



## What's Going on With Development

### 4 Months

#### Brain Development

##### Normal Development

- Brain is growing rapidly every day!
- Your baby's ability to see is still improving.

##### What you can do

- No need for black and white anymore. Your baby can see the same colors as you
- Use bright colors (in books, toys, room decorations) to capture your baby's attention
- Play games where your baby's eyes follow an object (like a rattle) as you move it.
- Play peek-a-boo

##### Our Advice

- Try your best not to bring the chaos of the outside world into your baby's "bubble." It's hard for your baby to learn how to focus if you yourself are jumbled and stressed.
- Remember that screen time (iPads, phones, TV) isn't great for your baby's brain right now.

#### Social Emotional

##### Normal Development

- Becomes aware of strange situations or environments (2–6 months)
- Shows excitement for things that are about to happen (3–4 months)
- Laughs when their head is covered and uncovered with a cloth (for example during a game of peek-a-boo) (3–5 months)
- Squeals with delight (3–5 months)
- Can show surprise (3–5 months)
- Begins to understand your expressions and will look worried if you look angry or upset (3–5 months)
- Begins to tell the difference between strangers and familiar people (3–8 months)
- Likes to smile at strangers (3+ months)
- Is interested in mirrors (4–7 months)

## What you can do

- Play peek-a-boo
- Face-to-face eye contact (imitate your baby's facial expressions)
- Sing to your baby
- Show your baby mirrors (especially on the floor during tummy time)
- Make a photo album of familiar people in your baby's life
- Read to your baby

## Our Advice

- Try not to overstimulate your baby with too many social events
- Try not to fight with others in front of your baby—babies can understand when there is conflict and they find it frightening.
- Remember that your baby is still very young—try not to expect him to be able to do things beyond what's normal for his age.
- Try not to compare yourself to other parents, or your baby to other babies. Every family is different.

## Sensory

### Normal development

- Enjoys movement and touch (0+ months)
- Can tell the difference between basic colors (1–5 months)
- Can focus on objects up to 3 feet away (1–5 months)
- Uses hands and mouth to explore objects (1–7 months)
- Looks towards sounds (3–7 months)
- Rubs their body against objects to explore touch (3–6 months)
- Depth perception develops (3–7 months)
- Can identify where sounds are coming from (4–8 months)
- Ability to taste salt improves and babies prefer it (4–8 months)

### What you can do

- Massage your baby to music
- Rock your baby to soft music
- Play with toys with different textures
- Musical mobiles

- Stroller rides on different types of surfaces (for example, bumpy, smooth, etc.)

### **Our Advice**

- Let your baby explore surroundings without worrying too much about germs.

## **Gross Motor**

### **Normal development**

- Holds their head steady when being held (2–4 months)
- General movements become less jerky (2–4 months)
- Rolls front to back (2–5 months)
- While lying on their back, can bring their feet to his mouth (3–6 months)
- Rolls back to front (4–9 months)
- Sits alone for a short time (4–8 months)
- Pulls to sitting position (4–8 months)
- Sits alone for a long period of time (5–9 months)
- Crawling begins (5–11 months)

### **What you can do**

- Encourage your baby to move and lift their head by calling to their name or rattling something to get his attention while on their tummy
- Hold your baby's hands and lift him off his back to sit, or roll him onto his side
- Leg play (move your baby's legs like they're on a bicycle)
- Put toys out-of-reach and let your baby try to grab them

### **Our Advice**

- It's important to start your baby with tummy time early
- Let your baby go barefoot while they are playing or crawling
- Remember that your baby is still very young—try not to expect your baby to be able to do things beyond what's normal for their age.
- Try not to compare yourself to other parents, or your baby to other babies. Every family is different.

## Fine Motor

### Normal development

- Discovers their hands (2–6 months)
- Fists begin to open (3–4 months)
- Reaches for a toy using both arms and holds it briefly (3–7 months)
- Grasps a small object using palm and fingers, but not thumb (5–6 months)
- Begins to reach for fallen or moving objects (5–8 months)

### What you can do

- Dangle toys to encourage reaching and grasping
- Rattles, activity gyms, and mobiles will stimulate your baby to learn “fine motor skills” like grasping and gripping

### Our Advice

- A great way to check if a toy is a choking hazard is to measure it against a toilet paper roll. Any object that can fit inside the roll is too small for your baby to play with.
- Give your baby plenty of rest.
- Remember that your baby is still very young—try not to expect your baby to be able to do things beyond what’s normal for their age.
- Try not to compare yourself to other parents, or your baby to other babies. Every family is different.

