



Provided by the WIC Program and First 5 LA

Your 5-7 month-old baby: Making things happen!



I am beginning to understand some words. Your baby may turn towards you when you say his or her name.

5-7 month-old babies are really fun! They laugh and smile when you play and read with them. Look inside this handout for games your baby will like.

Your baby is a scientist! 5-7 month-old babies love to make things happen. When your baby drops a toy and watches it fall, he or she is learning to make things fall. When you play peek-a-boo, your baby learns that you continue to exist, even when you cannot be seen.



Your baby may be getting teeth!

Every baby is an individual. Each baby is born with a different personality. Even twins are different from each other.

QUESTION: What is my 5-7 month-old baby learning about TALKING?

ANSWER: Since birth, your baby has noticed the tone and loudness of your voice. Now your baby is beginning to understand that different tones of voice mean different feelings. Loud means angry. Questions end with your voice going up. Your baby hears and notices vowels and consonants. Your baby notices how you put sound together to make words and sentences and will try to imitate them. Say your baby’s name and see if he or she turns and looks at you.

QUESTIONS: What are 5-7 month-old babies’ MOVEMENTS like?

ANSWER: Your baby can sit with help. Sitting is exciting, but being able to use both hands is even more exciting! Put pillows around your baby to help your baby to sit.

5-7 month-old babies also sit leaning forward using their hands to hold them up. This can be frustrating if they want to use their hands to pick up a toy.

Your baby can move toys from one hand to the other. Your baby will sit and bang with a spoon. You do not need fancy toys. Plastic bowls, spoons and pots from the kitchen are great toys for 5-7 month-old babies.

QUESTION: Every time I give my baby a toy, he or she drops it and waits for me to pick it up again. How can I teach my baby to hold onto toys?

ANSWER: Your baby is a scientist! Your baby will try the same activity again and again. Be patient. You may get frustrated after you have picked up the toy 20 times. Your baby is not trying to make you mad. Your baby is not trying to disobey. This is how your baby learns. 5-7 month-old babies love to make things happen. When your baby drops a toy and watches it fall, he or she is learning to make things fall. This does not mean that you must pick up the toy every time.



Try this!
Talking and moving go together. Now that your baby can use both hands, play clapping games. While you say the rhymes, do the actions.



Try this!
When you talk to your baby, you are teaching language. **TALK SLOWLY.** Use the **SAME WORDS** again and again. **REPEAT** what your baby says, like “Ba, ba, ba.” Repeating shows that you are listening.

SAY THIS:	While you DO THIS:
Patty cake, patty cake, baker’s man Bake me a cake as fast as you can	<i>Clap your baby’s hands together in time to the bold words</i>
Roll it	<i>Roll your baby’s hands around each other</i>
And pat it	<i>Pat your baby’s hands together</i>
And mark it with a B	<i>Draw a B on your baby’s palm with your finger</i>
And put it in the oven...	<i>Pretend to put something into an oven</i>
For Baby	<i>Point at your baby</i>
And me!	<i>Point at yourself</i>

Try this!

Give your baby lots of chances to make interesting things happen. Show your baby how to pour water from a plastic cup into the tub. Help your baby fill the cup and pour it into a plastic bowl or another cup. Never leave your baby alone in the tub, not even for a minute.

Exploring the world!

QUESTION: What does my 5-7 month-old baby SEE?

ANSWER: Your baby now sees all of the colors. Your baby can see objects and people that are all the way across the room. Your baby can follow objects with his or her eyes. If your baby does not seem interested in looking at new things, ask your doctor.

Baby sees! Baby grabs! Baby puts into mouth! This is one way your baby explores. Check your baby's toys often so your baby can explore safely. Babies can choke on small objects. Make sure that none of your baby's toys have small parts that can come off (like eyes on stuffed animals). If an object fits through a toilet paper roll, it is too small to play with. Never let babies hold balloons. More children choke on balloons than on anything else.



Try this!

Watch your baby's eyes follow objects. Help your baby sit by putting pillows around him or her. Then roll a ball to your baby. Remember to talk about what you are doing. Say, "BALL, see the BALL? Here comes the BALL!" Roll a ball to the wall so that your baby can see it bounce back. Say, "The ball is going, going, going ... Boom! Now it is coming back!" Do not worry about the exact words you say. Just talk to your baby.

