

Birth to 8 Months



I LEARN WHO I AM

I learn about my body

- I suck on my fingers or hands. I study them.
- I discover that my hands and feet are part of me. I can move them.

I learn to trust your love

- I learn I can depend on you if you come when I cry.
- I feel secure when you hold me in your arms.
- I feel good when you smile at me.
- I learn my world is safe to explore when you watch over me.

I learn to comfort myself

- I may suck my fingers or hands - it soothes me.
- As I grow, I can wait a few minutes because I have learned you will always come.

I can make things happen

- I can shake a rattle and make a sound.
- I can kick a mobile and make it move.
- I can smile and you will smile back at me.

I LEARN ABOUT MY FEELINGS

I can show you many feelings like pleasure, anger, fear, sadness, excitement and joy.

- I smile and wiggle to show you I like playing with you.
- I frown or cry when you stop paying attention or playing with me.
- I laugh aloud, sometimes with a belly laugh.

Sometimes I need you to help me with my feelings.

- I need you to try to understand how I feel.
- I need you to comfort me when I am upset or frightened.
- I need you to protect me when I feel overwhelmed.

I share my deepest feelings. I know and trust you.

- My smile is brightest for you.
- Sometimes I cry when you pick me up at child care. Sometimes it's because I've missed you
- Sometimes I'm just fussy. I know you'll understand.
- I can protest strongly when I am upset. I know you will be there for me no matter what.
- I'll show you more of my feelings than I may show others.

I LEARN ABOUT PEOPLE, OBJECTS AND HOW THINGS WORK

I can tell the difference between people I know and people I do not know.

- I recognise my parents' voices.
- I relax more when I am with you and other people I know.

I am sometimes afraid of strangers.

- I prefer the special people in my life such as my mum, my dad or my grandparents. I may begin to act differently and fearful of strangers, even at this young age.
- I sometimes cry if a stranger gets too close to me or looks at me directly in the eyes.
- I may cry or cling to you until I know I am safe with a new person.

I like to be with you.

- I like to be held by you.
- I like to play with you. You are more interesting than any of my toys.
- I like you to talk softly and smile at me. I smile and "talk" back to you.
- You are the most important person in my life.

I learn about how the world works.

- I like to look around and see new things.
- I like to play games with you, like peek-a-boo and hide-n-seek.
- When I want you to keep playing knee ride, I know I should keep bouncing up and down.

I LEARN TO MOVE AND DO

At first, my body moves automatically.

- I search for something to suck.
- I turn my head when something blocks my breathing.
- I turn my head or close my eyes when it is too bright.

Within a few months, I begin to learn to use my fingers and hands.

- I put my hand and objects in my mouth.
- I can hold something, let go, and get hold of it again.
- I can move an object from one hand to another.

Over time, I move my body with purpose.

- I can hold my head up.
- I can roll over.
- I can sit without your help.
- I have favourite positions. But I like change! It feels good to move from being on my back to my stomach to sitting up.
- I can crawl by myself.
- I may even be able to stand up if I hold on to you.

I LEARN TO COMMUNICATE AND RELATE

I can tell you things even as a newborn.

- I cry to tell you I need you.
- I communicate through the expressions on my face and gestures.
- I have different cries, facial expressions and body movements to tell you I am sleepy, hungry, wet, frightened, uncomfortable or just need a break.

Within a few months, I develop new ways to communicate.

- I learn to make many different sounds.
- I laugh.
- I use my sounds, change the expression on my face and move around to get your attention.
- Sometimes I may just listen to you. I love to hear your voice.

I learn to babble.

- I make some of the sounds that I hear you use.
- Sometimes I try to imitate you. I like you to imitate my sounds too.
- My babbling can even start to sound like adult speech...a question, an exclamation, a request, a song...

I like to “talk” with you even though I don’t yet speak words.

- I may catch your eye and smile to tell you I am ready to communicate with you.
- I pay attention to the tone of your voice and the expressions on your face when you talk with me.
- I stretch my arms toward you when I want you to pick me up.
- I look at you when I am ready to play. When I close my eyes or turn my head away, I am telling you I need a break.
- I learn how much fun language can be when you talk, sing and read with me.

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