

# The Growing Years

Healthy Start...where good results begin

Months 9 and 10

## Your Baby Wants You to Know

### How I Grow:

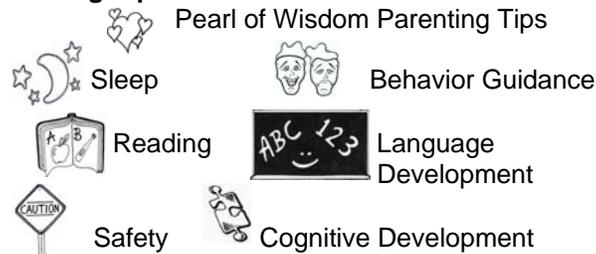
- I may crawl and turn around, while holding something in one hand.
- I can crawl upstairs, too.
- I may sit by myself and turn my body all the way around without losing my balance.
- I stand for a while if you hold my hands.
- I poke my fingers into holes and other interesting places.
- I pick up small things with my finger and thumb, and big things with both hands.
- I pull myself up by holding onto furniture, but I may have trouble getting back down.
- I crawl upstairs, but I don't know how to get back down yet.
- I walk if you hold my hand.
- I may begin to side step, holding onto furniture, to get around a room.
- I climb up onto chairs, and then climb down again.
- I'm beginning to show whether I'm right-handed or left-handed.
- I feed myself and help hold my cup.
- I may have trouble sleeping at night because I'm restless.

### How I talk:

- I understand some words, my name and simple sentences.
- I repeat one or more sounds over and over.
- I listen to people talking and try to imitate the sounds.
- I begin to say two-syllable sounds like "choo-choo", and "da-da", and "ma-ma".
- I may say "no" and shake my head from side to side.
- I am interested in conversations when I hear familiar words.
- I may drive you crazy because I like to say the same words all day long. Or I may say no words at all.

Continued on page 2.

Watch for these symbols to find articles on the following topics:



## How Baby Is Changing

Many babies begin crawling around the ninth month. It is exciting for baby to move around on his own, but scary too! Baby's first efforts to crawl will probably be toward something like a favorite toy or you. Don't be surprised if he falls on his face a few times while getting started. Keep him on a soft blanket or carpet.

Once he crawls, pulling to a stand isn't far behind. Watch out! Baby may be get up and not know how to get back down. He may cry to be rescued again and again. You can try to teach him to get down onto his knees or bottom. Be patient, he'll learn soon.

Does baby like to drop things from his crib or high chair for you to pick up? This can be annoying. It's a sign that baby's memory is developing. Now he knows that the toy or food he drops will land on the floor, and he likes to see and hear it.

His developing memory means he gets upset when someone takes a toy away from him.

Is your baby saying any real words yet? A child learning to talk often uses one real word to mean several different things. Real words are words that mean only one thing.



Even if baby says "no" and shakes his head back and forth, he may not know what the word means. He may even say "no" when he really means "yes". Don't take all his "no's" too seriously.

If baby is beginning to pull up to a stand, he will probably soon learn how to get down all by himself. Stairs may fascinate him. With a gate on the second or third step, he can practice climbing but can't fall too far.

Watch baby's hands. You may see him pick things up with just his first finger and thumb. Remember when he had to use his whole hand to smear food into his mouth? He has come a long way.

Don't worry if your baby doesn't seem to do things right on schedule. Your baby is unique, and he will develop on his own timetable. As long as your baby is making progress, just enjoy watching him grow.

## Your Baby Wants You to Know (continued)

### How I Respond:

- I like to watch people scribbling on paper.
- I like to perform for people. I love it when they applaud!
- I sometimes want praise for my accomplishments.
- I cry if another child gets more attention than I do.
- I still don't like being away from you.
- I like to imitate people, gestures and sounds.

