

# your child @™

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

## 2 months

Learning begins at birth, and your child at 2 months has been learning a lot! He is already able to smile at you, and tell you if he's hungry, cold or scared by crying. At this stage, the most important factors in his healthy development are loving relationships with warm, responsive and dependable adult caregivers. It's essential to make the most of this critical period in his growth by spending lots of time holding, cuddling, playing and reading with your child.

### your child's health

#### Typical immunizations at this age can include:

- DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough)
- Hib (protects against meningitis)
- IPV (polio injection)
- Hepatitis B
- Prevnar (pneumococcal)

#### The Well Visit

At two months, your baby should have another well visit.

- Bring notes with you about your baby's habits, such as sleeping and feeding, and ask any questions you may have at your visit.
- Until your baby is three months old, always call the doctor if he develops a rectal temperature of 100.4° or higher.
- Your baby's next well visit will probably take place at four months. Contact the doctor if issues about your child's health and development or illnesses arise between visits.

#### take note...

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, at 2 months, let your doctor know if he: • doesn't notice his hands; • doesn't smile at the sound of your voice; • doesn't follow moving objects with his eyes; • doesn't respond to loud noises.

#### Sleep

Your baby needs about 16 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period to maintain healthy development. Your baby should be starting to have one long stretch of nighttime sleep (between 4 to 6 hours). However, she is still too young to have a set daytime nap schedule.

- Encourage nighttime sleep by putting your baby to sleep between 6 and 10 pm, turning off lights and keeping the area quiet.
- Always put your baby to sleep on her back to prevent SIDS.



#### Nutrition

At this age, your baby is not ready for cereal or any solid foods. Until your baby is 4 to 6 months, provide only breastmilk or formula. Your baby will generally take 4 to 5 ounces per feeding, or 20 to 25 ounces per day.

#### safety tip...

Never shake or spank your baby. Shaking can cause brain damage.

#### Colic

Colic usually sets in between two weeks and 3 to 4 months of age. An infant with colic is an otherwise healthy baby who cries for more than 3 consecutive hours at a time, 3 days a week, for 3 weeks or more.

To console a colicky baby, try the following:

- Let your baby suck on a pacifier, bottle, hand or wrist.
- Rock or swing your baby.
- Take her for a drive or stroll.
- Swaddle your baby by wrapping her securely in a blanket.
- Try to stay calm since your baby can sense when you are stressed.
- Create shushing sounds or white noise by running a hair dryer, a fan, a vacuum cleaner, the shower/water faucet, or a recording of wind or surf.
- Hold your baby on her left side or stomach until she falls asleep. Be sure to roll her on to her back once she is asleep.

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.

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## 2 months

### your child's growth and development

#### safety tip...

Keep small objects that present a choking hazard away from your baby. (Anything that fits in a toilet paper tube is too small.)

**Read to your child from day one.** When you read together, you help your child learn to love books— and you!

- Introduce cloth or board books to explore.
- Choose books with bright colored pictures, familiar objects or photos of babies.

**Play together right from the start.** Play allows your baby to explore and express herself, connect with other people and make sense of her surroundings.

- Make silly faces, tickle her body. You are your baby's first toy.
- Slowly move objects in front of your baby and watch as he tracks them with his eyes.

**Sing songs.** Your voice will soothe your baby and the sounds and rhythms will teach her about words and language.

- Repeat your favorite songs and nursery rhymes again and again.
- Play fun music at play time, or relaxing rhythms to calm your baby at bedtime.

**Talk to your baby.** Babies learn by listening to you talk, so the more you talk to your baby, the better.

- Talk about what you see and what you are doing during everyday activities.
- Watch as he communicates through his coos, smiles, laughs and cries.

### nurturing your child



**Take care of yourself so you can take care of your baby.**

Your moods and lack of energy can affect your baby as well.

- Let your doctor or a friend know if you have signs of post-partum depression.
- Take breaks from your baby to rest and re-fuel.

**Create a predictable world for your baby.** Providing routines lets your baby know that he can depend on you, allowing him to spend less energy fussing over his needs and more time learning.

- Create routines for your child to follow every day; children thrive on consistency.
- Build routines that suit your style. Before bedtime you can: read a book, give a bath, talk to stuffed animals, hug and kiss, say "I love you."

**Provide a warm and loving environment.** A baby's ability to learn depends upon her emotional well-being; a baby who is content and comfortable has an easier time learning about the world.

- Tune in and respond to your baby. An infant cries only to let you know that she needs your help. Since you cannot spoil an infant, pick up your baby whenever she cries.
- Show her you care about her by making eye contact (at about 8 to 12 inches away), holding her close or rocking her in your arms.

#### remember...

Discipline is never appropriate for infants. They have no control over their actions and therefore should not be held accountable.

### your child's safety

Call 1-877-Kids-Now to see if your baby qualifies for free or low-cost health insurance.

#### In the car

Your baby must ride in a car seat that is:

- Rear-facing.
- In the backseat (ideally, in the middle of the backseat).
- Properly attached or secured.

#### remember...

Never leave your baby unattended anywhere near water. Babies can drown in less than 1 inch of water.

#### In the crib

- Empty the crib of blankets, pillows, and stuffed animals — any of these can smother the baby.
- Avoid devices that maintain sleep positions, since many of these have not been tested for safety and none have been proven to decrease the risk of SIDS.
- Keep your baby's room at a temperature that's comfortable for adults—don't make it too warm.

Born Learning<sup>TM</sup> is a public engagement and material distribution campaign that provides important information about what young children need every day to ensure quality early learning. Designed to support you in your critical role as a child's first teacher, Born Learning materials are made available through the efforts of United Way, United Way Success By 6 and Civitas.

For more information, visit us online at [bornlearning.org](http://bornlearning.org).

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