



# Your Security Blanket

A monthly newsletter for parents of newborns

Twelfth Month

## The Twelfth Month

*It's hard to believe you are near the end of a year with baby. Only a year ago, she was a helpless infant. Now, a year later, baby is walking (or nearly) and, after that big step, her world and yours will never be the same.*

## A Message from Baby



First of all, thank you for all you have done for me since we have been together. Mom and Dad, I love you! I hope you have noticed how grown up I am. I want to dress, feed and hold things myself. My memory is better, and I trust everyone more. I am starting to have a sense of humor. I use words, but I might not know what they mean. I might climb out of my playpen. Watch me! Give me commands, errands to run. Read to me. Share lots of hugs and kisses. Dance with me. Let me eat with the family and try to dress myself. In other words, keep on loving me and helping me grow.

## Baby's Health

Many toddlers have trouble with bedtime when baby reaches toddlerhood. Even when baby is sleepy, she likes being with adults. She may also resist her nap, but it is still important. Routines help. Stick to the same time schedule; read, sing, give a kiss and leave. Any other routine is fine, too; the point is to stick to a routine. Especially as baby becomes able to crawl out of the crib, spend the time you need to get the routine working.

One last word about immunizations: keep them up to date. When baby is 12-15 months old, get DTaP, Hib, IPV, MMR and Var. She will need the DTaP and MMR booster when she is 4-6 years. Possible side effects may occur with some vaccinations. Check with your doctor or health unit.

## Parent-Baby Games

Playing with water in the bathtub can be fun anytime of day, not just bath time. She can have fun with items from the kitchen: jugs, plastic cups, spoons, a funnel or a strainer. You can make one from a plastic jug in which holes have been made. Soon baby can "help" to wash the car with you.

## Swimming

Experts don't agree on the best time to start swimming, but they usually agree that by the time baby is a year old, she can get much enjoyment from the water. On your first visit to a swimming pool, it is a good idea to look around without actually swimming. Once in the water, your job is to get your child confident and enjoy the water. Dress baby in closely fitting pants; take a towel to the poolside to wrap baby in as soon as you get out. Don't take a child swimming if she has a cold or seems even slightly unwell. And, watch baby carefully.

## Baby's Food

Does baby have feeding problems? That's not unusual now. She may be doing well to eat one good meal and one fair meal a day. She's probably walking or getting ready to, and that's taking up her concentration. If she takes a bottle, she may count on it to fill her up. Try delaying it until 1-2 hours after the meal. This may be a better schedule. Try not to be overly concerned. Most feeding problems work themselves out.

## Walks and Trips

You have probably been taking baby for walks since she was tiny. The older baby gets, the more interesting the trips can be. If baby is walking, you might stay out for a long time and not get very far. Baby will investigate everything you pass. Watch her carefully though, and never leave her alone outdoors.

For a special treat, take a trip to a spot where there's something special to watch - perhaps a zoo, pet shop, duck pond, swimming pool or carwash.

(over)

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## One Down, Lots to Go!

We know you have enjoyed your year as a parent. We were happy to visit with you each month. We urge you to continue reading and learning about your child. Our final word is to remind you of something we have said many times. Your child is a unique individual. She is developing at her own pace. When you see other babies developing at what seems to be a faster pace, don't worry. Ask yourself, Is my baby learning some things? Is she active? Is she developing? Look for progress. Then, if you feel satisfied after thinking about these questions, stop worrying and enjoy your baby. If not, ask your doctor to take a look. Then, once again, stop worrying and enjoy your baby.

**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.

## Notes About Your Baby:

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