



# Born To Read

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Beaufort County, South Carolina

## Welcome to Parenthood!

Congratulations! You are now discovering for yourself what it's like to be a mother or a father. As a parent you can give a very valuable gift to your child . . . the love of reading.

Sharing quiet times with your baby, while reading books, will convey your love and care. As your child grows and becomes more curious, sharing books together will make your child an eager and active learner. Feeling comfortable with books will make learning easier and more fun when your child goes to school.



If you are feeling anxious or nervous about being a new parent, talk to a good friend, relative, or to your doctor.

If you have questions about your baby's development, see your doctor, nurse, or other medical practitioner.

### **Help Your Baby Be Smart From the Start!**

**There are some special things you can do to help your baby become smart from the start:**

**Talk to your baby.**

**Sing to your baby.**

**Read to your baby.**

**Play with your baby.**

**Laugh with your baby.**

**Keep your baby safe.**

### **Hold and Rock Your Baby**

Holding and rocking your baby is a good way of soothing and quieting your baby when he is upset.

When your baby is quiet, holding and rocking can make the two of you feel close and loving. It also makes your baby feel safe and important.



Hold and rock your baby:

- ♥ when your baby cries (and you've checked the diaper, etc.)
- ♥ before bed time to quiet the child to sleep.
- ♥ anytime you and your baby want to enjoy each other.

(It is not possible to "spoil" babies with attention until they're about six months old. Before then they do not understand that you react to their crying.)

### **Talk to Your Baby**

Your baby learns to understand language by hearing you use it. Talk to your baby as much as you can, even if it seems pointless.

- ♥ Say your baby's name
- ♥ Talk while changing, bathing, and feeding your child. Say the names of things you use in the bath e.g. soap, washcloth, sponge, rubber duck etc.
- ♥ Use the same words often. When finishing diapering, say "All done!" or when your baby's hand hits the water, say "Splash!"
- ♥ Take your infant on "language walks" around the house or outside. During these walks, point out familiar things and name them.
- ♥ Encourage your baby when he makes sounds. Smile and talk back to him.

## Sing to Your Baby



Babies love music. They can be calmed down with a soft song. Rhyming songs can be a fun way of learning words. They hear language and have fun moving with the rhythm.

- ♪ Sing songs to your baby while you are rocking her.
- ♪ Let your baby listen to many kinds of sounds—such as radio, music boxes, clocks, rattles, singing.
- ♪ Say nursery rhymes with action, such as: Pat-a- cake, pat-a- cake, baker's man (clap hands together), Bake me a cake as fast as you can. Pat it, prick it, and mark it with a B (trace on palm of hand) And put it in the oven for baby (or child's name) and me.
- ♪ Gently rock your child in time to a song or nursery rhyme.

Music, tapes, and nursery rhyme books are available at your local library.



## Playing is Learning



When your child plays, he is learning about the world around him. He is also learning how his body works and playing lets him develop his muscles. There are many toys that your child can use for play. Avoid things that are small enough for your baby to put in his mouth.

### From Birth to Three Months:

Babies learn to:

- ☺ Use their senses of sight, hearing, touch and smell
- ☺ Use their arms and legs
- ☺ Recognize pictures of humans
- ☺ Watch movement and changes in facial expression

Babies like to:

- ✋ Push their feet against a sturdy object (like a crib or wall).
- ✋ Kick toys in their cribs.
- ✋ Play with mobiles.
- ✋ Look at bright pictures of things, people, and themselves in a mirror.

Toys to use:

- 📖 Mobiles and pictures
- 📖 Rattles
- 📖 Soft toys (especially with different textures to feel) to cuddle or kick.
- 📖 Musical boxes or toys
- 📖 Squeaky toys
- 📖 Cloth or board books

## **Safety First**

Toys and games should always be used by children under the direct and constant supervision of an adult. The toys and games mentioned here are general recommendations only. Proper and appropriate use of toys and games should be determined by each parent on the basis of an individual child's age and abilities.



## *Suggested Books for Sharing*

Beaumont, Karen (2004) *Baby Danced the Polka*  
Dial Books for Young Readers

Katz, Karen (2007) *Peek a Baby*  
Little Simon Books

Charlesbridge (2007) *Global Babies*

Hoban, Tina (2007) *Black and White*  
Greenwillow Books

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and suggestions.

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For information on classes in English for non-native speakers call Literacy Volunteers of the Lowcountry  
Tel 843 525 6658 (Beaufort) or 843 681 6655 (Hilton Head) .