

0 – 6 MONTHS

Babies are effective communicators from the first day of life. At first they let the people around them know when something is wrong by crying. In their first few months they improve this skill so that parents can tell the difference between their baby's "hunger" cry & a cry for a nappy change. Babies also try to "talk" through a form of communication unique to babies. This form of communication, known as babbling, involves their repeating short syllables frequently. Many fascinating changes occur in the baby's ability to communicate in their 6 months of life. By encouraging the infant's efforts to communicate & providing a warm, loving & interesting environment, you give the young baby a solid foundation for future language development.



Activities

Respond to Crying



Crying is one of a baby's first forms of communication. When you respond to a baby's cry, you are showing that crying carries meaning. As a baby's cry begins to vary, you will soon learn to tell by the sound whether your baby is tired, wet or hungry. When you respond differently to different cries, the baby learns even more about communication.

Talk Closely to Baby



Babies need to have objects fairly close to them so they are able to see them easily. Hold baby close so they can watch your face clearly. Talk to them so they can hear your voice & watch your lips. They will soon learn that two go together. Pause frequently to give them a chance to make sounds too. When baby does, repeat the sounds back to them. They will enjoy this game, which will encourage them to vocalise more.

Provide Visual Stimulation



Babies enjoy having objects to look at: they learn so much from using their eyes. Place a mobile near your baby's cot (but out of reach) & put pictures on the wall. Patterned sheets & bumper pads provide more visual stimulation than plain ones. Change the mobile or the pictures occasionally to help baby to learn to notice differences.