

7-12 MONTHS GO, BABY, GO!



This pack includes facts, guidance, and ideas for you to try out with your baby from 7-12 months of age. This can help you see a bit more into the world of babies, but you know your child best; enjoy getting to know more about little person in your life.

In this age range you will likely notice that your baby:



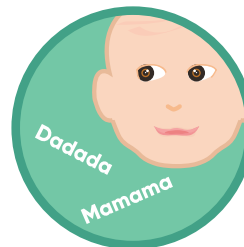
Is able to sit alone, then crawl or scoot, pull themselves upright and cruise along holding furniture or your hand. May even begin to walk alone.



Make a pinch movement between their thumb and their index finger



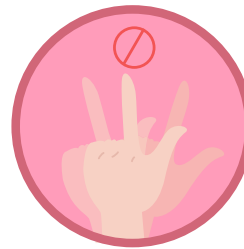
Get excited to throw and watch toys and other items being thrown



Make sounds like "dadadada" and "mamamama" noises



Understand and respond with a smile to positive recognition like smiling and clapping.



Understand "no."



Look for a cup or a toy they see you hide under a towel – understanding that it is still there even if she cannot see it



May be clingy or cry around people other than parents, even people they know



Begin pointing at things with their finger around 12 months, to share an experience or interest with you, to indicate they want a toy or to look at that



IS YOUR CHILD ON TRACK?

Babies develop at their own pace. If something worries you, seek help and guidance from a healthcare professional. It is particularly important that you bring your baby to the doctor if any of the following are true for your baby. Additionally, if your child is not on-track for whatever reason, alongside seeking medical guidance here are some things you can do to help them.

OBSERVATIONS

- Does not bear weight on legs with support
- Does not sit with help
- Does not babble ("mama", "baba", "da-da")
- Does not respond to own name

WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

- Try to put him first in keeling and stimulate him to raise his bottom (you can use toys on a low table/chair). When he manages to stay balances on his knee, try to do the same in stand-ing. Remember, it is easier to stand when you hand / arms have hold on something stable like a chair or a table.
- Smile, look them in the eye, and talk them through what you are doing.
- Try getting him closer to the object you want him to see, try to describe it. Choose big objects to point at.
- Try to involve him in games when 2 hands are needed: catch and push big balls. Or do specific games where he must use 1 hand at a time. Remember to praise the "difficult" hand. His hand is part of his body and he has to accept it. Kiss and touch the hand/arm from time to time.
- Put her in a situation when the back and the hips can be partially supported. Also try to fix the leg to the ground with your hand or your own leg and slowly reduce the support.
- Play with him using sounds. Keep talking with him and also pronounce easy sounds and blow a raspberry at him.
- Seek a medical consultation.
- Use his name regularly whenever speaking or playing with him. Use the names of others as well when speaking in front of him.



- Does not seem to recognize familiar people
- Does not look where you point
- Does not pass toys from one hand to the other
- Be sure to keep talking, smiling, playing, and holding her close even if she is not responding affectionately.
- Seek a medical consultation.
- Be sure to keep talking, smiling, playing, and holding her close even if she is not responding affectionately.
- Try getting him closer to the object you want him to see, try to describe it. choose big objects to point at.
- Try to involve him in games when 2 hands are needed: catch and push big balls. Or do specific games where he has to use 1 hand at the time. Remember to praise the "difficult" hand, his hand is part of his body and he has to accept it – kiss or touch the hand/arm from time to time.

JUST PART OF WHAT MAKES THEM UNIQUE

Many babies find it more difficult to try and get used to eating solid foods as their muscles and coordination may not be as strong as other babies their age, or because they find the sensation uncomfortable. Try the following:

- Keep mealtimes calm, relaxed, and friendly.
- Offer smaller more frequent meals, and more time for them to eat.
- Give them a spoon but also a washable plastic or rubber toy they like to chew or mouth. Let them dip the toy into food and learn about food that way.
- Offer more than one colour and encourage them to try each and to mix.
- Mix iron-fortified oat or barley cereal with breastmilk or infant formula and offer it in a cup or spoon.
- Try different food consistencies, one at a time (see point below), to see if they have a preference. Babies often dislike food that is fully solid or fully liquid so try soft, as well as liquid or solid food.
- Some babies may find it harder to eat food that has lumps or different consistencies (liquid/soft with pieces of hard food), so when you find the consistency they like, try to stick with it – very slowly trying new things from time to time.





It can help parents enormously to speak with parents of other babies the same age. All parents can share their stories of nappies and long nights, while other parents of babies with similar difficulties as your baby can help you see your situation differently, share resources and their experience. If you need help finding contacts, get in touch with **NATIONAL ENTITY SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES** to connect with other parents.



