

your child @TM

9 to 12 months

highlights of what's happening at this stage of your child's development ...

As your child approaches her first birthday, she may be crawling and trying to take her first steps.

Your child's health



The Well Visit

Your baby should visit the doctor at 9 months. Your doctor will give vaccinations that will keep your child healthy and strong. Schedule your next visit. Your baby will need to come back at 12 months.

Let your doctor know if your baby:

- Drags one side of her body after crawling for over a month.
- Does not point to objects or pictures.
- Does not look for objects that she sees you hide.

Sleep

At this age, your baby still needs 2 or 3 naps a day. Put your baby to sleep at night between 6 and 8 pm.

Safety Tip

Never give your baby whole grapes, popcorn, raw vegetables, hot dogs, nuts, or candy.

Nutrition

Your baby should drink up to 24 ounces of breast milk or formula and eat 3 meals per day. It is important to let your baby practice picking up food and feeding himself. Serving tips include:

- Give soft finger foods such as small pieces of cheese, cooked vegetables, soft fruit, or Cheerios.[®]
- Cut food into safe, bite-sized pieces.
- Around your child's first birthday, talk with your doctor about switching from a bottle to a cup.

Watch your baby as he eats. Is he refusing or having a hard time chewing the pieces of food? Then stop serving. But be sure to try again in a few weeks.

Nurturing your child

Behavior

At this age, you will need to set limits for your baby.

- Stay one step ahead. Distract a child from unsafe objects and show her an activity that may get her attention.

Made possible through the generous support of the **A.L. Mailman Family Foundation.**

Sources: *Your Baby's First Year* and *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child*, American Academy of Pediatrics, Steven P. Shelov, MD, FAAP, editor in chief; *Understanding Children*, Civitas and Richard Saul Wurman; *KidBasics*, Civitas; *Healthy Sleep, Happy Child*, Marc Weissbluth, MD.

Civitas thanks **Parents as Teachers**, an international early childhood parent education and family support program, for their ongoing support.

Tip

Never spank or hit your child.

Nurturing your child, continued

Behavior, continued

- Save “no” for safety issues. If a child hears “no” too much, it will lose meaning to her. Instead, let your child know what she can or should do.
- Use signs and signals to let your child know how to act. Give a shoulder pat or thumbs up when your child is doing something good.

Attachment Your child may have a hard time when her parent or caregiver leaves.

To help, you can:

- Say goodbye. Explain that you are going to leave but that you’ll return. Do not sneak out.
- Give her a teddy bear or a blanket to help her feel close to you.

Early Learning

Encourage your baby’s natural curiosity through talking, reading, singing, and playing with him.

- Play hide-and-seek with objects. Your child will like to see things come and go.
- Look at your baby when you talk and read with him.
- Point to the objects and people you see all the time and name them.
- Sing nursery rhymes and songs that repeat and have hand motions. Try *The Wheels on the Bus*.

Your child’s safety

Around the House

- Put gates at stairs. Cover edges of furniture. Put safety latches on drawers, cabinets, and toilets.
- Cover electrical outlets. Tie up cords hanging from blinds.
- Keep cleaning supplies, medicines, and sharp objects out of reach.
- Call poison control right away if you think your child has swallowed poison: 1-800-222-1222.

In the Car

By law, your baby must ride in a secure, rear-facing car seat. He must ride in the back seat of your car.

*Born Learning*SM is a public engagement campaign helping parents, caregivers and communities create early learning opportunities for young children. Designed to support you in your critical role as a child’s first teacher, *Born Learning* educational materials are made available through the efforts of United Way, United Way Success By 6 and Civitas. For more information, visit us online at www.bornlearning.org.

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