### How I Understand:

- I try to figure things out by myself.
- I know that if I look at things upside down or cover my eyes, they'll look different.
- I get upset if my toy is taken away from me.
- I may remember a game, person or toy from yesterday.
- I can tell what mood people are in by looking at them.
- I know which toys are mine, and I have some favorites.
- I will look for something if I see you hide it.
- I am beginning to think of myself as a person.

### How I Feel:

- I'm very sensitive. If I see another baby cry, I may cry too.
- I may become afraid of a lot of things that didn't bother me before, like taking a bath. I'm afraid of heights.
- I'm very determined and sometimes stubborn. It's all part of my growing up.
- I have many feelings now: sad, happy, mad, scared and hurt.
- I can be very moody and get easily upset.
- I may still feel shy around people.

### How You Can Help Me Learn:

- Talk to me. Listen to me. Take turns.
- Praise me when I do something new. I need your encouragement.
- Give me finger foods so I can practice picking up small things.
- Show me things you want me to know, like clapping your hands, so I can learn by imitating you.
- Read books with me.
- Play hide and seek with me! If you hide behind a chair, I can come and find you.
- Put some pictures and a mirror down low, so I can see them.

Children can be very different from each other. Don't worry if your child is "early" or "late" in growth. This is important: look for and notice your child's growth in each area. You can encourage each new ability.

## Learning To Talk

Talking to your baby makes a difference. Research shows that when parents imitate and respond to baby's sounds, it helps her to understand language.



Parents who respond when baby "talks" help draw baby's attention to her own sounds. This makes language more interesting and important to her.

Encourage your baby to practice speech by playing games with her. When she makes sounds, repeat them back to her. Pause and give her a chance to answer.



Your imitation excites her and may cause her to repeat the sounds. Keep listening! You may hear certain tones of voice and sentence patterns in baby's babbling.

Baby may have a sound, like "ba," that she uses to mean many different things. These "words" mean real speech isn't too far away. Between 9 and 12 months, she might have a real word or two mixed in with her babbling.

## Baby Learns to Feed Himself

Does your baby hold most foods while eating? Or drink from a cup (with a little help)? These are the first steps in learning how to eat by himself.

Let your little one try out his new skills at picking things up with his thumb and forefinger. Here are some finger foods he can feed himself:

- Small pieces of soft, mild cheese (he can choke on big chunks)
- Soft toast, pieces of tortilla, globs of rice, bagel halves.
- Small pieces of graham crackers.
- Cooked vegetable strips or slices (potato, carrot, peas, green or waxed beans, zucchini, sweet potato).
- Peeled soft fruit wedges or slices (banana, apple, peach, pear, plum, avocado, melon)
- Soft, tender (small) pieces of cooked meat or chicken.

Praise baby for feeding himself, even if he is very messy. If the mess bothers you, spread newspapers, a towel or a plastic shower curtain under the high chair to catch dripped food.

Most babies don't learn how to use a spoon until well after their first birthday. The food they try to pick up with a spoon sometimes lands on the floor. But they are learning and they need practice to become skillful with a spoon.

Here are some foods that will stick to the spoon when scooped up. Your baby can enjoy them while practicing his spoon skills:

- Yogurt
- Applesauce
- Mashed potatoes
- Cooked cereal (oatmeal, cream of rice, or wheat)



- Cottage cheese
- Macaroni and cheese
- Mashed cooked beans
- Pureed or mashed vegetables or fruits

If you are worried about your baby not getting enough food, try two spoons, one for you and one for baby. Give him a mouthful or two (if he'll let you) in between his efforts.

By now, baby can eat most things the rest of the family eats. Just take his portion out before you add salt or other seasonings. Don't give baby round, slippery foods (like grapes or hot dog circles) or small hard foods (like nuts, seeds or popcorn) that could choke him.

Remember to make mealtimes happy, not frustrating. Hungry babies want to eat. It's up to parents and other caretakers to help babies develop good attitudes about food. How? With lots of praise, a little patience and encouragement, your baby can learn a wide variety of tastes and textures in new foods. Good food habits start in infancy.

