider
- Modulate the amount of stimulation your baby receives
- Identify a support person who can help with baby care when you need a break
- Check off your baby's milestones on the "Things I Can Do" checklist

Phone/E-mail:



- Call, text, or e-mail your buddy and share something from your support diary (page 163-164)

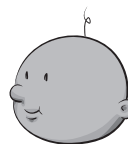
To Read:



Read Chapter 5: *Parents Gaining Support* and keep your diary up to date.



BABY-PROOFING SAFETY CHECKLIST



Take a look at this checklist and check off all of these things that you have done

- ☐ I have checked to see that small objects (coins, safety pins, marbles, grapes, peanuts, popcorn, keys etc.) and plastic bags are not around for my baby to find. Objects that can fit through a toilet paper tube are choking hazards.
- ☐ I have taken an infant CPR class.
- ☐ All poisonous substances including cleaning products, shampoos etc. are in latched or locked cupboards
- ☐ Poisonous houseplants have been removed, or are up high
- ☐ Always use a baby or child car seat that is right for your child's height and weight. Make sure the seat is fitted properly in the car and your baby or toddler is securely strapped in
- ☐ I wash rattles and baby's toys in the dishwasher
- ☐ I use a TV strap with flat screen TVs to prevent tipping over
- ☐ I do not place crib/cot near windows or window blind cords
- ☐ I use straps on cupboards in bedroom to prevent them tipping over
- ☐ Infant seat is federally approved and installed correctly with rear facing seat in back that I always use when transporting my infant in the car
- ☐ I am vigilant about watching my baby at all times
- ☐ I never leave my baby alone in the bath, on the bed, on the changing table, or in the car even for a minute
- ☐ A baby gate has been placed at the top and bottom of stairs
- ☐ Guards have been put around fireplaces or heaters and over electrical outlets
- ☐ My baby's cot does not have small objects in it, blankets, pillows or soft toys; cot slats have no more than 2-3/8 inches between them
- ☐ I put my baby on his back to sleep
- ☐ My baby sleeps in fire retardant sleepwear
- ☐ I have installed a smoke alarm
- ☐ I have set my hot water below 49 degrees C.
- ☐ I never leave my child alone with a pet
- ☐ I have placed a set of emergency numbers next to my phone

**I keep my
baby safe**

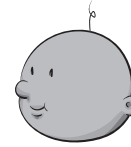




HANDOUT



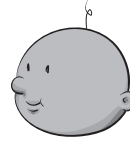
THINGS I CAN DO (6–12 months)



Activity	Date/Check	Observations/Comments
I can sit without support now		
I am trying to crawl with my arms but my legs don't work yet		
I can wave bye-bye		
I can say mama and dada		
I can reach for something I want		
I can indicate with gestures what I want		
I understand "no"		
I can understand what you are telling me		
I can search for things that are hidden or just out of reach		
I am curious and want to examine things		
I can feed myself by picking up stick-shaped pieces of food with my fingers		
I am experimenting with what foods I like and dislike		
I can turn pages of a book		
I enjoy being read to		
I am drinking from a sippy cup		
I love pat-a-cake and other peek-a-boo games		
I am crawling with my belly off the floor		
I can put things in a container		
I am trying to pull up to stand		
I copy others using a spoon or fork		



Parent's Viewpoint



Developing my Support Team

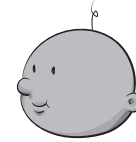
- Take some personal time to refuel my energy
- Do something nice for myself such as exercise, have a massage, or walk with a friend; when I recognise and meet some of my own needs, my children benefit too
- Leave my baby with a caregiver I trust
- Help my caregiver know my baby's schedule, regular routine, and favourite activities
- After being away from my baby, find out about my baby's activities and routine with her caregiver
- Support my baby's caregiver with appreciation for his or her thoughtful efforts with my baby
- Encourage my baby's special relationship with my caregiver — remember this is a healthy sign and will not diminish my special bond with my baby
- Encourage my baby's relationships with family relatives and friends by sharing my baby's developmental milestones and special interests via phone, email or texting; even though they may not live nearby
- Keep a log of the fun moments to share with friends
- Join with other parents to share parenting ideas, experiences and frustrations
- Keep life simple

