

*... And the Story Begins  
For You and Your Baby*

## ***Childhood Development***

### ***Physical Development***

Your baby is working hard to develop physically during the first year; your baby learns to roll over, sit up, reach for objects using their hands and fingers, crawl, stand and maybe even walk. Yes, all this probably will happen by the time your baby is a year old. But babies are unique. Some may walk before they are a year old, while others may not be interested until they are much older. And when these developmental stages are completed, you won't be able to tell the babies who crawled and walked early from the babies who took a little longer.

You can help your baby develop physically at his/her own rate.

- Give babies plenty of room to stretch and move. Play with them on a blanket in a safe place.
- Encourage babies to use their hands and fingers. Let them reach for bright colored rattles and other safe objects.
- Keep babies safe. When traveling by car, always put them in a safety seat in the back seat of the car and make sure the car seat is properly installed.

### ***Emotional Development***

Although your baby's emotional development may not be as noticeable as his/her physical development during the first year, it is just as important. The way babies see themselves in relation to their surroundings can have a big effect on their future.

You can help your baby develop into a confident, loving adult.

- Show babies that they deserve to be loved and that you love them very much by holding and cuddling them.
- Teach babies to trust you by paying a lot of attention to them and comforting them when they cry.
- Protect babies. Keep them safe and meet their needs.

*EVEN BEFORE YOUR BABY IS BORN, HE KNOWS YOUR VOICE. AT BIRTH, HE ALREADY IS FAMILIAR WITH YOU.*

### ***Cognitive Development***

Environment plays a big role in your baby's cognitive development. Expose your baby to a variety of sounds, sights, and textures.

- Help babies learn by talking to them as you go through the day together. Meals and baths can be good opportunities to talk to them. They'll enjoy your attention.
- Stimulate babies with bright colored objects. Let them touch and play with toys. Be creative. Plastic kitchen containers, measuring cups and mixing bowls can be great toys.

*Continued on back*

*and the story...*

- Read and sing to babies. They love to hear your voice and they'll grow up to like books and music.

*BABIES LEARN ABOUT THE WORLD THROUGH THEIR SENSES—WATCHING, LISTENING, TOUCHING, SMELLING AND TASTING. YOU CAN TEACH THEM THAT THEIR WORLD IS A GOOD PLACE.*

***The Story Begins***

Your baby's first years are the foundation for the rest of his/her life. And research indicates that babies develop best in a stimulating environment. This doesn't mean that you need to spend lots of money on expensive educational materials to stimulate your baby's physical, emotional and cognitive development. Everyday household items and activities can offer babies all the stimulation they need.

It takes a lot of energy to meet your baby's needs and help him/her develop. And taking good care of your baby means you must take good care of yourself, too. Remember to rest as much as possible and eat healthy, nutritious foods.

*YOUR BABY DEPENDS ON YOU.*