## Fears and Insecurities

When baby can stand up by himself, he becomes aware of many new things, and some of them can be scary. Many 9-month-olds become afraid of heights and will no longer climb down from chairs, even though they have before. Loud noises, like the vacuum cleaner, or blender, may frighten him. He may even refuse to be bathed in the big bathtub. Try bathing with him, or give him sponge baths in the tub.

Don't laugh at his fears. They are just as real to him as your fears are to you. Comfort him, and then encourage him to explore the things he is afraid of. For example, let him touch the turned-off vacuum cleaner. He will grow out of these new fears, with your understanding and help.

## Getting Ready to Walk

Baby's first steps are a cause for celebration. But the process of learning to walk started many months ago as she was gaining control over her legs and arms. A few babies (25 percent) take their first steps by 11 months; others wait until 15 or 16 months.



Most babies pull themselves to a standing position for the first time between 6 and 10 months. They hold onto furniture, their crib, playpen rails or your pants leg.

The next step is called cruising. Baby holds onto furniture and walks sideways. As she gets better, she'll stand further away from the furniture, using it for balance only.

Falls are quite common when baby first starts walking. Learning to walk takes real courage. You can help by watching out for safety hazards (chairs or tables that tip, dangling tablecloths or cords, sharp corners), providing a soft surface to ease falls and offering praise and love when she gets discouraged.

After she is confident about walking while holding furniture, she is ready to take a few steps holding your hands. This can be scary for her, so go just a few steps unless baby wants to go on.

Baby may really enjoy this, and insist that you "walk" with her all day long! She will learn to walk even without your help. But you may enjoy taking the time to help her learn and practice.

## Making Your Home Safe for Baby



Once baby can stand, he can reach further and higher and reach things that were out of his reach before. Look at each room in your home again and watch for new hazards.

1. When baby uses furniture to pull himself up, he can pull things over. Remove wobbly tables that could tip. Fasten bookcases to the wall if they're not sturdy.
2. Set crib mattress to the lowest level.
3. Be especially alert for dangling electric cords, drapery cords, tablecloths or curtains that baby could pull down or get tangled in. Cover outlets that are not in use.
4. Keep medicines, cleaners, pesticides, alcohol, cigarettes and other poisons out of baby's reach.
5. Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove and use the back burners when possible.

6. Turn your water heaters down to 110-120 degrees Fahrenheit in case baby turns on the faucet while he's in the tub (This saves money, too). Never leave baby alone in or near water, even for a minute. Babies can drown in as little as 2 inches of water.
7. Don't let baby stand up in the grocery cart at the store. Only use carts that have a safety strap.
8. Don't let baby stand up in his high chair.

## Discipline: Is Baby Testing Limits?



Does your baby ever tease you on purpose? Has he ever headed straight for a wastebasket, making sure you notice? Does he reach for your glasses, almost waiting to hear "no, no"?

Your child is testing his emotions and yours. He is experimenting to see just where his limits are.

Teaching children to behave has always been a challenge to parents. It's not so much a matter of making your baby mind as it is a process of making it easy for him to do the right thing.

How can you make it easy? First, don't ask too much of him. Keep in mind that he is a baby. Don't tempt him with wastebaskets, plants, or uncovered outlets.

Give your baby safe toys and places to play. Pick him up and take him away from dangerous things. Give him words like "hot," "tastes bad," or "stop," instead of a flat "no" all the time.

If you find yourself saying "No" all the time, perhaps you should change things in the places where baby spends time. Put safety latches on the kitchen and bathroom cupboards. Move the outdoor barbecue to a spot where baby can't go. This will make life easier for you and you won't have to discourage baby's curiosity so often.

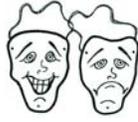
Sometimes you have to say "No" to a baby. That's OK. Just don't overdo it. Besides, it's easier to change your living room than to stop the curiosity of a child!



