

4-Month Visit



PEDIATRIC CARE • SUPPORTING • PARENTING
A Program of ZERO TO THREE

Language

Your baby loves it when you make faces, gesture, talk, read, and sing to them. It may feel a little silly because they don't really understand yet. But that's OK. It's still helpful to talk about things you're doing and seeing. Read books because even at this age babies enjoy them. It's OK if you don't finish or read every page. It's listening to your voice and sitting with you that's important. And you can sing anytime. Sing a song you love or just make one up about whatever you're doing.



Science and Math

It may seem like your baby is too young for math or science, but they're not. They are already learning about patterns when you create them with daily routines. For example: lunch, nap, and then a walk to the park. Routines also teach babies that things happen in a certain order, which is an early math skill. Learning simple patterns now will help your baby understand harder ones later.



Managing Feelings

The first step in helping baby learn to self-soothe is for you to soothe them when they cry. Sometimes it's not so easy to figure out what they need or want. And hearing a baby cry can be stressful and frustrating. If you are feeling overwhelmed, it's OK to take a short break. Every parent needs one. Put the baby down somewhere safe (a crib or playpen) and take a few deep breaths. When you feel calmer, try soothing again. Your baby is more likely to feel calm if *you* are calm.



Good books to read at this age:

- *Barnyard Dance!* by Sandra Boynton
- *The I LOVE YOU Book* by Todd Parr
- *Baby Faces* by Margaret Miller
- *Welcome, Precious* by Nikki Grimes

Problem-Solving

You have probably noticed that your baby is gaining more control over their body and learning to move on purpose. You can encourage growth of this emerging ability by offering an age appropriate toy and holding it just far enough away that they must reach for it. Offer a compliment when they grab it, such as “Yay, you got it!”



Physical Skills

Always watch your baby closely and try singing during tummy time. Place them on a blanket on the floor. Firm surfaces are better for babies when learning physical skills. Lie down so you are facing them. Then sing a song like “Old MacDonald.” But replace “Donald” with your child’s name, for example, “Old MacJaden had a farm.” They might be able to stay on their tummy longer if you sing. You can also try tummy time in front of a mirror. When your baby gets tired and starts to fuss, roll them over for a break.



Art and Music

Play the music you love and rock out with your baby. Be sure to support their neck while you dance and twirl. Notice what moves your baby likes. Fast or slow? High or low? Switch it up and watch their reaction. Try different types of music and see what they like—slow, fast, calm or upbeat.