**I keep
life simple**





Points to Remember about **BABYSITTER PREPARATIONS**



Things to discuss with your babysitter:

- Location of your emergency information (fill out the handout included and post it on your refrigerator).
- Where you will be and when you will be home.
- Your child's schedule for the time you will be gone: discuss feeding, changing nappies, sleeping, and activities that your baby likes. It can be helpful to write this down for your babysitters.
- Show the babysitter where everything is and what to do: nappy changing table and where to put soiled nappies, bottles, and how to warm milk, where your child usually sits or plays (bouncy seat, exersaucer).
- If your babysitter will be transporting your child in the car, make sure that the carseat is properly installed and show her how to secure your baby in the seat.
- Review baby-proofing needs and stress particular situations where your child needs monitoring (protection from the family dog, siblings, where your child can and can not be safely placed). This will vary depending on your child's developmental level.
- Particularly if you have a young babysitter, discuss your expectations for his or her behaviour: visitors, phone calls, texting, whether he or she can leave the house with your baby, etc.
- Check with your babysitter about their level of experience with children the age of your baby. If you have an inexperienced babysitter, you will need to think carefully about the different situations he or she will encounter and provide enough guidance to keep your baby safe. For example, if your teenage babysitter has never given a bath to an infant, do not have them bathe your infant while you are gone. Provide clear guidelines about what your baby can and cannot have to eat.
- Discuss when your babysitter should call you. This will also vary depending on the experience of your babysitter. For example, you might let an experienced caregiver use his or her own judgment, but might have a less experienced caregiver call you if your child has been crying for more than 5-10 minutes.
- Better yet to have your babysitter spend time with you in advance to observe and learn your feeding and changing routines and play interactions.

Once you have covered these things with your babysitter, relax and enjoy your time away!

I keep
my baby
safe



EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Post on the Refrigerator

PARENT'S CELL PHONE _____

WHOM TO CALL IF YOU CAN'T REACH ME

Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Our 911 address is _____

Our closest major intersection is _____

OUR CLOSEST NEIGHBOR YOU CAN CONTACT IN AN EMERGENCY

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

DOCTOR NAME/ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER _____

[CHILD]'S INSURANCE INFORMATION

Provider _____ Group ID# _____

Insured's Name and ID# _____ Policy ID# _____

EMERGENCY TREATMENT RELEASE

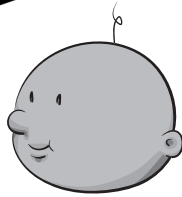
Child's Name _____ Birthdate _____

Any licensed physician, dentist or hospital may give necessary emergency medical service to my child (_____) at the request of the person bearing this consent form.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN

DATES OF RELEASE

Handouts & Fridge Notes
The Emerging Sense of Self



Emerging Sense of Self Home Activities for the Week



To Do:

- Give your baby opportunities to explore
- Make mealtimes fun—be child-directed and respond to your baby's cues
- Allow your baby some independence during mealtimes
- Teach your child some sign language
- Complete your emergency information (page 170)

Phone/E-mail/Text:

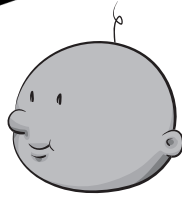


- Contact your buddy to share your baby's milestones (page 209-211)

To Read:



Read Chapter 6: *Baby's Changing Sense of Self*.



Emerging Sense of Self Home Activities for the Week



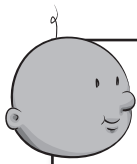
To Do:

- Make enjoyment of your baby a priority
- Allow your baby some independence during mealtimes
- Review your baby's milestones (pag 209-211)
- Play peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake often
- Complete your baby-proofing safety checklist (page 207-208)

To Read:



Review Chapter 6 and complete your happy memories diary and letter to your baby.