Be patient, gentle and understanding, but keep showing baby what you want. If you recognize and accept some behavior as part of babyhood, you are using good judgment.

## Reward Good Behavior

For babies under a year old, discipline is pretty simple. It means teaching limits through loving care and guidance. The key is reward.



Many parents only pay attention to their children's behavior when it upsets them. This teaches a child that attention only comes when he does something bad.

Your attention is baby's best reward. Use it to encourage good behavior, not bad! When baby plays nicely with the cat or makes sounds and tries to talk, reward him with a smile or talk to him.

When he touches something you don't want him to have, distract him by giving him a toy or point him toward something else. Ignore behavior that is annoying but not harmful. Save "no's" for times when baby's safety is in danger. Sometimes your baby won't be happy with the decisions you make and will fuss. You may even be tempted to give in to him.

Keep in mind that limits are necessary for your child's safety and welfare. You can set limits while giving your baby the freedom to explore and grow.

## Keys to Positive Parenting

Prevent situations where baby might do something you don't like. Move the glass vase to a higher shelf. Put a gate on the stairwell. If baby does something wrong, it may be your fault for not preventing it! Ignore behavior that is annoying but not harmful. If baby pulls everything out of your sock drawer, just take a deep breath and ignore it. If you pay too much attention, it teaches her to do things like this to get the attention she wants from you.

Reward baby with your loving attention when she's playing nicely. Don't become one of those parents who only notice their children when they have done something wrong. Notice the good times and give your baby a smile, a

laugh, a hug. Your attention is baby's most important reward. Use it to encourage behavior you like.

Your baby needs freedom to explore, but she also needs limits. You need good judgment to provide both. If a baby is kept in a playpen or high chair for much of the day, that is too little freedom, and too limiting. Baby needs "floor freedom" to explore. But that doesn't mean the basement stairs or garage! That is too much freedom and too dangerous.

## Helping Curiosity Grow

Researchers who have studied young children report that curiosity is important for success in the early school years. A child who is interested in the world around him and given the freedom to explore will observe and learn from it.

Formal teaching of babies is probably a bad idea. Young children learn best when they direct their own learning, not when you try to force something on them.

The first year is very important in laying the foundation for a lifetime of curiosity. You can help by making your baby's world an interesting, stimulating place, and by joining in your baby's excitement. Here are some ideas:

**Seeing:** Surround your baby with bright, moving colors in clothing, toys and room décor.

**Hearing:** Let your child listen to music on the radio, records, or tapes. Make a "chime" mobile, or hang wind chimes out of baby's reach to catch a breeze. Talk and sing to baby.

**Touch:** Give your child textures to feel, including soft, hard, smooth, and rough. Make a toy, blanket, or ball from scraps of fabric, like denim, corduroy, velvet, and satin. Touch your baby and let her touch your skin, hair and clothes.

**Smell:** Give your child chances to smell safe things, like soap, perfume, food, flowers, and dirt.



Most of all, try to see and hear things as your baby does. Share the experience. You can make learning fun!

## Sisters and Brothers

This can be a hard time for baby's brothers and sisters. Now that baby is moving around, she can get into the toys and favorite things of your other children. It is common for older brothers and sisters to rush by baby as she tries to stand up, knocking her down. Or to roughly grab their toys back from baby's grasp.

Baby will need to form a relationship with her siblings. As long as they are not hurting each other, you don't have to break up every "fight." But don't allow hitting or hurting.

Squabbling teaches children to reach each other's moods and sometimes helps clear the air. Hitting hurts without teaching.

You can help children get along. Give your older child a place of his own where "his" things are safe from baby. A drawer too high for baby will do, if he can't have his own room. Or let him play on the kitchen table, away from baby.

Point out to your older child how much baby looks up to him. Suggest things he can do to play with the little one, like rolling a ball to her or "reading" her a book.