Let's talk about temperament!

QUESTION: My older child is quiet, calm, and cuddly. My baby cries a lot, doesn't sleep much, and gets upset when we go to new places or when a new person is around. Why?

ANSWER: Your children have different **temperaments**. Temperament is not learned. Your baby may be born with an easy, difficult or slow-to-warm temperament.

Easy babies are usually happy. They enjoy new people and places. They sleep through the night earlier than other babies. They follow regular schedules for eating and sleeping. These are babies that parents can take everywhere with them. If you have an easy baby, parenting is easier.

Difficult babies cry a lot, respond strongly to changes, and are sensitive to bright lights or loud noises. They will probably take longer to sleep through the night. If you have a difficult baby, try to keep lights and sounds low. Holding your baby close may help your baby feel safe in new places and with new people. Try to keep trips short. Try not to feel guilty or think that you are doing something wrong if your baby is difficult.

Slow-to-warm babies need more time than easy babies to feel comfortable in a new places or with new people, but are not upset as easily as difficult babies. Most babies are slow-to-warm. If you have a slow-to-warm baby, give your baby time to feel comfortable before letting someone new hold him or her. You will learn how your baby shows you that she or he feels ready to try something or someone new.

QUESTION: When will my baby get teeth?

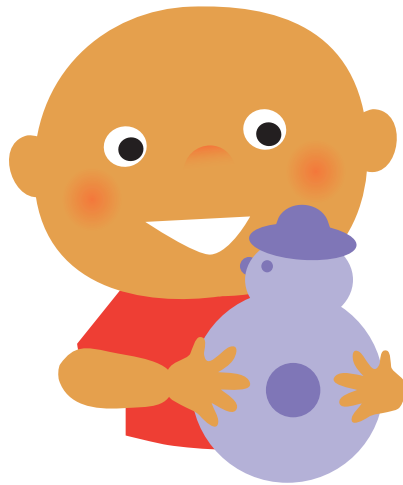
ANSWER: Any time soon! Sometime in these months, your baby's first teeth will appear. This is called "teething." Some teething babies cry and often drool. Sometimes teething babies get a low fever (less than 100 degrees). Chewing on a hard, cold (but not frozen) teething toy can help your baby feel better. Take care of your baby's teeth before you see them. Wipe your baby's gums with a soft cloth or use a soft baby toothbrush everyday.



QUESTION: What are the best TOYS for 5-7 month-old babies?

ANSWER: You are more important than any toy. Read to your baby every day. Play on the floor with your baby every day. Cuddle your baby every day. Talk and sing in every language you know.

When you read, put as much feeling into your voice as you can. You may feel a bit silly saying, "Look! A yellow bus!" with excitement in your voice. Your baby's smiles will show you how much your baby likes the way you read.



Safety Corner



If you use jarred or store-bought baby food, here are a few safety tips.

- Check the "use by" dates and throw away the food if the date has passed.
- Rinse all containers before opening.
- You should hear a popping sound when you open a jar. If not, throw it away.
- Watch out for microwaves—baby food gets hot quickly. Stir the food and test it first.
- Feed your baby from a small dish, not directly from the baby food jar. This helps keep germs away.
- Ask WIC for more information on how to make your own baby foods.



First 5 LA

First 5 LA is a child advocacy and grant making organization created by California voters to invest Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues in programs for improving the lives of children from prenatal through age 5 in Los Angeles County. First 5 LA champions health, education and safety causes concerning young children and families. For more information, please visit www.first5la.org.



The WIC Program

WIC provides nutrition and health education services, breastfeeding support, referrals to community agencies and healthy food to eligible women, infants and children under age five. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For more information, please visit www.wicworks.ca.gov.



