

Parent Express

A GUIDE FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY



TOPIC

10 months old

Dear parent,

When in doubt, use your own judgment. You may feel bombarded with advice from many sources. Since the “experts” sometimes do not agree, you might be confused when one person tells you one thing and someone else tells you another.

If you have been overloaded with advice, stop for a minute and back up. Summon your own resources. Do what you think is best.

You have done an outstanding job as a parent so far. Rely on yourself and keep up the good work.

What it's like to be 10 months old

How I grow

- I crawl up stairs but haven't learned how to get back down yet.
- I walk if you hold my hands.
- I sidestep, holding onto furniture, to get around a room.
- I sit down from a standing position.
- I climb up on to chairs and then climb down again.
- I am beginning to show whether I'm right-handed or left-handed.
- I carry things in one hand without dropping them.
- I feed myself, and I help hold my cup.
- I may have trouble sleeping at night because I'm restless.



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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

How I talk

- I understand simple sentences.
- I might know the words ma-ma and da-da.
- I am interested in conversations when I hear familiar words.
- I like to repeat the same words all day long.

How I respond

- I react to your approval and disapproval.
- 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 know which toys belong to me, and I have some favorites.
- I will look for something if I see you hide it.
- I know that if I don't see a toy, that doesn't mean it's gone forever.
- I am beginning to know that I am a boy or a girl.
- I am beginning to think of myself as a person.

How I feel

- I have many feelings now – sad, happy, mad, scared, hurt.
- I am moody and easily upset.
- I might still feel shy around people.
- I am sensitive to other children's moods.

An open letter from your baby

Hi Mom or Dad,

I know it isn't easy being a parent, and I do demand a lot from you. But don't forget that it isn't easy being a baby, either!

Now that I'm growing older, I'm going through a lot of new experiences. You can help me by trying to understand what upsets me.

Don't worry when I get scared. Fear sometimes is the price I have to pay for learning about myself and about the world in which I live.

I get tense when I have to face new situations such as strangers, animals, the dark, or being separated from you.

I cry because I can't tell you what's frightening me.

Here are some fears I have and ways you can help me live with them.



Fear sometimes is the price I have to pay for learning about myself and about the world in which I live.

- Fear of falling – When I crawl around, I might go too fast and fall on my face. I start to cry and look at you. Please comfort me and tell me everything is okay. A gentle pat on my back and a smile also make me feel better.
- Fear of the dark – Sometimes I wake up at night in a dark room, and no one is around. I start thinking that I'm all alone, and I don't like that feeling. Come in and talk to me for a few minutes. Or, leave a small light on so I can see there's nothing to be afraid of.
- Fear of separation – When you leave, I start to howl. That's because I think that you, the most important person in my life, are leaving me for good. A few brief words of love while telling me that you will return helps me feel better. After a while, I will learn that you always come back for me.
- Fear of objects – Don't be surprised if an appliance such as a vacuum cleaner or hair dryer that never bothered me before suddenly makes me cry. Now that I am becoming more aware, I won't feel so scared if you hold me while you show me how the machine works.
- Fear of animals – Please keep dogs and cats away from me until I get more used to animals. When



you look at a dog or a cat, you see a dog or a cat. But when I look, I see a giant beast. If you cuddle me and hold me close, I will feel safe.

Some tips for you

Don't make changes in my life too quickly. Give me time to get used to new situations, people, or animals. Everything I see, taste, smell, hear, or feel is a new experience, and I need time to understand it.

Be patient and gentle with me. Give me love and affection, and I will grow up knowing that the world is not such a frightening place in which to live.

Love, Baby



drawers. Remove things you don't want her to touch and put them out of her reach. Remove any furniture that could fall over to an off-limits area.

A question about clothes

My baby likes to take off all her clothes wherever and whenever she can. How can I stop her from doing this?

Some babies enjoy undressing themselves for the sheer pleasure of practicing a new skill. They also like the freedom of taking off shoes and socks and then working their way up until they are bare.

