



**Bayside Medical Group, Inc.**

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HELPING LEARN TO TALK

## Helping Your Baby Learn to Talk

<b>When to Start</b>	<b>Do the first activities as long as your child enjoys them. Add new activities as he or she grows older.</b>
Birth	<p><i>Help your baby learn how nice voices can be.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sing to your baby. You can do this even before your baby is born! Your baby will hear you.</li><li>• Talk to your baby. Talk to others when Baby is near. Baby won't understand the words, but will like your voice and your smile. Baby will enjoy hearing and seeing other people, too.</li><li>• Plan for quiet time. Baby needs time to babble and play quietly without TV, radio or other noises.</li></ul>
3 months	<p><i>Help your baby see how people talk to each other.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hold your baby close so she or he will look in your eyes. Talk to Baby and smile.</li><li>• When your baby babbles, imitate the sounds.</li><li>• If Baby tries to make the same sound you do, say the word again.</li></ul>
6 months	<p><i>Help your baby understand words (even if he or she can't say them yet).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Play games like Peek-a-Boo or Pat-a-Cake. Help Baby move his hands to match the game.</li><li>• When you give Baby a toy, say something about it, like "Feel how fuzzy Teddy Bear is."</li><li>• Let your baby see himself in a mirror and ask, "Who's that"? If he doesn't answer, say his name.</li><li>• Ask your baby questions, like "Where's Doggie"? If he doesn't answer, show him where.</li></ul>
9 months	<p><i>Help your baby "talk" by pointing and using his or her hands.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Show Baby how to wave "bye-bye." Tell baby "Show me your nose." Then point to your nose. She will soon point to her nose. Do this with toes, fingers, ears, eyes, knees, and so on.</li><li>• Hide a toy while Baby is watching. Help Baby find it. Share her delight at finding it.</li><li>• When Baby points or gives you something, talk about the object with her.</li></ul>
12 months	<p><i>Help your child to say the words she or he knows.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk about the things you use, like "cup," "juice" and "doll". Give him time to name them.</li><li>• Ask your child questions about the pictures in books. Give your child time to name things in the picture.</li><li>• Smile or clap your hands when your child names the thing that he sees. Say something about it.</li></ul>



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15 months	<p><i>Help your child talk with you.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk about what your child wants most to talk about. Give him time to tell you all about it.</li><li>• Ask about things you do each day. Which shirt will you pick today? Do you want milk or juice?</li><li>• When your child says just one word, like “ball,” repeat it with a short sentence such as “That’s Baby’s ball.”</li><li>• Pretend your child’s favorite doll or toy animal can talk. Have conversations with the toy.</li></ul>
18 months	<p><i>Help your child put words together and learn how to follow simple directions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask your child to help you. For example, ask her to put her cup on the table.</li><li>• Teach your child simple songs and nursery rhymes. Read to your child.</li><li>• Encourage your child to talk to friends and family. A child can tell them about a new toy, for example.</li><li>• Let your child play “telephone.” Have a pretend telephone conversation.</li></ul>
2 years	<p><i>Help you child put more words together.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teach your child things that are important to know.</li><li>• Teach your child to say his or her first and last name.</li><li>• Ask about the number, size and shape of things your child shows you. If it’s worms, you could say: “What fat wiggly worms! How many are there? Where are they going?” Wait, watch, and listen to the answer. Suggest and answer if needed: “I see five. Are they going to the park or the store?”</li><li>• Ask your child to tell you the story that goes with a favorite book.</li><li>• Check your local library for programs for toddlers. Ask at your health clinic for other guides.</li><li>• Don’t forget what worked earlier. For example, your child still needs quiet time. This is not just for naps. Turn off the TV and radio and let your child enjoy quiet play, singing, and talking.</li></ul>

*From the U.S. Department of Education*