



*Dear Parent,*

*It's easy to get so caught up in your day-to-day routine that you may overlook the need for a special time for you and your baby. Think about setting aside a time each day when he is alert and playful and you can give him your undivided attention. You can enjoy and appreciate each other without worrying about all the other things you have to do. It will give you both a break.*

*What can you do? Sing, read, look at pictures, play, or listen to music. Relax, cuddle, and enjoy just being together. You will both feel better and will look forward to these special moments.*



Professionals are not always in agreement on specific child-rearing and feeding recommendations. Consult your doctor if you receive conflicting information.

| HOW I GROW  | HOW I TALK  | HOW I RESPOND   | HOW I UNDERSTAND   | HOW I FEEL  |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| I crawl and turn around while holding something in one hand.                              | I understand some words and simple sentences.                           | My social life revolves around the people who take care of me.              | I try to figure things out by myself.  | I'm very sensitive. If I see a crying baby, I may cry too.                              |
| I sit by myself and turn my body all the way around without losing my balance.            | I repeat one or more sounds over and over such as "ga-ga" or "bye-bye." | I like to watch people scribbling on paper.                                 | I know that if I partly cover my eyes or look at things upside down, they will look different. | I may be afraid of a lot of things that didn't bother me before, such as taking a bath. |
| I may be able to stand up and sit down without holding onto furniture.                    | I like to cough, click my tongue, and make hissing noises.              | I like to perform for people and love it when they applaud.                 | I get upset when my toys are taken away.   | I may be afraid of heights.   |
| I stand for a little while when my hand is held.  | I listen to people talking and try to imitate sounds.                   | I want you to notice my accomplishments and tell me how much I am learning. | I can usually remember a game, a person, or a toy.   | I am very determined and sometimes stubborn—that's all part of my growing up.           |
| I poke my fingers into holes, especially those that look interesting.                     |   | I recognize myself and my parent in the mirror.                             |  |   |
| I pick up small things with my first finger and thumb, and larger things with both hands. |   |   |  |   |
| I may be able to crawl up stairs but haven't yet learned how to get back down.            |   |   |  |   |



## HOW YOU HELP ME LEARN

- Play "pat-a-cake" with me. I can move my hands by myself now and will clap my hands when you do.
- Give me soft playthings to poke at with my finger.
- You've been talking to me for some time. But now I may be able to imitate the sounds you make when you are naming objects. I probably have figured out what "wave bye-bye" means and may recognize names of people in my family.
- Sit me on your lap and look at a magazine or picture book with me. Point to a picture, name it, and say "see the dog," or "look at the car." While you are pointing, ask me "what is that?" Wait a few seconds and then say something like "that's a car." I may not understand everything, but I will hear the different tones of your voice. It helps me become aware of language.
- Cover a toy with a cloth. I will look for the toy under the cloth. I enjoy doing this again and again.
- I like to hide under a blanket and play "peek-a-boo" with you.
- Sing "Eensie Weensie Spider" to me. Make a spider of your fingers and move them over my tummy and legs.

### Table food

If your family eats foods without added salt, seasonings or rich sauces, your baby can eat many of the same foods you do. Feed him small, soft pieces of the foods you eat. If you season your foods, remove your baby's portion before adding sauce or seasonings. Foods that seem bland to you are exciting taste experiences for your baby.

Some parents get worried when they see undigested foods such as peas in their child's diaper. These undigested foods, which were swallowed whole, do not provide nourishment for the infant but are not harmful.

### Iron supplements

If your infant is drinking formula with added iron or is eating fortified cereals and other iron-rich foods such as meats, your doctor may decide that a nutritional supplement containing iron is not necessary. However, if you are a breast-feeding mother and your baby is eating a limited amount of iron-rich foods, check with your doctor to see if your baby needs an iron supplement.

### Finger foods

Finger foods allow your infant to develop independence while practicing eye-hand coordination. Try some of the following foods:

- Small cubes of cooked tofu or a mild cheese
- Pieces of toast with crusts
- Graham crackers or unsalted soda crackers
- Bite-size, unsweetened cereal
- Small pieces of peeled fruit such as apple, papaya, banana, mango, orange, or melon

When your infant is teething he'll enjoy chewing on something cold. Tiny pieces of fruit, as well as cooked mixed vegetables, can be frozen on a baking sheet then transferred to a freezer container to be offered frozen to your baby.

Encourage your baby to feed himself. It will be messy. However, it is important for his developing eye-hand coordination. Practice makes perfect. If the mess really bothers you, cover the floor with newspapers, an old shower curtain, a worn-out sheet, or a plastic tablecloth. Your baby's mealtime should be pleasant for you as well as for him.



We give equal time and space to both sexes in Keiki 'O Hawai'i! That's why we take turns referring to babies as "he" or "she". (In this issue, we use "he.") When we refer to "he" or "she," we are talking about *all* babies.

### Baby proofing

By nine months, many infants are pulling themselves up by holding onto furniture. Remove anything that dangles within his reach, including tablecloths and curtains.

