

Bright From the Start...Educational Material for New Parents

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“What’s
happening?”

The incredibly complex job of communicating begins at birth and babies don't waste any time getting started!

We are all born with a strong desire to connect with other people and to communicate with them.

Much of the complex foundation for language and communication development is being laid in the first days, weeks and months of life.

This important development is taking place much earlier than previously thought.

Infants do a whole lot more than cry in order to communicate. A long intimate look directly into mom's or dad's eyes right after birth is a great example of early communication.

An infant's brain will be collecting and organizing information at an amazing rate. Along with the different sounds of language, he will be memorizing words and certain language “rules” long before he can talk or even understand their meaning.

Maternal Depression can be a factor in language delays and emotional problems.

When mothers are depressed they are often less expressive with their language and facial expressions. They interact with their baby less. (Some mothers are able to overcome their sadness and meet their baby's needs.) Hopefully, other family members step in and are sufficient involved to support the baby's needs.

In severe cases, it has been reported that some children of depressed mothers had difficulty distinguishing between sadness and anger and accurately “reading” people.

Babies need lots of time with loving people. Picking up a crying baby does not spoil him.

Communication is more than just talking. Tone of voice, facial expression, and other body language, blends with words to give deeper meaning and emotional content.

We automatically “read” people without even giving it a second thought (But we do go off autopilot if their words don't match the look on their face or the tone of their voice.)

Infants are learning how to “read” people too. A smile is a smile in any language.

There is only one way a baby learns how to talk and communicate and that is from real live people (not TV). They need a tremendous amount of raw material for this big job.

That means spending a lot of time with people who talk not only to him but with him.

Nearly all parents are capable of providing this raw material. Baby talk produces just the sounds that his brain can use for language development. In fact, babies prefer baby talk.

Baby talk is automatically stepped up a notch by most parents as their baby's developmental needs change. Mother Nature prepared both parents and babies well for this adventure.

Even if a parent has poor language skills, it is sufficient for baby's needs in the first years. It's more likely that lack of time will be the bigger problem for most parents.

Babies are amazingly involved with their own development and getting their needs met. We usually respond to their cues with out even realizing it - if we spend needed time with them.



Little Steps for New Parents...
a week-by-week guide and journal for baby's first year

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