## Cognitive

### Normal development

- Watches for disappearing objects to reappear (4+ months)
- Begins to understand ideas about cause and effect (for example pushing a toy makes it move) (3–6 months)

### What you can do

- Use a rattle or other object to practice tracking (following the object with their eyes)
- Show your baby that things disappear and then return (by playing peek-a-boo)
- Imitate faces your baby makes at you
- Give your baby different types of toys to play with (different sizes, textures, etc.)
- Let your baby imitate you! (for example, wave bye-bye, blow kisses)
- Repeat, repeat, repeat! Practice helps build strong connections.

## Our Advice

- Try not to rely on TV or videos to grow your baby's brain or teach him new skills.
- Avoid electronic toys because they limit creativity
- Try not to let the chaos of your outside life into your baby's world—it can overstimulate your baby's development!
- Remember that your baby is still very young—try not to expect him to be able to do things beyond what's normal for his age.
- Try not to compare yourself to other parents, or your baby to other babies. Every family is different.

## Language

### Normal development

- Can recognize their caregiver's voice and prefers that voice over others (0–4 months)
- Starts to make open-mouthed and vowel sounds (for example, “ooh” and “aah”) (0–4 months)
- Begins to add some consonant sounds (for example, “baa” and “goo” and “ma”) (5–7 months)
- Can imitate some sounds (1–4 months)
- Turns head towards a familiar voice (2–4 months)
- Begins lip reading (2–8 months)
- Expresses needs and feelings through sounds and cries (3–8 months)
- Uses sounds to communicate pleasure and displeasure (4–7 months)

### What you can do

- Have back and forth conversations (give your baby plenty of time to respond)
- Talk face-to-face and get close!
- Sing nursery rhymes (babies enjoy the rhythmic patterns)
- Sportscast! Talk to your baby about what you're doing (for example, bathing, dressing)
- Encourage babbling by repeating what your baby says and adding more syllables (for example, baby says “ba” and you say “ba-ba-bottle”)
- Show your baby your tongue and practice simple sounds together (for example, ‘maa, daa’)
- When your baby makes a sound, repeat it, so they can hear their sounds
- Pick a word and show your baby what it means (for example, blanket)

- Read your baby board books (point and label as you read, name the main character after your baby)

### **Our advice**

- Listen to your baby's sounds and don't interrupt them.
- Talk to your baby as much as you can.
- Limit background noise (radio, tv) so your baby can focus on one thing at a time.
- Remember that your baby is still very young—try not to expect him to be able to do things beyond what's normal for his age.
- Remember, some babies develop faster in some areas and slower in others.
- Try not to compare yourself to other parents, or your baby to other babies. Every family is different.

## 6 Months

### Social-Emotional

#### Normal Development

- Smile at themselves in the mirror (3–12 months)
- Bang objects together while playing (4–8 months)
- Can show fear (8–12 months)
- Likes certain people/toys more than others (8–12 months)
- Imitates people during play (8–12 months)
- Becomes more shy or nervous with strangers (8–13 months)
- Begins to look to others' reactions before acting (this is called social referencing) (8–15 months)
- Looks at your responses to their behavior (8–15 months)
- Want to be with their main caregiver above others (8–15 months)

#### What You Can Do

- When your baby seems excited about something, show that you are too! (For example, “Oh look at that dog! He’s so big!”)
- When your baby seems scared of a stranger, use your voice to reassure him or her. Introduce your baby to the person (if appropriate) and show them that the stranger is ok.
- If your baby cries when you leave, reassure him or her that you will be back and that the person staying will take good care of them

#### Our Advice

- Fighting with other people in front of babies causes them to be frightened about the world around them.
- Reassure and comfort your baby when you are in a situation that is making them nervous.
- Try to change how you parent your baby to match with their mood in different situations.
- Try not to compare yourself to other parents, or your baby to other babies. Every family is different.

## Sensory

### Normal Development

- Depth perception begins to develop (3-7 months)

### What You Can Do

- Allow your baby to explore different surfaces whenever possible (grass, sand) and talk about how they feel different
- Play with toys in the bath (containers and cups)
- Toys with different textures
- Toys they can explore with their mouth
- Take your baby in their stroller over different types of surfaces (bumpy, smooth, etc.) and talk about how they feel different

### Our Advice

- Give your baby plenty of opportunities to explore with his or her body and mouth, and try not to panic about germs.

