

DID YOU KNOW AT 4 MONTHS I CAN...

Language Development

- Babble and imitate sounds
- Cry in different ways to express different needs
- Distinguish speech from other sounds
- Laugh when I am tickled

Talk, sing, and read to me so my language will continue to develop. Read simple board books to me with pictures of real items (animals, flowers, people), and talk to me about what is in the pictures. The more you talk and read to me, the more my language will develop.

Cognitive Development

- Follow toys with my eyes
- Reach for toys that I want to play with
- Begin to recognize familiar people and objects within 3 feet

Physical Development

- Grasp objects and shake them
- Hold my head steady and turn my head to look in different directions
- Roll over from my tummy to my back
- Support the weight of my head and chest on one arm if I'm on my tummy
- Splash and kick in the bath, which gets me ready for creeping and crawling
- Put my hands in my mouth

Make sure to give me safe toys and plenty of room to move and explore. I should still be breastfed or using formula. Keep me up-to-date on my shots and check-ups.

Social/Emotional Development

- Smile at people
- Mimic expressions
- Sense and react to moods
- Anticipate being picked up
- Make sounds to get attention or to socialize



I am learning to trust my caregivers and family, so when I cry, it means I need something, whether it is food, to be changed, or to know I am taken care of. To help me develop desired social/emotional skills, respond to my cries, even if it is by talking.

Since I am learning to talk, you can sing to me!

Sing "One Potato"!

One potato, two potato

Three potato, four.

Five potato, six potato

Seven potato, more!

Each day, I should have supervised tummy time. Tummy time is important to help improve my motor skills and strengthen my muscles that are necessary to help me learn to crawl and walk. It also helps prevent flat spots from developing on the back of my head. Start out tummy time for about 5 minutes two or three times a day. During tummy time, you can place me on a soft blanket on the floor with one of my favorite toys. There are toys you can make for me using things from around the house, like a **shaker bottle**.

Materials

- clear bottle (like a water bottle)
- rice
- beads or other small items that will fit in the bottle

Instructions

1. Insert small items inside the bottle. Make sure you leave enough room for the objects to move around.
2. Securely fasten the lid on the bottle. You can use duct tape or hot glue to make sure it is secure.
3. Show me how to use the shaker and talk with me about the sounds it makes.

Sleep helps me grow and develop. I should get 12–15 hours of sleep a day. To reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), place me on my back in an empty crib. An empty crib is important to prevent me from suffocating, so avoid having bumper pads or stuffed animals in my crib.

Play these games with me!

Do floor exercises with me by placing me on a soft blanket or quilt on the floor. Stretch my legs and then bend my knees to touch my chest. Repeat this activity to give me some actions that I may need once I start crawling.

Place me in your lap with my back to you. Take a rattle and shake it off to the right or left side of me to see if I can move my head toward the rattle.

You can also do the "Acka Backa" fingerplay with me:

Acka backa soda cracker,

Acka backa boo (play peek-a-boo)

Acka backa soda cracker,

Up goes you! (bounce baby up)

Acka backa soda cracker,

Acka backa boo (play peek-a-boo)

Acka backa soda cracker,

I love you! (hug baby)

I also may enjoy these books:

Baby Faces by Margaret Miller

Playtime Maisy by Lucy Cousins

Peek-a-Who? by Nina Laden

Moo, Baa, La La La! by Sandra Boynton

Noisy Farm by Tiger Tales

Safety note: Any toys or materials that can fit inside a paper towel roll can be choking hazards for infants and toddlers. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, any object handled by young children should be at least 1.25 inches in diameter and 2.25 inches long.

Remember that each child develops at his or her own rate, and this handout is meant only as a guide of what to expect of your child's development at this age.

For more information about parenting and developmental milestones, contact your county Extension office or visit **extension.msstate.edu**.

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By **Louise E. Davis**, PhD, former Extension Professor; **Elizabeth Thorne**, PhD, Project Manager; and **Mary Hannah Mills**, MS, Project Manager, Human Sciences.

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