



Links to Learning

JANUARY INFANTS

Links to Home: Shared Activities for Parents & Children

ACTIVITY:

Place a fuzzy sock over a rattle. Give the rattle to your baby and let him play with it. After a few minutes, remove the sock and hand the rattle back to your baby. Does he show greater interest in holding the rattle when it is covered with the textured sock? Try using different colored socks. Try this activity with your baby's bottle as well. This will encourage interest in holding his own bottle.



BABY SIGN LANGUAGE

This Month's Baby Sign is "MILK."

To sign the word "milk," open and close your hand to resemble milking a cow. For further assistance, have your child's teacher show you how to make the baby sign, or refer to videos and articles on the Web.

In our infant program, we start using baby sign language from the earliest months. Baby signs are common terms that have been modified and simplified from American Sign Language. As your baby reaches approximately six to eight months of age, he will begin to recognize and perhaps sign back to you on his own.

Baby signs are a good way to help children express themselves and lessen frustration in the early stages of language development. Signing helps young children learn to recognize, and eventually verbalize, the word associated with the sign.

Signing with your child is fun. Say the word as you sign. You can sign while holding your baby, and have him feel the sign that you are making. Baths and diaper changes are great times to practice baby signs.

How your child will be developing and learning during this stage.



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Your child's teacher will take a purposeful approach to model, nurture and provide opportunities for growth in these Links to Learning skill areas.

Birth to 3 months



Language and Literacy

- Cries to express need
- Varies pitch and loudness
- Responds to familiar voices
- Makes ooh and aah cooing sounds



Creative Expression

- Responds to sounds in environment
- Searches for sound source



Wellness

- Opens and shuts hands
- Brings hand to mouth
- Grasps objects when placed in hand
- Waves hands and feet when on back
- Engages in tummy time for short periods of time
- Lifts head briefly
- Moves head side to side when on stomach



Social-Emotional

- Begins to make eye contact
- Watches faces intently
- Smiles responsively
- Responds to being held
- Responds to being spoken to
- Recognizes caregiver
- Imitates some movements or facial expressions

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3-6 Months

Language and Literacy	Wellness
Communication	Gross Motor Skills and Balance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laughs out loud • Vocalizes simple consonant sounds (m, p, b, n) • Answers a sound with another sound • Attends to baby sign language • Smiles at caregiver • Responds to own name • Uses voice to express joy and displeasure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds head with control when in an upright position • Engages in tummy time for short periods of time • Lifts head and chest off floor during tummy time • Lifts head when on back • Brings feet to mouth • Rolls from side to back or from side to stomach • Reaches out when on stomach • Allows self to be pulled into a sitting position • Sits with support
Literacy	Fine Motor Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores books orally and by touch • Looks at clear, simple pictures and designs • Follows objects with eyes from side to side, focusing both eyes at the same time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches for toys • Grabs toys • Holds and shakes a rattle • Grasps with finger and thumb • Uses hand to "rake" smaller objects
Social-Emotional	Creative Expression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses feelings by making sounds • Notices strangers • Recognizes and responds to familiar actions • Engages in social play with caregiver • Recognizes and responds to basic facial expressions of caregiver (e.g. smiles in response to happy facial expression) • Attends to mirrors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds differently to a variety of sounds • Attends to noisemakers • Explores texture and sensation






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6-9 Months

 Language and Literacy	 Wellness
Communication	Gross Motor Skills and Balance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strings together sounds (ba-ba, da-da, etc) • Uses toys to make noises • Stops in response to 'no' • Responds to voice games • Responds to familiar words • Attempts to mimic frequent baby sign language signs • Uses baby sign language to communicate needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolls over independently • Sits without support • Pushes self into a sitting position • Crawls forward with stomach on floor • Rocks on hands and knees • Creeps on hands and knees • Assists in pulling up • Bears some weight on legs when held in a standing position
Literacy	Fine Motor Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys being read to • Looks at named picture • Recognizes pictures of familiar people, objects, and actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches and grasps toys • Uses fingers and palms to hold objects • Transfers objects from one hand to the other • Holds objects with both hands • Holds and releases objects • Strikes objects together • Takes objects out of large-mouth containers
 Mathematics	 Social-Emotional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracks and locates objects falling from view • Develops object permanence • Shows some understanding of cause and effect • Repeats certain activities, such as dropping a spoon • Unstacks nesting blocks or rings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plays unattended for a short time • Plays peek-a-boo • Develops preferences, particularly with toys • Eats baby food from a spoon • Eats finger food • Holds own bottle • Feeds self finger foods • Explores multi-sensory activities
 Creative Expression	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys rhymes and song • Responds to music with body movement • Claps hands • Experiments with different art materials 	

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9-12 Months

Language and Literacy

Communication

- Associates meaning to familiar words
- Says 3-6 words with meaning
- Responds to simple verbal requests
- Practices sounds in a variety of ways
- Uses a variety of baby sign language signs to communicate wants and needs
- Looks at object named
- Shakes head for 'no' and uses other simple gestures
- Imitates heard words
- Squeals to elicit attention

Literacy

- Enjoys being read to
- Looks at pictures in books
- Shows preference for a certain book
- Attempts to turn pages in board books
- Interacts with textured or sound-producing books
- Recognizes pictures of familiar people, objects, and actions

Social-Emotional

- Uses physical behavior (such as pulling up) to establish closeness
- Becomes upset if a toy or other object is taken away
- Participates in games of imitation
- Holds own bottle
- Self-feeds
- Begins to explore table foods
- Independently uses a sippy cup
- Participates in hand washing

Mathematics

- Looks for hidden objects
- Begins to remember where things are kept
- Stacks rings or nesting blocks
- Shows basic understanding of schedule of events, such as after nap expects bottle

Wellness

Gross Motor Skills and Balance

- Crawls
- Pulls self up to stand
- Bears weight in standing position
- Stands unaided
- Walks with support
- Cruises, using furniture
- Helps with getting dressed, such as pushing hands into sleeves

Fine Motor Skills

- Points
- Picks things up with a pincer grasp (thumb and forefinger)
- Continues to hold one small object when handed another
- Retrieves dropped objects
- Puts objects into a container

Creative Expression

- Enjoys rhymes and songs
- Claps hands
- Moves body in response to music
- Plays simple musical instruments
- Explores the texture of paint
- Holds and uses a large brush to explore paint
- Explores large crayons and markers
- Engages in multi-sensory art activities