



Play tips for parents of infants

Musical fun filled with learning!



1. Exaggerate your mouth and facial expressions while singing to your baby, and look right into her face. Put your baby on her back, bend over her, get really close. Infants tend to be riveted to their parents' faces, so sing with a smile and an animated expression.
2. Sing to your baby often. This is done for the same reason that you speak to your baby before he can talk. The ear is completely developed very early (before the 3rd trimester). Your baby loves to hear you sing.
3. Incorporate music-making into your everyday activities. Sing songs during diaper changing, while taking a walk, or while pushing your baby in a swing. Sing a lullaby before nap and bed. Make up words about what your baby does to songs you already know, and include your baby's name often.
4. Allow some silences after songs to allow your baby to mentally process what she just heard. Imitate your baby's cooing and gurgles. This encourages her to vocalize more. Make up new sounds. Have a cooing, singing dialogue. You'll hear your baby sing a whole lot more.
5. Listen for cooing and crying on a particular pitch. Mimic his sound on the same pitch. You need to be the careful listener to match his pitch.
6. Babies can feel rhythm through your touches and taps. Put on music or sing, tap gently on her tummy, chest, arms, legs or the bottom of her feet on the microbeat or macrobeat. Making circle movements, massage or rub on her body to the music, while you dance/rock/sing.
7. Your baby loves to dance with you. Infants learn rhythm by feeling it through your body as you move so hold your baby close and move distinctly to the beat. Swing him to the beat. Use his favorite positions. Walk or dance on the macrobeat (big beat) or microbeat (little beat).
8. Invest in some baby-safe percussion instruments. Eggs or drums are great first instruments. Buy some for yourself that are fun for you to play. Make an instrument basket. Invite some friends over, put on a CD and sing and have a jam session.

(more on back)

Heartland Music Together

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9. Drums-rest the baby's hands on top of yours and allow her hands to "ride along" while you gently tap the drum.
10. Lullaby time is for cuddling. Memories of being sung to and rocked are powerful memories for many adults. Give your child this gift.
11. Share the music in a fun, loving way. You are your child's most important teacher.

Need more ideas? Join our Music Together classes for more play ideas with your baby or young child. Happy singing!

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