

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Cooperative Extension

Hi,

We hope you will learn something from each issue of “Zero to One” that will help you in parenting. Of course, no newsletter or book can tell you all there is to know about parenting. Most often your tender loving care and your common sense will see you through.

But as special situations and questions arise, call your doctor or nurse. Another source

of information is the county extension office.

Sincerely yours,



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Iowa State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating



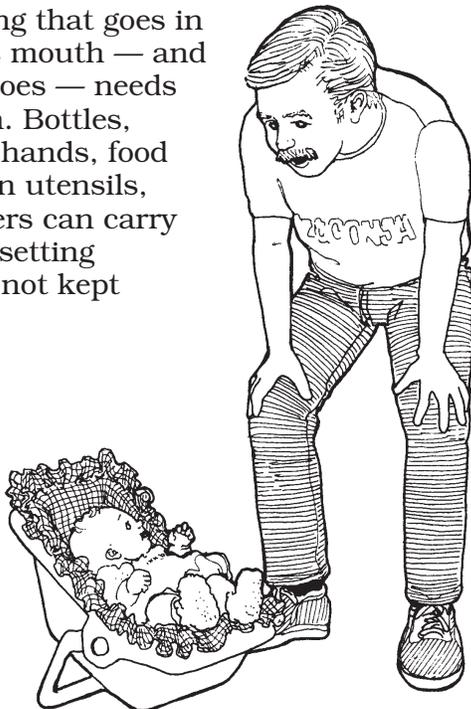
zero to one

news about infants during the first year | **month three**

Health and safety

By now your baby should have the first immunization to prevent disease. Keep your medical records up to date.

Anything that goes in an infant's mouth — and so much does — needs to be clean. Bottles, toys, your hands, food preparation utensils, and pacifiers can carry tummy upsetting bacteria if not kept clean.



Parents enjoy the convenience and babies enjoy the change in view that infant seats provide. Choose one that is solid, has a safety strap (use it!), and is deep enough so that your baby won't slip out when the seat is in an upright position. With back supported and arms and legs free to move, babies can participate more completely in family life. Caution: Do not over-use. Babies also need to be carried in your loving arms.

What's happening with baby?

Less time spent crying and sleeping leaves more time for 3-month-old babies to find out about themselves and the world. They're particularly captivated by their own hands and feet. Less crying also means time to discover the new gurgles, squeals, and cooing sounds that delight families. Propping Baby up in a lap or chair allows your baby to more actively respond to people who care. It makes a delightful circle; the more you respond, the more your baby will vocalize and smile. Watch out! Those chuckles can capture you. Your baby is beginning to realize that actions get results — and that you can be counted on for comfort when needed.

Games babies play

Playing is learning. Babies will watch and follow objects with their eyes (especially hands and feet). They listen to sounds and try to find out where they come from. They repeat actions to see what happens.

Learning Is loving. Babies smile, coo, watch you, and “concentrate” on your face. They try to attract your attention, and listen to you talk and sing.

Play with your baby.

Sing to baby.

Watch your actions get results, too!

Be good to yourself

The passage of time since your child’s birth may dim both the good memories and the not-so-great memories of the birth experience. Time also lets you reflect on your experience and go beyond the emotions of the first weeks. Perhaps now is a good time to think about and discuss future birth plans. No doubt, there were occurrences you would like to repeat. Did all go as you had planned and hoped? What, if anything, would you change? You know a lot more about birth now than you did a few months ago. Make a few notes on how you might improve the birth experience and stash them away. Your body needs time to recuperate, but your mind can prepare for the future.

Family focus

You are one of the main influences in your child’s life. Who were among the main influences in your life? Yes, your parents. When most people rear children, they either imitate their parents’ methods, or they choose opposing methods. As you begin to raise your family, give some thought to:

- what you do like your parents,
- what you do that is the opposite, and
- why you copy some things and not others.

Think about what you really want your family to be like. It may be easier now to establish patterns of family life than to change them as you and your children grow older.

Let’s take “family” back one more step — to grandparents. They come in all shapes, sizes, ages and emotional make-ups. For the most

part their involvement with your children is delightful if you’re lucky enough to have them nearby. Sometimes, however, in their efforts to be helpful, they can offer too many answers — even when no question was posed! On the other hand, their help may be the support you’re seeking. Love them and let them love your children. They are your children’s heritage, and your children are their future.

Not for mothers only

T. Brazelton’s book, *Infants and Mothers: Differences in Development*, is a sensitive portrayal of the first year of life. He describes an “average” baby, a quiet baby and an active baby in each month’s development. Although titled for mothers, it’s equally valuable for men. It is available in paperback. ISBN: 0440506859

Also ask for *Ages and Stages, 1-12 months*, PM 1530a, at your county office of ISU Extension.

. . . and so forth

Feeding your baby is one of your most important jobs during these first months of life. It’s a chance to get to know your infant as well as to provide nourishment.

