



Talking to Your Baby is Important

Your baby learns to talk by hearing you talk.

Babies understand words before they can say them. When you talk to your baby, your baby learns the names for things, people, and what they are doing.



So, talk about what you are doing: washing, dressing, feeding, changing, playing, and walking. These are good times to talk to your baby.

You are your baby's best talking teacher.

Don't sit your baby in front of the TV with no one to talk with. Babies learn best from playing and doing things.

Your face and your words are important to your baby.

Your tone of voice is important too.



Your baby can tell if you are happy or sad this way.

Keep talking fun and playful.

Sing songs and say rhymes.

Your baby loves to listen to you.



The other side of this page has more ideas for helping with early communication.

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Other fact sheets on parenting your child are available at your local Community Health Office/Centre or online at <http://vch.eduhealth.ca>

For more information, contact a Speech- Language Pathologist or Public Health Nurse at Vancouver Coastal Health www.vch.ca

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For more copies, go online at <http://vch.eduhealth.ca> or email pchem@vch.ca and quote Catalogue No. GK.600.T35 Please send any feedback about this handout to feedback@vch.ca
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Early Communication - Getting Ready to Talk

There are many things you can watch for and do in the first months to help your baby learn to communicate.

WHAT YOUR BABY WILL DO	THE STAGES OF LEARNING HOW TO COMMUNICATE	THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP
First Weeks;		
Jumps or is startled if there is a sudden change – a noise, a light, a movement	Starting to be aware of the world. Your baby is beginning to learn how to look and listen.	Touch, hold, and comfort your baby if upset.
Turns head to sounds	Beginning to hear and to listen	Talk in a soft, gentle voice to your baby.
Cries and makes sounds	At first all your baby's sounds and cries seem the same (hunger, pain, etc.).	Touch, hold, feed and talk to your baby.
Second and Third Months;		
Looks at things that are put in front of him/her. Eyes follow something that is moving. Turns head to familiar sounds.	Seeing and hearing are developing. Your baby is learning to pay attention and to tell the difference between sights and sounds that are important to him/her.	Let your baby touch you and handle objects to learn what they feel like. When you talk to your baby, make eye contact – look right in your baby's eyes. Touch your baby and talk when he/she moves his/her head or body.
Cries	Cries are different for hunger, for pain, etc.	Talk to your baby about what may be wrong: "Are you wet?" "Are you hungry?"
Makes sounds like "ah", "oo", "eee", "uh"	These sounds are often very different from adult sounds. Babies enjoy making noises.	Make sounds and noises to your baby. Say your baby's name. Play with sounds. Coo and gurgle with your baby.
May make sounds after hearing sounds	After you say something, your baby may make some sounds. The baby is just making noise – and is not yet trying to copy you.	Tell your baby what is happening as you do things. Sing songs to your baby.