

# Brain Development

Your baby starts learning from the day he or she is born. As your child's first teacher, you can support the critical learning that takes place during the first three years. Learn more about your child's milestones for development at [healthychildren.org](http://healthychildren.org).

To help your child develop language do the following:


- \* Engage in conversations with words and sounds your child uses.
- \* Read, talk and sing to teach words. Point to pictures and colors.
- \* Talk to your child about normal routines like diapering and feeding.

To help deepen thinking skills:

- \* Ask questions about the books you read to your child.
- \* Encourage your child to explore. Try different toys or textures.
- \* Use daily routines as learning opportunities.

To help develop self-control and self-confidence:

- \* Help your child learn how to express feelings.
- \* Set limits on negative behavior and explain why you are doing so.
- \* Praise your child when he or she takes on a new challenge and does well.
- \* Allow your child to help clean up. Teach him or her how to sort items.



What you do  
every day  
will boost  
your baby's  
brain power.



# Development of Motor Skills

Your darling child probably needs no encouragement to jump and run around. These motor skills seem to come easily. But you will likely need to work on his or her fine motor skills, which requires more control.

These skills include precise movements of the thumb, finger, hand and wrist. They are important because they enable your child to do such things as use a fork, write, fasten their clothes and do personal grooming. Develop your child's fine motor skills by encouraging him or her to:

- ✓ **Fill up and dump out items. Use a box of blocks or toys in a trunk.**
- ✓ **Dress and undress. Introduce buttons, snaps and zippers one at a time.**
- ✓ **Draw and scribble. Ask them to fold their creations in half.**
- ✓ **Squeeze toys in the tub. Or cut an orange in half and have your child squeeze it to help make fresh juice.**
- ✓ **Sort and stack items. Have your toddler sort toys by color or size.**
- ✓ **Make a salad. Allow your son or daughter to tear up salad greens.**

**Remember, fine motor skills develop your child's whole body and help get your son or daughter ready for school.**