Find a doctor you trust and follow his or her recommendations about nutrition. Here are some tactful ways to handle well-meaning neighbors or relatives offering advice on “how-it-ought-to-be.” “Thanks for the help, we may try it,” or “That sounds good, but the doctor says ...”

Frequently, about the third month, babies are uncomfortably over-fed by grown-ups who are eager to begin solid foods. There’s no proof that cereal or other “solids” will help babies sleep through the night. More about “solids” next month when some babies are beginning to be ready.



Getting it together

One way to make your baby comfortable is to select baby clothing carefully.

Size — It's not easy to choose clothes according to age labeling since a three-month-old, for example, may weigh 10 to 20 pounds. When the information is available, select a size that fits your baby's height and weight. The following chart will help.

<u>This Size</u>	<u>For Babies This Tall</u>	<u>And This Weight</u>
3 mo.	24 inches	13 pounds
6 mo.	26 inches	18 pounds
12 mo.	29 inches	22 pounds

When Baby is between these measurements, choose the larger size. Babies need room to move and stretch, even while sleeping.

Warmth, comfort, cleanliness — In addition to size, consider warmth, comfort, and cleanliness to ensure that Baby's clothes will be soft, non-irritating and washable. Some hints:

- Choose knitted outfits that give needed stretching room as well as warmth and ventilation; you can match the clothes with the weather.
- Choose front openings that add convenience.
- Avoid drawstrings around the neck or rough seams.
- Keep clothes clean and well-mended.

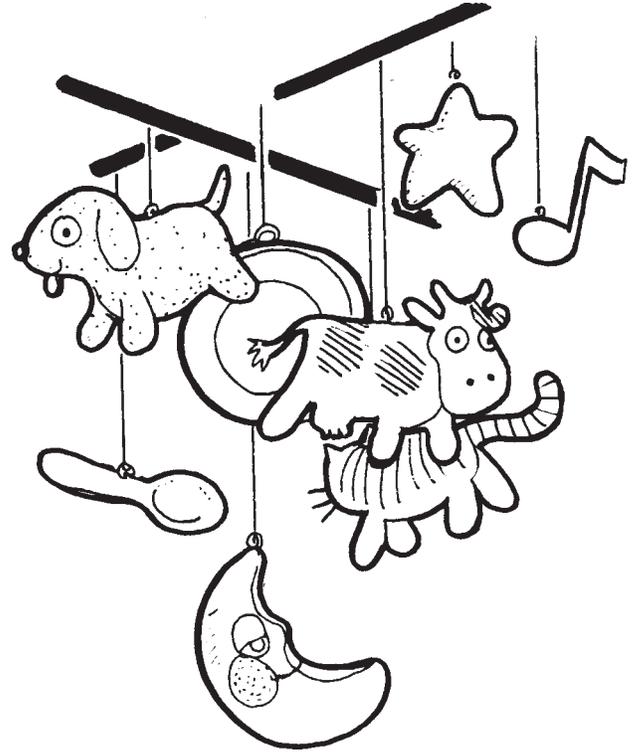
Straight talk about . . .

How your baby learns

One of the first ways your baby learns is by looking. At first, Baby stares at objects. If the object is just seven or eight inches away, Baby can focus on it pretty well. Later Baby begins to watch and follow objects with his or her eyes. Baby can even "concentrate" on some things — your face is one of them. A lot of time will be spent watching your face, especially when you talk or sing, make happy faces, blink your eyes, and make funny sounds. Since Baby learns by looking, give Baby something to see!

Babies like to look at:

Bright colored pictures — Hang some on the wall near Baby's crib. Pictures from magazines can be hung separately or can be cut up to make a collage. Pictures of faces are good.



Mobiles — Hang a mobile over the crib. If necessary, raise the mobile so that Baby will not be able to chew on or break off any parts. A mobile placed near the window in Baby's room can be watched when there's a breeze.

Bright colored crib toys and sheets.

Themselves — Yes, babies need to look at themselves. Hold Baby up to a mirror. Point out ears, eyes, nose, mouth, fingers, and toes. You might like a safe mirror that's made just for babies to hold. Some toys have mirrors, too.

Other people — Babies like to look at other people, especially faces of other babies and young children. Provide opportunities to see other babies and young children. It takes time, but they'll learn to play together.

Be consumer-wise

Consumer-wise moms and dads help protect their babies' right to health and safety by selecting products for them carefully. *Guide to Baby Products* 6th edition (May 12, 1999) by Sandy Jones is a Consumer Reports Book of 288 pages that contains safety and consumer advice. ISBN: 0890439184. Purchase your own copy or check your library for this book and others.

Also contact the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), Washington, D.C. for more information.

Write to:

Publications Request
Consumer Product Safety Commission
Washington, D.C. 20207

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Ask for: *The Safe Nursery: A booklet to help avoid injuries from nursery furniture and equipment.* Or print your own version from the CPSC Web site:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/>

You also may receive this information 24 hours a day through Fax-On-Demand (301) 504-0051. Dial that number from a fax machine to order a publication or a catalog of available information.

... and justice for all

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