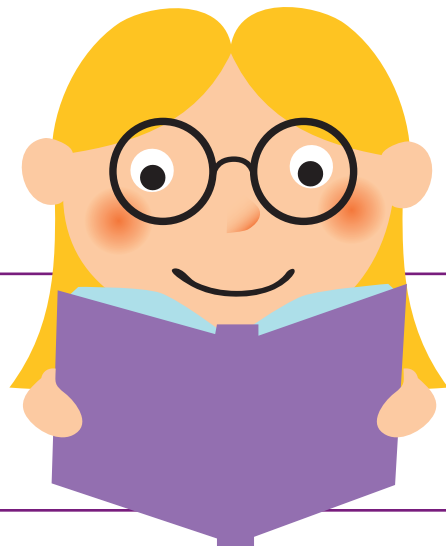
Provided by the WIC Program and First 5 LA

Making Things Happen!

My memory is developing. Your baby knows that mommy is different from daddy, grandma or new people. Your baby is able to play “Peek-a-Boo.”

I can understand some words, even though I cannot talk. Most 8-11 month-old babies understand words like “ball,” “mama,” and “papa.” Your baby can also tell you things by using his or her hands.

I am really moving! Most 8-11 month-old babies sit without help. Some may also stand or walk while holding onto furniture.



I love to EXPLORE! Your little explorer wants to touch, pull, shake, and chew everything. Now is the time to make sure that your home is safe for your baby.

Read to me! Reading to your baby will help him or her do well in Kindergarten and beyond!

QUESTION: What does my 8-11 month-old baby UNDERSTAND?

ANSWER: Your baby is beginning to understand that you do not have to be able to see something (or someone) for it to be there. Your baby will love to look for things that you have hidden. Peek-a-boo is even more fun now because your baby knows that you will be back.

QUESTION: Before, my baby did not cry when I left. Why does my baby cry now when I leave?

ANSWER: This is a normal part of development. Your baby remembers you, even when you cannot be seen. Your baby also has a better understanding of the difference between people he or she knows well (like you) and everybody else. Doctors talk about two ways that babies worry. **“Stranger anxiety”** means that your baby may cry when around new people. **“Separation anxiety”** means that your baby may cry when you leave. Crying for you when you leave shows that your 8-11 month-old baby recognizes people, and feels safest with you near. These are part of normal development.

You can help your baby get used to new people by introducing them slowly. Stay with your baby and the new person for a few minutes. When you leave, make sure that you tell your baby that you are leaving, and that you will come back. Then leave quickly.

Try this!
Believe it or not, leaving your baby gets easier for both of you with practice. If your baby crawls into another room, wait before you follow (as long as the other room is safe). If you leave the room for a few seconds, tell your baby that you are leaving and will be back. If your baby cries, keep talking even when you are out of sight.



Try this!
Does your baby look for a ball when you ask, “Where’s the BALL?” Does your baby look for you when someone asks, “Where’s MAMA?” or “Where’s PAPA?”

Try this!
It is hard to learn to talk. Pay attention to what your lips, tongue and teeth are doing while you read this sentence out loud. Pay attention to how the air is moving in your mouth. Your baby will learn how to make all of those little movements, and begin talking!

QUESTION: What is my 8-11 month-old baby learning about TALKING?

ANSWER: Most babies are getting more interested in talking. Nobody listens to you as carefully as your baby listens to you. Your baby is beginning to understand some words.

Your baby is also making more and more sounds. “Mama” and “papa” are often first words. But babies say “mama” and “papa” before they understand what they are saying. Babies usually use their first words when they are between 11 months old and 14 months old. Some babies do not start talking until they are 18 months old. Your baby is beginning to take turns. This is an important step in learning to talk. When you smile, does your baby smile back at you? Does your baby give you a toy, then wait for you to give it back? If your baby does not seem to respond to you, ask your doctor. If your baby needs extra help, it is best to get the help as early as possible. There are special programs for helping children, even little babies!

Your baby doesn't need words to communicate!

It is really exciting for your baby to be able to tell you what he or she sees or wants. Your baby can learn to talk with movements called "signs," like waving "bye-bye." Many babies can learn signs before they can learn to talk out loud, but both take a long time. Be patient. Learning to use signs helps babies learn to talk. Babies who learn to use signs for words also learn to talk earlier than babies who do not learn to use signs.

You can teach signs the same way you teach words. Use the **SAME SIGNS** again and again. **Say the words, too. REPEAT** the signs that your baby makes.



Try this!

Hold your hands as if you are holding an open book and ask, "Do you want a **BOOK?**" Then, give your baby a book. Or, if your baby brings you a book, make the movement while you say, "Do you want me to read you a **BOOK?**"

Try this!