FRIDGE NOTES

Feeding Babies — Be Baby-Led

Signs Your Baby is Ready for Solid Foods (around 6 months)

- Baby can hold his head up and sits well in a high chair
- Birth weight has doubled
- Baby shows interest in food
- Baby seems hungry after 40 oz milk in a day or 8 feedings
- Baby can hold a spoon

I am baby-directed in my feeding approach



Things to Remember When Introducing Solids

- Allow your baby to explore the food tastes, feelings, and textures (by touching, smearing, smelling)
- Next your baby learns about chewing movements and swallowing
- Your baby won't swallow new foods on the first (or even second or third) try
- Allow your baby some independence such as holding spoon, or cup, or feeding self a variety of soft finger foods
- Make mealtimes fun by playing games (e.g., peek-a-boo)
- Model appropriate eating behaviours yourself (let baby feed you)
- Praise good meal time and social behaviours and model them (say thank you for sharing)
- Talk parent-ese to your baby during feeding
- Name the foods your baby is eating
- Show a happy/joyful face
- Take turns feeding and talking
- Respond to your baby's cues and don't force your baby to eat; let him set the pace and decide when he is done
- As you introduce new foods, be baby-directed — let your baby feed himself and choose which foods he wants to try
- Combine nonverbal signals to help your baby communicate "more" or "all done"
- Make eating an enjoyable family time; have your baby take part in your own meal times at the family table so he can copy your eating behaviours
- Put a clean plastic sheet under the chair to allow for food drops



Baby Alert

Breast milk or formula will still be your baby's primary source of nutrition for several more months, so don't worry if your baby does not eat very much. At this stage he is just learning how to chew, what foods feel like, how they taste, and how to swallow.



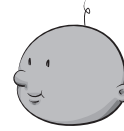
Baby Alert

Avoid honey (because of risk of botulism), peanut butter, shellfish, shark, swordfish, marlin, citrus, and egg whites in the first year. Avoid offering highly processed foods and foods with added salt or sugar. Avoid nuts for children under five years.



FRIDGE NOTES

Introducing Solid Foods (6 months)



- Introduce solids at 6 months starting with a small amount of food once a day. Until then, breast milk or formula is all your baby needs. Waiting for solids until 6 months has been shown to reduce the risk of your baby getting allergies and, if you are breastfeeding, will also increase your baby's immunity for the rest of the first year.
- Your baby will be ready for introducing solids when he has head control, shows interest in foods, can sit upright, has doubled his birth weight, and can coordinate hand, eye and mouth movement.
- Baby led weaning is a way of introducing solid foods that allows babies to feed themselves. There's no spoon feeding and no purees.
- Let your baby eat in the high chair with your family whenever you can—not in front of the television or on the run. Be sure to do up the baby chair safety straps.
- Start with soft fruit and vegetables or iron-fortified rice cereal (which is gluten free and less allergenic than other foods); let your baby finger-feed.
- First breastfeed or bottle feed and then give 1–2 teaspoons of soft finger foods or dry cereal mixed with breast milk or formula.
- Don't put solid food in your baby's bottle or he won't learn about eating from a spoon.
- Begin once-a-day feeding at a time when you and your baby are not tired.
- If you are using a spoon, use a rubber tipped spoon to avoid injuring baby's gums.
- Don't worry if your baby doesn't seem interested in eating off the spoon, better yet to let him smell, taste, touch and explore foods and learn to feed himself with his fingers.
- Let him explore with his fingers and have his own spoon and model feeding yourself with a spoon. You can choose to spoon feed your baby though they will soon be able to do it for themselves..
- Don't worry about your baby choking when letting her feed herself. At this age she can't get the food to the back of her throat to swallow — which is why she spits it out!
- If your baby leans back or turns his head away from food he has probably had enough or is bored with the food game.
- Remember, babies need to learn how to chew and swallow and it may be several months before they become skilled enough to be gaining much nutritional value from the solid foods. For a few months, your baby will be getting most of his/her nutrition from breast milk or formula. You can think of offering first solid foods as playtime and practice for learning how to eat.

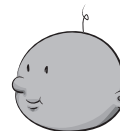




FRIDGE NOTES



Introducing Solid Foods (9-12 months)



- Babies will still need breast milk or formula until one year of age and many parents choose to breastfeed their babies longer than this.
- Start with soft or mashed fruits and vegetables, and move on to finely chopped foods.
- Gradually increase the consistency, texture, and variety of foods you offer. Give a rainbow of foods.
- Let your baby choose what foods she wants to try to eat. Allow for choice.
- Be prepared for messes by putting a plastic sheet or clean cloth under your baby's high chair and dress him/her in a short sleeve top. Remember dropping food and spoons and messing with it is all part of the learning process.
- Choose foods with no added salt or sugar. Avoid low fat, high fiber foods. Offer chunky, stick-shaped pieces of food (vegetables, fruits, chicken) that your baby can hold on to. Soft, somewhat firm, lightly cooked vegetables are great for baby munching and tasting. Toast is easier to eat than soft bread and bread sticks are great for dipping.
- Stay with your baby whenever he is eating. Preferably, have your family meal at the same time to promote modeling eating behaviours.
- Most of all, be baby-directed with feeding and let your child be in control of his/her own eating. Make this a time for fun, food exploration, and discovery. This will prevent many future problems over food. Respect your baby's preferences. Continue to offer foods periodically, even if baby has refused it in the past.