An uncovered toilet bowl is sure to be explored. Keep the toilet lid down and the bathroom door closed. Infants have drowned when they have toppled into toilets.

Take special care when you have house guests or when someone in the house is ill. There may be medicines, toiletries, or cleaners in places where a curious infant can find them.

When your infant is sick, don't give medicine in the dark. Turn on a light and read the label.



### Water play

Wading pools are popular in Hawai'i. Babies love to splash and play in them but, like a bathtub, a pool can be dangerous even if it contains only a few inches of water. Stay with your baby when he's in the tub or pool, or near any container of water, even if it means letting the phone or door bell ring.

Rapid algae growth makes a pool very slippery. Empty the tub or pool when you are finished with it.

### Shoes or no shoes

Your child does not need to wear shoes to help him walk. He sometimes may need them to protect his feet. Young children may find rubber slippers hard to walk in and they may lose them frequently.

When you want to encourage a particular behavior, tell your child what to do rather than what not to do. Say, "Please lie down while I change you" rather than, "Don't try to get up when I'm changing your diaper!"

When your child is doing something you like, tell him. Mention the specific thing he's doing well. Say, "You are lying down so I can change your diaper. Thank you." Your baby needs to know when he is behaving well. He'll feel your love and acceptance and you will be supportive and encouraging.



- Parents and babies learn together.
- Parents' needs are important.
- Your baby relies on you. You can rely on others.
- Guide your baby with love and limits.

## TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

With the added demands of your baby, it may be hard to find time with your partner. As difficult as it may be, it's important to make time for each other.

Here are ideas some couples have found useful:

- *Set up a "date"* - Reserve a time (or times) each week when you can be together without distractions.
- *Use "I" messages* - say how you are feeling without placing blame. Make sure you put *yourself* in your communication. Instead of saying "You always put me down," say "I feel put down when. . ." By using "I" messages, your partner is less likely to feel blamed or defensive.
- *Be direct and specific* - Say what you mean, rather than hoping the other person will guess or know what you mean. Instead of saying "The living room has been looking messy lately," say "I get upset when clothes are left in the living room."



- *Avoid the question trap* - Asking questions is often a poor substitute for direct communication. Instead of "Why didn't you call to tell me you'd be late?" say "I was worried that something had happened to you when you didn't come home at the usual time. Next time, I'd really like you to call me so I won't worry."
- *Be sure to listen* - Give your partner a chance to air feelings and gripes. Don't interrupt, jump to conclusions, or preach. Check back to see if you really understood what was said; for example, say, "Let me see if I understand. Are you saying that ... ?"

A counselor can help you practice better communication techniques. You don't have to wait for a crisis before seeking help.

*Your child is unique and has his own timetable of events.  
You have to wait for his "happenings" as they occur.  
If you have any questions about your child's development,  
call your doctor or H-KISS.*

**Q** - *My sister and her 3-year old daughter live with us. My niece sometimes hits my 9-month old son and seems to hate him at times. What should I do?*

**A** - Now that your baby is crawling and moving around, your niece may regard him as a threat. He may get into your niece's things or may take your attention away from her.

Your niece was probably the center of attention until her cousin was born. She now needs to be reassured that she is still loved. Make it clear to her that certain behaviors, like hitting her cousin, are not acceptable. You could say "Be gentle. Hitting hurts". If she forgets and does hit him, physically stop her, and calmly move her out of the situation.

It might help if you spend some time alone with your niece each day, free from distractions and away from the baby. You could give her your complete attention when your baby is asleep. Your niece may need a place and time to play by herself, uninterrupted by the baby.

Fun times and activities you all enjoy together such as the beach or park are important, too. Notice when your niece is playing gently or helping with the baby and thank her. We sometimes tend to complain and nag rather than notice good behavior.

**Q** - *My parents are always telling me how to take care of my baby. I know they mean well but I get really upset with them. What can I do?*

**A** - Relatives, particularly grandparents, can be very special people in your baby's life. They can provide warmth, security, and loving care for your baby. However, many new parents feel as you do that their parents are telling them what to do every step of the way.

You might try discussing your feelings about child rearing with your parents. Listen to their ideas. If they differ from yours, you might tactfully say, "Thank you for your suggestions. I really appreciate your concern. I'll think about what is best for us".



For more information about Keiki 'O Hawai'i and its contents or to receive additional copies call The Parent Line at 526-1222 or 1-800-816-1222 toll free.



Let your parents know that they play an important role in the life of your child, so that they won't feel that you resent their presence. Reaching an understanding of what the grandparent relationship can mean for you, your parents, and your baby is often difficult. It may take patience, restraint, and tact on your part to let them know how you want to raise your child and how you think they can help.

Keiki 'O Hawai'i describes a typical child at each age. These descriptions are based on the study of many babies.

Because your child is unique, he may do things somewhat earlier or later than is indicated.

If you have any question about your child's development, call your doctor or The Hawai'i Keiki Information Service System (H-KISS).

H-KISS is a statewide information and referral phone line for families with children ages 0-5.

H-KISS helps parents who have concerns about their child's development and/or have children with special needs.