

Parent Express

A GUIDE FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY



TOPIC

11 months old

Dear parent,

Your baby learns most things from you, especially about love.

Babies, just like adults, need love and attention. Rewarding your baby with a smile, a hug, or a kiss is better than rewarding her with a new toy. Your baby will know she is loved, and she needs that knowledge to stimulate the chemicals in her brain that strengthen her ability to learn and grow. With your support, she will feel she can tackle anything.

What it's like to be 11 months old

How I grow

- I stand by myself.
- I hold a toy in one hand while pulling myself up on my feet with the other hand.
- I may even wave while standing and turn my body around without falling down.



- I walk if you hold one or both of my hands.
- I easily squat down, stoop, bend over, and then get up.
- I hold a pencil or crayon, and I love to make marks with it.
- I take a spoon and put it in my mouth.

How I talk

- I know that words are used to identify things.
- I babble and mumble gibberish quite a lot, but I do know a few words.
- I use one word to express a complete thought.

How I respond

- I copy everything I see and then do it my own way.
- I try to get your approval and hide when I know you are not pleased.
- I may test you to see how much I can get away with.

How I understand

- I see the expression on your face and copy it. I'm learning from you.

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

- I try to bark or meow when I see a dog or a cat. I am learning how people, animals, and things function.
- I like to look at pictures in books and magazines.
- I know that tools (such as a chair pushed in front of me to steady my walking) will help me.

How I feel

- I need you more these days and cling to you, especially in new situations.
- I love to shake my head and say no even when I mean yes.
- I might cry, scream, and have tantrums if I don't get my way.

Toilet training – when?

Some parents might be tempted to start toilet training too soon. Training probably will be easier on everyone if you wait until daily bowel movements are regular, and your child can tell you her needs in words and gestures.

A baby doesn't have to be fat to be healthy

If you have an active baby, you might notice his weight gain slowing down. That's because your baby is using more calories for his constant activity. Though your baby might not be gaining as much weight as before, he is still healthy. A fat baby is not necessarily a healthy baby. At this age, babies should be developing muscle tissue, not fat.

Worrying about what your baby eats or does not eat only makes both of you nervous. Don't expect your baby to clean his plate or to eat just one more mouthful. Trust him to be the best judge of how much to eat. If, over a period of a few days, he gets a good variety of foods, his nutritional intake will be adequate.

As your baby moves around to explore his world, he will discover a new independence. He may be eager to try out this new independence by insisting on feeding himself. Or his new abilities might scare him a little and he might cling to you at mealtimes. He might even refuse to hold his

cup or spoon and demand that you feed him.

Whether your baby is a clinger or a self-feeder, be calm and patient. It will pay off in fewer feeding problems both now and later.

Your baby still should be drinking breast milk or 24 ounces of iron-fortified formula each day. He is not yet ready for cow's milk.

Welcome to the no-no's

Most parents of 11-month-olds go through the "no-no's" at this age. Sometimes it will seem like you're always telling your baby what not to do. No wonder – the 11-month-old loves her independence as she moves around and touches more things than ever before, so discipline becomes part of the daily routine.

What is discipline? It is something that you do for and with your child – and not to her. It is setting up a reasonable balance of limits to teach your child what is and is not acceptable. Discipline also is letting her know that though you may disapprove of what she did, you still love her.

To handle discipline problems, anticipate what your child will do, divert her attention to something else, substitute or remove the object, and be firm in saying no.

Your baby might continue to do something that is a no-no just to get attention. It becomes a game. She crawls to a forbidden object and turns around to look at you. You say no but she reaches out to touch it anyway. You get angry and say no again. She reaches again, waiting for your no, and so the game goes on.

Solution: Take the object away, replace it with something your baby can have, or take her away from the forbidden area and give her some attention. A little tenderness goes a long way.

Babies at this age also like to shake their heads while saying no. They delight in swinging their heads from side to side and love the head movement. They might even say no to things they enjoy, such as taking a bath, eating dinner, or getting dressed to go

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out. Don't be alarmed at this negativism. It's all part of growing up and becoming more independent.

Games babies play

Play ball: An eyes and body game

Purpose

This game teaches your baby to crawl to get things and find out about them.

How to play

- Take a ball that your baby likes and roll it toward, away from, and then to the left and right of your baby.
- Say, "Look at the ball. Go get the ball."
- Your baby will try to get the ball by crawling after it.

Another eyes and body game

- Move things away from and back to your baby while he watches. This helps your baby see that distance might affect how things look, but it doesn't change their size.

Make the most of your time

Time is a valuable resource. You can control your use of time or let it control you. It all depends on how you make use of it. To make the most of your time:

- Decide what your goals are and what you need to do to reach them. For example, you might want to

go back to work or school. List the steps to achieve your goals. Follow these steps to make each goal a reality.

- Write a list of things that need to be done. Make a new list every day. Rate the three most important items A-B-C or 1-2-3. Do these three things first. Cross out tasks as they are completed.
- Expect the unexpected. Be prepared to revise your list as needed. Try to reduce the time and energy you spend feeling guilty or frustrated about things you can't complete or jobs you can't do.
- Avoid clutter. Make a simple daily housekeeping schedule with basic, important tasks on it. Routines reduce thinking time.
- Plan ahead to save time. Leave 10 minutes earlier for an appointment. Being early cuts down on stress.
- Be good to yourself. Set reasonable goals, deadlines, and schedules that you can achieve within your time plan.

A question about an older child

My 3-year-old niece lives with us. She sometimes hits the baby and seems to hate her. What should I do?

Now that your 11-month-old is crawling and moving around, the older child might regard her as a threat. She gets into her things, takes you away, and, to her, is a pest sometimes and an intruder.



Your niece was top attention-getter around the house until her cousin was born. She now needs to be reassured and told that she still is loved and cared for.

You also should make it clear to her that certain behaviors, such as hitting her cousin, are not acceptable. When she does hit the baby, physically stop her, move her out of the situation, or hold her while you explain why she can't hit.

It might help if you spend some time alone with the older child, free from distractions and free from your baby. You can give her your complete attention and do whatever she would like to do. You can plan the time around your baby's naptime or for the evening. Stimulating your niece's interest in other things such as play activities or friends also will help occupy her time.

Good books for almost 1-year-olds

Eleven to 12-month-old babies are able to use their hands with more precision, and they can usually hold small books with stiff pages and bring them to you to read.

Select books for your baby with simple, colorful pictures of familiar objects and events. Sit on the floor with your baby or hold her on your lap. Focus your baby's attention by saying, "Look at that!" Then point to a picture and ask, "What's that?" Wait for your baby to respond by a sound, a gesture, or a facial expression. Praise her for responding, then label the object correctly. Speak clearly and slowly. You're helping your baby learn language and showing her you love her.

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