

Your baby is ready to learn to drink from a cup. Begin by giving him a little formula or fruit juice from a cup at each meal. He may choke easily, so watch him closely when he is first learning. Also, let him experiment with the cup in the bath water where spills don't matter.

Remember, nursing from a bottle or breast is still important. Only a small amount of liquid will be taken from a cup.

BABY'S HEALTH

Is your baby teething? He will soon have some of his teeth, and when he is about 2 years old, he will have 20 primary teeth. If you haven't already, it is time to start thinking about dental care. The American Dental Association makes several recommendations to help your baby avoid tooth decay: no fruit juice or soft drinks before sleeping; no sugar-coated foods (avoid sugar whenever possible); no food just before bedtime; and no sweets on baby's pacifier. Drinking water is also important to help rinse the mouth. Remember to wipe teeth with a clean cloth or brush with water only.

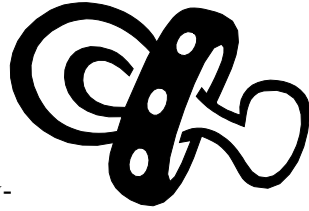
PARENT-BABY LEARNING GAMES

Do you remember the songs and finger plays you played as a child? Perhaps you remember "pat-a-cake," "one, two, buckle my shoe," and "this little piggy." Your child will have a great time playing these games with you now. And you'll have fun remembering them! In case you have forgotten some of these, your librarian can show you some books with lots of ideas.

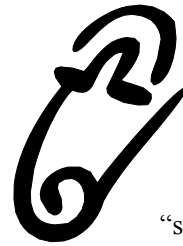
THUMB SUCKING AND PACIFIERS

Your baby is becoming more independent now. The process toward independence takes many years. At these first stages, your baby may start to rely on an object, such as his thumb, pacifier or blanket to

provide security. This is a good sign of development. It shows that your baby can satisfy his own needs instead of depending solely on you. So, be patient with these behaviors. Don't try to stop thumb sucking or take the pacifier away at this stage. Most children give up these comforting behaviors by themselves, especially by the time they enter school. Many older youngsters continue sleeping with a special teddy bear or blanket well into the school-age years (or later), and this does no harm.



SAFETY TIPS



When your baby begins to pull himself up to a wobbly standing position, it is time to remove any side bumper pads you may have in his crib. These pads (or other objects in the crib) can be used for "stepping stones" for an active baby to climb over the side of the crib.

*Prepared by Don Bower,
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Putting Knowledge to Work

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Baby Bouncer



NINTH MONTH Fears and Insecurities



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Baby Bouncer

NINTH MONTH: Fears and Insecurities

It may seem that baby's development has slowed down some in the ninth month, but many developments are taking place.

BABY'S DEVELOPMENT

Expect More of the Following Physical Developments This Month:

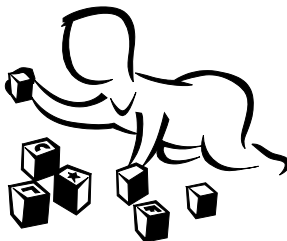
- Can turn around.
- Can crawl, while holding something in one hand.
- May be able to get down from standing position.
- May give up his morning nap.

Baby's language continues to develop. He will listen intently to others' conversations. He tries to imitate sounds, such as clucking, coughing and hissing.

Other Mental Skills Include:

- May build a two-block tower.
- Gets bored with repeated stimuli.
- Anticipates rewards (memory is developing).

You may notice your child role-playing soon. He is just beginning to



be able to think by using symbols instead of real things. Watch him during play and see if he copes with a frightening or frustrating experience by pretending with a doll or stuffed animal. Dramatic play is a good way for children to overcome fears and anger, so encourage role playing.

Another mental skill baby is learning is persistence. Have you noticed that he sticks with a specific activity longer now? This is a very important skill that he will use throughout his lifetime.

Your baby is developing socially, also. He may now initiate play by offering you a toy to play with.

BABY'S TEMPERAMENT

This seems to be the month of fears and insecurities. When baby can stand by himself, he enters a new dimension of life and becomes aware of many new things. This is sometimes frightening to him (and to you, too!). Many 9-month-olds become frightened of heights and will no longer climb from chairs as they have before. Many become frightened by noises and things such as the vacuum cleaner. Parents need to be concerned, but shouldn't overreact and become too protective. Providing quick sympathy and then encouragement usually works well. For example, if the fear is directed at the vacuum cleaner, dry the tears with a kiss, and then encourage the child to investigate the unplugged vacuum cleaner. It also may help to explain what to expect before noisy equipment is turned on (to reduce the startle).

It is not uncommon at this age for your baby to show a clear preference for his primary caregiver (usually his mother). Being "Mommy's little boy (or little girl)" is an important phase of development, although one parent may feel left out sometimes.

Continue to show affection for your partner when your baby is around. Typically, in a year

or two the child's parent preferences will switch to the other parent, and eventually even out in the long run. Knowing this may help soothe hurt feelings of whichever parent isn't the current "favorite."

BABY'S BATH

Many babies become frightened of their baths around the ninth month. To comfort him, try returning to bathing him in his old bathinette or bathing him with you (holding him) in the tub. An adult bathtub looks very large to a small child. He will gradually lose his fear and be satisfied to bathe alone (with your close supervision, of course).



OLDER CHILDREN

It is not unusual for new jealousy to develop in older brothers and sisters since baby is now mobile. A strong rivalry between baby and a toddler is not unusual. Your older child may feel threatened now and may express his anger and frustrations in a variety of ways — including some that could hurt the baby. It is often hard for parents to deal with an ugly outburst from their older child, particularly if it includes unkind behavior directed toward the baby. However, intervention each time there is a fight is not the best answer. The older child needs to get out his tensions, and if scolded too often may begin to bottle up his feelings until he explodes. Both baby and older child can learn from their squabbles. As long as no harm is directed toward the baby, the experience of arguing can teach how to read others' moods and how to cooperate, and can clear the air so more positive feelings can develop. You can model the behavior you expect.

Encourage play between the children, with the older child taking a leadership role. Playing a simple form of "catching the rolled ball," or looking through a magazine together is a good start. Help the older child understand the abilities and limits of the younger child. Remind the older child that being a big brother or sister is an important responsibility. Ignoring minor disputes may be best for everyone concerned.

BABY'S SELF-CONCEPT

If your child could grow up to be anything, what would you want him to be? Many parents would answer this question by saying, "Why, whatever he wants to be." His ability to become and do what he wants will depend on whether he believes in himself. The development of a secure, strong self-concept begins as early as the first year of your baby's life.

As your baby learns to tell the difference between pleasure and displeasure in others, he will strive to please. If he grows to believe that he is a likable, "good" person through pleasing you, his self-concept will grow strong and positive. Of course, you will be displeased with him at times and will need to show this displeasure. His self-concept will not suffer, however, if you help him realize that his **actions** sometimes displease you but not **everything** about him. If your child is always assured that you love him and believe he has worth, he should grow to respect and believe in his own value. Children, like adults, grow from hearing positive comments such as "Good job!"

BABY'S FOOD

Does your baby "give you the raspberries"? That is, does he sputter with his tongue and lips? This is sometimes an indication that he has eaten enough food at that particular feeding. Watch carefully for signals of "I've had enough," or you encourage overeating.