NOTE: There is no need to purée or mash the food or even for spoon feeding. Self-feeding allows babies to explore taste, texture, and smell and encourages hand-eye coordination.

Fridge Notes

Ensuring Your Toddler's Safety: Part 1

Toddlers are driven to explore and are curious about everything—they have no inhibitions and don't understand danger! Therefore one of the biggest challenges for parents is doing as much as possible to keep your child safe. Do this checklist and see how toddler-proof you are.

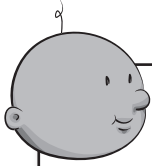
Action	yes	no
Monitor and supervise my toddler at all times; am vigilant about this.		
Toddler-proofed every room in my house		
Keep emergency numbers next to the phone		
Keep curtain and blind cords out of reach		
Ensured all my windows are lockable and use window guards		
Put plastic covers on electrical outlets		
Unplug electrical appliances when not in use		
Put latches on cupboard doors and drawers		
Keep chairs and cots away from windows		
Keep small objects such as coins, marbles, batteries and purses out of reach of my toddler		
Keep toilet seat closed at all times. If my toddler is attracted to water, keep the bathroom door closed/locked or use a toilet seat lock		
When bathing child, I do not leave a filling/filled bath unattended. I keep my toddler with me while bath is filling. Once my child is in bath, I do not leave, even for a second. I drain water as soon as my child is out of bath		
Do not leave my toddler alone with my pet and keep litter box in walled off area		
Made sure my plants are not dangerous		
Installed baby gates at the top and bottom of stairs		
Use fire-retardant sleepwear		
Turned down the temperature on my hot water heater		
Locked all medications (including vitamins) in lockable medicine cabinet or cash box that can be stashed on a top shelf		
Keep all products such as shampoo, cosmetics, nail varnish remover, household cleaners, scissors, razors out of my toddler's reach		
Keep electrical hair dryers out of my toddler's reach		
Keep stuffed animals away from cooking area, and don't leave stuffed animals in the baby's cot		
Turn pot handles toward back of stove; secure oven door		

Refrigerator Notes

Ensuring Your Toddler's Safety: Part 2

Toddlers are driven to explore and are curious about everything—they have no inhibitions and don't understand danger! Therefore one of the biggest challenges for parents is doing as much as possible to keep your child safe. Do this checklist and see how toddler-proof you are.

Action	yes	no
Never leave my toddler unattended while eating; do not give him popcorn or whole nuts		
Have a play area in kitchen—give him his own cupboard with plastic containers, wooden spoons etc.		
Avoid latex balloons		
Put fireplace guards around fireplaces or heaters		
Supervise my toddler when he's using a riding toy		
Use a helmet when my child is riding a tricycle (to get in habit)		
Keep my toddler in a car seat and strapped in facing the rear. (Children should be rear facing until they weigh at least 20 lbs AND are one year of age.) Current guidelines in Wales are: Baby seat should be rear facing for children up to 13kg (approx. 9-12 months.) Child seats should be forward facing for children 9kg to 18 kg (approx. 9 months to 4 years.) Booster seats should be forward facing for children 15kg and up (approx. 4 years to 12 years.) 135cm Booster cushions should be forward facing for children 22kg and up (approx. 6-12 years.)		
Use a government-approved car seat. I never ride in the car with my toddler in my arms. I will keep my toddler in a car seat until he is at least 40 lbs and then in a booster seat until he is 4'9".		
Never leave my child unattended in car, even if rushing to the shop for a minute.		
Put sun cream on and sun hats on my children when in the sun		
I have taken a first aid and infant/toddler CPR class		
I stay within arm's reach of my toddler near traffic, water, or other dangerous situations.		
I am teaching my toddler to "stop" for traffic and to hold my hand as we cross road		
In very dangerous or crowded situations (near water, near traffic, in a busy airport) I keep my toddler safe in a backpack, pram or harness.		