Try to give each child some of your full attention each day. Your children may resent the baby if she always interrupts their time with you.

Finally, don't always take baby's side when you do intervene. Separate the children for a few minutes without taking sides. You don't want to always be in the middle.

## Roughhousing with Baby

Researchers find that men and women play differently with babies. Men are more likely to roughhouse.

Some women would say that men are too wild! Men are more likely than women to swing babies around, lift them high and low, tickle and chase them.

Babies like this, although moms often worry. That's OK. But moms might feel better if they know that most men are like this and most babies not only survive, but also like it!

It's fun to roughhouse with baby and most babies love active play. But keep it safe. A few games are too wild for babies:

- Don't throw the baby into the air. She could fall if something distracts you. Instead, lift her over your head without letting go.
- Don't jerk a baby's arm. If you swing the baby around in a circle, don't hold her by her hands. This is too much stress for baby's elbows and shoulders and these joints could be dislocated. Hold her under her arms by her chest instead.
- Never shake a baby; it can lead to blindness, brain damage, or death.

Some other fun and safe ways to play with your baby are chasing her as she crawls.

## Household Items as Toys

Look around your home. You probably have lots of safe objects to use as toys.

- Baby is probably ready for nesting containers, which are things that fit inside other things. You can buy a set of nesting cups or let baby use plastic measuring cups or food storage bowls. These let him practice the ideas of "bigger," "smaller," "in and out." These make good bath toys, too.
- Be sure all toys for baby are too large to swallow, have no sharp edges, and are safe for chewing.
- Use old-fashioned wooden clothespins (not spring-type) and a box or coffee can for baby to learn "in" and "out." Show him how to put the clothespins in the container and dumping them out.
- Cut a hole in the top of an oatmeal box for baby to drop large empty thread spools or other round objects into. He can take off the lid and get the objects out.
- Babies like to do things with toys, too, besides examining them. Making towers out of blocks or fitting rings onto a pole help his hand-eye coordination. You can make blocks out of empty, rinsed out milk cartons. Open up the top, and fold it down to make a



cube. Tape each block shut. Rinsed-out square baby-wipe containers make good blocks too.

- Baby may enjoy larger toys, too. A cardboard box with the ends cut out can be a tunnel. Baby can roll over a pillow or beach ball, and crawl into a paper grocery bag.
- Children love to do the things their parents do. By 12 months, about 25 percent of babies will imitate housework. If you paint, let him "paint" with water. Or give him a broom, toy hammer, dusting cloth or other object to do work just like you. Have fun with your baby!

## Be Good to Yourself!

If you're feeling stressed out by being a parent, you may need to give yourself a present: some time just for you. Even if you are a single parent, you can trade babysitting with another parent, or trade a service like cooking a meal in return for a few hours to yourself. You have earned it, you deserve it and you don't need to be embarrassed to ask for it. Here are some suggestions for spending time on yourself:

- Take a long bubble bath, a walk or a swim. See a movie or read a book without interruption.
- Plan your future: investigate classes you might take, jobs you could apply for, activities you would enjoy.
- Spend time with a friend, without children.
- Talk to someone about the stress you feel and what you might do to reduce it.

Taking time just for yourself will help you feel refreshed and ready to face parenthood again.

## Baby Called the Child Care Provider "Mama" or "Papa"

Parents who use full-time child care sometimes worry that their baby will feel more love for the child care provider. When your baby calls another woman "mama" or another man "papa," you may feel hurt, jealous, guilty or just confused.

Research shows that infants in childcare do form strong bonds of love with their caregivers.

The infant is able to use the caregiver much as he uses you: to calm fears and to feel secure.

But research also shows that caregivers do not replace the parent. Some of the research was done in communal towns in Israel, where the baby lives and sleeps in a special infant house with trained caregivers, and only sees the parents for about three hours each evening. Even in this extreme case, babies are still more strongly attached to their parents. By the way, this is true for babies who are adopted at a young age, too.

