

Supporting Language & Literacy at 2 Months

TALK & Parentese

At 2 months, your baby is getting better and better at communicating their wants and needs and is starting to control their communication more. They'll show interest by looking at people and things. They'll start to practice making vowel sounds and will even start taking turns in conversations.

Family can best support healthy brain and language development by noticing your baby's cues, what they're interested in, and then respond to those cues. These are called *responsive interactions*. They build your baby's brain and strengthen your relationship with them. This teaches your baby what conversations look, sound, and feel like – which is an important pre-literacy skill.

Use the TALK strategy to have lots of responsive interactions with your baby. TALK is an acronym to help you have loving, brain-building conversations with your baby.

- **T - Tune In:** Notice and respond to your baby's cues and interests. Something like 'I see you looking at that toy,' or 'I hear you crying and see you straightening your legs'
- **A - Ask Questions:** Follow up with a question about what you noticed. Like, 'Would you like to play with the toy?' or 'Are you uncomfortable?' It's important to remember to pause for their response and then put words to their response.
- **L - Lift Language:** It's important to use real words and complete sentences -- not baby talk ('goo-goo', 'ga-ga')
- **K - Keep It Going:** Tune into another cue or ask another question. 'Is the toy heavy? (pause) You are so strong to pick up that heavy toy'. As your baby gets older, try to increase the number of times the conversation goes back-and-forth between you. Those back-and-forth exchanges are called *serve-and-return conversations*.

Your baby loves the sound of your voice. They particularly love it when you use *parentese*, that sing-songy voice people tend to use with babies. It keeps their attention and helps them learn the sounds of their language.

As your baby's communication becomes less reflexive and more intentional, you may notice some new things your baby does...

- shows interest by looking at people and objects
- smiles on purpose (known as a social smile)
- may be starting to make some vowel sounds ('ah-ah' or 'ooh-ooh')
- starting to 'wait their turn' in conversations

It is never too early to start reading to your baby as part of their nightly routine. Here are some suggested titles for you and your little one to enjoy!

- *Once Upon a World* series by multiple authors
- *Bath! Bath! Bath!* by Douglas Florian
- *The Going to Bed Book* by Sandra Boynton
- *Look, Look* by Peter Linenthal
- *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle