



## GCAPP PARENT TOOLKIT:

# Your Baby's Development: 9 to 12 Months

As your baby approaches their first birthday, they are becoming skilled communicators. This stage is full of joy as babies use actions, gestures, and sounds to express themselves for example, handing you a book to ask for a story.

## What Your Baby Can Do and What You Can Do

■ What they can do

■ What you can do

### I CAN UNDERSTAND MORE WORDS THAN I CAN SAY.

- I'm beginning to understand what you say to me.
- I can follow simple directions like "Go get the ball."
- I use sounds, gestures, and movements to tell you what I want. I might even say a few words like "mama" or "dada."

#### Talk about what's happening and what comes next.

- Narrate your routines: "After your milk, it's time for a nap."
- Use your baby's sounds and actions as cues: "You're pushing your food away. I think you're telling me you're all done."
- Predictable routines help your baby learn language and feel secure.

#### Name what your baby sees or points to.

- Say things like, "That's the moon. The moon comes out at night."
- Naming helps your baby connect words to the world around them.

### I CAN CREEP AND CRAWL.

- I might crawl on my hands and knees, scoot on my bottom, or move backward or sideways whatever works for me!
- I walk while holding on to furniture or your hand, and may soon take my first steps on my own.

#### Encourage movement and exploration.

- Give your baby a safe space to practice crawling and walking.
- Make a "trail of toys" a few interesting items (like a wooden spoon, soft ball, or colorful cloth) placed just out of reach to motivate movement and curiosity.

### I KNOW THAT THINGS STILL EXIST EVEN WHEN I CAN'T SEE THEM ESPECIALLY YOU!

- I may cry when you leave because I know you're still out there somewhere, and I want you to come back.

#### Play hide-and-seek games.

- These games teach your baby that things (and people) still exist even when they're out of sight.
- Always say goodbye before leaving don't sneak out. This builds trust and helps your baby handle separation.

### I LOVE TO DO THINGS OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

- Repeating actions helps me understand how things work and builds my memory.

#### Support repetitive play and new skills.

- If your baby is banging two blocks together, show them how to stack them.
- Offer toys like balls to roll, rattles to shake, or scarves to wave great for learning cause and effect and strengthening fine motor skills that prepare for writing later on.

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