Some babies like to take off their nightclothes and throw them out of the crib or bed. Of course, if they have a bowel movement during the night, the bed will be quite a mess.

Discourage your baby from playing this new game by putting her clothes on backwards, especially at night.

It's harder for little hands to undo a zipper or fasteners that are on the back of a sleeping sack.

Is your baby feeding the floor?

Most babies don't learn to use a spoon well until after their first birthday, but they need practice. Since the food a baby tries to pick up with a spoon sometimes lands on the floor, try yogurt, applesauce, mashed potatoes, cooked cereal (oatmeal, cream of rice or wheat), cottage cheese, macaroni and cheese, and mashed cooked beans. These are foods that stick to the spoon when scooped up, and your baby can enjoy them while practicing his spoon



skills. To make eating easier, try offering your baby a spoon with a curved or looped handle. Place old newspapers, a piece of a shower curtain, or a plastic tablecloth under his chair to catch messes. Research shows that parents should offer new foods five to 10 times or more to encourage their acceptance. If your baby rejects a food after repeated offerings, he probably really does not like that food. You might wait a few months and then try the food again.

Make mealtimes happy, not frustrating. Hungry babies want to eat. It's up to parents and other caregivers to help babies develop a good attitude about food. With praise, patience, and encouragement, your baby can learn a wide variety of tastes and textures in new foods. Good food habits begin in infancy. It is a good idea for you to sit and eat meals with your baby so he can learn healthy habits and manners from you.

Your baby still should be drinking breast milk or 24 ounces of iron-fortified formula each day; but no cow's milk. You might try introducing full-fat baby yogurt at this time. Your baby's digestive tract can tolerate yogurt before cow's milk.

Games babies play

Which hand is it in? The things don't disappear game

Purpose

This game teaches your baby that things don't disappear just because they are not in sight. It also teaches them how to get information from words. Games like this are playful ways to strengthen and help develop the nerve connections in your baby's brain.

How to play

- Hold a small object in one hand and show your baby the object.
- Switch the object back and forth between your hands several times.
- Show both hands closed and say, "Which hand is it in?"
- When your baby reaches for one hand say, "No, it's not in this hand. This hand is empty. Where is it?" or, "Yes, it's in this hand." (Quickly open your hand.)

Other things don't disappear games

- Hide a toy under towels.
- Hide a ball under one of several cups.

Dealing with temper tantrums

Let's say that your baby wants to play with your phone. He doesn't get what he wants and lies on the floor kicking and screaming. Should you punish him and scream back?

No. Tantrums are hard to deal with, but punishment and yelling are not the answers. Here are some guidelines.

If he is frustrated because you have set certain limits such as "no touching my phone," let him cry out his tantrum. When he realizes that you are not paying attention, he will quiet down. You have to set certain limits, and you should stick by them. Be kind, loving, and firm with your baby, but don't give in to his demands just to keep him quiet.

Kitchens and bathrooms might be dangerous

About 80 percent of all accidental poisonings involving children happen to those between



10 months and 36 months old. The poisons swallowed are usually household items such as detergents, cosmetics, furniture polish, and health products such as vitamins or aspirin.

Now is a good time to recheck your kitchen and bathroom.

Clear out all bottles under the kitchen sink, and put them in either a locked cabinet or a high cabinet that your baby cannot reach even using a chair or stool.

In the bathroom, don't leave any medicines around – not even vitamins. A pill containing vitamin A can poison your baby, and an infant who chews and swallows six to 12 vitamin pills containing iron could need emergency hospital treatment.

Keep all substances in their original containers. Children will swallow substances that look familiar and attractive.

If your baby does swallow something, try to find out what it was. Then immediately call your doctor, the nearest hospital emergency room, or the Kentucky Regional Poison Center (1-800-222-1222) for advice.

This is also the phone number of The National Poison Control Center. If you have to take your baby for treatment, take the container of whatever he swallowed with you.

Poisonproofing your kitchen and bathroom might be hard, but saving your child's life is worth the inconvenience.

Sources and recommended readings

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