FRIDGE NOTES

Social and Emotional Developmental Milestones 6–12 months

- Stranger anxiety starts (7–8 months, begins; peaks at 10-18 months)
- Waves good-bye (8 months)
- Begins to understand object permanence (7–8 months)
- Can say mama or dada indiscriminately (8 months)
- Begins to understand the meaning of words (9 months)
- Searches for hidden objects (8–9 months)
- Will reach out to objects and indicate wants with gesture (8–9 months)
- Jabbers (9 months)
- Plays patty-cake and peek-a-boo (10–11 months)
- Says mama and dada to correct parent (10–11 months)
- Understands about 50 words but cannot say them (at 12 months) (action verbs, eating, bath time etc.)
- Discovers self in mirror

**We play
peek-a-boo**

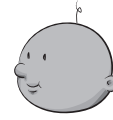




HANDOUT



THINGS I CAN DO (9–12 months)



Activity	Date/Check	Observations/Comments
I recognise my parent from other adults		
I have discovered myself in the mirror		
I can wave bye-bye		
I can say mama and dada to correct parent		
I can search for something that is hidden		
I can jabber		
I understand “no”		
I can understand what you are telling me		
I can reach out for what I want		
I am curious and want to examine things		
I can pick up a small object with my fingers		
I like “touchy-feely” books		
I recognise my favourite foods and trying new flavors		
I am drinking from a beaker and like to feed myself with a spoon		
I love pat-a-cake and other peek-a-boo games		
I am crawling with my belly off the floor		
I can pick up foods accurately using fingers and hands		
I can stand alone briefly		
I am cruising		



FRIDGE NOTES

Physical Developmental Milestones 6–12 months

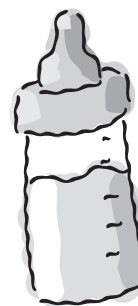
- Sits without support (7 months)
- Starts trying to crawl (7–8 months)
- Stands while holding onto something (8–9 months)
- Gestures and points at objects (8–9 months)
- Will reach out to objects and indicate wants with gesture (8–9 months)
- Pick up small object with thumb and forefinger and bring to mouth (9 months)
- Turns pages of book (9 months)
- Drinks from beaker and eats with fingers (9 months)
- Crawls well with belly off floor (10 months), but crawling is extremely variable and babies have a variety of ways of mastering this skill. Some drag one foot, some do a “commando” crawl, and some skip crawling and go straight to cruising. As long as your baby is meeting other developmental milestones, chances are that variations in your child’s crawling schedule and style are completely normal.
- Puts objects in container (11 months)
- Stands alone briefly (11 months)
- Cruises (12 months)



Fridge Notes

Deciding When to Stop Breastfeeding

The World Health Organisation recommends breast milk for the first year of the baby's life because of its immunological, nutritional and medical benefits. Breast milk (or formula) is sufficient food in the first 6 months of life; after that solids in combination with breast milk can be offered until the baby is at least 1 year old. In the first few months of solid foods, your child will still get most of his nutrition from breast milk or formula. Remember, the introduction of food at this stage is more about the baby learning how to self-feed and swallow than his nutritional needs.

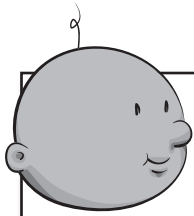


Deciding when to stop breastfeeding your child is a personal and individual decision. Some families will decide to stop breastfeeding early, while others may continue to breast feed for months, or even years, beyond a child's first birthday. The decision about when to stop breastfeeding may be influenced by factors such as your personal preferences, work and travel schedule, your health, your child's health, or by the cues your child gives you she is ready to stop breastfeeding.



Many mothers make the decision to stop breastfeeding with mixed emotions. On the one hand, it can mean more flexibility and freedom, but on the other hand it also can also represent a loss of intimacy with your child. Regardless of when you decide to stop breastfeeding your baby or toddler, the best approach is a gradual, gentle process that is flexible and pays attention to what both you and your baby need. When this is done, stopping breastfeeding can be a positive experience for both you and your baby.

