

LOUISIANA'S FUTURE: FAMILIES AND CHILDREN



Your Security Blanket

A monthly newsletter for parents of newborns

Ninth Month

The Ninth Month

It may seem that baby's development has slowed some in the ninth month, but many developments are taking place.

Message from Baby



I'm spending much of my energy doing physical things. I can turn around, crawl while holding something in my hand and may be able to get down from a standing position. I'll get lots of bumps and bruises.

I can begin to stack items now, but I get bored with the same activity quickly, so I need to change toys a lot. When I do get really interested in something, I am really persistent. This is a skill I need throughout my life.

I am developing socially, too. I might offer you a toy to play with. Say "thank you," to teach me to do the same.

Get me things to stack. Cups or blocks will be great. Leave out only a few toys, and change them often. I'll notice the new ones. Sing to me. Take me for a walk.

Baby's Temperament

This seems to be the month of fears and insecurities. Baby might become frightened of heights or noises, even if he has never been afraid before. Parents can be concerned but shouldn't overreact and become too protective. Providing quick sympathy and then encouragement usually works well. For example, if baby is afraid of the vacuum cleaner, say "Oh, what a loud noise. I'll turn it off. Now hold my hand and let's look at it together."


Baby's Bath


If baby also becomes fearful of his bath this month, try returning to his baby tub (if he still fits), or bathing him with you in the tub and holding him. He will gradually lose his fear and be satisfied to bathe alone.




Baby and Language

Babies have to understand a lot of language before they can say anything themselves. At nine months, he understands a few sounds and words. Here are some good ways to help:

 Stress key words in your sentences, and try not to replace them with pronouns. "Where's the cup? Oh, there's the cup."

 Use baby's name instead of "you" or "your." "Here's a biscuit for Mommy."

 Talk about things baby looks at and is interested in. "...Oh, here is a red block, and a blue block and a green block."

Baby's Self-Concept

If your baby could grow to be anything, what would you want him to be? You probably say, "Anything he wants to be." His ability to become and do what he wants will depend on whether or not he believes in himself. An important part of development will begin happening soon. He will start to understand when he is pleasing and displeasing you. If he grows to feel he is likable and "good" by pleasing, his self-concept will grow strong and positive. Of course, he will not please you all the time. Let him know when his actions don't please you, but never tell him he is "bad." Tell him instead that "Daddy loves you, but he doesn't like it when you _____." If your child always believes you love and believe in him, he'll grow to respect and believe in his own value.

(over)

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Baby's Food

Does baby have problems drinking from a cup? One of these ideas might help:



Give baby a cup to play with when you drink from a cup. Baby will try to do as you do. This will help him to catch on. Let him experiment with a cup in his bath water. Spills won't matter.

Parent - Baby Games

Do you remember any songs or games you played as a child? Maybe someone did "pat-a-cake" or "this little piggy" with you. Your child will have a great time playing games like this with you now, and you'll have fun trying to remember them. With a baby, you don't have to worry about mistakes!



Baby's Health

Baby might be teething and a little feverish and irritable. By the time he is about two, he will have 20 primary teeth. If you haven't already, it is time to start thinking about dental care. Here are some ways to avoid tooth decay. NO fruit juice or soft drinks before sleeping; NO sugar-coated foods; NO food just before bedtime; NO sweets on baby's pacifier.

Other Cooperative Extension Service publications from the Louisiana's Future: Families and Children program that you might find helpful with your baby are:

Every Touch Counts (Leaflets to Help a New Mother), Pub. 2520

How to Protect Kids From Lead Poisoning, Pub. 2556.

Call your parish office for a free copy and for other suggestions.

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