

Helping Kids Discover and Develop Language

0-3 MONTHS

1. The infant makes cooing sounds.

For example, the infant makes sounds such as "oohs" and "ahs".

SUGGESTIONS:

- increase the loudness of your own voice
- play with your infant and bring him/her close to your face
- imitate any attempts at sounds (i.e., sighs, coos, sucking sounds, and facial expressions) that he/she makes
- respond to any sound he/she makes as a conversational turn
- talk with your infant
- smile, laugh, or click your tongue
- touch your infant



2. The infant's cry varies with emotional and physical state.

For example, the infant's cry will be different when he/she is in pain compared to when he/she is hungry, angry or uncomfortable. Crying is important because it gives the infant a chance to learn to coordinate the oral structures involved in speaking (e.g., tongue, lips, and vocal cords).

3. The infant responds to human voice.

For example, the infant may quiet or discontinue his/her vocalizations and/or change his/her activity level.

SUGGESTIONS:

- use various intonations in your voice (e.g. to soothe your infant, use a happy voice; to excite your infant, use an animated voice)

4. The infant makes brief eye contact.

For example, when the infant is being fed, he/she will look into the caregiver's eyes.

SUGGESTIONS:

- go out of your way to meet your infant's gaze
- guide your infant's face towards your face to help make eye contact
- exaggerate facial expressions
- bring attention to your mouth or eyes by patting the side of your face. This adds a visual cue at which your infant can look.
- feeding, bathing and changing times are great opportunities to make eye contact



5. The infant engages in a back and forth vocal exchange with another person.

A baby's turn can be gurgling, sucking on a bottle, or any sound or movement a baby makes. This is the beginning of turn-taking which is later required for conversations.

SUGGESTIONS:

- imitate your baby's sounds (e.g., sighs, coos, lip smacking) and actions