## Gross Motor

### Normal Development

- Pulls to sitting position (4–8 months)
- Sits alone for a few seconds (4–8 months)
- Rolls from back to stomach (4–10 months)
- Pulls to standing position (5–12 months)
- Sits alone (6–10 months)
- Stands up using furniture (6–12 months)
- Walks holding on to furniture (this is called cruising) (8–11 months)
- Stands alone (9–16 months)
- Walks alone (9–17 months)
- Throws a ball (9–18 months)
- Walks sideways (10–12 months)
- Walks backward (11–20 months)

### What You Can Do

- Play games with a ball, rolling it back-and-forth together



- Place toys out-of-reach to encourage your baby to crawl to them
- Provide your baby with sturdy things to pull up on (for example couches, chairs)
- Play in the bathtub, let your baby splash and kick the water
- Create a climbing mound of pillows and cushions for your baby on the floor
- Games such as peek-a-boo and “how big is the baby?” encourage active movement

### **Our Advice**

- Let your baby have time to crawl and explore on the floor (without using infant walkers/jumpers)
- Keep your baby’s shoes off whenever possible.
- Remember that your baby is still very young—try not to expect him to be able to do things beyond what’s normal for his age.
- Try not to compare yourself to other parents, or your baby to other babies. Every family is different.

## **Cognitive**

### **Normal Development**

- Recognizes strangers (3–8 months)
- Understands that objects come back after they “disappear” (4–8 months)
- Repeats actions that makes sounds they like (such as banging) (4–8 months)
- Expects to follow a routine (4–8 months)
- Recognizes familiar faces, voices and touches (4–8 months)
- Begins to follow games (5–12 months)
- Responds to your requests (8–14 months)
- Stops when you say stop (7–17 months)
- Begins to imitate simple behaviors (8–15 months)
- Repeats an action that made you laugh (8–17 months)

### **What You Can Do**

- Play games of peek-a-boo
- Make story time a part of your everyday activities. Hearing favorite stories over and over helps strengthen brain connections
- Always remember, babies learn best through play!

### **Our Advice**

- Try not to rely on TV or videos to grow your baby's brain or teach new skills
- Try not to compare yourself to other parents, or your baby to other babies. Every family is different.

## Language and Communication

### Normal Development

- Tries to respond to sounds by making sounds (4–7 months)
- Says four different syllables (5–12 months)
- Recognizes familiar words (5–14 months)
- Capable of saying “da-da,” “ma-ma,” or similar (5–11 months)
- Waits their turn to speak (7–10 months)
- Babbling is less random; has meaning (8–14 months)
- Imitates sounds (8–12 months)
- Understands that words can refer to real objects (9–12 months)
- Jabbers expressively (9–18 months)
- Uses gestures and sounds to tell you they want (11–19 months)
- Points to shoes, clothing or body part when asked (10–18 months)

### What You Can Do

- When your baby says something to you (for example, “Dadadada”), make eye contact and repeat the sounds back like a real conversation.
- Play games like peek-a-boo and patty-cake which teach the “give and take” of talking with others
- Talk to your baby throughout the day by broadcasting what you're doing (“Now we're putting on your red shirt” or “Let's wash your face”). Hearing the sounds of words wires babies' brains for language, even before they know any words.
- Make story time a part of your everyday activities
- Sing the same songs over and over (repetition helps prepare your baby's brain for listening and speaking)
- As you read to your baby, point to pictures of things and label what they are (child, house)

### Our Advice

- Let your baby “talk” without interrupting

- Keep your speech simple and short so that your baby can focus on the words
- Try to eliminate too much background noise (TV) so your baby can focus on one thing at a time.
- Read to your baby, even if it's just a few pages. Reading is very valuable and a time to share together.
- Try not to rely on TV or videos to grow your baby's brain or teach new skills
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### Sensory

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#### What You Can Do

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### **What You Can Do**

- Play games with a ball, rolling it back-and-forth together
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## Fine Motor

### Normal Development

- Able to move objects from one hand to the other hand (4–8 months)
- Scoop up small objects (watch out for choking!) (5–9 months)
- Brings objects together (6–12 months)
- Points with index finger (8–11 months)
- Begins to put objects in and out of containers (8–11 months)
- Uses pincer grasp (thumb and index finger coming together). This position is important for learning to write one day! (8–11 months)
- Uses fingers to explore objects, turn knobs and dials (10–20 months)

### What Can You Do?

- Encourage your baby to reach for objects
- Allow your baby to practice picking up small objects like cheerios (always watch for choking)
- Give your baby a rattle (or music making instrument) to hold and shake
- Play with blocks
- Use water toys in the bath (cups, bowls) help develop hand-eye coordination
- Start using a drinking cup
- Pick grass

### Our Advice

- A great way to check if a toy is a choking hazard is to measure it against a toilet paper roll. Any object that can fit inside the roll is too small for your baby to be playing with.
- Try not to compare yourself to other parents, or your baby to other babies. Every family is different.

- Reaching and grasping common household objects (a pillow, a cheerio, a cup) helps a baby's hand muscles to develop.

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