

Adapted from The Washington Guide to Promoting Development in the Young Child, 4-9 Months

Expected Tasks in This Age-Range

Suggested Activities

Motor Skills:

Sits with little support with stable head & back
Sits alone steadily
Plays with hands, which are open most of the time
Holds a rattle or bottle with both hands
Picks up small objects
Transfers toys from one hand to the other

Pull baby up to sitting position
Allow baby to sit supported or by herself when she can hold head & trunk steadily
Put brightly-colored objects within her reach
Give baby toys or household objects: rattles, teething rings, cloth animals/dolls, plastic objects (cups, rings, balls)
Around 8 months of age, offer small objects like cereal to improve ability to grasp
Use squeak toys
Offer a variety of patterned or textured toys

Feeding Skills:

Tongue is used in moving food around in the mouth
Uses hand-to-mouth motions
Recognizes bottle when she sees it
Gums or mouths solid foods
Feeds herself crackers
Can swallow pureed foods

Give finger foods to help develop chewing, to stimulate gums, and to encourage hand-to-mouth motion (shredded cheese, bananas, dry toast, bread crust)
Introduce solids, one kind at a time. Use a small spoon & place food well back on infant's tongue
Sit baby upright in infant seat, car seat, or highchair for feeding
Encourage her to hold own bottle

Sleep:

Night: 10-12 hours
Naps: 2-3 naps, each one lasting 1-4 hours
Night awakenings can happen normally

Keep crib sides up
Try not to take infant into your room if she awakens
Place child in crib while she is still awake. Do not get her used to being fed in order to fall asleep
Check for causes of awakening: hunger, teething, pain, cold, wet/dirty diaper, noise, or illness
Provide familiar people to babysit who know baby's routines

Play:

Plays with her own body
Can tell strangers from family members
Tries to get objects to play with
Grasp, holds, manipulates objects
Repeats activities she enjoys
Bangs toys or objects together

Begin playing patty-cake & peek-a-boo
Allow time for solitary play (eg. in playpen)
Provide a variety of multi-textured objects for child to hold
Encourage exploration of body parts
Provide floating toys for the bath

Language:

Baby looks toward sounds
Responds to "hi there" by looking up at your face
Turns head to sound of a rattle
Responds differently to vacuum cleaner, phone, doorbell or dog barking. He may cry, whimper, look toward sound, in body, or or parent may notice change in baby's body tension
Responds by raising arms when parent reaches toward baby and says "come up"
Uses different inflectional patterns (voice rises & falls in different patterns when he is happy, sad, or just trying to "talk" to you)
Laughs out loud your
Has different patterns of crying when hungry, in pain, or angry
Produces vowel sounds and several syllables in a row (baba, gugu...)
Makes "talking sounds" in response to others talking to him
Babbles to make consonant sounds (ba, da, m-m)
"Talks" to toys
Says "dada" or "mama" but not specifically to correct parent

Engage in smiling eye-to-eye contact while talking to baby
Talk in a conversational style with baby. Echo the sounds he makes
Watch for signs baby is tired of communication. He might look away, struggle to move away, have tension movement of his arms
Talk with infant during feeding, bathing, dressing, diapering.
Make him laugh with light tickling
Observe child's reactions to bells, whistles, phones, laughing, singing, talking, noise-making toys, household noises
When talking to baby, hold him in a position so he can see face
Place infant at position of eye level while talking to her
Let us know if you haven't heard laughing & crying sounds yet

Adapted from The Washington Guide to Promoting Development in the Young Child, 4-9 Months

Expected Tasks in This Age-Range

Suggested Activities

Discipline:

Begins to understand "no-no"

An infant who is left alone for long periods may become bored/
fretful & learns that crying/whining results in attention

Begins to show signs of stranger shyness; may whimper/cry when
parent leaves him or when stranger picks him up

Beginning to grasp objects & bring them to his mouth, but is unable
to differentiate safe from hazardous items

Reserve "no-no" for times when it is really needed. Be
consistent with use of "no-no." Say it each time baby
does the activity you don't like. Be friendly but firm
when instructing baby

Make a special effort to pay attention to baby when he is
quiet and amusing himself

Gradually introduce strangers into infant's environment, but be
gentle & avoid frightening situations with strangers

Allow infant to cling to you to get used to others a little at a time

Play hiding games like peek-a-boo wherein you disappear and
reappear

Provide familiar people to babysit. Introduce for brief periods of
time before leaving infant in his/her care

Avoid rough handling, particularly by strangers.

Provide toys that don't have small, detachable parts. Check
frequently for small objects in your child's reach