The research is clear: your childcare provider doesn't compete with you. She or he helps you raise your baby well, but never replaces you.

From your baby's point of view, having a strong attachment to the childcare provider is good. Your baby needs to feel secure and loved in every place he spends time, both at home and at childcare.

If your baby calls the childcare teacher "mama" by mistake, you can tell yourself "How nice! My baby likes his teacher almost as much as me." You will know no one can replace you.

## Questions and Answers

**Q. My daughter crawls around and pulls everything out of drawers and cupboards. I want to let her explore, but I'm worried that this will become a bad habit if I don't do something. What do you suggest?**

**A.** Don't worry about your baby getting into bad habits yet. Babies this age create clutter. A healthy baby is doing what comes naturally: exploring.

She pulls things out of drawers, turns furniture over, drags toys all over the house, and examines anything she can touch. But she is not doing it just to spite you or anyone else.

Drawer and cupboard latches will keep baby out of things that could be dangerous to her. Try keeping a special drawer or cupboard open for her, with safe plastic bowls, wooden spoons, pots and pans, and food cans to play with.



Very soon, your little one will be walking and running and won't have time to sit still and clutter up your whole home! She is going through a normal phase of development.



### **Pearl of Wisdom Make Reading Fun and Interesting**

Reading is so much more than a solitary act of picking up a book, sitting down and reading the words. Everywhere you look there are signs to read, objects to label, and describe, stories to tell and new stories to be created.

Infants "read" books right from their parents' lap! Non-verbals such as left to right eye movement, emotional reactions, body position, and excitement (increased heart rate) are observed and felt by infants and toddlers. When a child points her finger and asks, "What's that?" she is beginning to build vocabulary and learning to organize people, places and things. This is sometimes referred to as emerging reading.

And that's just the beginning. The joy of reading is fashioned by parents who talk, talk, talk, rhyme, rhyme, rhyme, sing, sing, sing, and create stories inviting a child to imagine and dream. Young children learn about concepts and how to use language through repetition.

Happy Parenting  
*Vicki Thrasher Cronin*

For the complete article, visit our website at [www.HealthyStartAnokaCounty.org](http://www.HealthyStartAnokaCounty.org)

Vicki Thrasher Cronin is a Parent Educator and Early Childhood Educator. This article was reprinted with permission from Ready 4 K.

### **Books to Enjoy with Your Baby**

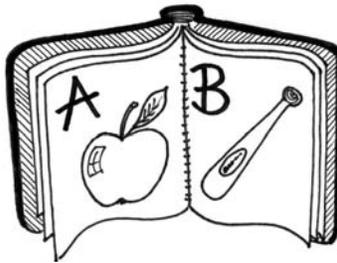
My Truck Is Stuck by Kevin Lewis

Where Does It Go? by Margaret Miller

The Foot Book by Dr. Seuss

Yoyo's Numbers by Jeannette Row

Sugar Pie Honey Bunch by Brian Holland



---

Graphics created and donated by Glen O. Jungmann and [www.designedtoat.com](http://www.designedtoat.com)

Remember, this developmental mailing describes a typical child at each age. Each child is special and each child develops at his or her own pace. Perfectly normal children may do things earlier or later than those described in this mailing. If you are concerned about your child's development, see your medical provider.

This developmental mailing gives equal time and space to both sexes. That's why we take turns referring to children as "he" or "she." When we use he or she, we include all children. Fathers, partners, and other significant adults all play an important role during pregnancy and in childrearing. When we specifically refer to "fathers," the information may also apply to partners and/or other significant adults involved in childrearing.

This developmental mailing was adapted and reprinted with permission from the University of Maine Cooperative Extension's Bulletin #4226, The Growing Years, Months 9 & 10 and 10 & 11. Produced for educational purposes by Healthy Start, Anoka County, Minnesota.