EAT WELL

In the second half of the first year of life...

After 6 months of age, babies' iron and vitamin needs are bigger than what they can get from their mother's milk. Along with breastmilk or infant formula, babies need iron and other nutrients from solid food to ensure that their brains develop normally, and to help them grow and have energy to play and explore.

Look out for these signs your baby is ready to begin exploring solid food!

- Able to sit up on your lap, a highchair or feeding seat with good head control
- Reaches for food or seems interested to eat
- Can put things in her own mouth



DID YOU KNOW THAT...

Some foods can be dangerous for babies under 1 year of age. Avoid giving salted food or food with sugar, shellfish, raw honey or raw egg, cow, or goat milk, hard or uncooked vegetables, whole nuts, and fruit juice. Many people are surprised about the last one, but both natural or sweetened fruit juices contain a lot of sugar which can cause sleep and mood difficulties in children and increases problems with teeth and weight gain later in life.



AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?

Your baby starting solids is exciting and fun, but it can also mean extra preparation, clean up, and effort for you. If you are always focused on the family, you can easily neglect your own diet which is not good for your health, mood, or dynamic with food. Take turns between par-ents and family members to feed your baby or clean up afterwards so that everyone gets their meal. See the **Respond** section for info on how to stay calm – this age can get messy!

HOW CAN I MAKE SURE MY BABY EATS WELL?

- Make meals as relaxed as possible; eat a meal alongside them, talk, and play with them as you show them their meal. Watch how they react and their signs of interest and hunger.
- Offer soft, mashed, or little pieces of cooked vegetables, fruit, or oat/barley cereals.
- Take it slowly, introducing single vegetables, fruits, or grains at a time, makes it easier to spot any food allergies your baby may have.
- Encourage him to take very small pieces of vegetables, fruit, or sweet bread with the fingers, and give them their own spoon to play with and learn how to use.
- There is no need to make special baby food. Prepare regular family food that is cooked without salt, and just offer them a bit of pureed vegetables, banana, avocado, or smashed potato or rice. **INSERT PAGE WITH AVAILABLE NATIONAL YOUNG CHILD FEEDING VISUAL**

GROW STRONG

In the second half of the first year of life...

This is an amazing period of rapid development. In these short months, most babies will learn to get around, open drawers and cupboards, crawl and cruise everywhere.

Babies' teeth appear at this age causing grumpiness, red cheeks, constant drooling, sore gums, broken sleep, a low appetite, and sometimes a light fever.



DID YOU KNOW THAT...



Your baby can perceive distance from you during this age, which can often upset him; reassure him by holding him especially after time apart. Because of all the rapid development during this time, it can also sometimes be hard for your baby to settle to sleep. Help him relax and fall asleep with calm rhythmic movements, patting and shushing him, or lying him up against your shoulder.



AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?

For different reasons, many couples experience more conflict in their relationship after having children. Besides love, joy, and happiness, parents can be frustrated by the demands and work involved in having a new baby; managing everyone's expectation and "advice". This is normal. What matters is how you decide to cope with conflict, as it affects everyone in the family including your baby. **Try out the Fathers' and Mothers' Quizzes to get some insights into what you are each feeling and experiencing.** Many of the skills in the **Respond section** can help you to remain calm, connect and respond to your spouse in moments of conflict, resolve your differences, and work to keep your home healthy and safe.

HOW CAN I HELP MY BABY TO GROW STRONG AND HEALTHY?

- If your baby is teething, it can help to offer her a clean, wet, and cold washcloth, chewy toy, or a piece of chilled banana to chew on.
- Never put alcohol on a facecloth on your baby's body when your baby has teething trouble, the alcohol can get into their bodies and harm their organs.
- A fever is the body's way of fighting infection and sometimes comes with teething. Putting a baby in cold water or putting ice on them when they have a fever is not recommended. Dress them lightly, give them lots of breastmilk, formula, or water to drink, and watch them very closely. Speak with a nurse or doctor about how to manage fever before giving paracetamol or other pain medication.
- Take your baby to the doctor for vaccinations, and growth and development check-ups at [NATIONAL VACCINATION SCHEDULE](#)
- Give your baby plenty of time to strengthen his neck and back through play. Put him lying on his tummy on a clean blanket or towel on the floor with clean, safe household items, toys, and picture books for up to 30 minutes a day, while you supervise him.





PLAY HAPPILY

In the second half of the first year of life...

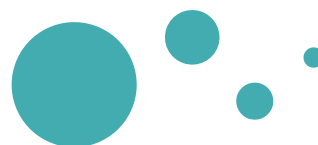
Babies aged 7–12 months are great fun and love to play. They are often on the move and chattering, they enjoy exploring the world by looking at, poking, and trying to eat everything.