When you talk to your baby, you are teaching language. **TALK SLOWLY.** Use the **SAME WORDS** again and again. **REPEAT** what your baby says, like "Ba, ba, ba." Repeating shows that you are listening and helps teach your baby to take turns.

QUESTION: What are 8-11 month-old babies' MOVEMENTS like?

ANSWER: Sitting pretty! Most 8-11 month-old babies will sit without help. By the time your baby is 11 months old, your baby will probably be able to stand holding onto furniture or a person and be able to pull up to a stand from a sitting position. Learning to sit back down is harder and you may want to teach your baby to bend his or her knees to sit down. Your 11 month-old baby can probably walk holding onto furniture. Some babies take their first steps during this time, but some do not walk until after their first birthday.

Your baby may be **crawling**, but some babies never crawl. They may scoot or roll rather than crawl. This is all normal. Ask your doctor if you are worried.

Your baby is learning to use his or her hands and fingers. By the end of 11 months, your baby will probably be able to **pick up pieces of cereal** and other small things with his or her thumb and finger instead of using the whole hand.

Try this!

When your baby reaches for you, ask, "Do you want me to pick you **UP?**" Lift up your arms as you say, "UP."



You can make it safe for your baby to explore. Exploring is very important for your baby. Babies need to spend a lot of time on the floor playing and exploring. This is how your baby learns. Keep plastic bowls, pots and pans where your baby can play with them. When your baby explores somewhere that is less safe, you can move your baby to the bowls and pans and say, "Look, play with these!" instead of saying "no."

Read, read, read! Babies this age like books with pictures of babies and pictures of what they see around them. They like pictures of balls, other toys, chairs, tables, trees, and shoes. Use board books so that your baby can handle the book without hurting it. Babies also like rhymes (when words end in the same sound like “cat” and “bat”) and rhythm (the beat). This is what makes nursery rhymes like “Mary Had A Little Lamb” so popular with babies. If you want to learn more signs to teach your baby, look for books about signing with babies at your local library.

Try this!

Lie on the floor on your stomach and look around. This is a great way to see what you want your baby to be able to reach and what you need to keep away from your baby.

Try this!

Give your baby bowls of different sizes and other objects of different sizes (but nothing small enough to fit through a toilet paper roll). Your baby will have fun trying to fit the bowls into each other, and moving objects between the bowls. Play with your baby and talk, talk, talk. “Look, this bowl is BIG. MOMMY can put the SMALL bowl into the BIG bowl. Your turn.”

QUESTION: What are the best TOYS for 8-11 month-old babies?

ANSWER: You are more important than any toy. Read to your baby every day. Play on the floor with your baby every day. Cuddle your baby every day. Talk and sing in every language you know.

8-11 month-old babies like anything that can be stacked up and knocked down (like empty cereal boxes). They like toys with wheels that they can push or pull. Safe toys have no sharp edges or small parts. Babies also like balls (that are too big to fit into their mouths) and toys that squeak, move, and open. You can use paper towel tubes and washed empty plastic bottles for your baby. They like board books!



QUESTION: My baby plays the same games over and over. Why?

ANSWER: Your baby is a scientist! 8-11 month-old babies love to make things happen. If you stack blocks or boxes, your baby will love to knock them down. Just be ready to play again, and again, and again, and again. And, be ready to read the same book again, and again and again.

Safety Corner



Tips to make your home safe for your baby to explore:

- Make sure that medicines, electrical cords, and small objects are out of your baby’s reach.
- Keep your baby away from stairs except when an adult is close.
- Keep hot foods and drinks out of your baby’s reach, and keep your baby away from the stove and oven.
- Stay with your baby when bathing him or her.



First 5 LA

First 5 LA is a child advocacy and grant making organization created by California voters to invest Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues in programs for improving the lives of children from prenatal through age 5 in Los Angeles County. First 5 LA champions health, education and safety causes concerning young children and families. For more information, please visit www.first5la.org.



The WIC Program

WIC provides nutrition and health education services, breastfeeding support, referrals to community agencies and healthy food to eligible women, infants and children under age five. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For more information, please visit www.wicworks.ca.gov.