Your Baby’s Development: 9-12 Months

Babies are becoming good communicators as they get closer to turning 1 year old. This makes it a delightful time for parents. Babies can use their actions and sounds to let loved ones know what they want, like handing a book to a parent so that she’ll read it aloud.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Your Baby Can Do</th>
<th>What You Can Do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **I can understand more words than I can say.**  
• I am starting to understand what you say to me.  
• I can even follow simple directions like Go get the ball.  
• I tell you what I want with my sounds and body movements. I may say a word or two, like mama. | **Tell your baby what is happening and what you will do next:**  
• After your milk, it is time for a nap. This helps her learn language.  
• Routines also let her know what to expect.  
• **Put your baby’s sounds and actions into words.** You are pushing your food away. I think you are telling me you are all done.  
**Name things your baby looks at or points to:**  
• That’s the moon. The moon comes out at night.  
**Tell your baby what is happening and what you will do next:**  
• After your milk, it is time for a nap. This helps her learn language.  
• Routines also let her know what to expect.  
• **Put your baby’s sounds and actions into words.** You are pushing your food away. I think you are telling me you are all done.  
**Name things your baby looks at or points to:**  
• That’s the moon. The moon comes out at night.  |
| **I can creep and crawl.**  
• I have found my own way of crawling—on my hands or knees, on my stomach, “crab crawling” by moving backwards and sideways, or even scooting on my bottom!  
• I walk while holding on to furniture or your hand. I may even start walking on my own. | **Give your baby lots of time and a safe place to practice new skills like crawling and walking.**  
• Make a “trail of toys” in a child-safe place in your house. Line up several interesting objects (a wooden spoon, a plastic bowl, a brightly colored dishcloth) that your child can crawl to and explore.  
**Play hide-and-seek games.**  
• This helps your baby learn that things that disappear also reappear.  
• Be sure to say good-bye to your baby. Never sneak out. This builds his trust in you and helps him learn to deal with difficult feelings.  |
| **I know that things still exist even though I can’t see them—especially you!**  
• I may cry when you leave because I know you are still out there somewhere and I want you to come back! | **Help your child take the next step in her play.**  
• If she is banging two blocks together, see if she’d like to try stacking them.  
• Offer your child a ball to toss, a rattle to shake, or a scarf to swing. These activities help children learn how things work. They also build the muscles in their hands that will help them learn to write.  |
| **I love to do things over and over again.**  
• This is how I practice and figure out how things work.  
• Repetition also helps build my memory. | For more information on parenting and child development, go to: www.zerotothree.org.  |

For more information on parenting and child development, go to: www.zerotothree.org.