Babies this age love to watch cause-and-effect; marking chalk on the pavement, poking a stick in the dirt, or drawing with a crayon across paper fascinates them. Older babies also begin to drop and throw things for the same reason. Try to offer acceptable ways for them to enjoy this fascination such as dropping plastic cups in water, throwing a ball or leaves in the air.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...



Around this age, research shows that most babies benefit from routine in day-to-day life, especially in circumstances of upheaval or difficulty. You can help your baby to feel safe and comfortable by letting them eat, sleep, and play in a familiar manner. Notice what they use for comfort – a teddy, a blanket or a particular toy, or a soother – and try to ensure that they spend time with people in day-to-day life that are consistent and familiar.



AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?

For grown-ups as well as children, routine in day-to-day life can be a good way to ground yourself both mentally and emotionally, especially in circumstances of upheaval or difficulty. Make the effort to eat and sleep as well as you can, make time for prayer or spirituality, exercise even for 10 minutes a day, make regular meetups with family and friends, and stay connected with your community. See **Respond section** for more ideas on how to keep family life as low-stress as possible.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY BABY TO PLAY AND DEVELOP HEALTHILY?

- Sing songs and make movements that go with them. At 9 months, he will squeal, smile, maybe clap his hands, and laugh at his favourites.
- Talk about different, safe, and clean objects of different colour, texture, etc with him; hand these objects to him and encourage him to pass them from one hand to the other, shake them and hit them on the floor.
- Spend just 10 or 15 minutes every day looking at a book together, touching the pages, and chatting about what she points or looks at; before sleep time is good.
- Play peek-a-boo with his toys and make dramatic efforts to look for them, praising him when he finds them before you.
- Encourage him to pick up little bits of food like sweet corn or beans as she eats.
- Play music, sing, dance, or offer babies safe, clean objects around the home to make noise with such as metal and plastic pots and pans, wooden spoons, and plastic toys.

LOVE DEEPLY



In the second half of the first year of life...

Babies at this age are picky, they love their special people and may cry if carried or picked up by someone they do not know or do not want to be with. Try to show your feelings of trust to other caregivers and help your baby to transition smoothly when you are leaving them with someone else.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...



From around 6 months babies understand that something exists when they can no longer see it (object permanence). This can create great opportunities for play (peek-a-boo) and other hiding/revealing games. However, it also makes some babies feel anxious about being separated from their parents. To help them feel safe you can:





- Show consistency in responding to their needs.
- Show reassurance and repetition in games and actions of hide-uncover or leave-the-room-and-return.
- Use the same phrase each time such as “Baba go, Baba come back”, and give her something of yours to keep such as a scarf, an old shirt. Say the same phrase when you “hide” and “find” toys, so they learn the principle of return – “cup go, cup come back”.



AND HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY?

As the months pass, older babies recognise and show many emotions: sad, happy, excited, disgusted, angry, afraid, hurt, uncomfortable, and enraged. Teaching your child about positive emotions often comes naturally, such as embracing joy, happiness, and excitement. But teaching your child about negative emotions can be more difficult. Think about what you do when you feel frustrated, sad, angry, or afraid – how do you behave and how well does this behaviour serve your needs and interests? Is this what you want for your child? See **Respond section** for some information on how to recognise negative feelings and manage them in a healthy way, for everyone's sake.

HOW CAN I MAKE SURE MY BABY FEELS LOVED AND IS SAFE?

- Babies this age can be very affectionate and offer kisses, hugs, pats, or other signs of love to their special people – mom and dad! Share back and enjoy being their favourite person.
- Offer your baby choices when you can, such as: “Do you want this cup/spoon or that cup/spoon?” and follow their preference.
- Have a look at the Safety First sheet, and be mindful when they start to crawl and cruise as they have no sense of danger;
 - o Supervise your baby closely at all times near stairs, balconies, or other fall areas and ensure that everyone taking care of your baby understands this need.
 - o Do not walk carrying your baby and hot drinks at the same time, as they can easily grab cups of tea or coffee and keep electrical cords from kettles out of their reach.
 - o Keep babies this age away from electrical or curtain wires, especially near their bed as they can roll in them and choke.
 - o Keep poisonous items far away or locked from baby's reach, especially laundry pods, medication, vitamins, and cleaning products or liquids.

CONCLUSION

And just like that you have made it through a whole year – way to go! Looking back, you may ask yourself where the time went, but there are plenty of new adventures and milestones ahead on your parenting journey to look forward to and cherish.