Stopping breastfeeding does not have to be an all-or-nothing proposition. Some women choose to stop breastfeeding during the day and breast feed in the evening or morning. Stopping breastfeeding is easier if your child has taken milk from a bottle (or beaker if your child is older than 12 months) before stopping breast feeding. So it's a good idea to give an occasional bottle of breast milk to your child around 4-6 months (or sooner if you decide to stop breastfeeding earlier). Even if you plan to continue breast feeding, giving the occasional bottle of breast milk can make it possible for others to be involved in your baby's feeding process and give yourself a little freedom from feeding.



Fridge Notes

Tips for Stopping Breastfeeding

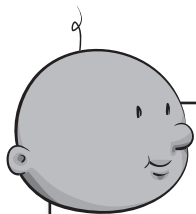
Deciding When to Stop Breastfeeding

- Remember you are the best judge of when to stop breastfeeding.
- Don't set an arbitrary deadline on how long you will breastfeed; remember every baby stops at a different age and has different developmental readiness for the next stage.
- Delay stopping breastfeeding if there are other stressful life changes in your baby or toddler's life such as beginning child care, or a household move, or you have recently gone back to work, or your child has had an illness. Try again in another month.



Take a Gradual Baby-led Approach When Possible

- Take a gradual approach to stopping breastfeeding; skip one breast feeding a day for several days to start with (e.g., midday feeding); reduce feedings one at a time over a period of weeks –perhaps eliminating the bedtime breast feeding last to prolong the special bonding experience.
- Avoid abrupt stopping of breastfeeding if possible as it can be stressful for your child and cause mood swings, breast engorgement, or infections for you.
- Gradually cut down on feeding time and breastfeed after meals instead of before meals (if your baby is over 8 months and is eating solids).
- Don't offer, but don't refuse; breastfeed when your baby is adamant about it but don't offer at other times.
- Postpone and Distract. Engage your child in a fun play activity during the time you would usually breastfeed; distract with a snack or walk outside.
- If breastfeeding is strongly associated with a particular time or activity (bedtime, wake up time) have the other parent or another caregiver do this routine with the child for several days. This may help to break the pattern since the child doesn't associate breastfeeding with this parent.
- Avoid sitting with your child in places that are associated with breastfeeding (e.g., feeding chair) during the process of stopping. Instead, cuddle or play with your child in a new location during the usual feeding time.
- Make sure you offer regular meals and drinks to minimise hunger and thirst.
- If your child begins to pick up a self-soothing habit such as becoming attached to security blanket or special stuff toy, don't discourage it. You can even encourage this by providing a special object or "lovey" for your child to hold while breastfeeding.
- Be flexible, gentle and patient. Watch your child's reactions and respect them; if he is having a hard time giving up morning feeding, you may want to continue for a while rather than force the issue.
- Be prepared to experience a range of emotions, these are completely normal.
- Remember there are still countless ways you can provide your child with affection, closeness and security; offer plenty of opportunities for extra cuddling while stopping breastfeeding. Stopping breastfeeding doesn't signal an end to intimacy.



Fridge Notes

Stopping Breastfeeding for Toddlers

In addition to the above suggestions, there are other ways that you can engage a toddler in the process of stopping breastfeeding and help make this transition easier for you and your child.

- You and your toddler can talk about the process of stopping breastfeeding. "Pretty soon you will feed in the morning, but not at nap-times." Start this talk a week before you are cutting out a particular feeding time, but keep these conversations brief, especially if your child seems distressed by them. The day before you cut out a feeding time, let your toddler know it is coming. "Tomorrow at nap time, you and I will cuddle in the big bed and read a story, but you will only feed at bedtime."
- If you are stopping breastfeeding with an older child, you can make a special trip to the store to buy a big-boy beaker that your child chooses. Then let your child help you pour the milk into the special cup at the time when you would usually breastfeed.
- It may be helpful for another person (dad, grandmother, favourite babysitter) to put your child down to bed, or get him up in the morning for a few days. This may help break the association between feeding and that time of day.
- It is possible, even likely, that your toddler will be upset during some of the times that he or she usually breastfeeds. If you have decided that it is time to stop a particular feeding time, be prepared to endure some crying and tantrumming even if you have prepared your toddler well. Offer comfort and distraction and know that in a few days your child will probably adjust well to this change.

